

# THE SPIRE

EDWARDS CHURCH *of* NORTHAMPTON  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Vol. 29 No. 7 September 2019

Dear Edwards Church Community,

Thank you for the opportunity to take a restorative sabbatical. The term “sabbatical” indicates the root of the custom in the Biblical mandate to cease from work and attend to that which feeds us most deeply. Sabbath rest is taken so that we can remember who and whose we really are, what our deepest calling is, where it comes from and what it calls us to do. This sort of rest re-orient us, or can, when we have (as we almost inevitably do) wandered a little off course. I hope you can see how that is closely related to weekly sabbath rest and worship! (If not, please contact me.)

During my sabbatical, I rested, read, and reflected enough to realize where (I think) I have wandered a bit and what sorts of course corrections need to be made. Mostly they involve rebalancing where to direct energy and attention among my various responsibilities. I will discuss that in more detail with the appropriate lay leaders in the church before making any noticeable changes. By way of example, I hope to spend less time on administrative matters, especially related to the building, and more on pastoral care and community building, with continued efforts in outreach on a local and broader basis.

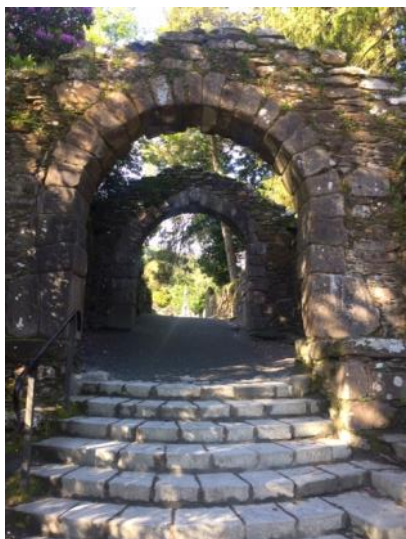
While on sabbatical I did a lot of walking. Outside, moving in nature, I feel as close to God as I do in our sanctuary. God is there, revealing herself, reminding me how we are related, how I am precious, as are you, and all of creation. God made it all and said, “It is good.”

While walking in beautiful places, especially on retreat in Ireland and later walking along Loch Lomond to the Scottish highlands with my son, I was often reminded of how precious the earth and its beauty are, and how human behavior can fulfill or flaunt a sacred trust. So this year, among many other important things, let’s see if we can, as a community, do more about environmental stewardship for our children, grandchildren and neighbors around the world.

“Gathering at the crossroads of ancient faith and contemporary culture, we are a Christian church asking God to open us to a new way.” We have, over the last couple of years, reframed how we think about and utilize the church’s inherited wealth. The REACH team is now well on its way (see the article in this Spire) to helping us reframe how we think about the work of the church and organize ourselves to do it. There’s a lot going on, and it is all good! I hope to see you soon, especially at the All Church Picnic following worship on September 8<sup>th</sup>.

With gratitude and affection,

*Michael*



**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***

Dear Beloved of God,

I hope that even in the midst of the horrific tragedies caused by gun violence, the vitriolic rhetoric spewing from political leaders, and oppressive heat that you were all able to enjoy periods of rest and renewal with family and friends.

I hope you were able to experience the Divine in gentle breezes and ocean waters; to taste the Divine in summer fruits and vegetables harvested from the many farms in the Valley; to smell the Divine in freshly mowed lawns, gentle rains, and fragrant flowers. I hope you heard the Divine in the chirping of birds, in summer concerts, the laughter of children and adults, and in the cries of the suffering. I hope you saw the Divine in the rising and setting of the sun, the stars in the evening sky, throughout creation, in one another and in those you just happened to pass by.

The Divine is indeed in and around all that was, is, and is yet to be. That gives me great hope and assurance even in times like these.

It will be exhilarating to experience the Divine on **September 8 – Welcome Back Sunday!** Worship will be intergenerational as a church family we celebrate the Sacrament of Communion. We will also bless backpacks of all who bring them and after worship fellowship with one another during the church picnic.

