



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
Web site: www.edwardschurch.org

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Deborah Clark
Ministers: All the People of Edwards Church

THE STEEPLE

September 2019

No. 8

Dear friends,

One of the greatest joys I have experienced this past year has been working with our Associate Pastor Search Committee. What a remarkable group of individuals, and what a remarkable team we became! It was hard work, and it was extremely rewarding.

Noah Cichowlas started each meeting with a scripture to center us. We went around the circle to check in about our lives each time, which gave us an opportunity to know one another more deeply. Everyone contributed their unique perspectives and talents.

As we prepared the profile, we got to reflect on the strengths of this amazing congregation, and also named our potential and our challenges. When we began interviewing, we met wonderful people—faith-filled, creative pastors. We were struck by how every one of them remarked on all our church is doing to be a source of healing in our world.

Best of all, we found a candidate whom we are all excited to present. Rev. Dr. Karen Nell Smith brings warmth, depth, humor, creativity, energy, and faithfulness to everything she does. She loves children and youth. She loves meeting new people and building relationships. She loves working collaboratively. She loves discovering new ways to make our faith come alive.

I am so eager to work with her and to see what wonderful things we will all be able to do together.

Next time you see a member of the search committee (Noah Cichowlas, Cindy Sweeney, Chris Leigh-Manuell, Victoria Sorensen, Jeff Stewart-Morales, and Ruth Carney), be sure to thank them. And be sure to join us for Karen Nell's candidating weekend!

Peace, Debbie

Associate Pastor for Faith Formation & Outreach **Candidating Weekend**

The Associate Pastor Search Committee is delighted to invite you to meet and hear our associate pastor candidate, Karen Nell Smith, in preparation for a congregational meeting to vote on calling her.

Friday, Sept. 6, at 6:00pm in Sue Dickerman Hall
Youth, children, parents, Church School teachers and Board of Christian Education members are invited to a pizza party, with some fun get-to-know-you games.

Saturday, Sept. 7 at 6:00pm in Edwards Hall
An all-church supper with Karen Nell and her family.

Sunday, Sept. 8 at 10 am in the Sanctuary
Karen Nell will preach and offer Words with the Young People. Following the service, she will leave the sanctuary, and we will vote to call her to be our new associate pastor.

Please RSVP by calling the church office or by emailing pastor@edwardschurch.org, for Friday and Saturday, including any dietary restrictions.

WORSHIP

September 1 at 10:00am—Holy Communion; Intergenerational Worship

Rev. Debbie Clark preaching; “Come from Away”

September 8 at 10:00am—Intergenerational Worship with Rev. Dr. Karen Nell Smith

Our candidate for associate pastor for faith formation and outreach will lead our Words with the Young People and preach a sermon, “Breakfast on the Beach.” A congregational meeting will follow (see below).

September 15 at 10:00am

Rev. Liz Garrigan-Byerly, Associate Director of Metrowest Worker Center, will preach on the theme, “Unmeasured,” based on the Parable of the Yeast.

September 15 at 5:30pm—Seeds of Grace Worship

Ruth Carney and Isaac Everett will lead us in a creative, participatory worship service on the theme, “Where is God?”

September 22 at 10:00am—Outdoor Blessing of the Animals Service!

Bring your beloved animal companions and friends of all species to a relaxed, chaotic, joyous service around the Edible Forest Garden in front of Edwards Hall. Special music by On the Fence. We will continue our fall theme, “Jesus the Foodie,” with reflections on his exhortation not to worry about what we eat or drink.

September 29 at 10:00am

Rev. Debbie Clark preaching; “Water into Wine.”

A Fall Worship and Faith Formation Theme

Jesus loved to eat! He loved to play with his food—turning water into wine, multiplying loaves and fishes, breaking bread and cooking breakfast. He loved to eat with friends; even more, he loved to eat with strangers. He used meals and stories about meals to teach us what the Realm of God is all about.

