



THE SPIRE

EDWARDS CHURCH *of* NORTHAMPTON
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Vol. 28 No. 5 May 2018

Dear Edwards Church Community,

On Sunday April 22nd two cruel events collided. The cruelty of one is obvious: Travis Reinking, a man with a history of criminal acts and mental illness, reportedly used an AR-15 assault rifle to kill four young people and wound four others at a Waffle House in Nashville. The second event was cruel only by coincidence: the *NY Times* ran a story headlined “The Mass-Shooting Survivor Network” by Rick Paulus. (Link below.)

I could be upset by the existence of a network of mass-shooting survivors, were it not for the comfort, support and healing provided by a community of mutual care. The mere facts that such a community is needed and that the need continues to grow distress and anger me. But the human capacity for empathy and reaching out to help heal each other is, in the end, stronger. Or it better be, if we are to survive and thrive.

In 2008, after a shooting at Northern Illinois University, students from Virginia Tech waited a few days before making contact with survivors in Illinois. They knew from their experience the year before to let the initial shock and media frenzy fade. Their counterparts in Illinois were grateful. “[H]earing about a different shooting from their perspective helped. It was like, ‘Tell me how the next year is going to be, what am I going to be dealing with?’” said one survivor. And then a contingent from Illinois, weeks after experiencing their attack, traveled to Virginia for a memorial on the one year anniversary of that shooting.

There are numerous groups with different focuses, but a common purpose – to connect survivors of mass shootings, so they can help each other. The largest grew out of a group of Columbine high school survivors, who reached out to their neighbors 20 miles away in Aurora, CO when a midnight movie theater shooting happened there.

The chief of police in Aurora at the time, Dan Oates, was a law school classmate of mine. Dan was a patrol sergeant in the NYPD during law school, and we bonded in night classes. His family wanted him off the street, but he never took to the office work available in a big city police department. We fell out of touch over the years, but I can imagine the move to Colorado was in part to use all of his experience and education in ways that suited him and his family. Because I knew Dan as a person and knew enough of his stories from the street, I grieved for him when the Aurora shooting happened.

In February of this year, survivors from Virginia Tech (2007) and Columbine (2000) travelled to attend the ten year anniversary memorial of the Northern Illinois University shooting. While they gathered, their phones lit up with news alerts about the shooting in Parkland, FL. Just as they tried to compose themselves for a difficult memorial, the need kept growing to care for more survivors, and it will until we do something to reverse the trend.

May God help us find the way,

Michael

Link to article: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/22/style/gun-survivors-network-shooting.html>

Edwards Church is an Open and Affirming Congregation:

*We embrace Christ's command to love God with all our hearts and our neighbors as ourselves. Therefore, we welcome **everyone** regardless of ethnic background, economic circumstance, sexual orientation, family configuration, or difference in ability.*

All who seek the love of Christ are welcome to Edwards Church and to share fully in its life and ministry. In response to the Spirit of Christ in our midst, we glorify God and rejoice in the inherent worth, dignity, and gifts of every person as a child of God.

From the Minister of Faith Formation

Offered below is the written in celebration of Earth Day and with the assistance of the young ones among us during Chancel Step time:

A Prayer About the Beauty of Nature

Holy, Loving, and Creating God, we thank you for the beauty and joy of nature.

Our World is filled with so many special places and amazing natural wonders. We remember the lilies, and the grass, and the birds and give you thanks and praise.

We remember our favorite places to visit: Florida, New Hampshire, Vermont, Hilton Head, Michigan and my grandma's house where can enjoy swimming, skiing, biking, an amusement park, Universal Studios and a nice visit with grandma.

We are grateful for the beach where we can collect shells and other things while walking, we can look for fish and dolphins, and we can go into the water; and for mountains where we can hike, ski, be challenged by a steep climb, or find a special place to sit.

We appreciate the opportunities we have to learn about places like Canada, India, Siberia, Africa, and South America.