*Grateful for our mutual ministry,  
Deb*

### **Church School begins September 15<sup>th</sup>!**

The Board of Faith Formation has decided to continue with the lectionary-based curriculum *Seasons of the Spirit*, published by Wood Lake Publishing. The publishers have inserted into the Season after Pentecost a four-week Season of Creation, the color for which is blue-ish green. During the month of September our children, youth and their teachers will explore/experience the following themes and texts:

September 15 ~ Storm Sunday: Psalm 29

September 22 ~ Cosmos Sunday: Proverbs 8:22-31

September 29 ~ Keeping Focus: Luke 16:19-31

*Registration forms for church school will be available beginning September 3<sup>d</sup>.*



### **Autumnal Equinox – Labyrinth Walk**

*"It's the summer's great last heat,  
It's the fall's first chill. They meet!"*

*Sarah Morgan Bryan Piatt*



Come and celebrate the autumnal/fall equinox by walking the labyrinth on September 23 from 3:00 – 4:00 p.m. in Addis Hall. All ages are welcome! If you are interested in being part of the labyrinth ministry team, please let Janet Tucker or Deb Moore know.

### **Intergenerational Retreat**

Pre-registration for the Intergeneration Retreat - Too Many Pumpkins - on October 19 from 9a.m. - 4 p.m. has begun. Please refer to the flyer included in this edition of the Spire and return to the church office by 9/8.



# 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!*



## Teacher Meeting

There will be a teacher meeting Saturday, September 14 from 9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. in the Heritage Room. During our gathering we will form a covenant, overview the first unit, go over the Edwards Church Safe Church Policies and Procedures and a Disruptive Behavior Policy.

*Curious or interested in sharing and forming faith with our children and youth in the church school setting on one or more Sundays a month? Please contact Deb Moore if you are interested and feel free to attend the teacher gathering.*

We will have our first meeting of this year on September 15 at 11:30 in the Edwards Room.

On September 29, after sharing pizza, we will be going on our annual gleaning expedition with youth and leaders from First Churches and St. John's Episcopal Church. We will depart by bus at noon and return to Edwards by 4:00 p.m. This has become an annual event enjoyed by all!

Always, feel free to invite a friend.

## Faith Journey Story Project

Similarly modeled after the Story Core Project, Susan Creighton and Pat McPherson of Narratus have begun a pilot project for faith communities. Thus far seven members of Edwards Church have been interviewed. Susan and Pat offer prompting questions around the context of personal religious life experience ie: were you brought up in the church; how would you describe your faith journey; what do you think God is like; how did you come to Edwards Church and what keeps you here; which aspect of the Vision Statement excites you? The interviews are about 1 hour long, and participants will receive whatever combination of audio, electronic document, or paper copy they have chosen. Ideally, Faith Formation would like to create an archive of these files (with interviewee permission) that might be used in worship experiences, intergenerational events, etc.

If you are interested in or have questions about this project – and we hope many more will be interested in participating – please speak to Sheri Cheung, Melissa Mattison, Jim Stokes-Buckles, or Deb Moore.

## Attention College Students!

Please make sure with know your campus snail mail as well as your email address. Your church family would love to keep you up to date with what is happening at Edwards, send you a card or two... and of course a box of exquisitely decorated cookies by members of the youth group!

## Super Saturday – October 5, 2019

Come explore workshops, worship, and more! Super Saturday will take place from 8:00 a.m. – 3:45 p.m. at Keefe Regional High School in Framingham, MA. Bishop Dwayne D. Royster, Pastor, Racial and Economic Activist, and Radio Host is the keynoter for this event and will also lead a workshop titled The Theology of Resistance – Helping the Church Reclaim Its Prophetic Power. In addition to the 28 morning workshops, the 26 afternoon workshops, there are 4 lunch activities and new this year - a Hygiene Kit service project for Church World Service. There are paper copies of the brochure on the shelf in the Narthex; it is also available at

<https://www.macucc.org/eventdetail/12749786/item/12868552>. Carpooling will be arranged.