This fall, in our worship and in our faith formation programs, we will explore gospel stories about food. What do they tell us about who Jesus was? What do they tell us about how we are called to live? Join us for this fun and lively exploration.

BIBLE STUDY

DIVES INTO THE EARLY CHURCH

Wednesdays, September 11 and 25 at 5:15pm

The Acts of the Apostles is a continuation of the Gospel According to Luke. It tells the story of the development of the early church. The book is filled with courageous people, life-changing moments, and wild adventures. It’s a lively, fascinating book that triggers questions about our lives and our communities today.

We meet on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month in the church office from 5:15-6:15pm. Join us at 4:45 for soup!

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

This year our annual outdoor service and Blessing of the Animals will be on Sunday, September 22 at 10:00 a.m. in front of Edwards Hall, in and around our Edible Forest Garden. We will enjoy the music of our own bluegrass group, On the Fence.

As part of our fall “Jesus the Foodie” theme, the service will center on Luke 12:22-31, in which Jesus evokes the lilies of the fields to challenge our inclination to worry about what we eat and drink.

The service we include a blessing of the animals, so be sure to bring your beloved animal companions for the service. Following the service, we will enjoy a “Picnic with our Pets.” Bring a pet; bring a friend; bring a chair to sit on!

SUPER SATURDAY

Saturday, Oct. 5 at Keefe Tech, 8:00am-3:45pm

The Massachusetts Conference, in partnership with Connecticut and Rhode Island Conferences, is offering a day of workshops, forums, networking and worship on Saturday, October 5, at Keefe Tech High School in Framingham. The featured speaker will be Bishop Dwayne D. Royster, political director of Faith in Action, a faith-based community organizing movement. He is a voice for justice for and with the most marginalized in our society. Workshops address a wide range of issues relevant to our church and our personal lives, and we will do a special collection to make health kits for Church World Service. See macucc.org for more details. Please speak with Debbie if you would like to attend.

CHRISTIAN EXPLORERS NEWS

As summer vacations begin to blend into fall programs, big things are happening in our Christian Explorers classrooms! The teachers have been cleaning and re-arranging, getting ready for the new program year. This fall, we will be focusing on Jesus the Foodie! That's right, we'll get to study Jesus and play with our food at the same time. I bet there are Bible stories you may not have associated with food, but everywhere you look, Jesus is in the middle of the feast. Just think: we can go from breakfast on the beach to the wedding at Cana, take the road to Emmaus, welcome home the prodigal son, end it all with the story of the great banquet and feel like we're as stuffed as the Thanksgiving Day turkey! It's going to be loads of fun.

We invite families, teachers, and Board of Christian Education members to join us for a special family pizza party with our associate pastor candidate, Karen Nell Smith, on Friday, September 6 at 6:00 p.m. We'll have pizza and spend some time getting to know each other better through fun intergenerational activities.

September is always a busy month, we'll have an outdoor service, usher in a new program year and welcome new faces to our campus. I hope you'll join us—it will be good to see you!

Blessings,
Dawn

NOTES FROM THE CHOIR DIRECTOR

As you can imagine, I'm overjoyed with the number of exciting fall services and programs that I'm sure are covered extensively elsewhere in this *Steeple*. As I have thought over the worship themes I've come up with a series of wonderful anthems, many of which will be familiar to those who have worshiped with us before, all of which are perfectly approachable by anyone interested in learning more about the joys and richness that being in choir can add to your life. Recent studies have proven this to an even greater degree than previously thought. One, in fact, went so far as to discover that in singing together our heartbeats approach synchronicity!

The Edwards Church choir is a loving community which cares deeply about its members and sees every chorister as family. Don't you want some of that in your life? We meet most Thursdays (usually taking off one per month) from 7:15-8:30 p.m. in

Susan P. Dickerman Hall, preparing ourselves to sing in the Sunday services throughout the year. I would love to talk to you more if you're interested! We start up Thursday, September 5 for our kickoff Sunday, September 8.

