EDWARDS CHURCH of NORTHAMPTON

THE SPIRE

EDWARDS CHURCH of NORTHAMPTON
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

297 Main Street, Northampton, Massachusetts 01060 **Vol. 37 No. 8 September 2026**

As the Seasons Turn, the Old Becomes the New

"As you read this, the traffic patterns have changed as schools are now in session. September is a month of season-change. We will have some really hot days and some really cold days - perhaps even a frost. The decrease in the amount of daylight becomes more noticeable. In response, we start carrying a jacket or sweatshirt when we go out. We adapt to the environmental seasons and the cultural seasons. We go through many seasons annually. We also experience longer seasons in our lives: when the house is full of children – when it is empty; the season of full workdays and the season of retirement; seasons of health and seasons of sickness. Sometimes the season changes abruptly, but usually the change is slow. This congregation is going through a season change."

I wrote those words last September, and they seem true today. A year ago, the Transition Team was just starting. Now a year later, the Search Team is diligently doing their work with the church's profile being circulated and clergy submitting their profiles to be considered. We are transitioning from the season of asking questions to the season of making things happen. As you read this edition of the Spire, you will see so many things happening and so many opportunities to participate in the community.

I'm really excited about all we have planned for September! From our pre-September Friends Dinner, 8/28 and Back-to-School Blessings, 8/30 to our first ever in-person hybrid worship on 9/27, when we join congregations around the Southern New England United Church of Christ to worship together through the internet.

As we move into the next season may we remember to keep doing all the essentials of spiritual care as we worship, study, play and serve together. We are here to support and care for each other and the beautiful world God created for us. May grace abound as we enjoy the change of season.

- Rev. Jennifer Geary



Worship in September

August 30 – Edwards Sanctuary
Back to School Blessings
Exodus 3:1-15; Matthew 16:21-28
Greeter:
Usher: Jon Dietrich
Liturgist: Rev. Jennifer Geary
Reader:
Fellowship: Carolyn Dion & Ella Stocker

September 7 – Communion
Gather in the name of Jesus
Exodus 12:1-14; Romans 13:8-14; Matthew 18:15-20
Greeter:
Usher: Marc Waller
Liturgist: Stefanie Adair
Reader:
Fellowship: Nancy Flickinger & Michele Whiting

September 13 – Look Park - all ages worship and Church Picnic
Beginnings
Genesis 1:1-2:1
Greeter:
Usher: Marc Waller
Liturgist:
Reader:
Fellowship: Susan Anderson & Debbie Davis

September 20 – Presenting Bibles, Pinwheels for Peace
A Generous God
Psalm 145:1-8; Matthew 20:1-16
Greeter:
Usher: Jon Dietrich
Liturgist:
Reader:
Fellowship: Sandra Rossi & Michele Whiting

September 27 – SNEUCC Sunday
Hybrid Worship with the Annual Meeting of the SNEUCC
Ecclesiastes 4:12
Greeter:
Usher: Ron Korza
Liturgist:
Reader: Kathy Korza
Fellowship: Sarah Briggs & Kathy Korza

Pastoral Care & Office Hours

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/text my cell phone. My open office hours for the month of September are Mondays 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM Tuesdays 10:00-11:30 AM and Thursdays 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM. – Rev. Geary

Team Meetings in September

9/2 3PM Investments Team (Edwards Room)
9/10 4PM Care & Visitation Team (Zoom)
9/14 7PM Elected Core Ministry (Zoom)
9/16 7PM Building & Grounds Team (Zoom)
9/20 11AM Outreach Team (Edwards Room)
9/30 7PM Building & Grounds Team (Zoom)



Worship Returns to the Edwards Sanctuary
Sunday, August 30, 2026

Back to School Blessings is the worship theme for the 5th Sunday of August. We will gather in our own sanctuary to mark the seasonal shift for all those associated with education. All society notices this shift as traffic patterns and schedules change. Join us to mark and bless this moment in time. If you are involved in education in anyway, bring a token to be blessed, such as a backpack, briefcase, binder, broom, bandage, whistle, paper, calculator, safety vest, etc.



All-Ages Worship & Church Picnic
September 13th, 10a – 2p

Look Park Dow Pavilion (http://www.lookpark.org/)
A special all-ages worship service has been planned for Sunday, September 13th as we gather at Look Park for the annual Church Picnic. Everyone, young and old are encouraged to join in the fun. All our Spiritual Formation staff will be there to greet you.

