



**THE STEEPLE**

## **EDWARDS CHURCH**

**An Open and Affirming Congregation of  
The United Church of Christ**

**39 Edwards Street**

**Framingham, MA 01701**

**Telephone: 508 877-2050 508-877-0300**

**E-Mail: [office@edwardschurch.org](mailto:office@edwardschurch.org)**

**Web site: [www.edwardschurch.org](http://www.edwardschurch.org)**

**Pastor: Rev. Dr. Deborah Clark**

**Ministers: All the People of Edwards Church**

January 2019

No. 1

Dear friends,

By the first weekend in January, the Christmas decorations have begun to come down, dried-up Christmas trees are on the front curb awaiting trash pick-up, and the post-Christmas sale rush is over. Just when we think things are getting back to normal, it's time for another joyous celebration! On Sunday, January 6th, we will celebrate Epiphany!

The word "epiphany" refers to a sudden awakening or a realization, what I like to call an "ah-hah" experience. The celebration of Epiphany in the church calendar centers on two particular "epiphanies"—the discovery of the Christ child by the three kings who followed the star in search of a Savior, and the baptism of Jesus, in which Jesus, and those gathered at the river, recognized his calling. As we re-tell these stories at Epiphany, we reflect on the epiphanies in our own lives—the stars that guide us on our journeys, the voices that inspire us, the events that lead us to recognize God at work in our lives in a new way, the experiences that inspire us to give of ourselves.

For the past twenty-one years, we have celebrated Epiphany with a special service that brings together the United Churches of Christ in Framingham—now Plymouth and Edwards. Clergy and other staff members from both churches participate in planning and leading the service, and the choirs form one larger choir to sing for us. It is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate our unity as members of churches of the United Church of Christ, and also to experience the rich diversity of our worship traditions and styles. Each year, I come away with new ideas, and also with a deeper

appreciation for the unique role Edwards Church has to play in our city. The event itself is an occasion for "epiphanies," as worshipping with an expanded congregation can enable us to experience our faith in a fresh way.

In our Epiphany service this year, which will be hosted by Plymouth Church, we will reflect on stars that shine a light of hope through the fog (smog and smoke) of despair as we confront the crisis of climate change. Whose actions point us toward hope? Whose voices inspire us to act? How do we make the faith-filled shift from looking for the light of hope outside ourselves to becoming light to bring hope to others?

We will hear stories that inspire us. We will receive a special offering to support Tree for Life, a project of the Organization of African Independent Churches, supported by the United Church of Christ. Small independent churches plant thousands of seedlings to combat the effects of drought and desertification. We will also receive a special offering of socks and underwear for Worcester Fellowship.

Following coffee hour, the combined Green Teams invite you for soup and bread and a letter-to-the-editor-writing workshop!

Our Epiphany service will be intergenerational worship; the stories, music, and sharing of Holy Communion will be engaging for people of all ages. We hope you will come worship together with our siblings from Plymouth Church, at Plymouth Church.

Peace,  
Debbie

## **JANUARY WORSHIP**

### **December 30, 2018, 10 am A Celebration of Love Worship and Brunch**

*Join us in the sanctuary for a short intergenerational worship service, at which we will witness the marriage of Sarah MacLennan and Joe Griffis. Then we will move into the Sue Dickerman Hall for brunch!*

### **January 6, 10 am Combined Epiphany Worship, at Plymouth Church; Holy Communion**

*We will join with our friends from Plymouth Church for our twenty-first annual Combined Epiphany Worship Service. The service will be an Intergenerational opportunity to reflect on the light of hope in the face of the fog (smog, smoke) of the global climate change crisis. Bring warm, new white socks and undergarments for Worcester Fellowship! The offering will support the Tree For Life project of the Organization of African Instituted Churches, supported by the United Church of Christ.*

### **January 13**

*We will celebrate the baptism of Jesus*

### **January 20**

*10am Shelly Cichowlas will preach.  
5:30pm Seeds of Grace Worship*

### **January 27**

*Chris Leigh-Manuell will preach.*

## **MEN'S GROUP**

All men of the church (and your friends whatever their church background) are invited to gather for coffee and great conversation on the first Saturday of the month, January 5, from 8am–10am in Susan P. Dickerman Hall.

## **BIBLE STUDY**

The Wednesday Evening Bible Study class will continue our study of the Gospel According to Luke. We will meet January 9 and January 16 at 4:45 for soup, 5:15 pm for Bible Study. Please note the date change due to Debbie's vacation!

## **SPECIAL OFFERING ON EPIPHANY**

The offering for our Combined Epiphany Service will be donated to the Tree for Life Project of the Organization of African Instituted Churches, in cooperation with the United Church of Christ. Members of small, independent, mostly rural churches in Kenya and Nigeria plant trees to combat

desertification and drought. Phyllis Byrd, our UCC mission partner who visited us in the summer of 2017, works with the OAIC on this project in Nairobi.

