



EDWARDS CHURCH
An Open and Affirming Congregation of
The United Church of Christ
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Ministers: All the People of Edwards Church

THE STEEPLE

May 2019

No. 5

Dear friends,

Every Sunday something powerful and holy happens here at Edwards Church. Occasionally, there are Sundays that stand out in the way they embody our values. This Sunday, April 28, is one of those.

The morning begins with an invitation from the Green Team to walk, bicycle or carpool to church as an expression of our commitment to reducing our carbon footprint. Once we get there, we welcome Rabbinic Pastor Matia Angelou who will join me in offering an interfaith baby blessing to Memphis Applebaum, son of Gretchen and Todd Applebaum.

Following worship, we will gather in Sue Dickerman Hall for a congregational meeting, where we will vote on a nominating slate and a solar panel contract. We will also review some of the new things we tried during Lent, to consider what we might do in the future. There will be soup and crackers to nourish us for the rest of the day!

Then, at 1:00 p.m., there will be several cars leaving our parking lot to go to the Islamic Society of Framingham on Union Avenue for their Open Mosque Day. Our friends there have invited us to visit them to learn more about Islam, enjoy some delicious food, and even get henna tattoos.

We will return to campus in time to prepare for the third in Open Spirit's *Inspiring Courage: Stories of Passion and Compassion* series. This event features Buddhist lay renunciate Joti Royster, who will lead us in meditation and then in a conversation about finding peace and clarity as we work to heal our violent and confusing world.

From there, some of us will head up the hill to Sue Dickerman Hall for our Seeds of Grace worship

service, which will feature the Just Peace Players' performance of their new play, *Extra! Extra!* This play uses stories from the newspaper to challenge us to reflect on how our faith calls us to respond.

Each of these events is important in a different way; together, they reflect some of these things that we value:

- We value God's creation, caring for our planet by seeking earth-friendly transportation and putting solar panels on more of our buildings.
- We value children and families, and so we create new rituals to celebrate children who are part of interfaith families.
- We value our congregational polity, in which we recognize that each of us has wisdom to contribute to our community decisions.
- We value our neighbors from different faith traditions, and we look forward to what we can learn from one another that enriches all of our lives.
- We value the connections between spirituality and social justice activism, and we together seek insight into how to find peace amidst the struggle.
- We value creative worship, and we value our friends who dare to use drama to illuminate our faith.

Wow! It will be a very full day. I hope you will come celebrate our values for as much of the day as you are able.

Peace,
Debbie

MAY WORSHIP

May 5 Holy Communion;

Acts 9:1-6; Luke 24: 13-32 “On the Road”

May 12 Mothers Day

Psalms 23; John 10:22-30 “A Shepherd’s Care”

May 19

Acts 11:1-18; John 13:31-35 “A Meal That Changes Everything”

5:30 p.m. Seeds of Grace Worship

May 26 Memorial Day Weekend

Revelation 22:1-2; John 5:1-9 “Troubled Waters”

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Sunday, April 28 at 11:30am

Please plan to stay for an important congregational meeting following worship on April 28. We will elect officers, board and committee members, and we will also make plans for transitions in the positions of financial secretaries and members of the Board of Trustees. These are important positions, and the people in them have served faithfully for more than a decade. They are willing to continue for the remainder of this year, and we need to begin to plan now for their transition.

In addition, we will hear a report, and possibly take a vote, on a proposed contract for solar panels on several buildings. Finally we will review new things we tried during Lent.

SEEDS OF GRACE WORSHIP

Sunday, April 28 at 5:30 pm in Sue Dickerman Hall

Join the Just Peace Players as they share their new play *Extra! Extra!* at our Seeds of Grace Worship Service. The play reflects on events in the headlines and how faith empowers us to work for peace and justice. You’ll learn new ideas for working with neighbors, sharing hope and love with strangers and feeling God’s presence with you every day.

Sunday, May 19 at 5:30 pm in Sue Dickerman Hall

In May, we return to our typical third Sunday of the month for Seeds of Grace Worship. Join us for an inspiring and moving participatory service.

BIBLE STUDY—LUKE

The Wednesday Evening Bible Study classes will continue their study of Luke’s Gospel. We will meet on May 8 and 22 at 4:45 p.m. for soup, 5:15 p.m. for Bible Study.

SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE

Our search committee has received profiles of viable candidates and is in the first stage of interviews. This first stage is kind of like a “first date,” getting to know the candidate and to see if we are compatible. After we complete this first stage, we will determine which candidate(s) will move on to the second stage. Until we have a candidate to present to our congregation, we must keep applications confidential, but we will update you on our progress. I am excited about our work together. We have a wonderful cross section of our congregation on this committee. We are listening to each other and valuing each other’s opinions. We meet several times each month, prepared and to work together. Please keep us and our church in your prayers as we search for our next associate pastor.

