



# THE SPIRE

EDWARDS CHURCH *of* NORTHAMPTON  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Vol. 35 No. 7 July & August 2025

## A message from the Interim Pastor

### **The Health Benefits of Ice Cream – Rev. Jennifer Geary**

No matter where you get your news, you might be feeling a little or a lot of anxiety. While most of us have lived through several wars, the world seems more volatile right now. We hear or read conflicting news reports. The issues such as immigration, budget and LGBTQ rights feel too big and beyond us. What can we do to stay healthy in body, mind and spirit during such times? What do you do when you are stressed out? Me? I eat, usually things with lots of sugar and fat. I engage in number puzzles. I go for a walk or run. I pray and listen to Christian music. Sometimes, I just complain and complain – I'm not sure that helps but some days...

I was noodling around the internet, reading about the health benefits of different things. Here's two I'd like to share. Please note, I did not do research, I am just quoting other folk's articles.

For the 30% of the world's adult population whose bodies can process lactose, there are several benefits to eating ice cream. It contains calcium, protein, a variety of vitamins, and eating it releases some feel-good hormones. For the majority of the world's adults, whose bodies don't digest lactose, there's not so much benefit and for many some real discomfort. (Maybe not the best info to share when we are planning a Sundae Sunday. See related article).

I also did some reading about the health benefits of attending worship on a regular basis. One study showed that daily prayer/worship increased the volume of the cingulate cortex which leads to a person being kinder and more empathetic. It also showed a decrease in the activation of the fight or flight mechanism thus reducing stress. Another study showed that folks who regularly

attend worship services have a stronger belief in a higher power. The attendance is what increases their belief, not their belief increasing their attendance. Folks who believe in a higher power whose focus is love and caring, are more likely to have calmer experiences during tough times.

Another study conducted by Vanderbilt University shows that middle-aged (40 – 65) adults who regularly attend religious services reduce their risk for mortality by 55%. The researchers state: "increased religiosity as determined by attendance at worship is associated with less stress and enhanced longevity."

Here's the really good news, these benefits are for 100% of the world's population. Unlike the benefits of ice cream, everyone can benefit from weekly worship attendance.

As schedules shift and change during the summer months, as you travel more, consider making/keeping regular weekly worship a part of the rhythm of your life. Whether here or on the other side of the world, find a community of believers to join in worship. It doesn't have to be on Sunday morning. (See related article.)

Another study I read many years ago showed that children who regularly attend worship during the first 3 years of their life are more likely to continue to participate in church as adults. So, bring those kids – children, grandchildren, neighbors- along with you too. We can all share the joy of nurturing their faith. Placing ourselves in the company of worshipers of all ages, while focusing our praise on God, is a proven way of helping us to cope with the stresses of the world.

# Sunday Worship in July

We will worship at 10 AM in the Edwards sanctuary and on-line which can be accessed from our home page: [www.edwardschurchnorthampton.com](http://www.edwardschurchnorthampton.com). Childcare will be provided.

## July 6 – Communion, Do the right thing

Luke 10:1-11, 16-20; Galatians 6:1-16

## July 13 – Being neighborly

Luke 10:25-37; Colossians 1:1-14

## July 20 – It's not always what it seems

Luke 10:38-42; Colossians 1:15-28

### Gratitude Corner

*If you see someone doing something nice, share a gratitude here.*

- Thank you to the Building & Grounds Team for great project management.
- Thank you to all the Sunday morning volunteers.
- Thank you to all Cathedral in the Night volunteers.

### Pastoral Care – Rev. Jennifer Geary

Feel free to contact me at any time. Messages left at the church phone (413) 584-5500 x2 will be emailed to me. You can send an email to [minister@edwardschurchnorthampton.org](mailto:minister@edwardschurchnorthampton.org) or call or text my cell phone. I am usually at the church on Mondays and have set office hours: Tuesdays 4-5:30 PM in the lobby; Wednesdays 9:30-10:45 AM in my office. I am happy to visit you in your home or at some neutral location. I look forward to getting to know you.

