



THE SPIRE

EDWARDS CHURCH *of* NORTHAMPTON
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

297 Main Street, Northampton, Massachusetts 01060

Vol. 36 No. 2 February 2026

Taking Care of Our Hearts

Over the past few months every one of us has experienced joys and sorrows in our personal lives. We've been to parties, shared gifts, sent and received letters and cards. We've also gone to work and school, cleaned house, volunteered, took care of the pets. December is a busy time and while we enjoy all the festivities we look forward to life getting back to a routine in January.



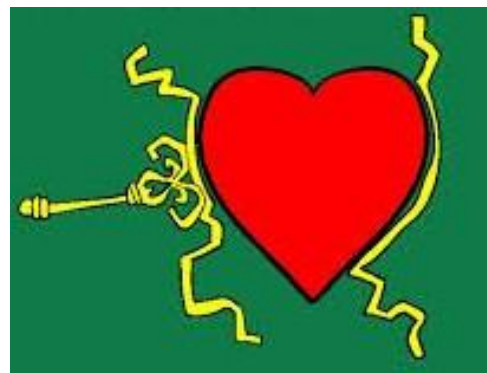
I don't know about you, but for me, January has been anything but routine. I'm still confused on what day of the week it is; there's been very little rhythm to my days or weeks and each time I think things are settling down, I'm thrown off-kilter again. Sickness and the weather keep thwarting and complicating plans, and the news just keep throwing so much heart-break and pain at us. Some days I'm not sure how much more my heart can take.

As a faith community, we are people of the heart. The foundation of our faith is love and compassion. As followers of Jesus, we are to see, really see, the most vulnerable among us and to love them – really love them. At this time when the world seems to be disintegrating, may we support each other as we heal our broken hearts. May our hearts not only be healed, but as we work together and care for each other, may our hearts grow three sizes bigger that we are able to see and do what needs to be done to be good neighbors. May the wider community know us, Edwards Church, by our love, compassion and grace.

May the love of God strengthen us in the days of struggle ahead.

It's time to get together to share our brokenness and to share our healing techniques. It's time for us to get together to make plans as to how we help each other remain sane and strong as we act from and with compassion and love. It's time for us to talk about what it means to be God's people in this time. It's time. Let's talk and care and do.

Rev. Jennifer Geary



Worship in February

Consider reading each week's scripture 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>

February 1 – Communion, Storytelling?

Micah 6:1-8; Matthew 5:1-12

February 8 – Rebuilding Streets?

Isaiah 58:1-12; Matthew 5:13-20

February 15 – Transfiguration

2 Peter 1:16-21; Matthew 17:1-9

February 18 – Ash Wednesday

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

February 22 – Lent 1, Eyes Wide Open

Genesis 2:15-17; Matthew 4:1-11

Pastoral Care & Office Hours

– 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. My open office hours are Wednesdays 9:30-10:45 AM and Thursdays 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM in my office. And am available at other times by appointment.

Team Meetings in February

- 2/2 7PM Transition Team (Zoom)
- 2/4 7PM Building & Grounds (Zoom)
- 2/12 4PM Care & Visitation (Zoom)
- 2/18 7PM Building & Grounds (Zoom)
- 2/26 7PM Elected Core Ministry (Zoom)

Bible Study

Wednesdays 11 AM and Thursdays at 7 PM – via Zoom

Join us every Wednesday and Thursday 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. Or simply join at the appropriate time [here](#).

Helping to Navigate This Time

Please consider using some of our on-going activities: Monday Meditation, Wednesday and Thursday Bible study. In addition, we will be adding other opportunities for spiritual growth and hard conversations. If you are interested in helping to plan any of these events, please let Rev. Geary know ASAP. The Wednesday Word and bulletin will share information as events are planned.



Gather in the Sanctuary for a time of centering, confession, and the imposition of ashes. We use the symbol of ashes to remind us of our mortality and dependence on God. Ritually, we engage in confession as a spiritual washing in preparation for our devotion during lent. This service is appropriate for elementary age through adult.

ECM January Meeting Summary

January 12, 2026

All members were in attendance for the January meeting. ECM reviewed committee reports and received updates on staff activities. The Music committee and audio-visual team have made significant process in resurrecting the sanctuary audio system but more work is needed with the help of outside professionals. The Building and Grounds committee has been busy with updates to the annex, including installation of new windows and an office to apartment conversion. Outreach has completed its grant making for the year and requests additional funds in 2026 as it looks forward to working with community partners. The Settled Pastor Transition Planning Team is writing the church profile with an expected completion date of February month end. Finally, ECM is preparing for the Annual Meeting which was to be held after service on January 25th but was postponed until Sunday, February 1st. See you there!