We are thankful for elephants, giraffes, horses, wolves, butterflies, rhinos, hyenas, zebras, pandas, tigers and birds, and for some of our favorite pets: cats, dogs, chickens, lambs, and Golden Retrievers. Our world is an amazing place. Teach us to protect and cherish all of creation as we share and enjoy the beauty of our world. Help us to find time to rest and play and remember that your love is with us always.

It is in the name of your son, Jesus that we pray. Amen.

In just four short weeks, I will begin my sabbatical. Plans are shaping up nicely for this time of renewal. Firmly scheduled is a retreat from June 3-8, at Mercy By the Sea in Connecticut.

While I am away, Melissa Mattison and Sheri Cheung will share Chancel Step time during worship and Darleen Butterick and Melissa Mattison will co-lead the summer church school program on May 27, June 10, 17, and 23. I am grateful for their leadership.

May we all bear witness to the signs and beauty of resurrection all around us.

*Blessings,
Deb*



Thank you to these "fabulous faith formers" who nurtured our children and youth along their faith journey this past month:

Chelsea Marchetti, Diane Roeder, Paula Mattison, Jim Stokes-Buckles, Melissa Mattison, Rachel Venator, Kimela Webb, Carolyn Dion, Sandra Rossi, Liza McDonough, and Kristen Deschenes.

YOUTH GROUP

Edwards Church Youth Group's ministry is open to those in Grades 6 -12.

We generally meet on the second and fourth Sunday of the month from 11:30-1:00, with a few exceptions. Youth are always welcome to bring a friend!



Here's what is coming up:

Our next meeting is May 20th in the Edwards Room. This is an important gathering and my last one with you before leaving for sabbatical.

Continuing the Dialogue: Anti-Racism and White Privilege

Michael and I participated in the rally to end racism on the mall in Washington D.C. on the 50th anniversary of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King's assassination. ACT to End Racism was the theme challenging participants to *Awaken* to the reality that racism is present and deeply rooted in American culture and profoundly damaging to our communities, *Confront* and speak the truth to ourselves, our communities and institutions and stand against injustice, *Transform* the hearts, minds, and behaviors of people and structures that continue to shape society.

More than a dozen of us have been engaging in dialogue around white privilege and the systemic racism that so pervades our society. Several of us have participated in the Massachusetts Conference of the UCC's Level 1 Racial Justice Training. Many of us are committed to continuing the dialogue begun over a year ago and would like to invite others to join us. There will be a gathering on May 14 @ 7:00 p.m. in the Heritage Room for all who are interested in being part of an anti-racism group. At 4:00 on May 20th the movie *Places in the Heart* (PG), set in the 1930's in Waxahachie, Texas, will be shown in the Edwards Room.



Calling all Graduates

Whether from pre-school, elementary, middle, high school or college!

Please contact Deb Moore either by email, phone, or in person to let her know where you are graduating from and where you are headed after graduation. We would like to recognize this milestone in your life during worship on May 20, Pentecost Sunday.

Summer Camps

It isn't too early or too late to register for a faith-filled summer camp experience. Visit the Faith Formation bulletin board and check out the many camp offerings for all ages and genders.



End of Season Thank You

The Interfaith Emergency Shelter is concluding its November-April season and Edwards church volunteers have served their last "third Friday" meal. This service project is a part of our outreach work into the community and as such is a part of the Outreach committee's budget. Thank you to the Outreach Committee members for allotting the funds and to our volunteers for purchasing food, cooking, serving, washing dishes, packing up the kitchen and most importantly, providing a warm welcome to the table to the twenty plus shelter guests.

Special thanks to Jan Heminger for her amazing main dishes, to Shauneen Kroll for delicious baked goods, to Tom Derr for the heavy lifting shopping duties, to Dorothy Molnar and Matt Anderson for serving with such warmth and good cheer, to Sarah Briggs for tasty vegetarian dishes and serving with joy, to Dorothy's Angelica and Sarah's Stone for pitching in with their parents to serve the December meal, to Sylvia Shread for her wonderful vegetables and care in serving, to Laura Freed for joining us this past Friday, new to the community and ready to help. This is truly a "many hands make light work" effort. Please forgive me if I've left out one of our dedicated helpers!