### Team Meetings in July & August

7/16	7 PM Building & Grounds – Zoom
7/21	7 PM Elected Core Ministry – Zoom
7/24	6:30 PM Transition Team – Edwards Room
7/28	6:30 PM Transition Team – Edwards Room
8/5	7 PM Building & Grounds
8/11	6:30 PM Transition Team – Edwards Room
8/13	6PM Investments – Edwards Room
8/26	6:30 PM Transition Team – Edwards Room

## July 27 – How do we pray?

Luke 11:1-13; Colossians 2:6-19

### Looking Ahead

**August** – Shared worship at First Churches

August worship will take place at First Churches and on-line which can be accessed [here](#)

### Bible Study

#### **Wednesdays 11 AM - Zoom**

Join us every Wednesday as we read together the passages for the upcoming Sunday. Every day is a stand-alone event so come when you can and join our lively discussion. Scripture for each meeting is listed in the worship section of the Spire and in the previous week's bulletin. Let the church office know if you would like to have your name added to the weekly Zoom invitation.

### New Worship Service Added

Beginning Wednesday, July 2, there will be a communion service offered at 12:15 PM every Wednesday during July and August. This brief service, which will use the same communion liturgy each week, will provide a mid-week opportunity for community worship.

### Worship Questionnaire

The Edwards Church Worship Questionnaire is live – please let staff know if you have any issues accessing the questionnaire. You may access and complete the questionnaire directly [here](#). Please note the deadline for completing the questionnaire is Wednesday, July 16, 2025. Thank you!



## Pictures Needed

We are updating the church website and need new pictures of church happenings.

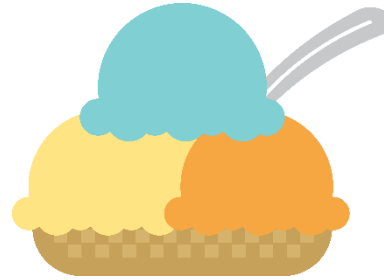
Please send pictures taken during worship and church events during the past year to the church office at:

- [info@edwardschurchnorthampton.org](mailto:info@edwardschurchnorthampton.org)

In addition, we are updating our church directory. If you have a family photo that you would like to include, send that to the church office. Thank you!

## Sundae Sunday

On July 13<sup>th</sup>, our Fellowship refreshments will be make-your-own sundaes. We will have a dairy and a vegan, lactose free option. Invite your friends to join you for worship and a sundae.



## Sunday Morning Volunteers

	Flowers	Greeter	Usher	Liturgist	Reader	Fellowship
6-Jul		Bob S	Marc W	Ella S	Paul B	Ella S Michelle W
13-Jul		Bob S	Ron K	Justin C	Kathy K	Kelly T Michele W
20-Jul		Debbie D	Jon D	Hazel W	Grace DV	Laura F Michele W
27-Jul			Carolyn D	Steve O	Ella S	Sue A Michele W

We'd love to have all the spots filled. Can you help out one Sunday this summer? Please contact the church office: [info@edwardschurchnorthampton.org](mailto:info@edwardschurchnorthampton.org). August weekly service at First Churches

## **Save the Date**

The quilt team and the prayer shawl teams will be blessing our quilts and shawls during the service on Sunday, July 20<sup>th</sup>. Please be a part of sending our gifts off to their new owners with your blessing and prayers.

## **New Quilt Project**

For the past two years, you – the congregation – have helped to create a quilt that was donated to a young adult who has aged out of foster care. Thank you so much. One request the quilt team has heard is that you wished you could see the completed quilt more often before it is given away. With that in mind, we decided our next project – with your assistance – will be to create a smaller quilt that will be used in the Edwards Room. It will make the room brighter, and hopefully

more welcoming for our fellowship hours, for the YWCA families that meet there two days per week as well as everyone else using the room. This project will happen after church during July and perhaps September. It will be another simple block. You have already conquered making a 4-patch block, then advanced to making a 9-patch. This time you will be making 7 rows of 3 squares. As usual you will be using 2 ½” squares and you are in charge of the colors you pick. What do you think? Can you help create a wall hanging that will stay in Edwards Church? We hope to see you after church starting July 6<sup>th</sup>.



- Edwards Church Quilt Team

## Do you knit, crochet, weave or do other handwork?

The Prayer Shawl team needs more creators. The patterns are simple but can be complex if you want them to be. All levels of expertise are welcome. If you can help or would like more information, please contact Pam at [pam@lamlein.com](mailto:pam@lamlein.com).

