

# THE SPIRE

EDWARDS CHURCH *of* NORTHAMPTON  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Vol. 30 No. 2 February 2020

Dear Edwards Church Community,

Thank you for a wonderful annual meeting on Sunday, Jan 26. As always, the variety of soups, salads, desserts, and other foods were delicious and nutritious, and a wonderful lunch was had by all. Every year as I read the collection of annual reports I am struck by the breadth of what we do and the care with which you do it. Thank you, thank you.

Anyone who did not obtain a copy of the annual report booklet can still obtain one by contacting the office. The most efficient way to send you one will be emailing an electronic copy, as paper copies are now in very short supply.

At the annual meeting the gathered congregation (including 37 official members, so a sound representation) unanimously approved the REACH Team proposal, which is described in this SPIRE. REACH is short for Revitalizing Engagement, Active Commitment, and Hope. Our goal in pursuing the changes you have now authorized is all in that name. As one member commented shortly after the vote, this is an exciting development and one with a lot of positive potential. Now the challenges of implementation and continuous improvement begin in earnest!

In keeping with the festive feeling, before the meeting we received new members in worship: Tom Bernardin and Shannon Farrand-Bernardin, who recently moved back to the area with their children Lucia, Allegra and Winter, rejoined the church after living in Minnesota for four years; Ella Stocker joined after coming for a couple of years, singing in the choir and being on the REACH team this year; and Maureen Sturman, who has been coming for over three years and getting more involved also joined. Brief bios for each of them are on a following follow page of this SPIRE.

Blessings,  
*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.*

**An Explanation After the Fact:** Not all of the messages posted out front are intended to be easy, and I will admit this one was among the more obscure, at least among those unfamiliar with the requirements of Jewish tradition about the name of God. On MLK Day we got enough press coverage that one member of the public decided to inquire about the meaning of the message out front. I thought I'd share my reply, which has had typos and one or two grammatical errors corrected for sharing. – Michael



“Hello Bill,

This rather long email is a reply to your inquiry, which was: ‘hi..saw your spot on 22...noticed your bill board says G-D loves all.....who is G-D? Would it be GOD?? Afraid to spell it out?’

I imagine you know this, but when asked by a "lawyer" (meaning more of a person who kept track of the religious law than the way we think of lawyers), how one inherits eternal life, Jesus said love God with all you've got and your neighbor as yourself. Here's the full passage from Luke 10:25-28:

"And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying, “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” <sup>26</sup>He said to him, “What is written in the Law? How do you read it?” <sup>27</sup>And he answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.” <sup>28</sup>And he said to him, “You have answered correctly; do this, and you will live.”

The lawyer then asked a follow up question, "Who is my neighbor," which prompted Jesus to tell him the parable of the Good Samaritan. At the end of the parable, Jesus makes clear that when another person (or people) are down and out, we are to go out of our way to care for them, even - and maybe even especially - if they are different from us.

Among observant Jews, it is taken to be a sign of respect for the holy name of God that one never spells it out completely. This is why, for example, in the text of the Old Testament the name Yahweh, used for God in many places, is spelled with no vowels as YHWH. So in contemporary writing observant Jews often write the name of God as G-D as a sign of respect.

In recent years, the incidence of anti-Semitism has been on the rise. Our message is meant as a reminder that people who claim to have faith have got to have each other's back. That's all. So yes, it's about GOD, and I went out of my way to show a group of neighbors who are feeling attacked that we've got their backs.

Shalom,

Michael”

**So just in case you're asked what the sign is all about, now you know too.**

## NEW MEMBERS

**Shannon Farrand-Bernardin** and **Tom Bernardin** recently returned to Northampton after four years in Minnesota. Tom was teaching economics at St. Olaf College, and Shannon was completing seminary and working as a chaplain at Carelton College. Last spring she was ordained in the United Church of Christ. With their three children - Lucia, Allegra and Winter - they are super happy to be back in the Pioneer Valley.