You can also include your pledge or offering to Edwards Church in the offering plate; please be sure to designate it by using a pledge envelope or by noting it on your check.

## **SOCKS & UNDERGARMENTS FOR EPIPHANY**

The Magi journeyed, or so we imagine, through foreign lands, deserts, forests, and over mountains. We picture them on camels, but surely some of the time they walked. Surely they needed clean socks and underwear!

Remembering our friends today who may journey from place to place without a home to return to, we will receive a special offering of socks and undergarments at our Epiphany service. They will be donated to Worcester Fellowship. Especially needed are men's cotton briefs (sizes small, medium and large) and women's cotton underwear in sizes 5 through 8. Men's cotton undershirts are also welcome.

## **KERMIT'S KORNER**

### **Plymouth and Edwards Church Green Teams Joint Letter-to-the-Editor Writing Workshop**

*Sunday, January 6, 11:45am-1:00pm*

*After worship at Plymouth Church Fellowship Hall*

Do you want to get more people talking about the injustice of climate change (or another justice issue)? Do you want to get the attention of local lawmakers, decision-makers, and your neighbors? Letters-to-the-editor are a great way to add your voice to the discourse and call more attention to issues of justice and creation care. In this short, but focused workshop, we will show you how to hone in on good articles to respond to, make your point in 200 words or less, and quickly gather feedback before you submit your letter. Mary Memmott from the Edwards Church Green Team will lead the workshop—she is an experienced letter-writer who can share tips and strategies. Light lunch provided! Bring a laptop if you can.

## **ANNUAL REPORTS**

Annual Reports are due at 9:00am on Monday, January 7, 2019. Please email them to Nicola at nicola@edwardschurch.org. The Annual Meeting will take place on Sunday, February 10, after church. Childcare has been arranged.

### **FROM THE CHOIR DIRECTOR**

Special thanks go out to all the musicians that helped bring so much joy to our chancel during Advent. For our first anthem of 2019 we will join forces with the choir at Plymouth Church on Epiphany. As we start the new calendar year, and approach Lent, Holy Week, and Pentecost, you might consider joining the fun by starting in the choir. We rehearse Thursday nights from 7:15-8:30 and always welcome new singers! Contact me for more details.

Rick Seaholm

### **CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

The children, teachers, and the Board of Christian Education would like to thank you for your support of our Hollywood Studios Video Pageant Premiere. We thought this year would be the year to try something new, and we learned a whole lot doing it. All of the kids had a great time putting the pageant together, and there were lots of smiles, energy and engagement. Coming up in January, we will share Epiphany worship at Plymouth Church on January 6th. They have a great children's program, and we are happy to share worship with them. Starting on January 13th, we will be beginning a new chapter in our curriculum, focusing on Jesus' life and works. Confirmation plans are being made for the spring, as well as some exciting plans for Lent. Stay tuned!

### **FROM THE CHANCEL COMMITTEE**

The Chancel Committee would like to thank all those who purchased poinsettias for this Christmas season. We were able to purchase forty-two plants to decorate the sanctuary.

Cindy Booth for the Chancel Committee

### **OUR LITTLE WOODEN BANKS**

We had a donation for \$10.00 in December, giving us a total now of \$1199.24 in our Wooden Banks Fund. As you know this fund will be used for needs of our church which are not included in our annual budget. Please share with me or Fran Bogle any ideas you may have for putting this money to good use. See me if you would like to have one of our new little church banks. Contributions may be placed in the model wooden church on the table in the hallway between the sanctuary and Susan P. Dickerman Hall.

Many thanks to our faithful contributors. Say a little prayer with each penny you add to your bank. Happy New Year to you all!

God bless you all.  
Norma Hart

### **SEEDS OF GRACE**

*Sunday, January 20 at 5:30pm in Sue Dickerman Hall*  
On the eve of the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday, join us for a multi-sensory, participatory worship service, lifting up themes of racial justice and equality.

### **OPEN SPIRIT HIGHLIGHTS**

#### **World Religions Day Celebration**

*Sunday, January 20, 5-7pm in Edwards Hall*

January 20 is World Religions Day, a celebration begun by the Baha'i community around the world to honor the beauty, richness and truths in the diverse religions of the world.

Open Spirit invites you to join in an open-spirited, open-hearted dinner and open mic celebration. Bring food to share that speaks to the joy of your spiritual tradition. Bring a song or a dance, a poem or a reading—or just bring yourself!