Our service will be interactive - perfect for all ages. The church will provide main dish, salad, and drinks. Please bring a dessert to share. Invite your friends and family. We will gather at the Dow Pavilion near the rest rooms. Worship begins at 10 AM, followed by lunch and then time to play and enjoy each other and the park. If you need a ride, please contact the church office.

Admission to the park is by season pass OR mention "Edwards Church" to the gate attendant and you shall pass (Edwards will pay the fees after the Picnic). We look forward to seeing you there!!

Children's Bibles to be Presented - Sunday, September 20th



We will be presenting Bibles to all children who are in grades 3-6 during worship on September 20th. If you know of any child in the community who would benefit from this gift, please share this information or let the church office know so we can invite them to be present. Each recipient will be given a special focus verse in addition to their Bible.

Please sign up to receive a Bible:
https://edwardschurch.breezechms.com/form/c4a5d6



Exciting Changes to Spiritual Formation for Children - Sunday, September 20th

Our Spiritual Formation program is growing so we are making some changes to meet the need. We are excited to welcome back all three staff members from last year, Shannon, Edie & Denisse as well as former staff member Zoë who was away for a year studying in Italy. We will also have at least one adult from the congregation downstairs each week.

We plan to have three separate spaces for children's Spiritual Formation programing. The Nursery, a dedicated space for those under the age of 3, will be available every Sunday and will be open to those age 5 and under when regular classes are not in session.

We will offer two classrooms. One for pre-readers, (mostly ages 3-7) and readers (mostly ages 8-12). These grouping are flexible to meet the needs of each child. A new curriculum that gives teachers more support and flexibility will be taken for a test drive this fall. Feedback from parents will be appreciated.

When classes are not in session we encourage older children to participate in worship. New materials will be available in the prayground area at the front of the sanctuary to be used at the table or taken back to their seats.

Registration for classes opens on September 13th at Look Park. The first day of classes is September 20th.

Church Directory

Church Directories are available to all those whose information is in the directory. Many have been given out at worship services. You may pick one up at the church office. They will not be emailed to maintain privacy. The Directory will be available on the Church Website under the password protected "member" tab. If you have not yet, please send in a picture for the directory. This will be helpful to new members and also your new minister.



Scholarships Available

The Edwards Church Scholarship Team is currently accepting scholarship applications on a rolling basis. Applications are welcome throughout the year and decisions will be made quarterly with awards to follow. To access the application form, please click here.

Please sign and date your application. If you have previously applied please include a new essay/update for the team. This fund is open to all regardless of age, religion, national origin, sexual or gender expression.

Did you know there is a statewide Interfaith Reparations group?

The Reparations Interfaith Coalition (RIC) is a Massachusetts-based alliance of ethical and faith communities committed to pursuing reparative justice for Black and Indigenous peoples. The group's website has a wonderful resource page you can find here: https://www.reparationsma.org/resources. There are articles, podcasts, videos and more. Topics range from the Christian call to reparations to the history of slavery & institutional racism and unpacking the multiple prongs of reparations. It's a great place to start to familiarize yourself with the topic of reparations.

The local Northampton Interfaith Reparations Roundtable (NIRR) leans into the leadership the statewide group offers. You are welcome to attend the local meetings which take place monthly. Meetings are typically in person during the warmer months and online in winter. Talk with Laura Frogameni, Edwards Church's representative to the Roundtable if you have questions - and especially if you want to come to a meeting, two or more! Our local group welcomes multiple members from each faith community - join Laura, get to know folks from other faith communities and learn ways to be a part of the repair process.

Roof Repair Work & Parking Access

Please Note: Mahan Slate Roofing Co. will be onsite next week to complete important roof repair work.

Staging equipment will be set up in the rear parking lot, and parking access will be limited on the following dates:

- **Tuesday, September 1**
- **Wednesday, September 2**
- **Thursday, September 3**
- **Friday, September 4**

Thank you for your patience and cooperation as we work to complete this important maintenance project.





Quilt Team Update

We are starting a new quilt and welcome your help. It will take about 10-15 minutes of your time. We supply the fabric pieces and do all the sewing. You supply the creativity. On 3 Sundays, starting at the end of September, we will set up a table and supply hundreds of fabric squares for you to choose from to design a 4-patch square. More details to come closer to when we start the project. We will need #640 blocks for this quilt so we truly welcome your help!