If you would like to get involved in this meaningful work please write <frogamenifamily@gmail.com> or let me know at Fellowship. I'll keep your contact information ready for when we begin again in November. You can volunteer from home by providing a dish to be served or come by the shelter for just over an hour to serve. Your participation matters!

With care, Laura Frogameni

A Gift Is Given

Before moving back to Switzerland, Liz Stiles-Neumann donated a sewing machine to our church. And an idea was born.

I had recently decided to put my multi-year accumulation of quilt fabric scraps to use with a goal to make scrap quilts for donation. Combine that goal with Liz's gift and I wondered if more people might like to join me. When reaching out to others about this project, I was told "yes" many times over. So far, there are offers to sew, cut fabric scraps, iron, to sew if someone could guide them, and arranging finished blocks to create the quilts.

I wonder if there might be someone who has organized a group sewing project before. That is something I have never done and I am not sure how to go about this. If you do, please let me know. I would appreciate the help.

I will be starting this project with the goal to create twin size quilts for donation - perhaps going to the new youth housing residents or the Interfaith Cot Shelter.

Liz also donated an iron, ironing board, and craft table, as well as other sewing supplies and books. The sewing machine also does embroidery motifs. The possibilities are endless and exciting.

To start, I will be sewing at home on most Thursdays, with a schedule determined later as the project moves along. If you are interested in using the church's sewing machine, send me an email, or talk with me in church. Thanks.

~Janet Tucker

Congratulations, Elena!

Congratulations to Elena Frogameni honored as the Gazette's Young Community Leader at Hadley Farms Meeting House on April 25!



Safe Conduct/Safe Church Policies and Procedures

During the April Council meeting, an updated Safe Church Policies and Procedures Manual was endorsed. Updates to the previously existing policy dated July 2012 include: title change to Safe Conduct/Safe Church to refer more broadly to organizational conduct and personal behaviors that impact both children and adults; CORI checks to be conducted on an annual basis; deletion of some forms not used; addition of an adult opt out form pertaining to publishing photographs; publishing of material online; communication and contact procedures; prohibition of smoking and alcohol on/in the church property; and addition of a toileting procedure in the Nursery. Copies of the updated Manual will be made available in the main office, the Senior Minister's office, the Minister of Faith Formation's office, the Music Minister's office, the Church School classrooms, and the Library. Information sessions overviewing the Manual will be held when I return from sabbatical. Many thanks to Pam Lamlein, Janet Tucker, Jon Dietrich, and Michael McSherry for their assistance in this revision process.

Communion Table Flowers

The gift of flowers for the communion table in our sanctuary is a revered custom. The flowers may be given to an ill or homebound member, or the donor may keep them and give to whomever they wish. The flowers may be of all kinds: wee plants from the grocery store, greens gathered on a woodland walk, cut flowers from the grocery or from a local florist.

Persons who receive flowers from our communion table are always so surprised, grateful, and appreciative. Please consider giving flowers as a wonderful way to express your love for the church and for each other.

Please call or email Janet Hemminger at (413) 584-1635 or chuck.hemminger@gmail.com to select a date in May or June.

Many thanks,
Janet Hemminger

Cathedral in the Night

Cathedral in the Night is an outdoor Christian community in downtown Northampton which seeks to create a safe place for all people – the homeless, the housed, the church-less, the church-ed, the students and the residents -- to explore, question and live out their spiritual beliefs; to gather for a meal; and to empower one another to engage in issues of social justice by working to fight the causes of inequality and homelessness.

Pastor Stephanie Smith, a Lutheran (ELCA) pastor for fourteen years, serves as the full-time pastor of Cathedral in the Night Northampton. Her work is based on the conviction that faith must be grounded in justice work, as we are God's hands in the world.

Worship is an integration of contemplative worship and contemporary context. The worship is multi-sensory and participatory, using the talents of local musicians, poets, artists and lighting engineers. It is a place and an activity which fosters an atmosphere of spiritual curiosity and exploration in order to create a community of support, challenge and deeper faith. Worship concludes with the Eucharist, which then leads into a meal offered freely to all.