Please speak to Deb Moore or Michael McSherry if you are interested in attending. The registration deadline is September 21, 2019.



## PRAYERS FOR A NEW SCHOOL YEAR

All are invited to write a Prayer of Blessing for a New School Year. The prayers may be for students, teachers, administrators, bus drivers, etc. in a public, private or religious setting. The prayers which may also be a prayer the pray-er wrote for themselves, do not have to be signed. They will be printed out and available on September 8 and subsequent Sundays for all who would like a set of them.

## Annual Church Potluck Picnic

Sunday, September 8 at Noon  
Courtyard at Edwards Church

The church will provide burgers and hotdogs (both meat and vegetarian).



You should bring:

- ◆ Yourself, family and friends
- ◆ Food to share:
  - Side dishes = last names beginning with A - J
  - Beverages = last names beginning with K - R
  - Desserts and fruit = last names beginning with S - Z

## *Faith Formation Fall Series*

Members of the Board of Faith Formation are offering the following in September and October:

September 22 from 11:45 - 1:15 Active Listening: Applications Abound with Jim Stokes-Buckles

October 13 from 11:45 - 1:15 Low Carb Life & Chronic Disease with Sheri Cheung & Melissa Mattison

October 26 from 4:00 - 5:30 Generations Together Engaging Bible Stories with Deb Moore

Note: the first two offerings will take place in the Edwards Room; the third offering will take place in Addis Hall and participants will share a meal together. If you desire child care, please let Deb Moore know.

## Scholarship Fund

An Edwards Church Scholarship Fund has been established through the Inreach portion of the New Way Fund and is included in this edition of the Spire and will be available on a table in the back of the sanctuary. The deadline to apply for 2019 funds is October 1. Please contact Pam Lamlein or Deb Moore with any questions.



# TOO MANY PUMPKINS!

*An All-Church, Intergenerational Retreat*

**Saturday, October 19**

**9:00 AM to 4:00 PM**

**Rowe Conference Center**

**Rowe, MA**



Themes of the "Too Many Pumpkins!" Retreat:

- A Reluctant Disciple
- Seeds: Planting, Watering, Growing
- Unintended Abundance
- Cultivating Community

*Walks • Meditation • Activities • Poetry • Lunch • Discussions • Play • Mission*

Come away from your usual routine

Pause from life's worries, schedules & burdens

Spend fun time with one another

RSVP: [info@edwardschurchofnorthampton.org](mailto:info@edwardschurchofnorthampton.org)  
413-584-5500 for the Church Office

Questions: See Deb Moore, Sheri Cheung, Jim Stokes-Buckles,  
or Melissa Mattison of the Faith Formation Committee

**\$20 per person • \$10 for children under 12**  
**Carpooling available**



# TOO MANY PUMPKINS!

## Registration Form

RSVP by September 15, 2019

Saturday, October 19

9:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Rowe Conference Center

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred method of contact? Phone ☐ Email ☐

Do you have any dietary restrictions or considerations? Please list:

Are you interested in carpooling? Yes ☐ No ☐

Other family or friends who will be attending:

1. Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Dietary restrictions/considerations: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Dietary restrictions/considerations: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Dietary restrictions/considerations: \_\_\_\_\_

The cost is \$20 for each adult, \$10 each child under 16 years.

Scholarships are available.

*We want all who want to attend, to attend!*

---

## 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*



**September 1** - Last names with A-D

**September 8** - Last names with E-K

**September 15** - Last names with L-P

**September 22** - Last names with R-Z

**September 29** - Deacons & Council

---



### Communion Table Flowers

The gift of flowers for the communion table in our sanctuary is a wonderful way to express your love for the church and for each other. You may select from the following Sunday dates: September 1, 8, 15, 22, or 29. Please call or email Janet Hemminger at (413) 584-1635 or [chuck.hemminger@gmail.com](mailto:chuck.hemminger@gmail.com) to select a date.