### Building and Grounds July and August Report

The B&G team summer project updates:

- ✓ Pew revision complete\*: creation of sanctuary handicap seating area, midway up the aisle. (see image)
- ✓ Window washing complete - did you notice how great the sanctuary window looks? Did you notice the crane that was needed to clean it?
- ✓ New, updated sign on Main Street - now with LED messaging.
- ✓ New sump pump alarm for the elevator - Ask Jon Dietrich for a tour if you'd like.
- ✓ Mixing valves installed on faucets: safety issue for all our building users.
- ✓ Washing and waxing of the floors - Addis Hall, lower level hallways, classrooms and bathrooms (both levels).

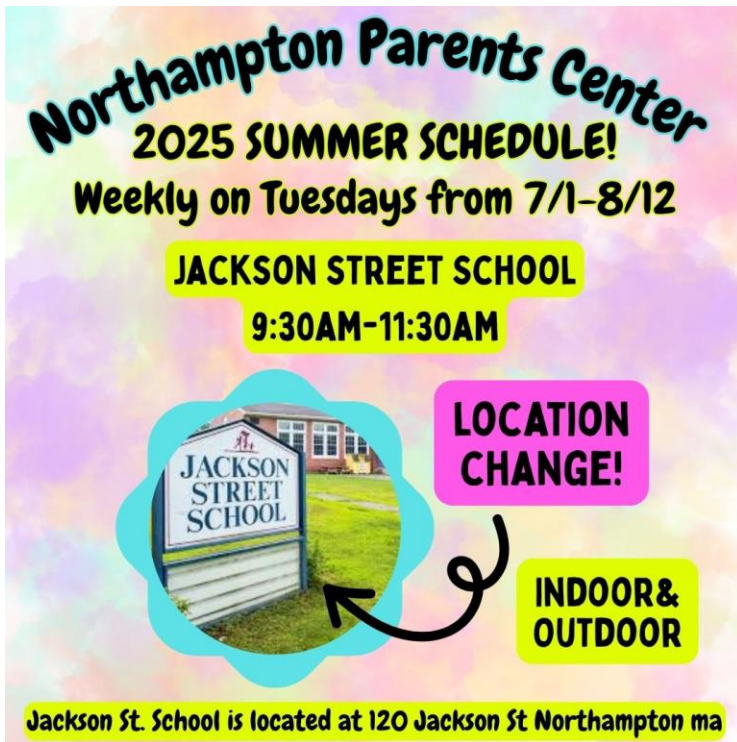
Courtyard benches - These need sanding and sealing. These benches are used frequently and we would like to make sure they are around for a long time. Let anyone on the B&G team know if you can help.

Thanks - Jon Dietrich, Ron Korza, Janet Tucker, Marc Waller, Rick Aquadro.



Images courtesy of church staff.

Please note NPC location change below:



**Northampton Parents Center**  
**2025 SUMMER SCHEDULE!**  
Weekly on Tuesdays from 7/1-8/12

**JACKSON STREET SCHOOL**  
**9:30AM-11:30AM**

**LOCATION CHANGE!**

**INDOOR & OUTDOOR**

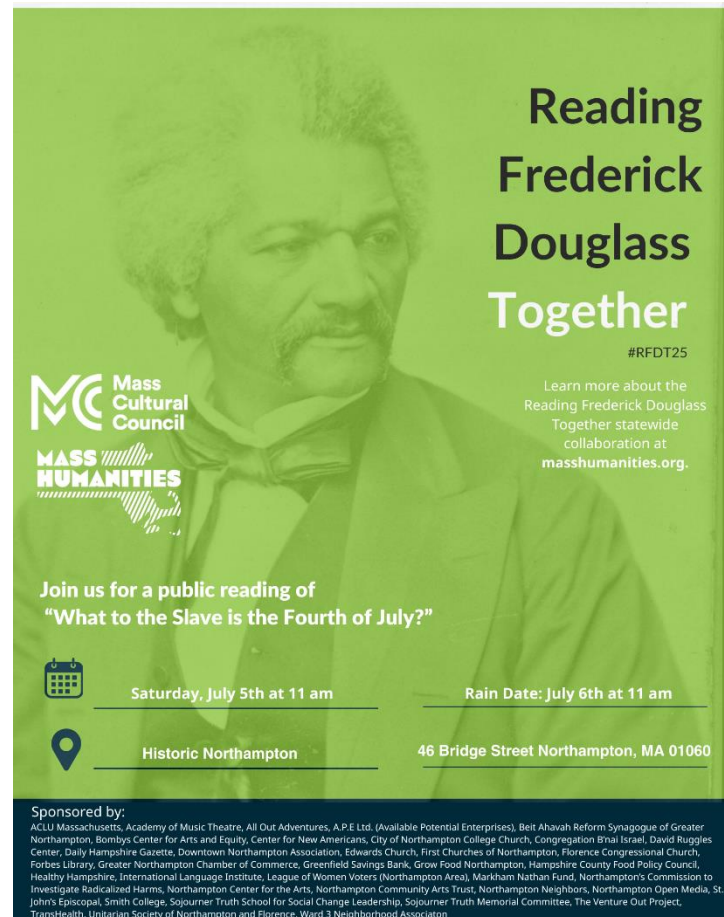
**Jackson St. School is located at 120 Jackson St Northampton ma**