Edwards Church of Northampton
Call to a
Special Congregational Meeting
Sunday, September 20, 2026

To the Members of
Edwards Church of Northampton,
Hampshire County, Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

You are hereby notified that a Special Congregational meeting has been called by the Elected Core Ministry to be held on the 20th day of September, 2026 immediately following worship at approximately 11:00 AM for the following purposes, to wit:

Article 1. To approve the transfer of a sum of money from the Investment Fund to the Capital Reserve Fund for the purpose of boiler replacement to heat the church. (ECM recommends $75,000)

Leon Drzewianowski, Moderator
August 26, 2026

Online Bible Study
Wednesdays 11 AM– via 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. Or simply join at the appropriate time here.

SNEUCC Joint Worship

We will be joining all of the churches of the conference through simulcast worship on Sunday, September 27th. 10 AM in our sanctuary. The Conference choir will sing and the preacher will be the Rev. Rafael Warnock. More information to follow in the Wednesday Word.

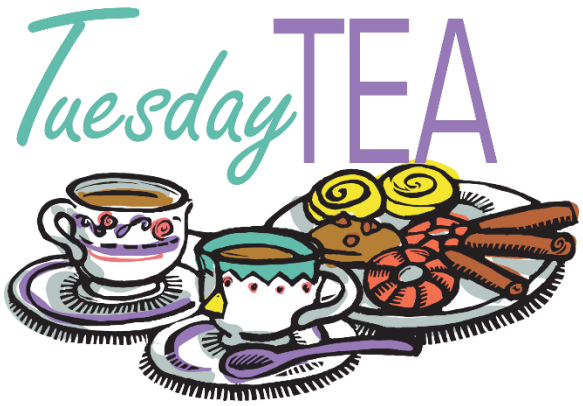


International Day of Peace September 21

Today, amidst staggering volatility, the search for peace feels overwhelming—but it has never been more urgent. Peace is more than the absence of war; it is the foundation necessary to collectively tackle humanity's challenges. It is the lived experience of safety, dignity, opportunities and cooperation in our daily lives.

To honor this day, we will be making pinwheels and decorating our sidewalk with chalk. Sunday, September 20th is a full day with the distribution of Bibles, the beginning of Spiritual Formation classes and a brief congregational meeting. But before or after all that, you are encouraged to go outside and write or draw messages of peace on the sidewalk and/or to make a pinwheel to post outside the church or to take home and put on your own lawn.

Pinwheels for Peace is an international art installation project started in 2005 by art teachers Ann Ayers and Ellen McMillan as a way for students to express their feelings about peace, tolerance, and harmony.



Tuesday Tea

Join us for **Tuesday Tea on Tuesday, September 22nd at 3:00 PM in the Edwards Room.** Come take a break, relax, and enjoy a cup of tea and good conversation with friends and fellow members of the Edwards Church community.

Everyone is welcome. We hope you'll join us!



Rev. Dr. Raphael G. Warnock
Speech: Saturday, Sept. 26, 4:00 PM
DCU Center in Worcester, MA

Since 2005, Rev. Dr. Warnock has served as the Senior Pastor of the Historic Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia - spiritual home of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. He became the first African American elected to the United States Senate from the state of Georgia in 2021.

Dr. Warnock is known for viewing his religious tradition as a bridge rather than a weapon, centered on love and human dignity. He teaches that true faith requires caring for the hungry, the sick, and the stranger rather than enacting policies that hurt low-income families.

Tickets to his address on Sept. 26 are $35 to attend in person or to watch the livestream: https://www.sneucc.org/warnock-tickets

Music Director Update

Hello Edwards Church community!

I'm thrilled to be back in our sanctuary this Sunday! This week, our staff singers and I will be providing music for the service, and our choir will begin singing the following Sunday, along with our regular Thursday evening rehearsals, starting Thursday September 3rd. The Edwards Church choir is welcoming and open to all, so if you know someone who might be interested in singing with us, please put them in touch with me!

Sophie, Rivka, and I had a busy and wonderful summer. In June, we taught a madrigal singing workshop at Montestrutto Castle in the Aosta Valley in Italy, and performed concerts with the La Folia string orchestra in Zurich, Switzerland. We spent July in Sophie's hometown of Annecy, France, where our daughter Rivka got lots of wonderful time with her grandparents and aunts.