Rick Seaholm
rick@edwardschurch.org

WIDER MISSION

Framingham Police Sponsor Gun Buy-Back

Saturday, September 14, 2019, 9:00am-4:00pm

The Framingham Police Department, along with the Middlesex Sheriff's Department, will be holding their third Gun Buy Back event this month. They are looking for volunteers to greet people and hand out gift cards. If you would like to volunteer, see the link in our weekly email or contact Lt. Riley at SDR@framinghamma.gov.

A Place To Turn Celebrates Forty Years

Sunday, September 15 from 2:00-5:00pm

For decades, we have been supporting A Place to Turn Food Pantry with donations of food, supplies and financial support. In turn, for four decades, they have helped thousands of people in our community who are struggling to make ends meet.

You are invited to join A Place to Turn (99 Hartford St., Natick) for an Open House, with tours, food and raffles.

“May We Forever Stand”

Friday, September 20 at 7:30pm

Greater Framingham Community Church

The Massachusetts Council of Churches has invited us to join in a commemoration of 400 years of Black resiliency, as we mark 400 years since the first enslaved Africans arrived at Jamestown, Virginia. In the worship service, we will honor ancestors, commemorate 400 years of resiliency, and pray for an end to systemic and racial injustice.

The service is hosted by Greater Framingham Community Church (44 Franklin Street). The Board of Wider Mission will organize carpools from Edwards Church. Please join us for this important opportunity to worship in solidarity.

LITTLE WOODEN BANKS

I hope everyone had an enjoyable summer. I am looking forward to some cooler less humid days, but it is hard to see the summer go – I love all the green! In July and August we had three donations to our fund for a total of \$30.00. I will report any expenditures to you. 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. 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

Seeking “Compost Captains” and Environmental Voters

This spring we started offering compostable cups and paper products at coffee hour—and the trash can in Sue Dickerman Hall has been converted to a compost collector. With this change we hope to have waste-free coffee hour and events. (Of course, if you can bring your own travel mug that is even better, and you can also borrow and wash and return one from our “ugly mug” collection any time.)

To keep up with this new system we need a monthly “compost captain” to educate folks at coffee hour and make sure the compost trash gets taken to the Black Earth Compost can next the dumpster each Sunday. The compost captain for September is Joanie White. Could you be the captain for October or November? It's a simple task that only takes a few minutes and helps keep our hospitality low-waste. Contact Mary Memmott (508-788-1826, or memmottm@gmail.com) for more details.

If you like the idea of composting your food and paper waste, 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. Learn more at blackearthcompost.com.

Composting at your home and church is a great start for sustainability—but we know that to change how we all use our one Earth, we need change at all levels. The UCC has been calling for action for global warming since at least 2007, when the General Synod released a resolution on climate change. The text of that resolution urged “state and local

governments to support and invest in energy conservation and, specifically, in sustainable, renewable and affordable systems of transportation.”

To make sure our local government officials pay attention to this need for change, we need to get involved. One way you can do that is to attend the First Parish Climate Action Team's “City Council Candidates' Forum on Sustainability” on Friday, September 27 at 7:30 p.m. at Scott Hall, First Parish UU, 24 Vernon St. (Framingham Centre Common). You can also keep up with elections at all levels by signing up for reminders through the Environmental Voter Project, which works to turn environmentalists into committed voters. Their simple mission is to encourage environmentally concerned citizens to engage with politics and vote in every election.

So bring your coffee mug, or compost one, or help compost for all—and then make sure you vote for candidates who will protect the Earth like you do!

COMING UP AT OPEN SPIRIT

A Father's Lullaby Opening Celebration

Sunday, September 8 at 4:00pm

Have you seen our labyrinth lately? Fran Graveson (our Open Spirit Intern this last year), Janet Sanders, Bill Freudenthal and Joe Hudock have spent many hours this summer weeding and mulching and moving stones to make it look beautiful!

