EDWARDS CHURCH of NORTHAMPTON

THE SPIRE

EDWARDS CHURCH of NORTHAMPTON
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

297 Main Street, Northampton, Massachusetts 01060 **Vol. 37 No. 9 October 2026**

Saint Francis composed this song of praise in 1225, and it is considered the first poem in vernacular Italian. Pope Francis' 2015 encyclical "Laudato Si" takes its name and inspiration from Saint Francis' work. The title means "Praise Be to You" in medieval Italian, a phrase that is repeated throughout the Canticle.

The Canticle of the Sun

Most High, all-powerful, good Lord,
Yours are the praises, the glory, the honor, and all blessings.
To You alone, Most High, do they belong,
and no mortal is worthy to mention Your name.

Praised be You, my Lord, with all your creatures;
especially Brother Sun, who is the day, and through whom You give us light.
And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendor,
and bears a likeness to You, Most High One.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars; in heaven You formed them clear and precious and beautiful.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Wind,
and through the air, cloudy and serene,
and every kind of weather through which
You give sustenance to Your creatures.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Water,
which is very useful and humble and precious and chaste.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Fire,
through whom You light the night;
and he is beautiful and playful and robust and strong.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Mother Earth,
who sustains us and governs us and who produces varied fruits with colored flowers and herbs.

Praised be You, my Lord,
through those who give pardon for Your love,
and bear infirmity and tribulation.
Blessed are those who endure in peace
for by You, Most High, they shall be crowned.

Praised be You, my Lord,
through our Sister Bodily Death,
from whom no living man can escape.
Woe to those who die in mortal sin.
Blessed are those whom death will find in Your most holy will,
for the second death shall do them no harm.

Praise and bless my Lord,
and give Him thanks,
and serve Him with great humility.

Amen.

Worship in October

Oct 4 – World Communion
Philippians 3:4b-14
Matthew 21:33-46
Greeter: Debbie Davis
Usher: Mark Dion
Liturgist: Stefanie Adair
Reader:
Fellowship: Laura Frogameni, Michele Whiting

Oct 11 – Banquet of Love
Isaiah 25:1-9
Philippians 4:1-9
Greeter:
Usher: Justin Chick
Liturgist:
Reader:
Fellowship: Susan Anderson & Sarah Briggs
Flowers: Sally Griggs

Oct 18 – Rev. Joanne Graves
Greeter:
Usher: Marc Waller
Liturgist:
Reader: Kathy Korza
Fellowship: Debbie Davis & Michele Whiting
Flowers: Mark Dion

Oct 25 - Mission Partners
Leviticus 19:1-2, 15-18
Matthew 22:34-46
Greeter: Mark Dion
Usher: Carolyn Dion
Liturgist: Kathy Korza
Reader:
Fellowship: Susan & Brian Swift
Flowers: Kathy Korza

Nov 1 – All Saints, DST ends
Revelation 7:9-17
Matthew 5:1-12
Greeter:
Usher: Jon Dietrich
Liturgist:
Reader:
Fellowship: Ella Stocker & Michele Whiting

Church Field Trip – October 3!

The Unitarian Society of Northampton & Florence's Racial Justice Team invites us to join them on **October 3, 11:00 AM at Historic Northampton** for a private talk and Q&A with Emma Bresnan, Museum Educator & Programming Coordinator.

Talk will be centered on the current exhibit **Slavery and Freedom in Northampton, 1654 - 1783**. RSVP to Laura Frogameni 413-270-0287 text/call.

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 October 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 October

10/4 4PM Search Team
10/8 4PM Care & Visitation Team (Zoom)
10/10 1PM Search Team
10/14 7PM Building & Grounds Team (Zoom)
10/18 11AM Outreach Team (Edwards Room)
10/21 7PM Elected Core Ministry (Zoom)
10/26 7PM Finance Team (Zoom)
10/28 7PM Building & Grounds Team (Zoom)



Update from the Search Team

Since June, the Search Team has been meeting frequently. With Jennifer's guidance, we have familiarized ourselves with the extensive search process, created a covenant to guide our work, determined the responsibilities for tasks and roles within our team and generally made decisions about how we will approach our Search. We have met with leadership from the Southern New England UCC conference and reviewed, revised, and refined the church profile that was initially put together by the Transition Team. Thank you so much to everyone who contributed to that profile and especially the Transition Team, we are grateful for your thoughtful work! With the profile now posted and our interview questions ready, we've begun receiving profiles from potential candidates. Just in the past few weeks we held a mock interview to better prepare ourselves for this next phase of the Search process and are reading and reviewing the profiles we have received to prayerfully discern candidates for the first round of interviews. We hope to begin these interviews soon.