Sexton Haiku

Clean windows

Make the divine more

Visible



**Reading Frederick Douglass Together**

#RFDT25

Learn more about the Reading Frederick Douglass Together statewide collaboration at [masshumanities.org](http://masshumanities.org).

Mass Cultural Council

MASS HUMANITIES

Join us for a public reading of "What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?"

Saturday, July 5th at 11 am      Rain Date: July 6th at 11 am

Historic Northampton      46 Bridge Street Northampton, MA 01060

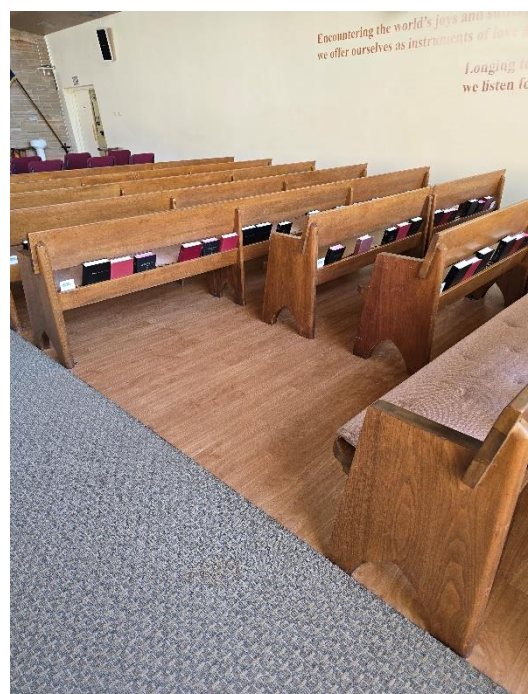
Sponsored by:  
ACLU Massachusetts, Academy of Music Theatre, All Out Adventures, A.P.E. Ltd. (Available Potential Enterprises), Beit Avraham Reform Synagogue of Greater Northampton, Bombyn's Center for Arts and Equity, Center for New Americans, City of Northampton College Church, Congregation Bnai Israel, David Ruggles Center, Daily Hampshire Gazette, Downtown Northampton Association, Edwards Church, First Churches of Northampton, Florence Congressional Church, Forbes Library, Greater Northampton Chamber of Commerce, Greenfield Savings Bank, Grow Food Northampton, Hampshire County Food Policy Council, Healthy Hampshire, International Language Institute, League of Women Voters (Northampton Area), Markham Nathan Fund, Northampton's Commission to Investigate Radicalized Harms, Northampton Center for the Arts, Northampton Community Arts Trust, Northampton Neighbors, Northampton Open Media, St. John's Episcopal, Smith College, Sojourner Truth School for Social Change Leadership, Sojourner Truth Memorial Committee, The Venture Out Project, TransHealth, Unitarian Society of Northampton and Florence, Ward 3 Neighborhood Association



Edwards Church needs gardening help! Are you interested in helping to take care of our plants? Can you:

- Help plant the Main Street flower bed?
- Pull out weeds?
- Water the courtyard plants?
- Do you have any experience setting up the water fountain?

This is an informal team. You can do as much as you are able. Let the church office know if you have questions or interest in volunteering and a Building and Grounds team member will contact you. (Or speak to Jon, Marc, Ron, or Janet when you see them.) Thank you.



\*Image provided by B&G Team.

## News from the Elected Core Ministry (ECM) June 16, 2025

All members were present for the June meeting of ECM in addition to Rev. Geary and Adam Simon. After an opening prayer led by Ron Korza, the committee moved quickly through a full agenda.

