



THE SPIRE

EDWARDS CHURCH *of* NORTHAMPTON
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Vol. 35 No. 10 November 2025

What is God doing?! – Interim minister’s message part one

It has been super busy here at Edwards Church for the past couple months. We have had 4-6 visitors every Sunday morning. Our children’s faith formation class is growing each week. Our choir is expanding and sounding great. People have stopped in asking if we give out Bibles – we do. More Bible study options are being considered. A new meditation program has begun on Monday evenings. Members are getting to know each other better and helping each other out. We are updating our database and website. It’s exciting and wonderful. What is God doing in our midst? How is God working in and through each of us as individuals and as a corporate body?

There are a lot of hurting people in our community who are looking for a safe group of people with whom to find comfort and strength. There are many who are searching for meaning in the madness they see around them every day. God is working on us to be that place of grace for each other and every visitor that comes through the door, and every person we encounter throughout our day, and every person of limited mobility, who receives our notes and calls.

Many of us are struggling as to our responsibility for the current trends in society. If the world seems too

violent and divisive, our challenge is to not join that energy of anger and division, and instead to find the energy of hope and love. We are called to live like we believe that God is in control; that God’s love is greater than all evil. Let’s eat together, visit with each other, give each other rides, take care of each other’s children or parents. Let’s pray for each other and accompany each other through joys and struggles. Let’s help each other let go of some of our burdens, giving them up to God, lightening our load. Let’s listen for God’s direction.

God is doing something here and the wider community is perceiving it. Are you?

- Rev. Jennifer Geary



Sunday Worship in November

Below are the lectionary passages for the month with the focus passages in bold. Consider reading these passages each week in preparation for worship. For an easy way to access these passages go to:

<https://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu/texts/?y=384&z=p&d=78>

November 2 – All Saints, Communion

Isaiah 1:10-18; Psalm 32:1-7; **2 Thessalonians 1:1-4, 11-12; Luke 6:27-31**

We will honor our Saints by lighting a candle and sharing the names of anyone dear to us that has died in the past year whether connected to the church or not.

November 9 – Guest Preacher: Donique McIntosh

Haggai 1:15-2:9, Psalm 98; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-5, 13-17; Luke 20:27-38

November 16 – Pledge Sunday, Lunch and Conversation

Isaiah 65:17-25; **Psalm 98**; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-13; **Luke 21:5-19**

November 23 – Reign of Christ, Thanksgiving

Jeremiah 23:1-6; **Psalm 46**; **Colossians 1:11-20**; **Luke 23:33-43**

November 30 – First Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 2:1-5; Psalm 122; Romans 13:11-14; Matthew 24:36-44

Pastoral Care – Rev. Jennifer Geary

Please 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 or call or text my cell phone. I am usually at the church on Mondays and have set office hours: Wednesdays 9:30-10:45 AM and Thursdays 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM 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 November

- 11/3 7PM Transition Team (Zoom)
- 11/5 7PM Investments Team (Edwards Room)
- 11/10 7PM Finance Team (Zoom)
- 11/12 7PM Building & Grounds (Zoom)
- 11/13 10AM Care & Visitation (Zoom)
- 11/17 7PM Elected Core Ministry (Zoom)

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.

All Saints Day Commemoration

On November 2, we will honor our Saints by sharing the names of anyone dear to us that has died in the past year whether connected to the church or not. During the service everyone will have opportunity to light a candle and say those names out loud.

Care and Visitation Team

A group of individuals meets every month (via Zoom) to follow those in our congregation of friends and members may need a note of encouragement and support, a visit, or just a friendly "we are thinking of you". The group also reaches out during Christmas, Easter and other times during the year with cards and or small remembrances.

If caring for others in this way would interest you or if you have someone in mind who might be helped in this caring way, please contact Reverend Jennifer Geary, Sandra Rossi or the church office.

Wednesday Worship

There will be no Worship on Wednesday, November 5th & Wednesday, November 12th. Weekly services will resume on Wednesday, November 19th and will include communion.