**Ella Stocker** grew up in the Pioneer Valley and, after more than a decade spent away at Bard College and living in Minneapolis and Boston, she finally returned home in the fall of 2017. Ella is the librarian at Amherst Regional High School. Here at Edwards, she has been a member of the REACH Team and sings soprano in the choir.

**Maureen Sturman** (no picture at this time) is a geriatrician and the mother of twin girls who attend Northampton High School. They moved here from Chicago three and a half years ago and began attending Edwards shortly thereafter. Maureen is part of the recently formed Care & Visitation team and volunteered this year as a host at Edwards for First Night activities.

### Get Me to the Church on Time!



When we know of an individual who would like to come to Sunday services but does not drive, we can most often arrange a ride. So if you would like to be here, and the only thing keeping you home is the need for a ride, please tell Rev. McSherry or Heather Dandy in the office, and we will get it figured out. The church has even set aside funds for cabs and similar ride services.

### Help the Church with Special Events and Earn a Fee

From time to time we have requests to use space in our building which require a paid proctor. If you would like to learn more about proctoring events and earning a fee, contact Heather Dandy at 413-584-5500 or [info@edwardschurchnorthampton.org](mailto:info@edwardschurchnorthampton.org).

### Adult Faith Formation Offering

The sessions continue on February 5, 12, and 19 from 6:30 p.m.-8:00 p.m. in the Edwards Room. The book *The Bible and the Transgender Experience: How Scripture Supports Gender Variance* by Linda Tatro Herzer will form our time together. As this faith community grows into the Trans Asylum Seekers Ministry, a group of us have entered into a timely discussion around what it means to also grow into our ONA covenant as an Open and Affirming Church.

## ***From the Minister of Faith Formation***

Dear Beloved of God,

During church school on January 19, after hearing the book *My Dream of Martin Luther King*, by Faith Ringgold and the passage from Isaiah, in which the prophet relays that he is to be a light to the nations, the youth and their teachers shared what concepts they thought might be as light for someone else. The words were then written on star shapes. Listed below are their star words displayed on the wall around the Faith Formation bulletin board:

Joy, peace, freedom, kindness

Rain, dance, dreams, generous,

Love & hope, freedom & justice

Sweet, dance, peaceful, positive

Laughter

In a couple of weeks, the words will go home with them for further sharing with their families. We who follow Jesus are called to let Christ's reflective light shine through us to others. I wonder what might you choose as a star word?

*Blessings as we travel through this Season after Epiphany,*  
*Deb*



### **CPR TRAINING**

All are invited to attend a hands-on CPR Training led by Mark Dion on February 9 in Addis Hall following worship. Three levels of training will be presented. Church school teachers, child care providers, parents, and all interested individuals are invited to attend. Members of the church school – this will be our meeting.

### ***Narratus - Edwards Church Faith Journey Project...to resume!***

After a brief hiatus, our Faith Journey Story Project will be resuming in the very near future. Pat McPherson, a retired book editor, and Susan Creighton, an Archivist at Westfield, MA Library and Athenaeum, and at the Vermont Folklife Center, invite members and friends to participate in this exciting venture to archive their faith journeys. Pat and Susan conduct interviews with questions such as:

did you have a religious life as a child?

how did your spiritual life develop as you got older?

how do you view God?

what drew you to this church in particular and what keeps you here?

what part of the Vision Statement speaks to you?

The interviews last an hour and take place in the Edwards Room.

Participants will receive an audio file and a transcript of their interview. A copy will be archived at Edwards Church.

Pat and Susan hope to make a brief presentation after church on an upcoming Sunday.

Interested in participating? Please let Deb Moore, Jim Stokes-Buckles, Melissa Mattison or Sheri Cheung know.