The impetus behind all this hard work is an upcoming art installation. We have invited Rashin Fehandaj, a Baha'i artist who is originally from Iran, to install her multi-media art show, “A Father's Lullaby,” in and around our labyrinth. The show is supported by Framingham Cultural Council. Rashin's installation offers an opportunity to reflect on the harm of mass incarceration to families. It raises awareness of the long-term consequences of the high rates at which people of color, especially men, are incarcerated in our nation.

At the installation, you will have the opportunity to walk the labyrinth in a meditative fashion, hearing fathers singing lullabies. When you take a break to sit on a bench, you can hear a personal story of someone who has been incarcerated and struggles to reconnect with children.

The installation will be open through September and October. We will have an opening celebration at the labyrinth and in Sue Dickerman Hall with an opportunity to meet the artist on Sunday, September 8 at 4:00 p.m. Please join us!

Weekend of Spirit: “Deepening Connections”

Friday and Saturday, October 25 and 26

Join Open Spirit for our seventh annual Weekend of Spirit. Through shared meals, music, conversation, art projects and experiential workshops, we will delve into our theme: “Deepening Connections.” Come explore this rich theme in a relaxed and relaxing environment.

This mini-retreat takes place right here, on the campus of Edwards Church, in the heart of Saxonville. It is affordable—with an early bird registration (due October 10) of \$30 for the weekend. You can come to the whole event or just to part of it!

Weekend of Spirit begins at 6:00 p.m. on Friday evening with a concert by our own Willie Sordillo, along with his colleagues and friends Doug Rich and Zoë Krohne. The concert itself is free; we will receive a free-will offering to support the work of our Nourishing Teachers / Strengthening Classrooms project in the Framingham Public Schools.

On Saturday morning, the program opens with a keynote presentation centering on deep-rooted connections in the plant world. How do trees nourish each other through their roots, with the help of networks of fungi? How does our knowledge of community in the plant world inspire us as we seek to deepen our own connections? Expect an inspiring and lively conversation.

Following our opening conversation, we will have morning and afternoon workshops, a Healing Spa, a delicious vegetarian/vegan lunch, lunch-time Qi Gong and drumming, and much more.

Watch for more information to sign up!

NEW YOGA CLASS: Strength Without a Gym

Mondays at 10:30am, beginning September 9

Do you want to build muscle but don’t want to go to the gym? Do you enjoy a light-hearted group with lots of laughter? Then our new “Strength Without a Gym” yoga class is for you! Whatever your age, whatever your physical abilities, whether or not you’ve ever done yoga, this class will offer you an opportunity to build on your strengths as you build strength!

This class is taught by Donna Warren, long-time Open Spirit yoga teacher and unofficial comedian. Suggested donation of \$15-20, more if you can, less if you can’t. [Please note: this class will replace the Thursday morning “Not-Your-Ordinary Yoga” Class.]

NEW! Open Spirit Library

Downstairs in Edwards Hall

Volunteer Bettina Messana and our Open Spirit intern, Fran Graveson, have been hard at work on our campus. They recently organized the middle classroom downstairs in Edwards Hall, and turned a collection of donated books into a lovely lending library. Stop by Monday through Thursday to browse the books and sign one out. Thanks to Bettina and Fran for all their efforts on this project!

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

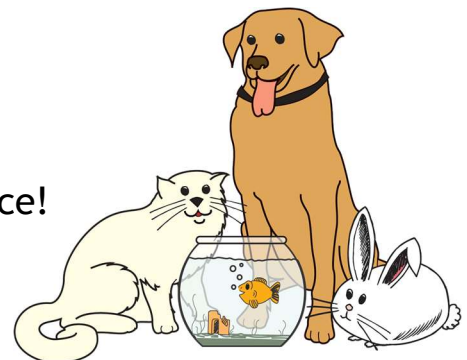
Blessing of the Animals



Sunday, September 22 at 10:00 a.m.

Bring your beloved animal companions
to be blessed at a joyous outdoor service!