Many thanks, Janet Hemminger

### GROWING INTO THE VISION OF A HOME FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS

In last May's Spire, a summary description of the new ministry *Alianza De Trans Solicitanies De Asilo Ministerio* (*Trans Asylum Seekers Ministry Alliance*) provided an overview of this new ministry with the goal of purchasing a home in Holyoke to provide housing and other support for trans asylum seekers. (That article is archived on our web site.) Both the Outreach Committee and Council approved funding from the Community Fund to support this ministry. While there is also support in the inter-faith community of the valley and beyond, fully realizing the long-range goal of purchasing a house will take longer than first hoped. Meanwhile, a family in Holyoke has offered short-term space in their home to help us receive asylum seekers while we find an apartment for them to live in longer term. Rev. Liza Neal has learned that there is a couple from Honduras presently in Tijuana, Mexico waiting for their number. While their arrival is not imminent, a sponsor will be needed. More information will follow.



*Thank you!*

Dear Edwards Community,

Thank you from the bottom of my heart, for the beautiful stoles, and for the wonderful cards that you sent for my ordination. They are so dear to me. Sending your well wishes all the way from Northampton was a tremendous kindness. I felt the presence of your community during the service. I am so deeply grateful for your continued love and support. Thank you for continuing to be a home to our family.

In love and thanks,

Shannon Farrand Bernardin

### **REACH Corner**

Our acronym, REACH, has been like a string tied to one's finger – a reminder to remember. The meaning of each letter has not been “tied” to any one word as yet and so we substitute a variety of words from time to time and the result is always like looking at a piece of art from varying angles thereby opening new avenues of thought. The latest is Revitalizing Everyone's Active Commitment and Hope.

The challenge remains: help our faith community develop a structure that is consistent with the church's ministry, vision and values by coordinating our talents and passions to do ministry in the world. We are aiming to present a pilot program that will start small and grow as energy and interest foster. Opportunities for conversation about the proposed new mission-driven governance structure will be offered. Our goal is to provide an outline of how it would work in a manner that encourages further discernment through prayer, questions, feedback, ideas, and more prayer.

Remember Enlightened Awareness Channels Happenings

### **REQUEST FOR VOLUNTEERS**

The following volunteer opportunities are offered through Catholic Charities Agency and the coordinator of English language instruction: ESOL lead teachers, and qualified assistants.

A commitment of two to three hours per week is required. Some training is available, depending on the applicant's prior experience.

The students are recently resettled refugees (new families) into our communities. The focus is learning English for employment and building skills to help foster independence in new cultural surroundings.

The classes will be held Tuesday through Friday, 4-6pm. The locations are the Elizabeth Ann Seton Center, 87 Beacon St. Florence and in Amherst at the Newman Center, at UMass.

For more information, or to volunteer, please contact –

Laura Bellusci

[l.bellusci@diospringfield.org](mailto:l.bellusci@diospringfield.org)

413/768-0055



## New Choir Season Begins

Rehearsals for the Edwards Church choir will begin on Thursday, September 5 at 7pm in the sanctuary. New members are welcome — in fact, it's the perfect time to start! Come a little early to the first rehearsal for refreshments and getting acquainted.



No audition is necessary; just come and see how you like it. If you have any questions, check out the Join the Choir page (<http://edwardschurchnorthampton.org/music/join-the-choir/>) on the church website or email Minister of Music David Kidwell at [music\\_minister@edwardschurchnorthampton.org](mailto:music_minister@edwardschurchnorthampton.org).

## Time Flies When You Are Having Fun

Recently, when I should have been doing something worthwhile, I got hung up on looking through a shoe box full of paper memorabilia. In it was a copy of the March 1984 Spire. For that issue, our Minister, Tony Acheson, and the Stewardship Committee had come up with an idea. It was 'to create a vehicle for some of us to put in words what our church and faith mean to us.' That issue of the Spire was completely composed of 14 submissions. 12 were signed, one was initialed and one was anonymous. By my analysis, only three of us are in the congregation now. My now 35-year-old submission is below, and I still hold to it. The March, 1984 Spire looks like it was done on a typewriter. So, with no computer file to retrieve it from, I scanned it with my cell phone.