As we continue this work, we ask for your respect for the confidentiality of the process. We know you are curious! We promise that we will update you whenever we reach a transition point in our search. In the meantime, please keep us in your prayers - and not just the Search Team but also for the candidates and especially for the pastor that God has in mind for Edwards, that they might hear God's voice and answer the call.

With thanks,

Ella, Floyd, Janet, Mariana, Justin, Ron, and Stefanie

Church Office Closure



Please note that the Edwards Church offices will be closed on **Thursday, October 1st, and Friday, October 2nd**. The church office will reopen with regular hours on **Monday, October 5th**.

Thank you for your understanding, and we hope you have a wonderful weekend!

Worship Volunteer Opportunities

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

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!

October Gleaning Opportunities

Help rescue fresh local produce, get it to people who need it and work to end hunger!

- **Thursday, October 1 • 11:00 AM–1:00 PM**
  Apple Gleaning in Enfield, CT

Registration and additional information are available through Rachel's Table of Western Massachusetts. View the full calendar for upcoming opportunities and sign-up here.

St. John's Bicentennial Celebration

Please join St. John's for a special **Bicentennial Weekend Celebration** marking 200 years of ministry and community on October 3rd & 4th.

See event flyer for more information at the end of the Spire!

Our Whole Lives (OWL) Sexuality Education for High Schoolers

OWL is a collaboration between UU and UCC churches to teach values-based sexuality education to congregants of all ages. OWL models and teaches caring, compassion, respect, and justice. It helps youth address their attitudes, values, and feelings about themselves, their sexuality, and their relationship with others, while empowering them to advocate for themselves and others and develop healthy relationships. This class will most likely meet on Sundays from 1-2:30, except on long weekends when it conflicts with other youth activities. Parent and caregiver orientation is currently scheduled for Sunday, October 4, from 2-4 pm.

- Learn more here: High School OWL Information & Workshop Titles.
- FMI: Jessica at dre@uunorthampton.org
- Register here: https://usnf.churchcenter.com/people/forms/1265994.

Volunteer at Cathedral in the Night

Join us on **Sunday, October 4th** as we volunteer with **Cathedral in the Night**, a welcoming community ministry that serves people experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity.

Whether you have volunteered before or are joining us for the first time, we would love to have you participate. It's a meaningful opportunity to connect with others and help support our neighbors in the community.

Questions? Please contact Debbie Davis.

Manna Celebrates 40 Years

Manna Community Kitchen is celebrating 40 years of serving and supporting the Northampton community!

The 40th "Mannaversary" will take place on **Wednesday, October 14, from 5:00–7:00 PM at the Smith College Conference Center**. The evening will celebrate Manna's history while looking toward its future of providing nutritious meals, community, and essential services to local neighbors.

The celebration will feature inspiring speakers, including State Representative Lindsay Sabadosa and members of the Manna community, along with food from several local restaurants. Thanks to generous sponsors, the event is free to attend. Guests will have an opportunity to make a gift toward Manna's $100,000 fundraising goal.

For 40 years, Manna has helped nourish our community - not only through meals, but by creating a welcoming place where people can find connection, dignity, and support. See the event flyer below for more information and to RSVP.

Learn more and register for this event here: https://manna.salsalabs.org/Mannas40thMannaversaryFundraiser/index.html

Pastor Geary Away

Pastor Geary will be out of the office from Thursday, October 15th to Thursday, October 22nd.

If you need immediate assistance please contact the church office at 413-584-5500 or by email at info@edwardschurchnorthampton.org. Thank you!

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.

Monday Meditation Group

Monday Meditation Group is back! Please join us on Mondays at 6:00 PM in the Edwards Room. No experience necessary!

A Monthly Message from Edwards's Representative to the Northampton Interfaith Reparations Roundtable (NIRR), Laura Frogameni:



Did you know that there are six Northampton faith communities with representatives on the NIRR? There are! You are always invited to join in the meetings and get to know your faith neighbors. I'll post meeting notifications in the Weekly Message and Sunday Bulletin. If you'd like to be added to the calendar notes for every meeting, just let me know.

Some of the other faith communities have statements about reparations. Below is the one our Jewish neighbors at CBI have adopted. I'll share other ones in the months to come. They all have similarities and differences, some focus more on one aspect of reparations and some include a broader anti-racism lens.