## Church School

The following are the scriptures and themes members of the church school and their teachers will be exploring this month:

February 2 ~ Communion Sunday ~ Intergenerational Worship

February 9 ~ Matthew 5:13 – 20 Shine

February 16 ~ Matthew 5:21 – 37 ~ Grow

February 23 ~ Matthew 17: 1-9 ~ Sent

*Thank you to those who helped nurture the faith of our children and youth during the month of January:*

*Melissa Mattison, Kristen Deschene, Mariana Haughey, Jim Stokes-Buckles, Michelle Prindle, Sarah Briggs and to our child care providers: Kelly St. Martin, Jack Mattison-Gulotta, Diane Roeder, and Madeline Gorman. What a gift each one of you are!*

## Save the Date – Super Saturday – March 14, 2020 Minnechaug Regional High School 8:00am – 3:45pm

Rabbi Elan Babchuck, theologian, writer, and advocate fascinated by the intersections of faith, justice and identity will lead us in worship and present a workshop titled *Bright Spots – Why Institutional Transformation Starts with Strengths*. Forty-eight workshops are offered in addition to worship, a market place, and lunch. There are several brochures on the counter in the Narthex; it can also be viewed at [www.sneucc.org/supersatreg](http://www.sneucc.org/supersatreg). If you are interested in attending, please let Michael McSherry or Deb Moore know. Carpooling can be arranged.

The registration deadline is February 29.

## Prayer Shawl Ministry New time – Same Days

Prayer Shawl Ministry group has moved the timing of their gatherings to 3:00 – 4:30pm on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month and Knitters, weavers, and crocheters of all levels of experience are welcome.



## *The Gospel of Mark Alive! – A Lenten Offering* *March 22 - 4:00pm in the Edwards Church Sanctuary* *Free and open to the public!*

Come and hear Rev. Bert Marshall recite the Gospel of Mark from memory. Rev. Marshall committed this Gospel to memory while on sabbatical in 2003. He presently serves as Interim Minister at Barre Congregational Church.

## 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 is our February schedule:

February 9 ~ 11:30 – 1:00 participant in Mark Dion's CPR training; lunch to follow.

February 23 ~ 11:30 – 1:00 meeting in the Edwards Room

## Mystical Experiences for Those of Us Living Ordinary Lives

Sunday, March 1, 2020, 4:00-5:30

A mystic is often regarded as a person who is special and different than the rest of us – someone who has an extraordinary capacity to experience God or the Divine. Centuries ago they lived in monasteries as monks or nuns or they lived alone in remote locations, in either case not taking part in usual day to day life.

More recently though there has been a recognition that there are “everyday mystics,” and further, some famous religious figures have asserted that every one of us is meant to be a mystic. Carmelite friar William McNamara wrote, “the mystic is not a special kind of person; each person is a special kind of mystic.”

You are invited to join a gathering to share your experience of God. Maybe you don't think of yourself as a mystic, but perhaps you remember some of those \*unforgettable\* times that you experienced something deep in your core that felt sacred or holy. Would you be willing to share these religious and/or spiritual awakenings? And to listen as others share?

Our group will have a time for sitting meditation, a reading, and sharing. Please let Linda Vincent or Deb Moore know if you are interested.



## 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: February 16 or 23 or March 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

## SNOW/INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

When storms of any kind occur it can raise the question whether we will be having our customary Sunday service or other events at that church. In the absence of a cancellation announcement, one should assume that the service or other event is being held. Cancellation announcements would typically include listing the cancellation with local news outlets (e.g., ABC 40 / FOX 6 or WWLP), and posting to the church web site and Facebook page. When in doubt, try calling the church to ask. Concern for personal safety should always come first, so even if there is no cancellation announcement, please stay home if you have any doubt.



## THANK YOU!

I am writing to thank you as well as the church for the scholarship I received. I very much appreciate the support, it means a lot!

Warmly,  
Gwenn Swift

### ***THANK YOU EDWARDS CHURCH COMMUNITY FOR SUPPORTING OUR CATHEDRAL IN THE NIGHT MISSION WORK***

On six Sundays in 2019, members of the Edward Church community shared their time and talents by making sandwiches, desserts and hot meals and participating in the Cathedral in the Night (CITN) worship service. An outdoor Christian community in downtown Northampton, CITN seeks to create a safe place for all people: the homeless, the housed, the church-less, the church-ed, the student and the resident to explore, question and live out their spiritual beliefs and gather for a meal.