### Born Again

I'm sure I've lived more than half my life and much of it was rough. For the most part, life overwhelmed me and I was weak to resist the temptations that we all confront. But I'm grateful for all my life has been because it lead me to the point where I could step over what is actually only a line, when you're ready, but most of us build up to be a wall and be born again in my spirit. That point came for me when I physically, mentally, and emotionally reached my bottom and just before I was to succeed in my long effort to destroy myself.

The prase 'born again', for most people, triggers an image of a religious fanatic. Actually, it just simply means to realize and accept what we are, spirit created in God's image, and to from then on live a new life. That's the message that The Christ, Jesus came to show us. We are not just the body we live in and the mind that tells us everything. We are eternal spirit. Jesus was body and mind but outstandingly more because He lived in His spirit but in a way no greater than He said we can too. When this Friend saves your life (spirit); your relationship with Him, the Holy Spirit which He left in place of His person, and through Them with the Father becomes the most important in your life. It even exceeds the parent-child and husband-wife relationships.

I'm only a growing child in my new, spiritual life but it's a thousand times better than being a 'successful adult' in the other life. I can't tell you how to find your spiritual life - it can only happen for you - but I pray that any reader who seeks it, will find it.

Sincerely,  
Carl Erickson

## Music at the Crossroads

On October 11, the Music at the Crossroads concert series of Edwards Church will present an evening of music by three fantastic and internationally renowned artists: Eugene Friesen (cello), Theresa Thomason (voice), and Joel Martin (piano). 4-Time Grammy Award winner Eugene Friesen is a professor of music at the Berklee School of Music and his career as a performer has sent him around the globe many times, both as a solo artist as well as the cellist for the Paul Winter Consort. Theresa Thompson is a powerhouse gospel-singer who has been the vocalist of the Paul Winter Consort for many years, as well as a collaborator with Pete Seger, John Rutter, Dream Theatre, and many others. Joel A. Martin is not only the creator of the Jazzical series, but has performed with Cab Calloway, the NY Philharmonic, and is a touring pianist with the legendary Soprano, Kathleen Battle. These three world-class musicians will be joined by the Edwards Church Choir and will perform an evening of spectacular music which should not be missed (including a premiere by church member Dave Haughey). As with all Music at the Crossroads concerts, entrance is free to the public and donations will be taken to support a local charity of the artists' choice.



## OUTREACH UPDATE

It has been a busy year for the Committee on Christian Outreach. We have added another organization to the list of agencies to receive annual contributions, made a one-time donation to a wonderful summer activity for the children who live at Meadowbrook Apartments, and approved the first grant to be made from the Community portion of the New Way Fund.

Edwards Church now gives \$500 to the Friends of Children, an agency which provides a broad range of services to foster children, including serving as the CASA (Court-Appointed Special Advocate) for Hampshire and Franklin Counties. Thanks to Susan Swift for bringing this need to our attention.

In late spring we were contacted by a Meadowbrook Apartments resident who began a summer arts camp for the children a few years ago. She needed \$300 in order to allow a larger enrollment, as the program has been very popular. We ended up providing \$310. The camp's official guidelines begin with an introduction which includes this passage: "We believe each person is art and that the paint, clay, music and acting are ways of putting who we are into the world. When we are making new art, our insides are in a tender place as we make ourselves visible." Art produced at this year's camp will be exhibited at the Forbes Library during September.

Earlier this year the Massachusetts Conference of the UCC expressed a need for donations in order to continue funding the position of Associate Conference Minister for Racial Justice. Outreach voted to contribute \$5000 of the \$20,000 available in the Community segment of the New Way Fund. Supporting racial justice is a fitting way to begin.

*- Jeanne Kocsis*

### Children's Choir

As a new school year begins, we turn our minds and hearts towards a new season of music-making with the children of Edwards Church. We will begin our preparations with the children for the annual Christmas pageant sometime in October, with exact dates TBA. We would love to have any elementary-aged children join us for a joyous Advent musical offering of songs and bells. Please email [dan@theprindleschool.com](mailto:dan@theprindleschool.com) if you would like your children to participate, and you will be notified of the dates of the rehearsals in mid-September.