Pledge Sunday

Sunday, November 16th is Pledge Sunday! Please keep a lookout for a stewardship letter from the Elected Core Ministry (and 2026 pledge card) being distributed in early November.

MANNA Friday Meals Return

Manna is looking for dedicated volunteers to assist with:

- Meal Prep
- Service
- Clean Up

Sign up now by clicking or visiting the link below:

https://mannanorthampton.org/volunteer_calendar/volunteer-signups/

Friends of Children, Inc. to host Artisan Market on November 16

Friends of Children, Inc. is hosting its first ever Artisan Market on Sunday, November 16 from 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Garden House at Look Park, 300 N. Main Street in Florence, MA.

This juried artisan event will feature 30 local creators, food vendors, and a silent online auction with a great selection of local seasonal experiences to bid on. All proceeds from the fund-raiser will benefit children and young adults affected by the child welfare system.

“We are excited to invite the community to learn more about our mission through this inaugural event to kick off the holiday shopping season,” said Sarah Segura, Co-Executive Director of Friends of Children. “It’s been exciting to realize how many artisans are eager to join us for this holiday market to support the children and young adults in our programs.”

Admission is free and there is no parking fee. Artisan items available for purchase include fiber arts, pottery, woodworking items, kiln glass, framed prints, holiday decor, jewelry, and all-natural self-care items. Push for Joy and Local Burger are the featured food vendors.

The online silent auction will run from November 5 through November 23. To view or bid on available items including experiences at New England’s premier holiday season attractions, museum admissions, lift tickets to local ski resorts and a beautiful array of handmade items from our artisans please visit: <https://www.32auctions.com/FOCArtisanMarket>

Friends of Children is fully dedicated to improving the lives of children and young adults impacted by foster care and the child welfare system. Friends of Children was formed as a child advocacy organization 501c(3) in 1990 and currently administers the CASA program for Hampshire and Franklin counties and the FOCUS mentoring program statewide. From the beginning, their advocacy mission has defined the work of the agency as it addresses the needs of high-risk children who are not readily supported by systems designed to protect them and encourage their full participation in society. For more information visit www.friendsofchildreninc.org and see the flyer below.



The flyer features a circular image of a red knitted mitten with a white heart on a snowy background. A QR code is located in the top right corner. Below the image, the text reads: "ARTISAN MARKET November 16 10:30 to 4:30 GARDEN HOUSE AT LOOK PARK". Further down, it says: "START YOUR HOLIDAY SHOPPING! Amazing selection of local vendors Silent Auction to benefit Friends of Children, Inc." At the bottom, it says "Thank you to our sponsors" and lists logos for Greenfield Savings Bank, Whalen Insurance, The Hampshire Gazette, A HOME WITHIN, Applied Medical, and bankESB.

St. John's Episcopal GALA CONCERT

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 8 4PM



48 ELM STREET | NORTHAMPTON
WWW.STJOHNSNORTHAMPTON.ORG

Featuring:

**GRANT MOSS, LARRY SCHIPULL,
LARRY PICARD, MAX SWISHER,
& TYLER MILLER**

*Including music from Bach, Grieg, Gershwin, and more.
Music for piano, organ, and euphonia!*

Suggested
Donation **\$30**

donation includes refreshments
and one adult beverage

SCAN TO
RESERVE
TICKETS:



SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 2ND
FROM 1 TO 5 PM

DUST TO DUST

*SURROUNDING DEATH
WITH CARE*

WORKSHOPS ON
HOSPICE CARE | GRIEF
MEMORIAL SERVICE
PLANNING | CREATING
YOUR WILL
AND MORE

TICKETS:



Come together in a supportive environment to learn more about what one might encounter around the end of life and how to prepare for it. Come for yourself, loved ones, or to be supportive to your community as a whole. *Held within spiritual community, this event is open to people of all backgrounds and faith journeys.*