This year, we saw an increase in the number of people attending the CITN worship service and meal. We now regularly prepare 84 servings each of sandwiches and desserts and 100 servings of a hot meal when we when we serve as CITN's worship partner.

All members of the Edwards community, through the act of giving an offering at our weekly worship services, support our CITN mission as well as many other important forms of outreach locally, regionally, and globally. A *heartfelt thank you to all the Edwards volunteers listed below* who lived out our vision statement by sharing their time and talent and offering themselves as instruments of love and justice through our CITN partnership in 2019.

Jen Adams and Edie Adams Sternal  
Sue Anderson  
Carla Bee and Danny Shanahan  
Heather Bell  
Fumiko Brown  
Pat Cameron  
Nancy Lee and Don Carpenter  
Floyd and Sheri Cheung  
Debbie Davis and Grace Del Vecchio  
Susan and Leon Drzewianowski  
Nancy Flickinger  
Laura Frogameni  
Jim Green  
Jan Hemminger  
Beth Henneman  
Chris Hjelt  
Dianne Hobbs  
Lynda Kamik

Barbara Kirchner  
Jeanne Kocsis  
Kathy Korza  
Laura, Christian, and J.J. Kroll  
Shauneen Kroll  
Melissa and Jack Mattison  
Deb Moore  
Peg O'Sullivan  
Ann Parker  
Sandra Rossi  
Jim, Connelly, Keira, & Maren Stokes-Buckles  
Marj and Gene Tauer  
Janie Thurber  
Janet Tucker  
Hazel and Marc Waller  
Carla Wirzburger  
Linda Vincent

## FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Dan Shanahan  
Luke Longstreeth  
Ruby Smith  
Margaret Allen  
Deanna O'Connor



Brian Swift  
Sandra Rossi  
Marc Waller  
Kimberly Schlichting  
Marc Abel  
Tracy Teague

**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!

### THANK YOU!

Dear Edwards Church Community,

Thank you so much for the incredibly generous scholarship. I feel so lucky to have my faith community supporting me as I work toward earning my degree!

I am deeply grateful for the community, education, and faith development Edwards Church has given me, and feel blessed by the way the community continues to hold and support students such as myself.

Thank you for this important scholarship, which will be such a help this academic year!

~ Elena Frogameni

## 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*



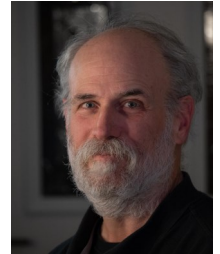
**February 2** - Last names with A-D  
**February 9** - Last names with E-K  
**February 16** - Last names with L-P  
**February 23** - Last names with R-Z

## Edwards Musicians in Concert



David Kidwell will accompany three outstanding local musicians with Edwards Church connections on Saturday, February 8 at 4:00 p.m. at South Congregational Church in Amherst. The concert, entitled "I'll Sing On," is free, but donations are appreciated.

Baritone Peter Shea has been a vocal soloist in the Pioneer Valley for many years. Peter has researched and performed countless settings of the German poet Heinrich Heine and has also commissioned many composers to set Heine's poems to music.



Mezzo-soprano Justina Golden is a singer, choral conductor, and owner of the Profound Sound vocal studio in Florence. She is the former conductor of the Dessert Singers at the Northampton Community Music School, and she is a member of the music faculty at Smith College.

French horn player Jean Jeffries teaches horn and chamber music at Amherst College and Mount Holyoke College, and she performs with many local orchestras. Jean is a passionate advocate of contemporary music and has commissioned many works for horn.



All three musicians have Edwards Church connections: Peter is a bass section leader in the choir, Justina is a substitute alto section leader, and Jean has been a frequent soloist for summer worship services.