August has been a joy as I've helped lead services with Sarah Buteux at First Churches, but I'm very eager to be back in our own sanctuary. I'm looking forward to another great year of music-making and worship with all of you! – Adam



Sunday Worship Opportunities

Sunday worship at Edwards Church is a wonderful opportunity to share in community, connect with others, and help create a meaningful worship experience. There are many ways to participate, and now is a great time to sign up!

Interested in helping with Sunday worship? We'd love to hear from you. Whether you're new to volunteering or have participated before, there's a place for you.

Interested? Please reach out to the church office at info@edwardschurchnorthampton.org or 413-584-5500. Thank you for being part of the Edwards Church community!

Activities for our Teens and Tweens

The following service projects are being done by youth from our congregation, St. John's, First Churches, the Unitarian Society and St. Philips. At this time, we do not have an adult volunteer to accompany our youth for these events. If you can be that volunteer, please speak to Rev. Geary.

- Saturday, September 26th - Workday at Ashmere in Chesterfield.
- Sunday, October 25th - Gleaning with Rachel's Table
- Sunday, Nov 22nd - Thanksgiving Food Drive for Easthampton Survival Ctr
- Sunday, Dec 6th - Host Cathedral in the Night at First Churches

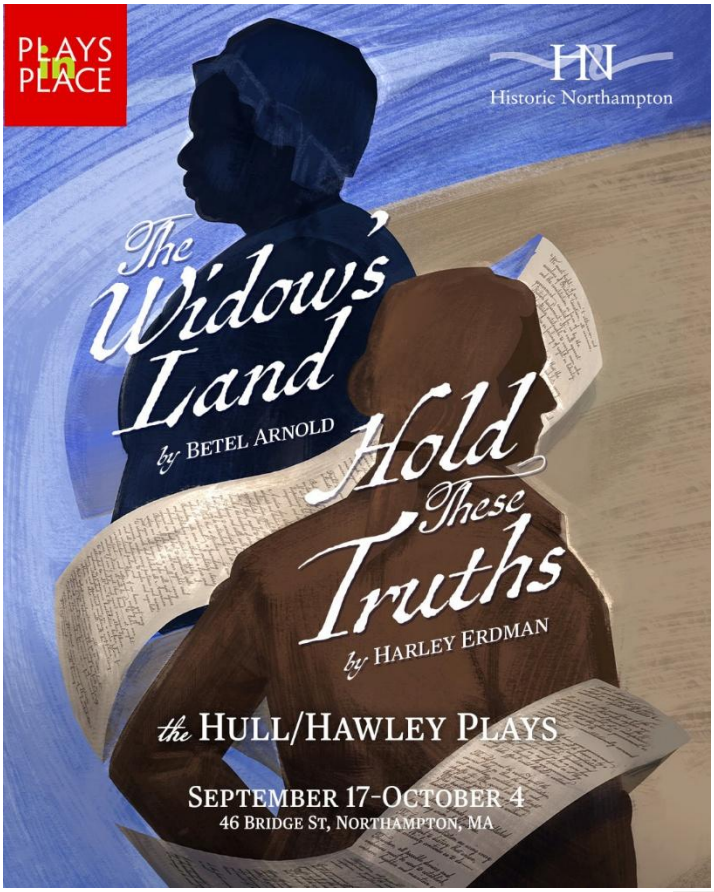


A Time for Reflection: Prayer Labyrinth

On **Monday, September 21, from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM**, the Prayer Labyrinth will be available at Edwards Church in observance of the **International Day of Peace** and on **Tuesday, September 22nd from 9:00 Am to 4:00 PM** for the **Autumn Equinox**.

As we welcome the changing season, we invite you to pause, reflect, and find a moment of peace. The labyrinth offers a quiet opportunity for prayer, meditation, contemplation, or simply a chance to slow down and be present.

Please come and walk, reflect, and reconnect. All are welcome.





Do you enjoy wood working??

The worship team needs several "block and dowel" stands for the September 13th service at Look Park. If you are able to help them by making some stands, please be in touch with Kathy Korza or Sandra Rossi.

Learn more, performance times and ticket information here: https://www.historicnorthampton.org/the-hull-hawley-plays.html



Please Note: Church Offices will be closed on Monday, September 7th in observation of Labor Day.