QUESTIONS? CONTACT THE OFFICE!
CALL 413-584-1757 OR EMAIL LIV:
OFFICE@STJOHNSNORTHAMPTON.ORG

St. John's
Episcopal Church

ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
48 ELM ST., NORTHAMPTON, MA
STJOHNSNORTHAMPTON.ORG

A SPIRITUAL MUSICAL GATHERING FOR ALL
FIVE SACRED TRADITIONS
• ONE COMMON GOAL •

MUSIC FROM
BALRAJ BALASUBRAHMANYAN | CARNATIC TRADITION
JUSTIN C. BEATTY | NATIVE AMERICAN TRADITION
GLORIA MATLACK | BLACK SPIRITUAL TRADITION
UMER PIRACHA | SUFI TRADITION
FELICIA SLOIN | JEWISH TRADITION

ACCOMPANIED BY
• RICHIE BARSHAY • AMIT KAVTHEKAR • ADAM MATLOCK
• MICHAEL NIX • GENEVIEVE ROSE • KEVIN SHARPE •

Yearnings
MUSIC THAT MOVES BEYOND BORDERS

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 13 | 7:00 PM | AT BOMBYX
WWW.DREAMUPEVENTS.ORG 130 PINE ST, FLORENCE, MA

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Arts and Culture Network • Beit Ahavah • Bombyx • Congregation B'nai Israel • Edwards Church • Florence Congregational Church • Goodwin Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church • Halcyon Arts Network • Haydenville Congregational Church, UCC • Interfaith Opportunities Network of Amherst & Franklin County • Jewish Community of Amherst • Jewish Federation of Western MA • LAVA Center • Morning Star Baptist Church • Springfield JCC • St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish • Temple Beth Elohim



Center for New Americans
A Community-Based Education and Resource Center for
Immigrants and Refugees in Western Massachusetts

30 POEMS IN NOVEMBER!

A literary fundraiser to support free English classes for
immigrants at Center for New Americans

HOW DOES IT WORK?



- ~Visit the 30 Poems link on cnam.org or scan the QR code below to create your fundraising page.
- ~Write a poem each day throughout November in support of immigrants.
- ~Reach out to family and friends to sponsor your efforts.

*Writers who raise at least \$300 will have the opportunity to read a poem at our Reading & Celebration and contribute a poem to our Anthology.

Registration opens in October at
www.cnam.org

Questions?

Email: laurie@cnam.org



Nerissa Niels, Event Chair

Center for New Americans
42 Gothic St.
Northampton, MA 01060
(413) 587-0084
www.cnam.org



Center for New Americans Inc.
@cnaforimmigrants



SCAN HERE

Sunday Morning Volunteers

	Flowers	Greeter	Usher	Liturgist	Reader	Fellowship
2-Nov		Debbie D	Mark D	Ella S	Kathy K	
9 -Nov		Sue A	Carolyn D		Kristen R	
16- Nov			Marc W			
23 - Nov			Jon D	Justin S	Brian S	
30 - Nov			Ron K			

We'd love to have all the spots filled. Can you help out one Sunday this November? Please contact the church office: info@edwardschurchnorthampton.org

Meet our New Faith Formation Staff



Shannon Ryan graduated with a bachelor's degree in Media and Communication with a Minor in Art. Her passion is photography, scuba diving and inspiring children to explore the world around them. From Shannon: "My kids are my greatest adventure and my constant motivators!"



Denisse Barron is a student at Smith College, double majoring in Education & Child Study and History. She also works at the Smith College - Fort Hill Center for Early Childhood Education. From Denisse: "Being part of the Edwards community has been such a fun and meaningful experience, and I'm so grateful to spend my Sundays with such wonderful kids!"