ECM

(Jeff Prince, Leon Drzewianowski, Mark Dion, Ron Korza and Claudia Lyons)

Black History Month

Black History Month is an annual observance in February that honors the history, culture, and contributions of Black people and communities. It recognizes their vital role in shaping society while highlighting struggles for freedom, equality, and justice. This month is a time for reflection, education, and celebration of achievements past and present. Please see below for a list of local events celebrating Black History Month in February:

Local Black History Month Events (Northampton / Amherst Area)

- **Not A Noplace: Beloved Community — Black History Month Event**
A community arts event in honor of Black History Month at the Northampton Center for the Arts on **February 14, 2026**.
📄 More info & tickets: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/not-a-noplace-beloved-community-tickets-1980158113221?aff=ebdssbcategorybrowse>
- **Annual Black Heritage Month Celebration — “The Virtues of Slowness in Times of Urgency”**
A lecture and discussion on art, racial justice, and cultural possibility, hosted by the Commonwealth Honors College at **UMass Amherst on February 12, 2026**.
🔗 Details: <https://www.umass.edu/honors/events/bhm2026>
- **Historic Northampton Gallery Talks — *Slavery and Freedom in Northampton, 1654–1783***
Part of Black history programming with **gallery talks** about local history on **Feb 1 & Feb 22, 2026**. Free and public.
🔗 Event info: <https://www.historicnorthampton.org/upcoming-programs.html>



Anti-Ableism workshop: Request for Co-Sponsorship

First Churches is working with our friend Bekah Maren Anderson, a local theologian and disability rights advocate, to host a workshop on combating ableism in faith communities. The workshop (along with lunch) will take place on Saturday, Feb 21, from 10am-2pm. Bekah describes it as follows:

"Welcome communicates a posture of love and desire for another person's wellbeing, as well as pleasure for being with one another. When we look at how the disability community receives and is received by religious communities, this love, desire for wellbeing, and pleasure at being together is not what so many people with disabilities find, be it in the building, in people's attitudes, or in the theology that faith communities teach and preach. This three-hour training seeks to address this problem and help us all enact fuller welcome for people with disabilities by:

- 1. Discussing how ableism informs assumptions about persons with disabilities in society and in our faith communities;*
- 2. Exploring how expectation of disability instead of accommodation for disability impacts our attitudes and approaches to welcome;*
- 3. Introducing skills for creating anti-ableist welcome and hospitality in space, attitude, story, and belief."*

We are reaching out to you and other faith communities in the Northampton area to request your assistance in making this workshop a wonderful experience for all. We need help promoting the event to members of faith communities throughout town, and we also are asking if you would be willing to make a financial contribution (\$100-\$500) to help cover the cost of the workshop. Our goal is to not have to resort to requiring a registration fee for participants, so that any and all who are interested can attend. That being said, if your congregation wants to co-sponsor without a monetary contribution that is completely fine! Just let me know, and I will make sure you are listed on any promotional materials.

If you have further questions, feel free to [email](#) or call Elliot Davey at (413) 570-4605.

Call to Attend an Installation

Members of the Hampshire Association, UCC are invited to attend the installation of

**Larry Picard
as
Lay Pastor**

**North Hadley Congregational Church
243 River Drive
Hadley, MA 01035**

Sunday, February 22, 2026 at 3:00 PM

A church is represented by clergy and four delegates. Visitors are welcome.

Workshop Opportunities from SNEUCC

Intro to gender and trans/non-binary affirmation
<https://www.sneucc.org/eventdetail/19273273?month=2&year=2026&day=1&display=m>

Adaptive and innovative leadership for faith formation
<https://www.sneucc.org/eventdetail/19505830?month=2&year=2026&day=1&display=m>

Neurodivergence and Congregational Welcome
<https://www.sneucc.org/eventdetail/19498741?month=2&year=2026&day=1&display=m>

Engaging Our Sacred Scripture's Story
<https://www.sneucc.org/eventdetail/19502285?month=2&year=2026&day=1&display=m>

Check out all the latest news from the **Northampton Parents Center** below:

