Thomas A. Edison

Congregational Church

NOVEMBER 15, 2026



Order of Worship
Twenty-Fifth Sunday of the Growing Season
10:00 AM

** You are invited to stand
(Please remember to silence your cell phone during the service.)

When the prelude begins, let us quiet our hearts and conversation.

Church Bell Calls Us to Worship

The Light of the World is Acknowledged in our Worship

"Jesus said: "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12). The presence of the light reminds us of Jesus' coming into our world and into our lives. The light is carried into the worship service as a symbol of Jesus' coming into the presence of the worshiping community. During most of the time of our church year our congregation uses two candles on the altar to point out that Jesus was both a human being and God. The light of the world is among us today.

— adapted from https://www.umc.org/en/content/ask-the-umc-why-do-we-light-and-extinguish-candles-during-worship

Prelude

Pastorale
by Charles Wesley

Call to Worship (responsively)

One: We gather this morning in the coolness and sunlight of Southwest Florida, grateful for the changing season and the gentle rhythms of creation.

All: We come seeking the presence of the Immortal, Invisible God, who dwells in light inaccessible yet meets us right where we are.

One: Our world is filled with noise, division, and uncertainty, yet we trust in a Wisdom deeper than our own understanding.

All: We open our hearts to the Most Blessed, Most Glorious, the Ancient of Days, whose justice and mercy endure

forever.

One: Like the blossoms that flourish and fade beneath the autumn sun, our lives are fleeting, yet we are held in eternal, unfailing love.

All: Whether we arrive today with full hearts or heavy burdens, we are welcomed, affirmed, and cherished in this sacred space.

One: Great Father and Mother of Glory, pure source of light, help us to see Your image in every neighbor and every stranger.

All: Let us worship together in spirit and in truth, and leave this place ready to embody Your love in the world. Amen.

~Slightly adapted from a prayer based on the hymn “Immortal, Invisible God, Only Wise"

Opening Hymn #18 Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

Passing of the Peace

May the Pease of Christ be with you!

And, also with you!

Gift of Music Holly Sorensen, Mezzo Soprano

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing

based on Traditional American Melody
Words by R. Robinson
Arr. by Mark Hayes

Prayer of Discipleship (responsively)

One: Fount of Every Blessing, Source of the living waters that sustain this coast and our spirits, we gather in the quiet turning of November, as the Gulf breezes cool and the seasons subtly shift.

All: Tune our hearts to sing Your grace, not just with our voices, but with the rhythm of our lives.

One: Here in Southwest Florida, amidst rapid growth and quiet struggles, teach us what it means to follow the path of radical love and Biblical justice.

All: When the world around us feels divided, pull us towards

the needs of our neighbors far and wide.

One: Give us eyes to see our neighbors—the seasonal worker, the elder, the unhoused, the newcomer—with Your boundless compassion.

All: We confess how prone we are to wander from the hard work of discipleship.

One: We get caught in the currents of busyness, comfort, and fear; yet You continuously seek us out, calling us back to table fellowship and shared purpose.

All: Here, we raise our Ebenezer—our stone of help and remembrance.

One: We look back at the storms we have weathered as a community, both literal and spiritual, and we give thanks for the resilience You have woven into us. We look ahead to the coming year, trusting that Your grace will continue to guide us as we advocate for peace, care for this fragile coastal creation, and build a sanctuary where all are truly welcome.

All: Bind our wandering hearts to You, O God, and bind us to one another. Make us instruments of Your mercy in this place and in this time. Amen.

~Slightly adapted from a prayer based on the hymn “Come Thou Fount"

Prayers of the People

Our Lord’s Prayer *(unison)*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Song of Prayer Response

Rain Down

By: Jaime Cortez
Arr by: John Carter

Rain down, rain down,
rain down your love on your peo-ple,
Rain down, rain down
rain down your love, God of life.

Today's Scripture Judges 4:1-7

Deborah, Barak, and Jael

After Ehud had died, the Israelites again did things that the Lord saw as evil. 2So the Lord gave them over to King Jabin of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor. The commander of his army was Sisera, … 3The Israelites cried out to the Lord because Sisera had nine hundred iron chariots and had oppressed the Israelites cruelly for twenty years. 4Now Deborah, a prophet, the wife of Lappidoth, was a leader of Israel at that time.

5 She would sit under Deborah's palm tree between Ramah and Bethel in the Ephraim highlands, and the Israelites would come to her to settle disputes. 6She sent word to Barak, … and said to him, "Hasn't the Lord, Israel's God, issued you a command? 'Go and assemble at Mount Tabor, taking ten thousand men from the people of Naphtali and Zebulun with you. 7I'll lure Sisera, the commander of Jabin's army, to assemble with his chariots and troops against you at the Kishon River, and then I'll help you overpower him.'"