Ministry partners, which are usually churches, synagogues, or individuals, and occasionally restaurants, prepare, donate and help serve the meals for eighty to one hundred people to be enjoyed at Cathedral in the Night. Sandwiches for 80 to 100 people are offered to take away for a meal the following day.

I have attended many of these Cathedral in the Night suppers. The one most striking to me was the night I began talking to a man who was hanging back in the periphery. He seemed shy and I approached him and told him my name. "OH, you don't want to talk to ME!" he said. I was stunned and said of course I did. I made sure he did go up to the food table and get food. The encounter with him will always stay in my mind. I pray he is alive and well, and not homeless. Cathedral in the Night is an event that Edwards Church helps with regularly and may we always share our 'plenty' with all.

The venue is outside First Churches at 129 Main St., Northampton, and the time is at 5:00 p.m. every Sunday, rain, snow or sunshine. There is a tent/pavilion when weather is bad, and lights when it is dark.

Pork Roast Supper

When: Saturday, **May 12, 2018**

Time: Take outs: 5:00-6:30pm
Dine in: 5:30-7:00pm

Tickets: Adults \$12.00
Child under age 10: \$6.00

Where: The First Congregational Church of Hatfield
41 Main Street, Hatfield, MA

Menu: Roast pork, gravy, mashed potatoes, green beans almon-dine, coleslaw, roll with butter, homemade applesauce, and brownie ice cream sundae for dessert.

Contact: Linda Milewski for reserved tickets at 413-247-5604

The Hampshire Association of the MACUCC
and the Members and Friends of
Church of Christ Congregational, UCC
request the honor of your presence at the

Service of Ordination for
Mr. Lawrence Humphrey

Saturday, May 19th, 2018
at three o'clock in the afternoon

Under the Tent on the Church Commons
Church of Christ Congregational, UCC
235 State Street
Granby, MA 01033

MAY BIRTHDAYS

Jody Gerbasi
Ann Abel
Sarah Briggs
Janice Longstreeth
Sally Griggs
Connie Douglas
Debra Davis
Harriet Smith



Lynda Kamik
Janie Thurber
Barbara Kirchner
Rutherford Wilson
Isabella Leo
Lynn Koerbel
Ashe Boyer
Julia Stearns

Note: In an effort to protect the digital identities of our community members, we will no longer publish dates of birth in the newsletter. Please contact the church office directly if you would like to obtain this information.

Is your birthday missing? We'd like to include everyone, so please call the church office and let us know your birthday!

Star Island

Star Gathering 2 Friends,

From all of us here at Star Island, thank you for being a part of our one-of-a-kind community. The impact that Star has on guests, and guests have on Star is like no other place we know. Summers on Star Island are filled to the brim with unique memories, deep conversations and connections that last a lifetime. We love being able foster the type of environment where these connections grow and flourish, but we know in our heart of hearts that Star Island blossoms with love and knowledge because of the spectacular people who visit each year. Because of you, Star Island becomes better with every passing season. To all Shoalers, new and old, thank you for making our island home so special. Thank you for bringing with you compassion, knowledge, and enthusiasm and leaving with open minds and open hearts.

We are asking for your help in building our community in 2018. Each year it is important to introduce new friends and family to the island to secure a bright future of delight and wonderment for generations! The more folks who join us, the more experiences, conversations and relationships will be created. We look to you to help us achieve this goal. **Will you bring a new Shoaler to the island this summer?**

We are offering a discount of **30% off room and board** for any new conferee who has never attended a program on Star Island. We know your time is valuable and we also want to offer you, the returning Shoaler, a room and board credit for your help building the island community of either \$50 or \$125 depending on how many people you bring this summer. Learn more about our Community Building Discount here: <http://starisland.org/discounts/>

APPLYING FOR A DISCOUNT

To access the discount application for the Community Building Discount go to:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2018discounts>

The new Shoaler must fill out the discount application. They will be asked the name of the Shoaler that referred them - a room and board credit will then be applied to the returning Shoaler's bill on island depending on how many new folks have been referred.

