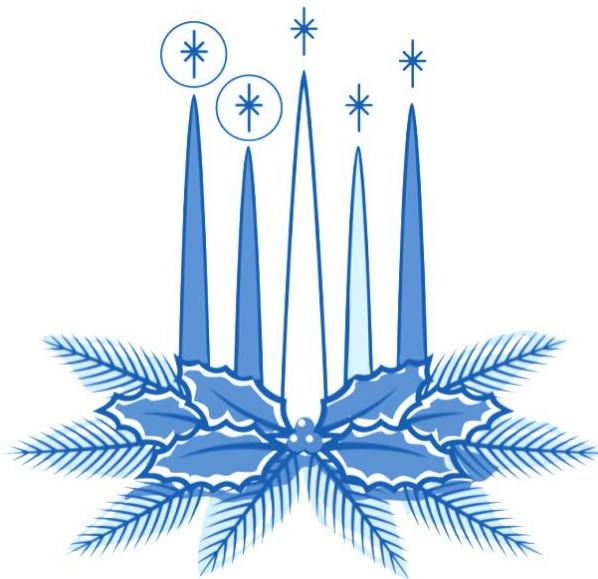


EDWARDS CHURCH

A UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
AN OPEN AND AFFIRMING CONGREGATION



In the name of God and Jesus Christ, Edwards Church, a congregation of the United Church of Christ, welcomes all who seek to know and worship God. We invite everyone to join in our faith journey and participate in our congregational life.

As a community of faith we take seriously the Biblical call to love God and our neighbors as ourselves, and recognize that although we are many members we are one. We celebrate the uniqueness of everyone. We rejoice in our diversity of views and understanding of our shared faith. We commit ourselves to work diligently to help end oppression and discrimination. We affirm all relationships founded on the principle of God's love and justice.

We declare ourselves to be an Open and Affirming congregation.

Seeking to be the Body of Christ, we welcome into full fellowship and membership all persons of every race, language, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, physical or cognitive ability, and economic status.

39 Edwards Street
Framingham, MA 01701
508-877-2050
www.edwardschurch.org

A Thought for Reflection

“Shepherds lift their heads,
not to gaze at a new light but to hear angels.”

— *Richelle E. Goodrich*

GOD GATHERS US

PRELUDE

GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PASSING OF THE PEACE

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.

People: **And also with you.** (*We invite you to turn to your neighbors and greet them.*)

* **HYMN OF PRAISE**

“O COME ALL YE FAITHFUL”

C-18

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: O come, all ye faithful—

People: **We come with joy, wondering what triumph really means.**

Leader: O come, all ye faithful—

People: **We come to behold the Holy One, wondering how we will recognize the Savior in our midst.**

Leader: O come, all ye faithful—

People: **We come in wonder and adoration.**

All: **Let us worship God.**

PRAYER OF INVOCATION AND LORD’S PRAYER

(Please pray the Lord’s Prayer using the words you find most meaningful. There is a prayer card in your pew rack.)

* **SENTENCES OF PRAISE** (*Please stand for the Sentences of Praise and Gloria.*)

Leader: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and goodwill toward all.

People: **For out of God’s own being, Jesus comes to bring love and light to all people.**

Leader: Jesus is our Emmanuel—God with us—come to gather our tears and laughter,
our work and play into God’s love.

People: **Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and goodwill toward all!**

* **GLORIA**

Gloria in excelsis Deo,

Gloria in excelsis Deo.

C-8

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

(in unison)

We sing, “O come all ye faithful,” but we confess that we are not always faithful. We could have shown love this past week, but we kept ourselves busy with other things. We spoke without thinking and hurt someone. We treated the gifts and greetings and meals as chores, leaving out the most important greeting—caring. We are sorry. Please forgive us, God, and accept our worship.

Amid the bright colors that surround us this season, send the light of your Christ, that we might see Your way, Your truth, and Your love. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF GOD’S FORGIVENESS

RESPONSE

FROM NCH 122

Come, O long-expected Jesus, born to set all people free;
From our fears and sins release us; grant us your true liberty.

GOD MEETS US IN THE WORD

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

THE WRONSKI-JONES FAMILY

SONG

“ADVENT INCANTATION”

C-2

LITANY

Leader: O tidings of comfort and joy!

People: Joy to the world!

Leader: We love to sing about joy, but how're we gonna make it real?

People: With a smile for a stranger;

Leader: With a silly joke;

People: With a song that lifts our spirits;

Leader: With trust that joy will emerge out of sorrow;

People: With a prayer for patience and faith.