The varied and diverse program will include music by contemporary composers, including David Kidwell and Jerry Noble, as well as arias by Handel and Mendelssohn.

## Lend Me a Tenor

The Edwards Church choir is low on tenors! Currently we only have one, making it challenging to select music and balance voices. If you sing tenor (a high male voice, or even a very low female voice) or if you know of someone who does, please see our Minister of Music, David Kidwell. No audition is required. More information about singing in the choir can be found on the Join the Choir page of the church website.

## THANK YOU!

Dear Edwards Church,

Thank you for providing me with such a generous gift toward my education. This scholarship will help me buy books and continue my education through my last year of college. Thank you guys for following me through my college years.

I really appreciate it.

Thanks again,  
Rachel Frogameni

**DRAFT Edwards Church Council Minutes**  
**January 8, 2020**

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

Staff Attending: Michael McSherry (Senior Minister), Deb Moore (Minister of Faith Formation), David Kidwell (Minister of Music), Mark Waller (Treasurer)

Others Attending: Sandra Rossi, Ella Stocker

Leon opened the meeting with prayer at 7:05pm.

Joys and concerns:

- Concerns for Billy's family, especially Delores.
- Concerns that First Night experienced inconsistent coverage from volunteers. There were several volunteers but not enough toward the end of the night.
- At First Night, a couple told Michael they really appreciated the Christmas Eve service and they were happy to be back.
- Laura & Mark experienced several opportunities to share about Edwards Church with attendees at First Night.
- Deacons reviewed all the services in December and they were all joys and all well attended.

Minutes of the December meeting were accepted without correction.

Annual Meeting Lunch

- Leon compiled a list of volunteers to make salad, soup, and other items to share at the annual meeting lunch.
- Deb will work on arranging childcare.
- Attendees will be asked to bring their own bowls as in recent years.
- Michael will check on the sound system in the basement and try to make sure it's working.

REACH

- The REACH team presented an updated model of the proposed church governing structure. Council members expressed gratitude for the team's hard work, and there was an extensive and rich discussion of it. Council members expressed excitement and eagerness to live into this new way of organizing our church's work.
- REACH will provide a presentation this Sunday 1/12 after worship, open to all, and all members and friends of Edwards are strongly encouraged to attend.
- Council voted unanimously to support this proposal and bring it before Annual Meeting for approval.

Thriving Congregations Project

- Edwards Church is one of six congregations in the Northeast region that is being considered for participation in this project. We will find out toward the end of January if we have been selected to be a part of it.
- There was some discussion as to whether we will have the resources to participate in this project on top of the work the REACH pilot will require, and there was much expression of support and enthusiasm to participate.

Grant opportunity from the Governor's funds for safety and security of places of worship

- The Trustees discussed this and had some questions. Jon noted that the probability of our getting the grant may be low, and the amount of the grant (\$50,000) might mean more to another organization with fewer resources. It was also noted that someone would have to take the time to write the proposal. Therefore Edwards will likely not be pursuing this grant.

At this time, there are no further scheduled meetings of the Edwards church council.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45pm.

Jim led the council in a closing reflection.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jim Stokes-Buckles