Grace and peace,
Ruth Carney, co-chair

MEMORIAL SERVICE

Monday, May 6 at 11:00am

Please join us in the sanctuary as we celebrate the life of Richard Whitmore.

SPECIAL LUNCH BUNCH

Wednesday, May 29 at noon in Sue Dickerman Hall

Please join us for a special take-out lunch bunch. We haven’t selected the restaurant yet, so watch for more details in the coming weeks. Please let us know if you have any local ethnic favorites that we should try.

CHRISTIAN EXPLORERS

Greetings from the faith formation team! We are excited to announce that we have a group of youth who will be taking the trip to Milwaukee this summer to participate in the Youth@Synod event. They will learn about how the UCC governs itself and will even be invited to participate in the process. There will be a mission component as well, where the youth will take part in engaging with area folks involved in helping others. It proves to be an exciting time!

Our youth need your support! We will be having a Dessert Auction after church on May 5. Please consider baking something and/or purchasing something!

Thanks so much for everything you do to support faith formation at Edwards Church!

FROM THE CHANCEL COMMITTEE

The Chancel committee would like to thank everyone who purchased flowers for Easter to help decorate the sanctuary.

OUR LITTLE WOODEN BANKS

We had one donation in April totaling \$10.00. There is over \$600.00 now in the fund. This fund is used for needs of our church which are not included in our annual budget. 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 the Susan Dickerman Hall. Many thanks to our faithful contributors! Say a little prayer with each penny you add to your bank.

God bless you all,
Norma Hart

KERMIT'S KORNER

You can compost, too!

By now we hope you've noticed that we are offering compostable cups and paper products at coffee hour; the trash can in Sue Dickerman Hall has been converted to a compost collector. We can compost paper products (simple paper plates, napkins, tissues, coffee filters, tea bags, even bulletins!), food scraps of all kinds (meat and dairy too), and compostable coffee cups—no plastic or metal, though, please. With this change we hope to have waste-free coffee hour and events. Anyone is welcome to take the compost trash to the Black Earth Compost can next the dumpster after any event or coffee hour. Just be sure to replace the compost trash liner with a green, compostable trash bag (available under the sink in Sue Dickerman Hall). We still encourage you to use your own travel mug to cut down on the number of cups we need to purchase, but if you forget your mug, or are visiting for the first time, the compostable cups are a great option.

If you like the idea of composting your food and paper waste (even take-out pizza boxes!), you can sign up for Black Earth compost collection at

home for a reasonable fee. They are now offering home pick-up in many local towns and cities including Framingham, Natick, and Ashland. You can find out more at blackearthcompost.com.

Those who have been delivering your home compost to the community compost bin at Open Spirit can now use the Black Earth compost cans instead. Just please be mindful that pick-up day is Thursday, and we need to leave space for some coffee hour refuse on Sundays. Compact your compost trash as much as possible and be sure it all gets in the lined part of the bin so we do not have a mess.

WIDER MISSION ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mother's Day Collection

Sunday, May 12 during worship

Spread the love on Mother's Day by bringing in hand and body lotions (all types) and size 6 diapers for A Place to Turn food pantry. They have requested these specific items which are in especially high demand.

Walk for Hunger

Sunday, May 5 in Boston

The 51st annual Walk for Hunger is the first Sunday in May. Edwards Church will be sending a small but mighty team of walkers: Mary Memmott, Ronda Yeomans, and Frank Carney. All moneys raised go to support local anti-hunger efforts from food pantries, to community gardens, to summer lunches for kids.

To donate online, visit edwardschurch.org. Or you can give a check or cash to any of the walkers before May 5; we'll be leaving early that morning, so you won't see us at church. Checks can be made out to "Project Bread – the Walk for Hunger." There is still time to join the Walk Team—please speak to Mary, Ronda, or Frank if you are interested.

Seeds Of Grace Grants

Applications Due June 15

The Board of Wider Mission announces its second round of grant-making with the Seeds of Grace Mission Fund. This fund was created as part of our merger with Grace Church to support partner organizations that are actively working to make the world a more just, loving, welcoming, and sustainable place. Please spread the word to

organizations that you believe are living out our values. You can download an application on the home page of our website.

In 2018 Seeds of Grace awarded grants totaling \$39,900.00. Grants went to a variety of organizations with strong peace, justice, and outreach missions including the African Community Education Program which matches immigrant youth with mentors in Worcester; Greater Framingham Community Church in Framingham for their MLK Empowering Youth Conference and Vacation Bible School; Just Peace Players for printing plays and traveling to special events; Metrowest Free Medical Program which provides free medical care in our community; Metrowest Workers Center (Casa), which empowers and supports local immigrants; and Open Spirit, our own multi-faith outreach program. Each project has direct connections with members of Edwards Church and offers opportunities for all church members to participate in their ministries.