### Lend Me a Tenor

The tenor section in the Edwards Church choir is usually the smallest section. Unfortunately, it's gotten even smaller! One tenor graduated from college and left the area, another tenor will be moving to Montana, and a third tenor sadly passed away.

If you sing tenor (a high male voice or a really low female voice), or if you know of someone who does, please contact Minister of Music David Kidwell at [music\\_minister@edwardschurchnorthampton.org](mailto:music_minister@edwardschurchnorthampton.org).



## Cathedral in the Night

On Sunday, August 4th, our Edwards Church congregation enjoyed worship and fellowship with Cathedral in the Night.

Pastor Steph Smith, the full-time minister for Cathedral in the Night (CITN), was our guest minister for the morning worship service at Edwards Church. Steph and CITN's official ministry dog, Tessie, were heartily welcomed as they shared their time and talents with us. I found Steph's sermon quite inspiring and have shared some excerpts from it, below.

Also on that day, we partnered with CITN for their evening worship service. Over 20 volunteers from the Edwards congregation helped by praying for this mission and/or preparing food and being present for the 5 pm CITN worship service. We had a great service and good fellowship as well as taco salad, sandwiches and desserts with over 60 of our Cathedral in the Night neighbors! I hope you enjoy these photos of some of our volunteers sharing their time and talents.

### Excerpts from Pastor Steph Smith's August 4, 2019 sermon at Edwards Church

Pastor Steph's sermon was based on the parable of the rich man whom Jesus called a fool because he wanted to build bigger barns to keep his vast harvest for himself. She relayed how, when we partner with CITN for their worship service, it is great that we bring food, but the greatest gift we bring is ourselves. Steph asserted that "We are all rich, whether or not in economics, but in gifts that God has given us."

Pastor Steph challenged us: "In your life, think about all the big moments in your life when something shifted for you. Was there money attached to that moment? Maybe, but I'm going to guess 9 times out of 10, there wasn't. I'm going to guess that it was someone saying the right thing. It was someone showing up at the right time, loving you, caring about you, not judging you when you're tearing yourself down. Those are the moments in our lives that change things, right? Not what someone has in their bank account, not what we've stored up. Not the me and the mine and the I, but the we."



"How many times have we fallen into saying me and mine instead of us and we? So much of our (worship) service is us and we. *Our* father, *not my* father, *not your* father, but *our* father. That's when I know that we're enough. Because I'm not enough. Guess what, you're not, either. And that might feel kind of ouchy for me to say. I find it very freeing. *You don't have to be enough. We have to be enough.*" . . . ***Together we are enough.*** What I have gets put together with what you have, and then God sneaks in some other stuff somehow that makes it even greater. . . . When we feel like we're not enough, God fills in the rest. . . . The gifts God has given us do us no good if we keep them to ourselves and doubt or question them. It's not that the rich man in the parable was a fool for having stuff and being successful, it was that he's a fool to think that it was all for him and that the world would not benefit from the gifts he was given."

"If you're thinking 'I don't know how to share my gifts with the world' - it doesn't matter, just get out there and do it. . . . We don't have to be great at it to be able to do good for the world. If we all waited until we were really good at something, our gifts would never be brought to light. We're not supposed to be perfect. We're just supposed to show up and share what we have when we have it. Offer what you can and ask for what you need."

To hear Pastor Steph Smith's complete sermon, go to:

<http://edwardschurchnorthampton.org/worship/listen-to-services-sermons/>



The following article is reprinted from the Friends of the Hampshire County Homeless' current newsletter. Amanda Jiang is a Smith College senior and served on the Friends' Board this summer.

### **Gift to the Community: MANNA Soup Kitchen**

Anyone who walks through the doors of MANNA Soup Kitchen can enjoy free meals and warm fellowship. MANNA serves the community at Edwards Church and St. John's Episcopal Church, providing free meals 5 days a week, 52 weeks a year. In 2019, MANNA celebrated 33 years of continuous operation.