Join or Support Team Edwards Church in the Hot Chocolate Run for Safe Passage

Please consider joining or supporting Team Edwards Church as members and friends participate in the Hot Chocolate Run for Safe Passage. Safe Passage delivers an array of support, counseling and prevention services that offer safety, hope and healing to adults and children experiencing violence in Hampshire County and surrounding towns. The annual run is on December 7 this year in downtown Northampton. The event begins at 9 a.m. To donate, scan the following QR code or label your offering "for Hot Chocolate Run":



To join the team, add your name to the poster in the church lobby. If you have questions, ask team co-captains Floyd Cheung and Ruth Griggs.

Cathedral in the Night Ministry Team Serves Up Food & Fun

A big thanks to the 26 volunteers who worked together for our October 5th partnership with Cathedral in the Night! Shown below are a few of the volunteers who came together to share a few laughs while cooking a hot meal, assembling cleansing kits, and organizing the sandwiches and desserts that many other volunteers donated. At Cathedral in the Night, we enjoyed an inspiring worship service and good fellowship with our Cathedral friends during dinner.

Pastor Steph is asking for winter clothes: coats, jackets, and boots for women and men; as well as pants, shirts and sweaters for men and new, unopened packages of men's boxer underwear, size medium. Donations can be dropped off at church on Sundays or anytime the office is open.

Thank you for your generosity, prayers, and care for our Cathedral neighbors! Feel free to contact us to find out more about volunteering on the Cathedral in the Night Ministry Team! Our next partnership date is Sunday, December 7th.

Debbie Davis and Grace Del Vecchio

DebraDavis1217@gmail.com

GraceDelVecchio@yahoo.com



Image provided by Debbie Davis

Thank you VOLUNTEERS!

Transition Team Update

The Transition Team recently asked for your thoughts on the Future of Ministry at Edwards Church in a survey emailed in late October. If you prefer to receive a paper copy, please let a transition team member know or reach out to the main office and we will provide one. If the office does not have your email and you wish to participate, send your email address to: info@edwardschurchnorthampton.org or use the link for the survey below - **please scan the QR code below with your phone's camera to participate in this important survey.**

This survey is anonymous. Your email address will not be collected. If you have a paper survey, an envelope can be provided to maintain your anonymity.

There are five sections in the survey, much of which you are asked to rank your opinions on a scale. There are some questions which may require a bit of your time and thoughtfulness. Please don't let that deter you from giving your opinion.

If you need help filling out the survey, please contact the office or a team member and we will help you record your responses.

Remember - the more responses that we receive, the more accurate our job description will be for our next settled pastor.

The deadline is coming soon – please complete the survey by November 8th.



With our thanks,

Transition Team members: Sheri Cheung, Carolyn Dion, Laura Frogameni, Melissa Mattison, Chuck McCullagh, and Janet Tucker

Congregational Conversations Luncheon

Our next opportunity to gather and share our thoughts is on **Sunday, November 16th, at 11:30 am** following the worship service. Thank you to everyone who came to the first luncheon in October. You don't need to have gone to that one to come to this one. And in reverse, if you came in October, good news – you can come to this one, too! A light luncheon will be provided by the Transition Team and conversation will be led by Rev. Jennifer Geary. More details will follow, including another request for your RSVP. We value your opinions and thoughts on this journey to finding our next settled pastor.

Help us prepare an emergency overnight shelter in the St. John's basement!

As winter approaches, we recognize the need for additional overnight shelter spaces for our unhoused neighbors, especially during periods of extreme cold. At St. John's, we have a large basement space that is very close to being approved as an emergency shelter.

If you think you can help with this, please contact office@stjohnsnorthampton.org or [visit the website](#) for more information. Thank you!

Open Hearts

On three Sundays in July, the congregation and visitors were asked to choose 21 of the assorted 2½” fabric squares from a table at the back of the sanctuary. With those choices, the quilt team arranged the squares to create heart blocks. In September, the “Open Hearts” wall hanging was installed in the Edwards Room with the accompanying sign - “Edwards Church welcomes You with Open Hearts.” Thank you to everyone who made their fabric choices and made it possible to brighten up the room and let all who visit know that they are welcome.