FINANCIAL GRANTS

Don't forget that financial grants are also available and a great tool to help new Shoalers get to the island. To learn more about Star Island financial grants and Star Gathering financial grants, visit our financial grant page here:

<http://starisland.org/programs/registration/#financial-aid>

June Memorial Services

Because they were both such long time and beloved members, we want you to know about two upcoming memorial services in June.

June 2, 11 AM - Dr. George Snook

June 9, 10 AM – Doris Holden

Both have obituaries in the Gazette, available on that web site.

Flowering Stars

Printmaker Dwight Pogue has been a member of the Smith College Department of Art since 1979. *Flowering Stars*, an exhibition of his work in place until August 19th, celebrates and commemorates his retirement, showcasing the progression of his work in print over career at Smith. Do yourself a favor and go see it!

Fellowship Time is Busy!

Hello Edwards Church! Here's another friendly reminder about the after-church fellowship hour, which has been well-attended this spring. Everything is there: Good company, a watchful deacon, hot coffee and tea, and – well, usually tasty snacks. But not always. Once in a while we have a pretty lean Sunday, hence this appeal. Please, when you get that gentle reminder that your alphabet group comes up, consider bringing a little something. Lots of littles add up to a generous and welcoming table.

Thank you,
from the Deacons,

Tom Derr



May 6 - Last names with A-D

May 13 - Last names with E-K

May 20 - Last names with L-P

May 27 - Last names with R-Z

Children's Music Rehearsal and Offering

As the sunlight returns, we turn our eyes and hearts to the renewal of life all around us. The splendor of Spring reminds us of the beauty of God's creation, and the part we all play in caring for this gift. The Children's Choir has resumed and we will be learning songs that celebrate God's creation and our role as stewards of the Earth. We will rehearse immediately after fellowship in the sanctuary on May 6 and 13. Our offering will be Sunday, May 20, during the worship service. Come join us for this fun celebration of new life here in the Pioneer Valley and beyond.

Spring 2018 MINDFULNESS

Resting in the Breath: Healing Practice for Mind and Body

MAY 6, 2018

4:00 to 5:30 p.m.

Our daily lives are made up of times of being awake and of times of being asleep, but what about resting? In our busy lives, do we know how to rest? And further, even after sleeping, why is it that sometimes we do not feel rested?

You are invited to join our mindfulness group this spring as we explore "resting in the breath," a mindfulness practice that teaches us how to breathe with awareness, how to calm our body and mind, and how to rest there. This is a beautiful, ancient, and practical practice that can guide sitting or walking meditation, and it can also offer us rest in moments throughout the day or night.

This mindfulness group is open to those who are experienced in meditation as well as to those who are complete beginners. The group welcomes youth who are in sixth grade and above as well as adults of all ages. We will meet in the chancel area of Edwards Church. Linda Vincent will be facilitating.

If you are interested, please contact Linda or Deb Moore.

DRAFT Edwards Church Council Minutes
April 18, 2018

Council Members Attending: Scott Anderson (Trustees, and chairing this meeting), Jim Stokes-Buckles (Outreach), Tom Derr (Deacons), Nancy Flickinger (Music), MaryAnn Bankman (At-Large), Mark Dion (Pastor-Congregation Relations), Carl Erikson (At-Large)

Staff Attending: Rev. Michael McSherry (Senior Minister), Deb Moore (Minister of Faith Formation), Marc Waller (Treasurer)

Scott called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and Deb Moore led an opening devotion.

Minutes of the last meeting were accepted without correction.

Joys and concerns:

- MaryAnn regrets that she was not here for the interactive Palm Sunday service, which was well received by many.
- Michael shared that it's a joy to see the Northampton Recovery Center gain their own space and be able to grow beyond using Edwards church space for meetings.
- Scott appreciated the concert for Homestead Farm hosted at Edwards.
- Tom is sobered and impressed with the Unitarian society's offer of sanctuary for Irida. Edwards has been supporting that via volunteers.
- Annie Bissett's reception at the Oxbow is up, and the youth group is going to see it this Sunday.
- Michelle Prindle's voice is a joy.