Highlights from the Music committee report include a successful Music at the Crossroads event in support of Musica Franklin (\$2875 raised), progress but ongoing work to find choir members and a call for new members as the Music Team as both committees have lost members recently. Finally, the Music committee informed ECM that the first quote received for an upgrade to the lighting in the sanctuary was much higher than expected (~\$31k). The Music Committee recommends that Edwards consider working with a conventional electrician to get most of the desired lighting features at a much lower cost. Due diligence continues.

A request was received from the Outreach Grants Team for ECM's consent to award a grant in excess of the \$20,000 limit. ECM reviewed the request and gave approval. The Outreach Grants Team has distributed most of its New Way monies that had been accumulating. The ECM holds additional New Ways monies that can be used to respond to grant requests during the remainder of the year.

Two new opportunities for members to help Edwards Church and the Northampton community: Mark Dion will arrange proctor training for interested members. Proctors will be paid by organizations (by way of the church) to facilitate events held at Edwards Church. In addition, Mark Dion, who is an expert in life saving techniques, will offer free CPR/AED/Narcan training to members. You never know when these important skills will be needed by a member of our community at large. Please reach out to Mark or the Church Office for more information!

Please look for a complete set of ECM meeting minutes posted in the hallway outside the sanctuary.

ECM (Jeff Prince, Leon Drzewianowski, Mark Dion, Ron Korza)

## July/August Birthdays

### July

Beth Firmin  
Melissa Mattison  
Christian Schmidt  
Jon Dietrich  
Phyllis Taylor  
Ellyn McAllister Schmidt  
Lyle Phipps  
Carl Erickson  
Ron Korza  
Dorian Almeida

### August

Glenn Gulotta  
Florence Howes Semb  
Alexandra Webb  
Mark Dion  
Carolyn Dion  
Jeffrey Prince  
Keira Stokes-Buckles  
Benjamin Haughey



# July 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29	30	1 4 POH 7 GA	2 9:30 POH 11 Bible Study 12:15 Communion 7 AA	3 6:30 AA	4 Independence Day 7 AA	5 8:30 YWCA 11 Reading Frederick Douglass Together 2025 - 46 Bridge Street
6 10 Worship 11 Rain Date - Reading Frederick Douglass Together 2025	7	8 4 POH 7 GA	9 9:30 POH 11 Bible Study 12:15 Communion 7 AA	10 4 C&V 6:30 AA	11 5 YWCA 7 AA	12 8:30 YWCA
13 10 Worship	14	15 4 POH 7 GA	16 9:30 POH 11 Bible Study 12:15 Communion 7 AA	17 6:30 AA	18 5 YWCA 7 AA	19 8:30 YWCA
20 10 Worship	21 Floor Cleaning	22 4 POH 7 GA	23 9:30 POH 11 Bible Study 12:15 Communion 7 AA	24 6:30 AA	25 5 YWCA 7 AA	26 8:30 YWCA
27 10 Worship	28	29 4 POH 7 GA	30 9:30 POH 11 Bible Study 12:15 Communion 7 AA	31 6:30 AA	1	2 Key: POH - Office Hours C&V - Care & Visitation



# August 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27 10 Worship @ First Churches	28	29	30	31	1 5 YWCA 7 AA	2 8:30 YWCA
3 10 Worship @ First Churches	4	5 4 POH 7 GA 7 B&G	6 9:30 POH 11 Bible Study 12:15 Communion 7 AA	7 6:30 AA	8 5 YWCA 7 AA	9 8:30 YWCA
10 10 Worship @ First Churches	11 6:30 Transition Team	12 4 POH 7 GA	13 9:30 POH 11 Bible Study 12:15 Communion 6 Investments 7 AA	14 6:30 AA 4 C&V	15 5 YWCA 7 AA	16 8:30 YWCA
17 10 Worship @ First Churches	18	19 4 POH 7 GA	20 9:30 POH 11 Bible Study 12:15 Communion 7 AA	21 6:30 AA	22 5 YWCA 7 AA	23 8:30 YWCA
24 10 Worship @ First Churches	25	26 4 POH 7 GA 6:30 Transition Team	27 9:30 POH 11 Bible Study 12:15 Communion 7 AA	28 6:30 AA	29 5 YWCA 7 AA	30 8:30 YWCA
31 10 Worship @ First Churches	1	2	3	4	5	6 Key: POH – Office Hours C&V – Care & Visitation B&G – Building & Grounds