Contact our board to learn more, and remember to invite organizations you know and love to apply!

Wider Mission Celebrates Years of Commitment

After over ten years of participation on the Board of Wider Mission, Karen Dolliver has decided to step down. We are so grateful for her many years of commitment to service, especially for her leadership with the Gifts that Give fair and the annual Christmas collection for the Pathways shelter. We know that she will continue to help behind the scenes, and thank her for her service!

Kim Wronski has officially given up her spot as chair of the board, as she needs to dedicate her time to the demands of parenting and work. We have missed her, and are so grateful for her many years of participation and leadership. Full of passion for social justice and service, especially for serving at Worcester Fellowship, she led the board with patience, humor and quiet encouragement. We wish her well, and hope that she will return when the time is right!

OPEN SPIRIT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Framingham Community Farm Update

Have you noticed the changes this month at Framingham Community Farm? Fencing is complete, the irrigation system is installed, and planting is underway with peas, carrots, greens and spinach! We

anticipate regular drop-in volunteer hours on Thursdays from 9:00-11:00 a.m. beginning in May. Come help us plant! If you live close by or travel by regularly, we welcome volunteers who could sign up to gently hand-water newly seeded beds each day as they germinate. We welcome your involvement in our efforts to fight hunger locally. For more information contact Diane Bassett at dlbassett46@gmail.com.

Open Mosque Day

*Sunday, April 28, 2019 from 1:00-4:00pm
at the Islamic Society of Framingham*

The Islamic Society of Framingham, along with fifteen other New England area Mosques, cordially invites you, your family and friends to meet your Muslim neighbors. Come join in conversation, ask about the Mosque's role in the community, and learn about the Islamic faith. Tour the Mosque, taste ethnic food, visit the henna parlor, and try on a hijab. The Islamic Society of Framingham is located at 234 Union Avenue.

Inspiring Courage

A Conversation with Joti Royster

Sunday, April 28 at 3:00pm in Edwards Hall

Join us for an afternoon of conversation, the third in our Multi-Faith Collaborative's Inspiring Courage series. Joti Royster visits us from Temple Forest Monastery, a Buddhist monastery in the Thai forest tradition of Ajahn Chah and Ajahn Sumedho. Our conversation will focus on peace and balance in a world of conflict and injustice.

Breaking the Fast of Ramadan Celebrating Multi-Faith Friendship

Tuesday, May 14 at 7:15pm in Edwards Hall

During the month of Ramadan, our Muslim neighbors fast from sun-up to sun-down. Each night, at sundown, they gather with family and friends for an Iftar, a time of prayers and breaking the fast with favorite holiday foods. The event is for people of all faiths and backgrounds, and is an opportunity to support our Muslim neighbors, build deeper relationships, and learn from one another.

This year, we have many special guests joining us: refugee families from Syria, friends from Jewish Family Services, friends from Always Seeking Knowledge Muslim Sunday School, from Islamic Society of Framingham and Islamic Center in Wayland. Please join us! We invite you to bring a vegetarian dish to share. Please RSVP to debbie@openspiritcenter.org

Journey of the Spirit

Sunday, May 19 at 2:00pm (register by May 13)

Congregation Beth El in Sudbury

Join us as we continue our journey of discovery to gain greater understanding and appreciation of faith and traditions of our neighbors, deepen relationships among fellow travelers, and strengthen our shared commitment to this community. Our journeys take us to area congregations, where we learn from our hosts about their faith and practice, experience their sacred space and shared sense of culture and traditions, and interact in spirited conversation. Congregation Beth El is located at 105 Hudson Road in Sudbury. Please register at openspiritcenter.org. A donation of \$15 is appreciated.

Mushroom Hunt & Workshop

Thursday, June 13 at 6:00pm in Sue Dickerman Hall

Have you ever wanted to learn more about fungi and whether you could safely forage and eat your own local, wild mushrooms? Here's your chance! Ryan Bouchard and Emily Schmidt, co-creators of The Mushroom Hunting Foundation, will join One Earth Collaborative once again for this informative workshop.

Ryan and Emily will lead a mushroom hunt on the grounds of Open Spirit and follow it up with an educational slideshow where you'll learn about more about the different varieties of spring and summer mushrooms. It's great for beginners and enthusiasts alike! Please register at openspiritcenter.org. The cost is \$25 per person.

JUNE STEEPLE

Steeple articles are due by 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, May 15. If you would like to write an article for the *Steeple*, please send it to nicola@edwardschurch.org. The *Steeple* will be mailed on Wednesday, May 22 at 10:30 am. If you would like to help, please contact Jeannette Loughman of the Publicity Committee.

Edwards Church, UCC
39 Edwards St.
Framingham, MA 01701

Congregational Meeting

Sunday April 28 after worship