To many community members, MANNA is more than a soup kitchen. Lee Anderson, Head Cook and Board member, shared, "Our mission has always been to serve anyone who is food insecure. We are actively welcoming a wide cross section of people from all socio-economic groups with the knowledge that we're creating community. The connections formed at these meals have an impact beyond providing food. Guests have found employment, friends, and recovery around our tables."

The attendance for every meal ranges from 40-50 guests. The majority of guests are homeless or single-room occupants from low-income backgrounds. Some guest are handicapped. Some are capable of living without going to a soup kitchen, but like to attend for the fellowship.

Feeding the community entails challenges, such as maintaining a sufficient budget. Donations from the Friends of Hampshire County Homeless have helped MANNA overcome monetary obstacles. According to Carl Erickson, president of the MANNA Board, our donations (collected by the Happy Frog sculpture on Main Street) also helped add two meals a week to replace those formerly offered by another soup kitchen in Northampton which closed. Another initiative that derived from the Friends donations was the purchasing of fresh vegetables. Prior to receiving the funding, most vegetables were canned. More than generous donations to MANNA, the Friends contribution is a gift to the community.

On a typical day at the MANNA Soup Kitchen, volunteers and community members gather to share food and joy. Lee Anderson once met a young military service member who missed eating Rouladen, a dish from childhood. Lee went home, searched online for the recipe, and made the food. The gesture surprised the young service member and made him emotional. "This," Lee said, "is a reminder that the simplest gesture in life is also the most meaningful. This is what MANNA will continue to provide."

*- Amanda Jiang, Board Member*



Smith College and UMass Amherst student volunteers serving food at MANNA Soup Kitchen

**DRAFT Edwards Church Council Minutes**  
**June 12, 2019**

Council Members Attending: Leon Drzewianowski (Moderator), Janet Tucker (Deacons), Nancy Flickinger (Music), Carl Erickson (At-Large), Jeanne Kocsis (Outreach), Mark Dion (Pastor-Congregation Relations), Jim Stokes-Buckles (Vice Moderator & Faith Formation), Jon Dietrich (Trustees), Debbie Davis (Stewardship)

Staff Attending: Deb Moore (Minister of Faith Formation), Marc Waller (Treasurer)

Leon called the meeting to order at 7:02pm and led an opening prayer.

**Joys and concerns:**

The St. Mary's parking lot across the street has been gated off on some recent dates. Deb Moore reached out to the parish about this and did not receive a clear answer, although the parking lot has been open lately. The parish's finance committee is meeting 6/23 and may reply to her after that.

Two young people were baptized and two were confirmed on Sunday morning and that is a great joy for the church.

Sue Barnett (wife of former minister Roger Barnett) is ill and undergoing major surgery tomorrow.

Tonight at the Manna meal the main course was prime rib; a wonderful meal for a soup kitchen. A member of the church who does carpentry work is going to do the work on the pews to create accessible spaces in the pews for wheelchairs, walkers, and others who need it.

There is a form in the works for the scholarship application process.

Minutes of the May meeting were accepted without correction.

**New Way Inreach review committee**

Council unanimously voted its support for the following individuals to be appointed to the New Way Inreach review committee: Pamela Lamlein (Faith Formation), Dave Haughy (Music), Grace DeVecchio (Deacons), Jenny Hutchinson (At Large), Leon Drzewianowski (At Large). Leon will communicate with these members to coordinate a first meeting.

**Music at the Crossroads request**

There was discussion of how to approach funding a more expensive and "bigger name" Music at the Crossroads concert. Nancy will take the feedback back to the Music Committee.

**Fall Church Picnic**

Due to low attendance the last two years, Council decided to hold the fall picnic at the church building, using the Edwards Room and the garden (weather permitting).