Gratitude Corner

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

Thank you to:

- Mark Dion for providing First Aid, CPR and AED training to our church staff and members. We have 4 staff members and 2 church members officially certified for the next two years!
- Northampton Parents Center and church staff who helped move furniture downstairs for our annual floor waxing.
- The Building & Grounds Team for keeping up with important projects and building maintenance.
- Thanks to all the volunteers that make our teams successful within our walls and out into the wider community.



SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Paul Bertram
Pamela Cook
Phillip Cooper
Elizabeth Davis
Dorimar Diaz
Carolyn Gray
Jennifer Geary
William Hogan Jr.
Eli Hutchison
Kathy Korza
Nora Letendre
Ruth Steyn
James Young



Join us for supper and fun on September 25 at 6:00 PM in Addis Hall. Bring some friends along too. Food is provided and a $5 donation is requested to cover costs. Have a favorite game? Bring it along!

Let us know you're coming so we can plan quantities:

https://edwardschurch.breezechms.com/form/356d4f

Northampton Parents Center Updates

Northampton Parents Center
SOAPY CLEAN UP & STOCK UP PARTY!

THURS, SEPTEMBER 3RD 9:30AM-11:30AM

Bring a change of clothing in case kids get soapy and wet!
We will be sponging down the riding toys, cleaning the little toys, and collecting supplies to get us stocked up for playgroups!

WISHLIST

- NAPKINS & PAPER TOWELS
- HAND SANITIZING GEL
- RICE FOR RICE TABLE
- PAPER PLATES
- CREAM CHEESE
- GROUND COFFEE & TEA
- NUT-FREE SNACKS & FRUIT
- FRANGRENCE-FREE BABY WIPES

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.
We are wheelchair accessible!
The closest PVTA bus stop is the Academy of Music

Northampton Parents Center
Fall/Winter Schedule
WEEKLY 9/8/26-12/17/26



- **Monday** — INDOORS [AT] NPC
- **Tuesday** — OUTDOORS [AT] THE HAMPSHIRE REGIONAL YMCA PLAYGROUND
- **Wednesday** — INDOORS [AT] NPC
- **Thursday** — INDOORS [AT] NPC

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

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

INFANT GROUP STARTS AT 8:30!

FREE & ALL WELCOME!

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. We are wheelchair accessible!
The closest PVTA bus stop is the Academy of Music

Northampton Parents Center
Early Bird INFANT GROUP
THURSDAYS @ 8:30AM



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

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.
We are wheelchair accessible!
The closest PVTA bus stop is the Academy of Music

September 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
		10:00AM POH 7:00 PM GA	11AM Bible 3PM Investments 7:00PM AA	8:30 AM NPC Clean-Up Party 5:00 PM POH 6:30 PM AA 7:00 PM Choir	5:00PM YWCA 7:00PM AA	8:30AM YWCA
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
10AM Worship	Labor Day – Church Offices Closed	9:30AM NPC 10:00AM POH 7:00 PM GA	9:30AM NPC 11AM Bible 7:00PM AA	8:30AM NPC 4PM C&V 5:00 PM POH 6:30 PM AA 7:00 PM Choir	5:00PM YWCA 7:00PM AA	8:30AM YWCA
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
10AM Worship Dow Pavilion Look Park	9:30AM NPC 1:00 PM POH 7:00PM ECM	9:30AM NPC 10:00AM POH 7:00 PM GA	9:30AM NPC 11AM Bible 7:00PM AA 7:00PM B&G	8:30AM NPC 5:00 PM POH 6:30 PM AA 7:00 PM Choir	5:00PM YWCA 7:00PM AA	8:30AM YWCA
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
10AM Worship	9:30AM NPC 1:00 PM POH	9:30AM NPC 10:00AM POH 3:00PM Tuesday Tea 7:00 PM GA	9:30AM NPC 11AM Bible 7:00PM AA	8:30AM NPC 5:00 PM POH 6:30 PM AA 7:00 PM Choir	5:00PM YWCA 6:00PM Fourth Friday Friends 7:00PM AA	8:30AM YWCA
27	28	29	30			
10AM Joint Worship w/ UCC SNEC	9:30AM NPC 1:00 PM POH	9:30AM NPC 10:00AM POH 7:00 PM GA	9:30AM NPC 11AM Bible 7:00PM AA 7:00PM B&G			

NOTES:

NPC – Northampton Parents Center	ECM – Elected Core Ministry
POH – Pastor Office Hours	C&V – Care & Visitation
Bible – Bible Study	
B&G – Building & Grounds	