Congregation B'nai Israel Reparations Working Group (original)

The Reparations Working Group (RWG), a subgroup of the Tikkun Olam Committee of Congregation B'nai Israel, believes that doing repair (*teshuvah*) for the harmful effects of slavery and post-slavery racism is a racial justice priority for our Jewish community. Our current work has three prongs: anti-racism and reparations education within our community, collaboration with the Northampton Interfaith Reparations Roundtable to hold the city accountable to implementing racial repair, and working with our board to build a culture of reparations within our institution. Contact us: reparationscbi@gmail.com.

In the coming months I'll also share some reflections on Frequently Asked Questions about reparations and repair initiatives. Please submit your FAQs to me at laurafrogameni@gmail.com. My best to you all, Laura

Sunday, November 1, 2026



Electronics and Us

Very few of us would want to cut our grass with scissors or a scythe; fewer still would want to wash our clothes down by the river. Machines have improved our lives in so many ways and brought frustration and consternation in so many others. In an effort to modernize church operations from pen and paper to computerized database, we bought into Breeze/Tithe.ly for all our data management. This has improved our email communications, streamlined sign-ups and helped us create a new church directory. Beginning next Sunday, there will be a "kiosk" in fellowship to make it easier for folks to sign up for volunteer opportunities.

This November when you are asked to make a financial faith promise, you will be asked to use the tithe.ly system rather than a paper pledge card. Moving our pledging on-line provides multiple ways to make good on your pledge. Giving via credit card, setting up recurring payments from your bank account, donating via check or cash. It also means you will be able to track your giving. Paper pledge cards will also be available.

Another aspect of this new system is that we can communicate via text to those who prefer it. When completing your pledge commitment for 2027, you will also be asked to give the church permission to communicate via text. This is not an obligation but an option.

Over the next month, there will be multiple opportunities to learn how to access the Tithe.ly system so that when pledge time rolls around we will all be ready.

I personally do not use the internet for many financial services but do for some. I understand folk's reluctance and honor those who choose less internet instead of more. I will pledge on-line so I can track my pledge but will continue to give via check. At the same time, I understand that my children all use the internet to pay for most everything. Part of making our faith accessible to another generation is by using systems that are familiar to them. Our faith in God's providence transcends all the inventions and changes humans make. Part of demonstrating that, is to trust that new systems don't diminish God's power in our lives.

Let's pray for each other and the electronics as we make this change. - Jennifer





Fourth Friday Friends & Fun

Join us for supper and fun on October 23rd 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:

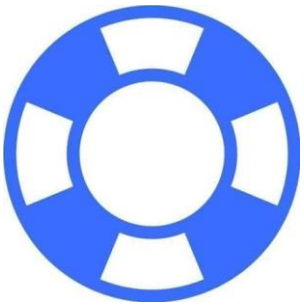
Quilt Team Update

In September, Edwards Church started another scrap quilt project using 2 ½" fabric squares. We have done this three times in the past few years with the resulting quilts going to the Friends of Children youth as well as a wall hanging for the Edwards Room. This project will benefit the Cooley Dickinson Hospital Hospice program. Many of us have benefitted from having Hospice support our loved ones at end-of-life and care for the families, too. These throw sized quilts will be given to patients receiving in-patient care - a visual and tactile gift of warmth and love from the Edwards Church community.



Ten minutes to make a difference and a quilt block. Pick 4 fabric squares that you love and the quilt team will use your block to make a comfort quilt for someone being supported by the Cooley Dickinson Hospice program. After worship, look for the Quilt Team at the back of the sanctuary. Our goal is #192 blocks so there is no limit if you want to make more than one! No experience needed. All ages welcome!

Out of the Darkness



Team Edwards/First Churches is excited to announce St. John's Episcopal Church will be joining the team for the 2026 Greater Springfield Out of the Darkness Community Walk in support of suicide prevention.

The new team is now named **Power of Three** to represent the three churches on the team.

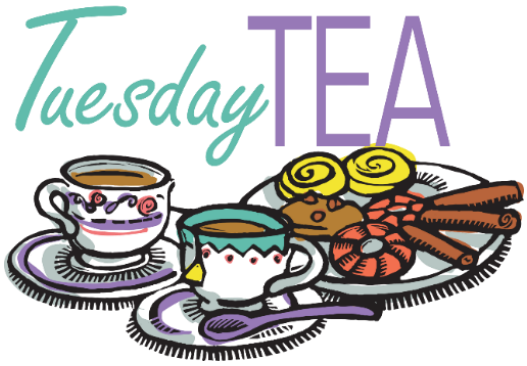
The walk will take place on Saturday, Oct. 24 at School Street Park in Agawam. Anyone who wishes to walk can sign up any time between now and the day of the walk. Check-in begins at 9:00 AM and the event takes place at 10:30 AM. Walkers are advised to meet up with Team Captain Kristin Rivers at the registration table to gather everyone together. She can also assist with signing up walkers ahead of Oct. 24. Donations in cash, checks or online are accepted. To donate online, visit https://afspwalks.donordrive.com/teams/400643.