FREE! First Aid for Parents and Caregivers

Tuesday, February 3rd [7-8:30 pm]

Virtual on Zoom
 RSVP for Link: www.bit.ly/ECCpresents






Taught by Molly Kitchen of Institute for Wild Med
 Hosted by Northampton Parents Center
 with the NPS Early Childhood Center
 Questions? email: support@instituteforwildmed.com



Northampton Parents Center



Early Bird Infant Group
 Thursdays @ 8:30am!
no such thing as late



Join NPC director Lindsey King for a free weekly drop-in group for infants and their caregivers.
 Coffee and tea included!
 Siblings welcome :)

Infants and their caregivers are welcome at any and all M-TH playgroups, 9:30-11:30!



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!

Northampton Parents Center
 Winter/Spring Schedule
 WEEKLY 1/5/26-6/11/26

FREE & ALL WELCOME!

MONDAY INDOORS [AT] NPC	TUESDAY OUTDOORS [AT] THE HAMPSHIRE REGIONAL YMCA PLAYGROUND
WEDNESDAY INDOORS [AT] NPC	THURSDAY INDOORS [AT] NPC

PLAYGROUPS ARE 9:30AM-11:30AM COME ANYTIME :)

TUESDAYS WILL BE INDOORS AT NPC IF THE WEATHER IS RAINY/SNOWY/TOO COLD!

INFANT GROUP STARTS AT 8:30!

Located in the lower level of Edwards Church 297 Main St. Northampton MA
 Please use the side entrance and public parking, not the church lot
 The closest PVTA bus stop is the Academy of Music

Gratitude Corner

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

- Everyone who contributed to the 2025 Annual Report.
- All who helped to make Carla Bee's Memorial Service so beautiful and memorable.
- Justin for keeping the building spotless during a messy winter.
- All the Cathedral in the Night volunteers.

Is your birthday missing? We'd like to include everyone, so please call the church office at 413-584-5500 and let us know your birthday!



FEBRUARY



Marc Abel
Ruby Smith
Sandra Rossi
Dan Shanahan
Deanna O'Connor
Kimberly Schlichting
Maya Wilson

Trudy Bertram
Margaret Allen
Tracy Teague
Marc Waller
Brian Swift
Ana Haughey

Sunday Morning Volunteers

We are in need of volunteers to help lead worship. February is a great time for children, adults and families to volunteer to be the liturgist, scripture reader, greeter. Please consider signing up by contacting the church office at 413-584-5500, by email info@edwardschurchnorthampton.org, via this [link](#) or by simply scanning the QR code below:



February 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10AM Worship 11:15AM Annual Meeting of the Congregation 4:00 PM Cathedral in the Night	9:30AM NPC 6:00 PM Meditation 7:00 PM Transition Team	9:30AM NPC	9:30AM NPC 9:30AM POH 11AM Bible 7:00PM AA 7:00 PM B&G	8:30 Infant Group 9:30AM NPC 5:00 PM POH 7:00PM Choir 7:00PM Bible	5:00PM YWCA 7:00PM AA	8:30AM YWCA
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
10AM Worship 11:15AM Fellowship	9:30AM NPC 6:00 PM Meditation	9:30AM NPC	9:30AM NPC 9:30AM POH 11AM Bible 7:00PM AA	8:30 Infant Group 9:30AM NPC 4:00 PM C&V 5:00 PM POH 7:00PM Choir 7:00PM Bible	5:00PM YWCA 7:00PM AA	8:30AM YWCA
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
10AM Worship 11:15AM Fellowship	Presidents' Day 6:00 PM Meditation		Ash Wednesday 9:30AM POH 11AM Bible 7:00PM AA 7:00 PM B&G 7:00 PM Ash Wednesday Service	5:00 PM POH 7:00PM Choir 7:00PM Bible	5:00PM YWCA 7:00PM AA	8:30AM YWCA
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
10AM Worship 11:15AM Fellowship	9:30AM NPC 6:00 PM Meditation	9:30AM NPC	9:30AM NPC 9:30AM POH 11AM Bible 7:00PM AA	8:30 Infant Group 9:30AM NPC 5:00 PM POH 7:00PM Choir 7:00PM Bible 7:00PM ECM	5:00PM YWCA 7:00PM AA	8:30AM YWCA

NOTES:

NPC – Northampton Parents Center

ECM – Elected Core Ministry

POH – Pastor Office Hours

Bible – Bible Study

B&G – Building & Grounds