~Common English Bible

Response to the Sharing of God's Story

The Story of God for the People of God!
Thanks Be to God!

Pastoral Words

Hymn of Praise

Here I Am, Lord

By: Dan Schutte

I, the Lord of sea and sky,
I have heard my people's cry.
All who dwell in dark and sin My hand will save.
I who made the stars of night,
I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear my light to them?
Whom shall I send?

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.
I will hold your people in my heart.

I, the Lord of snow and rain,
I have borne my people's pain.
I have wept for love of them. They turn away.
I will break their hearts of stone,
Give them hearts for love alone.
I will speak my word to them.
Whom shall I send?

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if you lean me.
I will hold your people in my heart.

I, the Lord of wind and flame,
I will tend the poor and lame.
I will set a feast for them.
My hand will save.
Fin-est bread I will pro-vide

Till their hearts be sat-is-fied.
I will give my life to them.
Whom shall I send?

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if you lean me.
I will hold your people in my heart.

Invitation to the Offering

What we give and the spirit with which we give it, enables this church to make a difference in the lives of all whom we touch.

Offertory **Holly Sorensen, Mezzo Soprano**

Simple Gifts
based on Shaker Tune and J. Pachelbel's Canon

** Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Tune: Thomas Ken, 1709

Life of Our Church

No Quilting on Wednesday

Faith Development
JOIN US WEDNESDAY @ CHURCH @ 11 AM & 6:30 PM;
AS WELL AS ONLINE THURSDAY 11 AM

The journey of the Hebrew people after receiving the Ten

Commandments at Mount Sinai is a foundational period in biblical history, marked by trials, transitions, and the eventual entry into the Promised Land.

Here are seven significant events that shaped their journey:

Crossing the Jordan and Entering Canaan:
Joshua 1 through 5 – Week 7

Today's flowers are gifted to the church by Cheryl Ellis. We would like to thank her for this beautiful gift.

November 15th– Blood Pressure Clinic
Today after service

For next week's God's word: Psalm 100

Parking for Sunday Service or Faith Development
Please Park on church side on Llewellyn Dr. and Menlo Rd. If able we are allowed to park in the back of Covenant Presbyterian Church parking lot. Enter Off of Marlyn. This is to make room for emergency vehicles if needed to come into the neighborhood.

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE CHURCH

Guardian ad Litem works with ANA's Friends and will be coordinating the Wishing Tree Project at Christmas again this year. TAECC will be collecting children's Christmas books, New Cozy Blankets, Holiday Mugs, Tumblers and Kid-friendly Cups, Hot Chocolate (prepackaged) and New Cozy Socks

for the 4th year for this project. The Wishing Tree Project will serve 765 children who are under court supervision appointed to the Guardian ad Litem office here in Lee County. The collected children's books will be distributed at Christmas to the foster parents and relatives to give to the children. If you would like to participate in the book drive this year, books can be brought to the church anytime and the drive will end on November 23.

Also looking for volunteers for cleaning windows in the Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall for one of the following mornings: Monday 11/16, Tuesday 11/17, Thursday 11/19 and Friday 11/20. We will not be cleaning the stained-glass windows in the Sanctuary. There will be a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board.

Monday, November 16th – Edison Park Expressive Arts School – Presentation of: *Sights and sounds of the season,* on the Church lawn between 10:00 and noon. Bring a Chair, and your Neighbors.

Women's Fellowship – November 18th
Women's Fellowship will meet on Wednesday, at 12:00 PM in the Fellowship Hall. The speaker will be Kim Gaide, with the Lee Health Military Support Program. Please bring your own lunch. All women are welcome.

November 21st – 22nd
Edison & Ford Winter Estates Autumn Garden Festival

Monday November 23rd
Decorate church for Advent – starting at 10:00 AM – lunch provided – sign-up sheet is on the bulletin

board. We need to know by November 18th who is planning to help.

Thursday November 26th
Turkey Trot 5K Race – Streets will be blocked off during the morning hours.

Thanksgiving – November 26th - Don't Be Alone.
Anton will be hosting a Thanksgiving luncheon On Thanksgiving Day here at the church at 1:00 PM. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board In the Fellowship Hall.

The Turkey will be provided by the Church. When you sign up, please also write down how many and what side dish you would like to bring so we don't end up with a lot of the same thing. Let's make it an assortment of different side dishes to make it festive. There will be a limit of 50 people this year.

November 27th thru January 3rd
Holiday Nights 5:30 PM – 9:00 PM nightly at the Edison and Ford Winter Estates (closed 12/24 & 12/25)

Sunday November 29th
First Sunday of Advent - Hope



Friday December 4th
Alena Michel presents
"Keys to Christmas Magic"

Student's Piano Recital starting at 6:00 PM here at the church.