- Edwards Church Quilt Team

Discerning Questions and Answers – Interim Minister’s message part 2

The Transition Team has been asking a lot of questions and many, many of you have been answering and engaging in the conversation. On October 19th, over 25 people spent two hours reviewing the first 150 years of this congregation’s life; discerning themes and values that have run through them all. We were so engaged we didn’t make it through the last 40 years but we will.

On **November 16th**, we will consider the history that most of you have lived. Identifying highs and lows, strengths and weakness, pain and joy, we will claim and own this history as part of the almost 200-year story of God working through this congregation. We will identify specific assets and challenges that this congregation has today and focus on what leadership is needed to companion the faithful into the future.

As you prepare for this gathering, please consider this question: What story of Jesus or about Jesus would you use to describe this congregation? Edwards Church is like the story of...

Also, if you have topics that you feel we should discuss during this interim time, please get them to me for inclusion in our gatherings.

Here are a few notes from our Oct 19th conversation

- Half of those present had connected with this congregation within the last 15 years and many within the last 5 years.
- This congregation has made bold moves, such as breaking away from First Church, replacing its classic building with a modern one, and actively engaging in social action for local, national and international causes.
- This congregation has sent out and supported many missionaries.
- Membership and participation numbers have swung widely
- Membership has included movers and shakers in the community, notably Calvin Coolidge
- Edwards has continuously engaged in cooperative ministries with other faith communities.
- Faith Formation and Religious Education have been a priority for children and adults.
- The name has gone through slight changes over the years
- There were multiple attempts of rejoining with First Church.
- Every building has been widely used by the community

- Rev. Jennifer Geary



Image provided by Janet Tucker

Gratitude Corner

If you see someone doing something nice, share a gratitude here. Thank you to:

- The Transition Team for all the hard work they are doing for the congregation.
- Manna staff and volunteers for everything they do – welcome back Friday meal service!
- All the Cathedral in the Night volunteers.

Sexton Haiku:

Pumpkins softly glow,
saints and spirits intertwine--
light redeems the night

Sunday, November 2nd



Pastor's Office Hours

Rev. Geary's office hours will resume on Thursday, November 13th and are on Wednesdays from 9:30 AM - 10:45AM and Thursday from 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM Jennifer is available by appointment on some evenings, call or text her to make an appointment. Please remember that you can reach out at any time. If it is urgent, please call Jennifer's cell phone. Please note, Jennifer will be away from Tuesday, November 4th – Wednesday, November 12th.



NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Elizabeth Young

Krisinda S. Semb

Elias Almeida

Jack Mattison-Gulotta

Susan Banas

Samuel A. Grant

Claire Cheung

William Roeder

Lindsey Ann Wells

Susan Anderson

Kai Hutchison

Mabel Cheung

Northampton Parents Center

Family Fun Sunday!

WITH MUCHO GUSTO SPANISH!
SUN 11/9
2PM-5PM



BILINGUAL MUSIC & MOVEMENT (A) 3:15!

Bring a dish to share, or just bring yourselves!
NPC will get the pizza!

NORTHAMPTON PARENTS CENTER IS LOCATED IN THE LOWER LEVEL OF EDWARDS CHURCH 297 MAIN STREET. PLEASE USE PUBLIC PARKING AND THE BACKDOOR ENTRANCE. WE ARE WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE!

Transgender Day of Remembrance

November 20th 7:00 PM Edwards Church is hosting an interfaith memorial service on November 20th in recognition of Transgender Day of Remembrance. If you would like to help plan, please let Rev. Geary know.

On-line Learning Opportunities

The United Church of Christ Southern New England Conference offers a variety of educational and training programs on a regular basis. This link will take you to the calendar for November.