*Featuring music from **On the Fence***



Regular office hours resume after the Labor Day Holiday
Monday-Thursday, 9:00am - 3:00pm

EDWARDS CHURCH ACTIVITIES

September 2019

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|---|--|--|---|--|---|
| 1 10:00am Intergen. Worship 11:00am Coffee Hour | 2 Labor Day OFFICE CLOSED 9:30am Chairobics 7:30pm Guided Meditation | 3 9:00am Qi Gong / Tai Chi 10:00am Gentle Yoga 1:00pm Nursing Home Services 5:30pm Hatha Yoga 7:30pm Y12SR 7:30pm Interfaith Book Group | 4 9:30am Chairobics 12:00pm Lunch Bunch 1:15pm Prayer Shawl Knitters 6:00pm Veterans Yoga 7:15pm Diaconate | 5 9:00am Qi Gong / Tai Chi 9:00am Gardening Hours 6:00pm Cancer Support Group 7:00pm Board of Finance 7:15pm Choir Rehearsal 7:30pm AA Meeting | 6 9:30am Chairobics 6:00pm Family Pizza Dinner with Karen Nell Smith | 7 8:00am Men's Group 6:00pm All Church Supper with Karen Nell Smith |
| 8 10:00am Intergen. Worship 11:00am Congregational Mtg. 11:30am Coffee Hour 4:00pm Art Opening | 9 9:30am Chairobics 7:00pm Wider Mission 7:30pm Guided Meditation | 10 9:00am Qi Gong / Tai Chi 10:00am Gentle Yoga 11:15am Steering Committee 5:30pm Hatha Yoga 7:00pm Buddhist Meditation | 11 9:30am Chairobics 4:45pm Soup and Bible Study 6:00pm Veterans Yoga | 12 9:00am Qi Gong / Tai Chi 9:00am Gardening Hours 6:00pm Cancer Support Group 6:00pm Kripalu Yoga 7:15pm Choir Rehearsal 7:30pm AA Meeting | 13 9:30am Chairobics | 14 9:00am Chair/Mat Yoga |
| 15 10:00am Worship 10:15am Sunday School 11:00am Coffee Hour 5:30pm Seeds of Grace | 16 9:30am Chairobics 7:30pm Guided Meditation | 17 9:00am Qi Gong / Tai Chi 10:00am Gentle Yoga 5:30pm Hatha Yoga 7:30pm Church Council | 18 9:00am Steeple Articles Due 9:30am Chairobics 12:00pm Lunch Bunch 6:00pm Veterans Yoga | 19 9:00am Qi Gong / Tai Chi 9:00am Gardening Hours 6:00pm Cancer Support Group 6:00pm Kripalu Yoga 7:15pm Choir Rehearsal 7:30pm AA Meeting | 20 9:30am Chairobics 7:30pm May We Forever Stand | 21 9:00am Chair/Mat Yoga |
| 22 10:00am Blessing of the Animals 11:00am Picnic Lunch 11:30am CE Meeting 4:30pm Common Ground | 23 9:30am Chairobics 7:00pm Green Team Meeting 7:30pm Guided Meditation | 24 9:00am Qi Gong / Tai Chi 10:00am Gentle Yoga 5:30pm Hatha Yoga 7:00pm Buddhist Meditation | 25 9:30am Chairobics 10:30am Steeple Mailing 4:45pm Soup and Bible Study 6:00pm Veterans Yoga | 26 9:00am Qi Gong / Tai Chi 9:00am Gardening Hours 6:00pm Cancer Support Group 6:00pm Kripalu Yoga 7:00pm Multifaith Collaborative 7:30pm AA Meeting | 27 9:30am Chairobics | 28 9:00am Chair/Mat Yoga |
| 29 9:00am Adult Bible Study 10:00am Worship 10:15am Sunday School 11:00am Coffee Hour | 30 9:30am Chairobics 7:30pm Guided Meditation | | | | | |