Leader: As we light this candle, we commit ourselves to making joy real.

ANTHEM “SHEPHERDS, SHAKE OFF YOUR DROWSY SLEEP” ARR. HOWARD S. SAVAGE

WORDS WITH THE YOUNG PEOPLE

* **HYMN OF PREPARATION** “O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM” **C-19**

(Children may go to Sunday School during the hymn.)

THE WORD IN SCRIPTURE, MUSIC, AND REFLECTION

Hebrew Bible Lesson

Psalm 23

Anthem

“Like a Shepherd”

J.S. Bach

Reflection

“In God’s Arms”

Gospel Lesson

Luke 2:8-14

Anthem

“Sherburne” verses 1-2

Daniel Read

Reflection

“Fear Not”

Anthem

“Sherburne” verse 6

Daniel Read

Scripture

Luke 2:15

A Charge

“Let us go now”

CALL TO PRAYER

CELEBRATIONS AND CONCERNS

SILENT PRAYER

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING, INTERCESSION AND PETITION

GOD CALLS FOR OUR GIFTS

OUR OFFERING TO GOD

OFFERTORY

* DOXOLOGY

(Lasst uns erfreuen)

NCH 17

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below; Alleluia, Alleluia.

Praise God for all that love has done; Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

* PRAYER OF DEDICATION

GOD SENDS US INTO THE WORLD

* **HYMN OF DEDICATION**

“THE FIRST NOEL”

C-23

* **CHARGE**

POSTLUDE

(Please feel free to remain and listen, or to greet one another in the narthex and at coffee hour.)

OUR WORSHIP HAS ENDED...

LET OUR SERVICE BEGIN!

MINISTERS

ALL THE PEOPLE OF EDWARDS CHURCH

PASTOR

REV. DR. DEBORAH CLARK

ASSOCIATE PASTOR FOR FAITH FORMATION & OUTREACH

REV. DR. KAREN NELL SMITH

COMMISSIONED MINISTER OF MUSIC

RICK SEAHOLM

ORGANIST

CHERYL ELKINS

PIANIST

SUSAN MINOR

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

NICOLA SEAHOLM

SEXTON

LORI WILSON

LITURGIST

REV. LIZ GARRIGAN-BYERLY

DEACON-IN-CHARGE

LEE ANN FRIEDMAN

GREETER

SANDY THOMPSON

COMPOST CAPTAIN

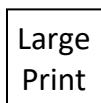
RONDA YEOMANS

JANIS STEIGMAN OF MOTHER'S HELPERS IS IN CHARGE OF THE NURSERY THIS MORNING.

Welcome! No matter who you are or where you are on your life's journey, we are glad you are here. Please join us for coffee following the service. Please sign our guestbook or fill out a welcome card.

We extend a special welcome to children and their families. The sound of children's voices is the sound of a living church! We want children to learn and question alongside adults, and we welcome whispers, wiggles, and joyful noises of all kinds. In the entryway to the sanctuary, you will find some quiet activity boxes; please take one and have fun! Following the anthem, we invite all children to attend a Christian Explorers class downstairs in the Susan P. Dickerman Education Building. We have a loving, trained nursery staff available for our youngest children.

Accessibility



Available in the Narthex (front entrance hallway):

- Sound-enhancing assistive listening devices
- Large print edition of the church bulletin



- **Accessible parking** spots are marked and located near the Education Building entrance.
- **Accessible entrance** is located on the lower level of the Education Building (to the left of the Church main entrance).
- **Elevator** is located in the Education Building next to the stairs.
- **Accessible restroom** is located on the upper level of the Education Building.