<https://www.sneucc.org/events?month=11&year=2025&cals=45603,49181>

Here are just a few:

Lunch and Learn: Making Music More Inclusive

Nov. 6, 12:00 to 1:00 PM • Online

Music is a powerful part of worship and is one of the many ways churches can live into their commitments to be inclusive and affirming. Presented by Soren Austenfeld and Rev. Hannah Brown

Saturday, November 15, 2025, 9am - 12pm ~ [Intro to Gender & Trans/Nonbinary](#)

[Affirmation](#) (registration closes 11/12) - clergy and lay

Making Disciples — Theories and Practices for the 21st Century

Dec. 6, 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM • Online

This class explores how to use the grounding principles of education, formation, and living in the ways of Jesus. You will learn to translate these theories into practical strategies for cultivating authentic discipleship across all generations in today's congregations.

Handbook for Visitation: A Resource for Lay Visitation and beyond

Dec. 9, 6:00 to 7:30 PM • Online

Now that *Called to Care* has been retired as the UCC resource for Lay Visitation, The UCC Wellness Ministries offers a new resource and paradigm to support and equip all those who engage in congregational care.

The Center for Transformational Leadership also has a wide variety of workshops available, many of which are on-line. Check out their offerings here:

<https://www.sneucc.org/church-resources>

Area Conference Minister Resigns

Our Area Conference Minister, the Rev. Terry Yasuko Ogawa, is leaving her position with the SNEUCC. She has accepted the position of Program Manager of the Yale Center for Environmental Justice. Her last day in the office will be November 6, 2025.



Service of Recognition of Ministry
Rev. Terry Yasuko Ogawa



Monday, November 3, 2025
6:00 PM
First Church of Christ
763 Longmeadow Street
Longmeadow, MA

Dinner to follow
Please RSVP to revpaulhesbit@gmail.com
by Thursday, October 30.

Advent Festival – December 6 - Can you help?

by Rev. Jennifer Geary

The lovely tradition continues of worshipping on Saturday evening, dining together and preparing the worship space for Advent and Christmas. December 6th, St. Nicholas Day, will be this year's festival date. Can you help plan or facilitate a part of this event? Since I'm new to this event, I need a few of you to meet with me to plan and then perhaps some others to help day of with food and programing. Please send me an email letting me know you can help. minister@edwardschurchnorthampton.org

November 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26	27	28	29	30	31	1 8:30AM YWCA
2 10AM Worship 11:15AM Fellowship	3 9:30AM NPC 7:00 PM TT	4 9:30 NPC 7:00PM GA	5 11AM Bible Study 6 PM IT 7PM AA	6 8:30AM IG 9:30AM NPC 6:30PM AA 7PM Choir	7 5PM YWCA 7PM AA	8 8:30AM YWCA
9 10AM Worship 11:15AM Fellowship	10 9:30AM NPC	11 Veterans Day (church office closed) 7:00PM GA	12 11AM Bible Study 7:00PM AA 7:00PM B&G	13 8:30AM IG 9:30AM NPC 10AM C&V 5PM POH 6:30PM AA 7PM Choir	14 5PM YWCA 7PM AA	15 8:30AM YWCA
16 10AM Worship 11:15AM Fellowship 11:30 Congregational Conversation	17 9:30AM NPC 7PM ECM	18 9:30 NPC 7:00PM GA	19 9:30AM POH 11AM Bible Study 12:30 PM Communi on 7PM AA	20 8:30AM IG 9:30AM NPC 5PM POH 6:30PM AA 7PM Choir 7PM Transgender Remembrance Service	21 5PM YWCA 7PM AA	22 8:30AM YWCA
23 10:00AM Worship 11:15AM Fellowship	24 9:30AM NPC	25 9:30 NPC 7:00PM GA	26 9:30AM POH 11AM Bible S 12:30 PM Communi on 7PM AA	27 Thanksgiving Day (church offices closed)	28 5PM YWCA 7PM AA	29 8:30AM YWCA
30 10:00AM Worship 11:15AM Fellowship	1	2	3	4	5 IT: Transition Team ECM: Bereal Care Ministry B&G: Building & Grounds IT: Investments Team	6 IG: Infant Group NPC: Northampton Parents Center POH: Pastor Office Hours