Committee Reports were received without correction.

Safe Conduct/Safe Church policy: Deb presented a final draft. Nancy moved that the church council endorse the proposed Safe Conduct/Safe Church policy as presented to the council with the addition of the provision in the Commissioned Minister's report to this meeting. MaryAnn seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

Church photo directory: Michael reported that Laura Frogemini is continuing to work on the layout of the directory. It is on track to be produced and available by June.

Stewardship/Investment/Trustees joint committee discussion is continuing. Next Tuesday will be the next follow up meeting to review options for our investment funds.

Ad hoc governance discussion. Janet Tucker convened this group twice so far, to address the structure of church governance. The process is ongoing. Janet, Michael, and Debbie Davis are reviewing books which might be helpful to inform this process.

Michael asked for support to share financial information with other area churches, for the purpose of gauging the average pledge amount among local UCC churches. This could inform Stewardship Committee's expectations for members' giving. There was general assent for this.

The Stewardship Committee requests that the budget process begin earlier in the calendar year, so that stewardship can use that information further in advance for planning the Stewardship appeal. There was discussion of the pros and cons of this approach by council. Scott proposed that the program committees (Faith Formation, Outreach, Music, Deacons) be asked to submit 2019 budget proposals by their June meeting. Marc will then compose a draft budget to help give Stewardship a target for fundraising. This was adopted.

The next council meeting will be held on May 9, 2018, at 7:00pm.

Michael led the council in a closing prayer.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25pm.

Respectfully Submitted, Jim Stokes-Buckles

MAY 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
		6:30pm NCMC Choral Concert 7pm AF 7pm Trustees Mtg.	10am AA Women's Group 12 pm Bible Study 4:30pm Friends of the Homeless Mgmt. Comm. 6pm MANNA	7pm Choir Rehearsal 7pm MANNA Board of Directors Mtg.	6:30pm AA	11:30am MANNA 3:30pm Circle of Care 7:30pm Pioneer Valley Capella Concert
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
9am Choir Rehearsal 10am Communion Worship 11:15 Fellowship (A-D) 11:15 Children's Music Rehearsal 11:30 Music Committee 11:30 Faith Formation Meeting	2pm PVIRAG 6pm RVS 6:30pm Deacons Mtg 7pm VMSG	4pm Prayer Shawl Ministry 7pm AF 7pm VMSG	10am AA Women's Group 5pm Board of Friends of the Homeless 6pm MANNA 7pm Council Meeting	7pm Choir Rehearsal	6:30pm AA	8am CE Certification 11:30am MANNA
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
9am Choir Rehearsal 10am Worship 11:15 Fellowship (E-K) 11:15 Children's Music Rehearsal	6pm RVS 7pm VMSG	7pm AF 7pm CE Community of Practice	10am AA Women's Group 6pm MANNA	6pm Members in Discernment 7pm Choir Rehearsal	6:30pm AA	11:30am MANNA
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
9am Choir Rehearsal 10am Worship 11:15 Fellowship (L-P) 11:30 Youth Group 4pm Movie- Places in the Heart	6pm RVS 7pm VMSG	4pm Prayer Shawl Ministry 7pm AF 7pm VMSG	10am AA Women's Group 12 pm Bible Study 6pm MANNA 7pm Outreach Mtg.	7pm Choir Rehearsal	6:30pm AA	11:30am MANNA
27	28	29	30	31	Abbreviations: AA = Alcoholics Anonymous AF = Augustine Fellowship NPC = Northampton Parents Center FF = Faith Formation PVIRAG= Pioneer Valley Interfaith Refugee Action Group RVS= River Valley Sangha VMSG = Valley Men's Support Group	
9am Choir Rehearsal 10am Worship 11:15 Fellowship (R-Z)	Memorial Day 6pm RVS 7pm VMSG	7pm AF	10am AA Women's Group 12 pm Bible Study 6pm MANNA	7pm Choir Rehearsal		