Edwards Church UCC  
39 Edwards St  
Framingham, MA 01701-3433

COMBINED EPIPHANY WORSHIP SERVICE

*Sunday, January 6 at 10:00am  
at Plymouth Church*

*Bring new socks and undergarments for Worcester Fellowship!  
The offering will support the Tree for Life Project.*



# EDWARDS CHURCH ACTIVITIES

# January 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		<b>1</b> <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b> <b>New Year's Day</b> 5:30 pm Hatha Yoga	<b>2</b> 9:30 am Move with Ease 9:30 am Chairobics 12:00 pm Lunch Bunch 1:15 pm Prayer Shawl Knitters 6:00 pm Veterans Yoga 7:15 pm Diaconate	<b>3</b> 9:00 am Qi Gong / Tai Chi 9:30 am Yoga 6:00 pm Cancer Support Group 7:00 pm Board of Finance 7:15 pm Choir Rehearsal 7:30 pm AA Meeting	<b>4</b> <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b> 9:30 am Chairobics	<b>5</b> 8:00 am Men's Group 9:00 am Chair/Mat Yoga
<b>6</b> <b>Epiphany</b> 10:00 am Worship at Plymouth 11:45am Letter Writing Workshop	<b>7</b> 9:30 am Chairobics 7:30 pm Guided Meditation 7:30 pm Board of Trustees	<b>8</b> 9:00 am Qi Gong / Tai Chi 10:00 am Gentle Yoga 5:30 pm Hatha Yoga 7:00 pm Buddhist Meditation 7:30 pm Council Meeting	<b>9</b> 9:30 am Chairobics 12:00 pm Healthy Aging Lunch 4:45 pm Soup and Bible Study 6:00 pm Veterans Yoga 6:45pm Search Committee	<b>10</b> 9:00 am Qi Gong / Tai Chi 9:30 am Yoga 6:00 pm Cancer Support Group 6:00 pm Kripalu Yoga 7:15 pm Choir Rehearsal 7:30 pm AA Meeting	<b>11</b> 9:30 am Chairobics	<b>12</b> 9:00 am Chair/Mat Yoga 5:00 pm <i>Journeys</i> Art Opening
<b>13</b> 9:00 am Adult Bible Study 10:00 am Worship 10:15 am Sunday School 11:00 am Coffee Hour 4:30 pm Restorative Yoga	<b>14</b> 9:30 am Chairobics 7:00 pm Board of Wider Mission 7:30 pm Guided Meditation	<b>15</b> 9:00 am Qi Gong / Tai Chi 10:00 am Gentle Yoga 5:30 pm Hatha Yoga	<b>16</b> 9:00 am Steeple Articles Due 9:30 am Move with Ease 9:30 am Chairobics 12:00 pm Lunch Bunch 4:45 pm Soup and Bible Study 6:00 pm Veterans Yoga	<b>17</b> 9:00 am Qi Gong / Tai Chi 9:30 am Yoga 6:00 pm Cancer Support Group 6:00 pm Kripalu Yoga 7:15 pm Choir Rehearsal 7:30 pm AA Meeting	<b>18</b> 9:30 am Chairobics	<b>19</b> 9:00 am Chair/Mat Yoga
<b>20</b> 9:00 am Adult Bible Study 10:00 am Worship 10:15 am Sunday School 11:00 am Coffee Hour 5:00 pm World Religions Day 5:30 pm Seeds of Grace	<b>21</b> <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b> <b>Martin Luther King Day</b> 9:30 am Chairobics 7:30 pm Guided Meditation	<b>22</b> 9:00 am Qi Gong / Tai Chi 10:00 am Gentle Yoga 5:30 pm Hatha Yoga 7:00 pm Buddhist Meditation	<b>23</b> 9:30 am Move with Ease 9:30 am Chairobics 10:30 am Steeple Mailing 6:00 pm Veterans Yoga	<b>24</b> 9:00 am Qi Gong / Tai Chi 9:30 am Yoga 6:00 pm Cancer Support Group 6:00 pm Kripalu Yoga 7:30 pm AA Meeting	<b>25</b> 9:30 am Chairobics	<b>26</b> 9:00 am Chair/Mat Yoga
<b>27</b> 9:00 am Adult Bible Study 10:00 am Worship 10:15 am Sunday School 11:00 am Coffee Hour 4:00 pm Wild Herbal Tea Making 4:30 pm Common Ground	<b>28</b> 9:30 am Chairobics 7:30 pm Guided Meditation	<b>29</b> 9:00 am Qi Gong / Tai Chi 10:00 am Gentle Yoga 5:30 pm Hatha Yoga	<b>30</b> 9:30 am Move with Ease 9:30 am Chairobics 6:00 pm Veterans Yoga	<b>31</b> 9:00 am Qi Gong / Tai Chi 9:30 am Yoga 6:00 pm Kripalu Yoga 7:15 pm Choir Rehearsal 7:30 pm AA Meeting	<b>Debbie will be away</b> from January 18-February 2.  If you have a pastoral concern during that time, please contact deacon Shelly Cichowlas at 508-904-6123.	