The picnic will be held on September 8, 2019 immediately after worship

Leon will organize renting a grill and getting it to the picnic

Deb will ask Heather to add this to the church calendar and order hamburgers and hot dogs

Faith Formation will work on children's activities for this event

Leon will ask Heather to send out a list of other to-do items to make this picnic a success

*(continued on next page)*

### Disruptive Behavior Policy

Deb reported that a draft has been proposed and she has begun receiving some feedback. She shared that this policy is based heavily on the UU policy, after consulting with our insurance representatives.

Deb also shared that the Northampton Police are willing to provide some safety training for church school teachers, deacons, ushers, etc.

Michael is on sabbatical. Reminder that if he must be contacted it will go through either Deb, Leon, or Heather.

Janet announced that Deacons are going to be doing visitations with church members and visitors while Michael is on sabbatical.

Deb presented a flyer for the all church retreat on October 19, 2019. Much excitement is building for this unique event.

The next council meeting will be held on September 11, 2019, at 7:00pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20pm.

Jim led the council in a closing prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jim Stokes-Buckles

## SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Ann Howes  
Carolyn Gray  
Kathleen Korza  
Shirley Atwood  
Pamela Cook  
Debra Moore



Elizabeth Davis  
James Young  
Karen Pederson  
Mark Maynard  
Phillip Cooper  
Michael Hayden  
William Hogan, Jr.

**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!

# SEPTEMBER 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 10am Communion Worship 11:15 Fellowship (A-D) 5pm Women of Change 7pm CoDA	Labor Day 2 Church Office Closed 6pm RVS 7pm VMSG	3 12pm Al-Anon 7pm Trustees Meeting	4 10am AA Women's Group 12 pm Bible Study 6pm MANNA 6:30pm Faith Formation	5 6:30pm MANNA Board of Directors Mtg. 7pm Choir Rehearsal	6 12pm Al-Anon 6:30pm AA	7 11:30am MANNA 3pm Circle of Care
8 9am Choir Rehearsal 10am Worship 11:15 Fellowship (E-K) 11:30 Music Committee 12pm Church Picnic 5pm Women of Change 7pm CoDa	9 2pm PVIRAG 6pm RVS 7pm VMSG	10 12pm Al-Anon 4pm Prayer Shawl Ministry 7pm VMSG	11 10am AA Women's Group 12 pm Bible Study 6pm MANNA 7pm Council Meeting	12 7pm Choir Rehearsal	13 12pm Al-Anon 6:30pm AA	14 9am Teacher Mtg. 11:30am MANNA
15 9am Choir Rehearsal 10am Worship 11:15 Fellowship (L-P) 11:30 Youth Group 5pm Women of Change 7pm CoDA	16 12pm MIDWIG 6pm RVS 7pm VMSG	17 12pm Al-Anon 7pm CE Community of Practice	18 10am AA Women's Group 12 pm Bible Study 5:30pm Board of Friends of the Homeless 6pm MANNA	19 7pm Choir Rehearsal	20 12pm Al-Anon 6:30pm AA	21 11:30am MANNA 7pm Concert
22 9am Choir Rehearsal 10am Worship 11:15 Fellowship (R-Z) 11:45 FF series: Active Listening: Applications Abound 5pm Women of Change 7pm CoDA	23 3pm Labyrinth Walk 6pm RVS 7pm VMSG	24 12pm Al-Anon 4pm Prayer Shawl Ministry 7pm VMSG	25 10am AA Women's Group 12 pm Bible Study 6pm MANNA 7pm Outreach Comm.	26 7pm Choir Rehearsal	27 12pm Al-Anon 6:30pm AA	28 11:30am MANNA
29 9am Choir Rehearsal 10am Worship 11:15 Fellowship (Deacons) 11:30 Youth Group 5pm Women of Change 7pm CoDA	30 6pm RVS 6:30 Deacons Mtg. 7pm VMSG					
<div> Abbreviations:  AA = Alcoholics Anonymous  CoDA = Co-Dependents Anonymous  NPC = Northampton Parents Center  FF = Faith Formation </div> <div> PVIRAG= Pioneer Valley Interfaith  Refugee Action Group  RVS= River Valley Sangha  VMSG = Valley Men's Support Group </div>						