# FEBRUARY 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 10am Circle of Care 11:30am MANNA
<b>Abbreviations:</b> AA = Alcoholics Anonymous NPC = Northampton Parents Center FF = Faith Formation PVIRAG= Pioneer Valley Interfaith Refugee Action Group						
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9am Choir Rehearsal 10am Communion Worship 11:15 Fellowship (A-D) 11:30 <b>Music Committee</b>	2pm PVIRAG 6pm RVS	7pm SAA	10am AA Women's Group 12 pm Bible Study 4:30pm Friends of the Homeless Mgt. Comm. 6pm MANNA 6:30pm FF Book Discussion	6:30pm MANNA Board of Directors Meeting 7pm Choir Rehearsal	6:30pm AA	11:30am MANNA
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
9am Choir Rehearsal 10am Worship 11:15 Fellowship (E-K) 11:30 Youth Group 11:30 <b>CPR Training</b>	6pm RVS 7pm VMSG	3pm <b>Prayer Shawl Ministry</b> 7pm VMSG 7pm SAA	10am AA Women's Group 12 pm Bible Study 6pm MANNA 6:30pm FF Book Discussion	7pm Choir Rehearsal	6:30pm AA	11:30am MANNA
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
9am Choir Rehearsal 10am Worship 11:15 Fellowship (L-P)	President's Day 12pm MIDWIG 6pm RVS 6pm Holyoke Civic Symphony Rehearsal	6:30pm CE Community of Practice 7pm SAA	10am AA Women's Group 12 pm Bible Study 5:30pm Board of Friends of the Homeless 6pm MANNA 6:30pm FF Book Discussion	7pm Choir Rehearsal	6pm Cot Shelter 6:30pm AA	11:30am MANNA
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
9am Choir Rehearsal 10am Worship 11:15 Fellowship (R-Z) 11:30 Youth Group	6pm RVS 7pm VMSG	3pm <b>Prayer Shawl Ministry</b> 7pm VMSG	10am AA Women's Group 12 pm Bible Study 6pm MANNA		6:30pm AA	11:30am MANNA

# CORE MINISTRY MODEL OF GOVERNANCE

A Proposal Approved by  
Congregational Vote by Members of  
Edwards Church of Northampton at  
Annual Meeting 2020

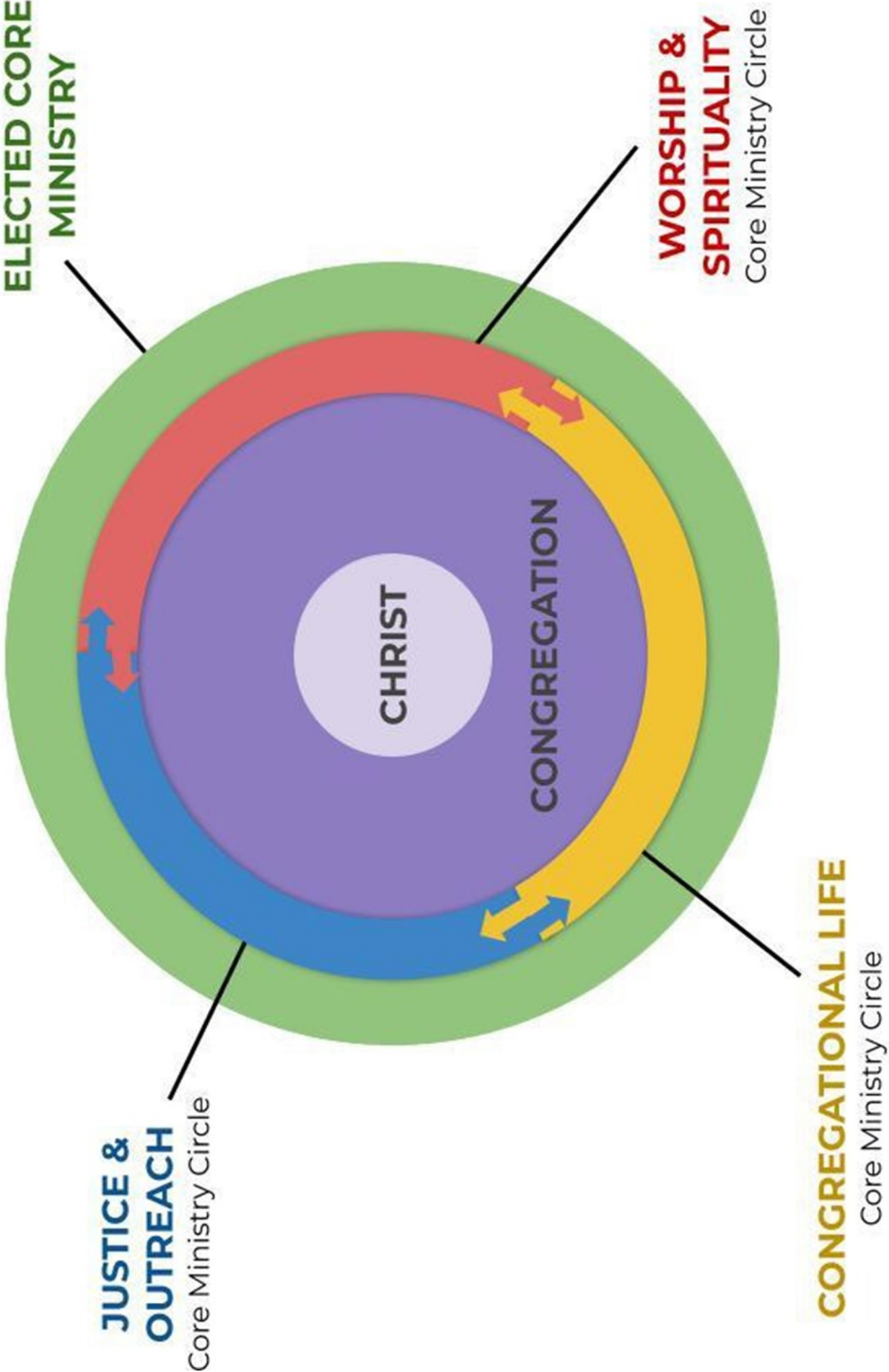
*This proposal was respectfully submitted to the  
congregation by the REACH Team*