For more information, contact Kristin at krivers2723@gmail.com.

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.



Tuesday Tea

Join us for **Tuesday Tea on Tuesday, October 27nd 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!

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.

- 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

NEF Adult Spelling Bee

Put your spelling skills to the test at the upcoming Northampton Education Foundation Adult Spelling Bee! This fun community event at BOMBYX on Wednesday, October 21st at 6:00 PM is a great opportunity to gather with others, enjoy some friendly competition, and support education in our community.

If you're interested in putting together a team to represent Edwards Church, please contact the church office: info@edwardschurchnorthampton.org.



All Saints Day Commemoration

On Sunday, November 1, 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. Please get any names you would like listed in the bulletin to the church office by October 28th.



Recent roof work at the church. No more leaks!

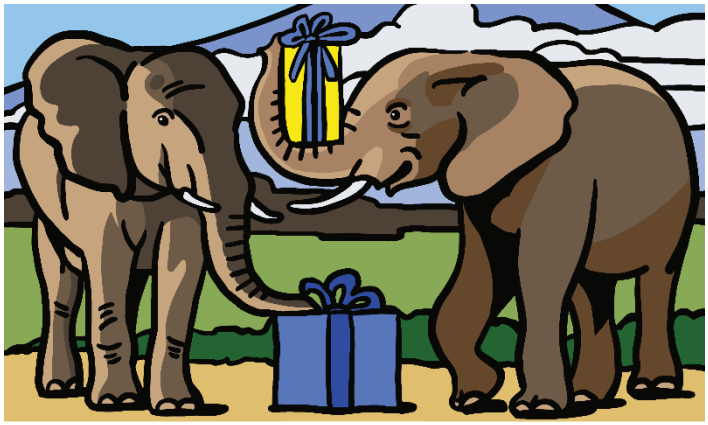


Gratitude Corner

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

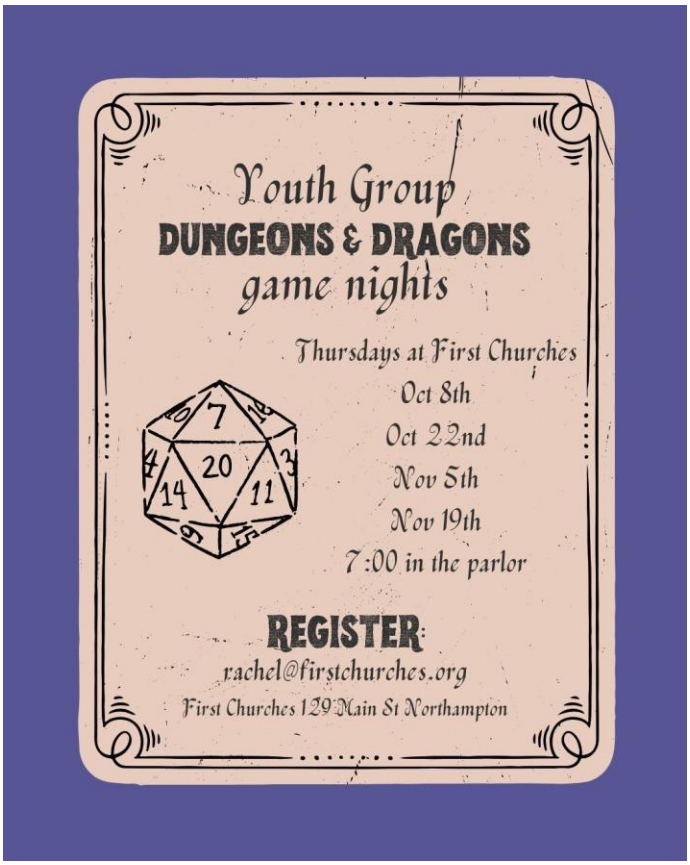
Thank you to:

- Rev. Geary for pulling together so many great events including Fourth Friday Friends, Tuesday Tea and Pinwheels for Peace.
- Mark & Carolyn Dion for organizing the food for the church picnic.
- The Worship Team of Sandra & Kathy for the lovely Creation Celebration.
- Our Spiritual Formation staff – Zoë, Shannon, Denisse, Edie.
- Kristen for organizing the Suicide Prevention walk.
- Laura for organizing the Historic Northampton Field Trip.



OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

Jude Almeida-Merrell	Sidney Letendre
Floyd Cheung	Chuck McCullagh
Justin Chick	Robert Saalfrank
Nancy Flickinger	Cynthia Stanton
Daisy Chastain	Susan Swift





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The clergy & vestry of St. John's invite you to join us for

St. John's Bicentennial Weekend!

Celebrating 200 years of community, faith, and radical welcome

October 3 & 4, 2026

event schedule on reverse of invitation

Kindly RSVP by September 18th:
google form (preferred) bit.ly/4hMjvuF
email operations@stjohnsnorthampton.org
or call 413-584-1757

48 Elm Street, Northampton, MA
www.stjohnsnorthampton.org

Saturday, October 3rd

3 pm – Open House
Tour the building and grounds and learn about St. John's history and current ministries

5 pm – Community Gathering
City, community, and religious leaders will speak about St. John's impact on our community

6:15 pm – Tapas & Dessert
Refreshments and opportunities to connect

Sunday, October 4th

8 am – Spoken Holy Eucharist
with special guest preacher Bishop Jennifer Baskerville-Burrows of the Diocese of Indianapolis

9 am – Adult & Youth Education Hour

10 am – Festive Holy Eucharist with Music
with special guest preacher Bishop Jennifer Baskerville-Burrows of the Diocese of Indianapolis

11:30 am – Refreshments in the Sanctuary

MANNAVERSARY! 2026 40 YEARS OF COMMUNITY

You're Invited to Manna's

40th Mannaversary

Honoring Our Past, Feeding our Future

Wednesday, October 14th, 2026
5:00 PM - 7:00 PM
Smith College Conference Center
Northampton, MA
Menu Curated by James Beard Semifinalist Unmi Abkin

Scan to RSVP

Please RSVP by September 30, 2026

Thanks to our generous sponsors, this event is free of charge. All guests will be asked to make a meaningful gift

Questions? Contact Manna's Development Director at kaitlyn@mannanorthampton.org

MANNA community kitchen

Northampton Parents Center

SAVE THE DATE!

PUTTIN' PUMPKINS FUNDRAISER & LOOK PARK'S FALL FESTIVAL!

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 24TH

NO RAIN DATE

PUTTIN' PUMPKINS 10-5

LOOK PARK FALL FESTIVAL 12-8:45
LIVE MUSIC VENDOR FAIR
FOOD TRUCKS AND MORE!

PRESENTED BY GREENFIELD SAVINGS BANK! Greenfield Savings Bank

TO SPONSOR THE EVENT CONTACT NORTHAMPTONPARENTSCENTER[AT]GMAIL.COM

October 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
				Church Offices Closed 8:30AM NPC 6:30 PM AA 7:00 PM Choir	*Church Offices Closed* 5:00PM YWCA 7:00PM AA	8:30AM YWCA 11AM Church Field Trip
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
10AM Worship 11:15 AM Fellowship 4PM Search Team 4PM Cathedral in the Night	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	8:30AM NPC 4:00 PM C&V 5:00 PM POH 6:30 PM AA 7:00 PM Choir	5:00PM YWCA 7:00PM AA	8:30AM YWCA 1PM Search Team
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
10AM Worship 11:15 AM Fellowship	Columbus Day	9:30AM NPC 10:00AM POH 7:00 PM GA	9:30AM NPC 11AM Bible 7 P M B & G 7:00PM AA	8:30AM NPC 6:30 PM AA 7:00 PM Choir	5:00PM YWCA 7:00PM AA	8:30AM YWCA
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
10AM Worship 11AM Outreach 11:15 AM Fellowship	9:30AM NPC	9:30AM NPC 7:00 PM GA	9:30AM NPC 11AM Bible 7 P M E C M 7:00PM AA	8:30AM NPC 6:30 PM AA 7:00 PM Choir	5:00PM YWCA 7:00PM AA	8:30AM YWCA
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
10AM Worship 11:15 AM Fellowship	9:30AM NPC 1:00 PM POH 7PM Finance	9:30AM NPC 10:00AM POH 7:00 PM GA	9:30AM NPC 11AM Bible 7 P M B & G 7:00PM AA	8:30AM NPC 5:00 PM POH 6:30 PM AA 7:00 PM Choir	5:00PM YWCA 7:00PM AA	Halloween 8:30AM YWCA

NOTES:

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