This Week at Edwards Church

December 15-21, 2019

SUNDAY	9:00am	Adult Bible Study	Youth Room
	9:00am	Rental	Edwards Hall
	10:00am	Worship	Sanctuary
	10:15am	Sunday School	Education Building
	11:00am	Coffee Hour	Susan P. Dickerman Hall
	1:00pm	Rental	Sanctuary
	5:00pm	Simple Supper	Susan P. Dickerman Hall
	5:30pm	Seeds of Grace	Susan P. Dickerman Hall
	7:00pm	Rental	Edwards Hall Classroom
MONDAY	9:30am	Chairobics	Susan P. Dickerman Hall
	10:30am	Strength Without a Gym	Edwards Hall
	6:15pm	Rental	Susan P. Dickerman Hall
	7:30pm	Rental	Edwards Hall Classroom
	7:30pm	Guided Meditation	Susan P. Dickerman Hall
TUESDAY	9:00am	Qi Gong / Tai Chi	Susan P. Dickerman Hall
	10:00am	Gentle Yoga	Edwards Hall
	10:30am	Rental	Susan P. Dickerman Hall
	5:00pm	Rental	Edwards Hall
	5:30pm	Hatha Yoga	Susan P. Dickerman Hall
	7:00pm	Rental	Choir Room
WEDNESDAY	9:30am	Chairobics	Susan P. Dickerman Hall
	12:00pm	Christmas Lunch Bunch	Susan P. Dickerman Hall
	6:00pm	Rental	Sanctuary
	6:00pm	Veterans Yoga	Edwards Hall
	7:30pm	Rental	Edwards Hall
THURSDAY	9:00am	Qi Gong / Tai Chi	Susan P. Dickerman Hall
	10:30am	Steeple Mailing	Jonathan House
	4:00pm	Rental	Edwards Hall
	6:00pm	Kripalu Yoga	Edwards Hall
	6:00pm	Cancer Support Group	Youth Room
	7:15pm	Choir Rehearsal	Susan P. Dickerman Hall
	7:30pm	AA Meeting	Edwards Hall
FRIDAY	9:30am	Chairobics	Susan P. Dickerman Hall
	7:00pm	Rental	Edwards Hall Classrooms
	7:30pm	Honoring the Dark	Edwards Hall
SATURDAY	11:00am	Rental	Sanctuary
	4:30pm	Rental	Sanctuary



Important Announcements

Music Note

This morning's worship service focuses on the shepherds and their part in the Christmas story. Upon hearing this selection, I came up with many ideas of pieces that I have heard or sung in years past. One is the beloved "Sheep May Safely Graze" by J.S. Bach, sung this morning in an adaptation, which uses the text of Psalm 23. We will also sing a fun French Carol which is reminiscent of the tune we know as "People Look East." The choral piece that excites me most this morning is "Sherburne," which comes to us from an American tradition called Sacred Harp singing, which names pieces using the hymn tune name rather than the hymn text name. The text of Sherburne is from Luke 2, "while shepherds watched their flock by night." These hymns are part of a participatory style of singing in which there is no congregation distinct from those who are singing, and they clearly stick to Charles Wesley's plea to "sing lustily and with good courage" (YouTube "sacred harp sing" later today and see what I mean). It began in New England among musically uneducated people who were unable to read music comfortably. Instead, they adapted our traditional oval note heads to a different set of note heads, each with an assigned shape (triangle, oval, square, diamond), and always tied to a specific syllable (fa, sol, la, mi). This may sound to you like the "do re mi" style of singing that many of us grew up on and which has been used in solfège classes for centuries. The difference is that in shape note singing, the pairing of syllable to shape makes it easier for people to associate the distances they are meant to sing between pairs of notes. Therefore, people who would tell you they "can't read music" can happily attend a Sacred Harp sing and sight read an entire hymnal on a weekend. It's captivating to think about.

Seeds of Grace

TODAY at 5:00pm for a simple soup supper, 5:30pm worship in Susan P. Dickerman Hall

The Seeds of Grace worship team will lead us in a time of warm community and creative worship with the Advent theme, "What are we waiting for?" Come gather for a cup of soup and a time of sharing stories and song, conversation and prayer. We hope to see you there!

Lunch Bunch Christmas Gathering

Wednesday, December 18 at noon in Edwards Hall

Everyone is welcome to join us for a Christmas lunch featuring turkey, stuffing, and all your favorite dishes. Fran and Debbie will provide turkey and stuffing; everyone is invited to bring a favorite holiday dish. Please sign up on the way to coffee hour or RSVP to the church office.

Honoring the Dark; Trusting the Promise of Light

Friday, December 20 at 7:30pm in Edwards Hall

In this holiday season, it is easy to feel overwhelmed and isolated, especially if we are grieving. Join us around the longest night of the year for an hour of gentle yoga, deep relaxation, and guided meditation. We will draw inspiration from a variety of spiritual traditions as we honor the wide range of emotions that are stirred this time of year, and as we point to the promise of the return of light and hope. Led by Debbie Clark. Donations to support Open Spirit are appreciated.

Christmas Caroling

Sunday, December 22 following worship and a light lunch (around noon)

Join us as we visit several members of our church in their individual homes and assisted living settings. We will have a brief lunch after worship before heading out to sing. Please contact Debbie if you would like to participate. Also, please let Debbie know if you need a ride or if you are able to drive people.