*Revitalizing Engagement, Active Commitment, and Hope*

*Debra Davis, Laura Frogameni, Sandra Rossi, Janet Tucker,  
Ella Stocker, Rev. Michael McSherry*



# Core Ministry Model of Governance



# Core Ministry Teams

## Congregational Life

*Connecting with and supporting each other and caring for our buildings and grounds*

- Advent Dinner Ministry Team
- Buildings & Grounds Ministry Team
- Care and Visitation Ministry Team
- Church History Ministry Team
- Fellowship Events Ministry Team
- Fellowship Hour Ministry Team
- Funeral Hosting Ministry Team
- Garden Ministry Team
- Green Church Initiatives Ministry Team
- Intergenerational Spiritual Life Offerings Ministry Team
- New Way Inreach Ministry Team
- Scholarship Program Ministry Team
- Stewardship Ministry Team

## Worship & Spirituality

*Supporting worship services and the spiritual life of our church community*

- Baptism Ministry Team
- Bible Study Ministry Team
- Chancelscapes Ministry Team
- Church School Teacher Ministry Team
- Choir Ministry Team
- Christmas Pageant Ministry Team
- Communion Ministry Team
- Confirmation Class Ministry Team
- Flowers for Chancel Table Ministry Team
- Greeter Ministry Team
- Labyrinth Ministry Team
- Meditation Ministry Team
- Prayer Leader/Reader Ministry Team
- Preaching Ministry Team
- Usher Ministry Team
- Welcome & Announcements Ministry Team
- Worship Service Structure, Themes & Music Ministry Team
- Youth Choir Ministry Team

## Justice & Outreach

*Practicing our faith within the wider community and the world*

- Cathedral in the Night Ministry Team
- Circle of Care Ministry Team
- College Fellowship Ministry Team
- Community Event Participation Ministry Team
- Hot Chocolate Run Ministry Team
- Interfaith Cot Shelter Ministry Team
- Justice Education Ministry Team
- Music at the Crossroads Ministry Team
- Outreach Grants Ministry Team
- Prayer Shawl Ministry Team
- Pride Parade Ministry Team
- Quilt Ministry Team
- Transgender Asylum Seekers Ministry Team
- Youth Group Ministry Team

# Elected Core Ministry

*The following text is taken from the 2020 Annual Report, pages 27-28.*

## **What is the Elected Core Ministry?**

Assuming approval of the REACH proposal, the Elected Core Ministry (ECM) will be the body that provides institutional care and feeding and ensures that all ministries in the new organizational structure are supported and connected. The ECM will consist of 7 to 9 individuals who are elected via a single slate presented to the congregation for a vote at its annual meeting. When vacancies occur between congregational meetings, the ECM may appoint new members to serve until the next annual meeting.

Between annual meetings of the congregation, the ECM will act on behalf of the whole congregation. It will seek to keep our various ministries and activities centered in Christ, with energy and resources focused on realizing our mission and vision. It is the administrative and operational coordinating body to which the three core ministries (Congregational Life, Worship & Spirituality, Justice & Outreach) report and to which they can turn for support. Similarly, the ECM will be responsible for fostering a culture that encourages and supports the generation of new activities, programs, ministry teams and co-sponsorships that align with our mission and vision. Such new developments will be referred to the ECM for consideration and possible resource allocation.

The ECM is also the prudential body with responsibility for the care and management of the institution as a whole, including its property and policies. To that end, the REACH proposal recommends that the ECM appoint and oversee the work of several administrative operations ministry teams including:

Finance    Investments    Safe Conduct/Safe Churches    Pastoral Congregational Relations    Personnel

Additionally, the ECM will be responsible for leading the process of evaluating the pilot organizational structure throughout the pilot phase, including recommending a process for re-drafting bylaws (if appropriate) for vote at a future annual meeting.

The ECM will be something like Council, but not exactly like it. One difference envisioned by the REACH team is that given its broad view and role in coordinating and supporting the ministries of the church, the ECM will be in the best position to make the policy decisions that are inseparable from producing the annual budget. That task is currently performed by our Trustees. REACH envisions the ECM leading the budget development and management process, in consultation with the Finance team.

### **Who Will Serve on the Elected Core Ministry?**

To develop a slate for the first ECM, the REACH team and the Executive Committee of the current Council collaborated to develop the following list of candidates. All of them have demonstrated commitment, faith, leadership capacity, team player-ness, and other skills and knowledge we felt were important to have in the ECM. They are:

Sheri Cheung                      Mark Dion                      Leon Drzewianowski                      Ruth Griggs

Melissa Mattison                      Ella Stocker                      Linda Vincent

We envision that Michael McSherry, the Senior Minister, will attend all meetings of the ECM with voice but no vote, and that Deb Moore, Minister of Faith Formation, David Kidwell, Minister of Music, and Marc Waller, Treasurer, will attend as they wish or are requested for specific matters.

Respectfully submitted,

The REACH Team

*Revitalizing Engagement, Active Commitment, and Hope*

Debra Davis, Laura Frogameni, Sandra Rossi, Ella Stocker, Janet Tucker, and Rev. Michael McSherry

# Core Ministry Model Implementation Plan

The REACH Team proposes a two-year pilot to live into this new Core Ministry Model. If the Model is approved by the Congregation at Annual Meeting, the following implementation plan is proposed.

The Elected Core Ministry (ECM) will meet regularly throughout the two year pilot period, beginning in February of 2020. From their members, the Elected Core Ministry will designate one ECM member to each of the three Core Ministry Circles.

Team Leaders have been designated to get the ball rolling in their respective teams in order to continue the work we are doing now. Ministry Teams will communicate among themselves to determine how and when they will meet as needed to their respective tasks.

In late winter/early spring, Core Ministry Circle liaisons will contact designated Team Leaders to convene the first of what we hope will be quarterly meetings of Ministry Teams. It is our hope that these meetings will serve to increase connection and support between teams, and create a more transparent way for members to engage with the service they feel called to do.



# The GOSPEL of MARK

Live Spoken Word Performance

Rev. Bert Marshall  
Edwards Church  
Northampton, MA

SUNDAY March 22 4:00 pm  
The whole Gospel of Mark from memory!



“Brilliant!” “A sacramental experience” “Unforgettable”  
“You blew the doors off the place!”

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