December 5th – 6th
Bromeliad Sale at the Edison and Ford Winter Estates

Sunday, December 6th
Second Sunday of Advent - Peace



Wednesday, December 9th
Women's Fellowship Christmas Party.
All are welcome. The gathering will be at the church at noon with a Potluck Party and Gift Exchange.
Please RSVP to Gail Courtwright - gailcourtwright26@gmail.com for more details.

Sunday, December 13th
Third Sunday of Advent - Joy



Sunday, December 20th
Fourth Sunday of Advent - Love



Thursday, December 24th
Christmas Eve – Music starts at 4:30 PM



Women's Fellowship

The Women's Fellowship is collecting gently used jewelry and accessories (loose or broken pieces are okay) for their Jewelry Sale in January.

We are looking for Volunteers for Greeters and for Ushers. Sign-up sheets are on the bulletin board, or you can go to the website "Signup Genius" if interested.

Free magazines are available behind the kitchen door next to the library shelves. Donations are welcome.

Benediction (responsively**)**

Our worship has ended, but now our life of service begins!
Go from this space, for you and I are the body of Christ, and all of creation awaits us. So, live passionately, love faithfully, and celebrate every moment of your life from now until the finale. Our God of relentless, amazing, creative, and hopeful grace goes with us! Amen. **Amen.**

~ Adapted from The Rev. Michael S. Piazza

The Light of the World is Shared with the World at the end of our Worship

At the end of the service, the light is carried out into the world to show that Jesus Christ is for all people everywhere; This symbolizes the light of Jesus Christ going out into the world where believers are to serve."

— adapted from https://www.umc.org/en/content/ask-the-umc-why-do-we-light-and-extinguish-candles-during-worship

Postlude

Professional of Joy

by Ludwig van Beethoven
arr. by Hal H. Hopson

Time with our Children

Place a box of Bibles in front of the children and ask them if you have to be strong to lift it. Pick it up and tell them that it is heavy, and you certainly have to be strong to carry it around. Then ask them who the strongest person in the room is: a man, a woman, a child? Tell them that you don't know, because the strongest person is not the person with the biggest muscles, but it's the person who does what God wants. Take a Bible out of the box and open it to Judges 4. Tell them the story of Deborah, a woman who probably didn't have big muscles, but was strong because she did what God wanted. Stress that she helped the people of Israel with their problems (4:5), and she told a man named Barak that he would be able to defeat his enemy — with the help of a woman (4:9). Ask the children to tell you if they think that a woman could do what a whole army could not — yes, if that kind of victory was what God wanted! Conclude by saying that

the strongest person around us is the person who does what God wants, whether it is a child, a man or a woman like Deborah.

November Newsletter

"Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers."
3 John 1:2

November is American Diabetes Month

American Diabetes Month is a time to care for our bodies, encourage one another, and replace fear with faithful action. The CDC's 2026 National Diabetes Statistics Report estimates that in 2023 about **40.1 million Americans had diabetes** — and more than 1 in 4 of them (11 million) did not know it. Another **115.2 million adults have prediabetes**, and 8 in 10 of them do not know it either. In Florida, about **2.3 million adults** have diagnosed diabetes. Yet there is real hope: type 2 diabetes, which accounts for 90–95% of cases, can often be delayed or prevented — and prediabetes is a warning, not a verdict. Awareness is more than wearing blue on World Diabetes Day (Saturday, Nov. 14). It means knowing your number, keeping recommended appointments, and helping every person in our community receive timely, high-quality care.

5 ways to turn awareness into action

1. Know your number. A simple A1C blood test tells the story. The American Diabetes Association says everyone age 35 and older should be screened — earlier if you carry extra weight or have a family history, high blood pressure, or other risk factors.
2. Prediabetes can be turned around. Losing just 5–7% of body weight through healthy eating and 150 minutes of activity a week can cut the risk of type 2 diabetes by more than half. If your results are normal, retest at least every 3 years; if you have prediabetes, test yearly.
3. Learn the warning signs. Extreme thirst, urinating often, unusual tiredness, blurry vision, weight loss without trying, or sores that heal slowly — see a doctor and ask for a blood sugar test. A change does not always mean

diabetes, but it deserves a prompt conversation with a health care professional.

4. Protect the whole body. Uncontrolled blood sugar raises the risk of heart disease, stroke, kidney failure, blindness, and amputation. Managing blood sugar protects your heart, kidneys, and eyes alike — and regular checkups catch problems early, when they are most treatable.

5. Do not let cost stop the first step. Lee Health offers ADA-recognized diabetes education and a free year-long prevention program, and the Florida Department of Health in Lee County helps income-eligible residents with insulin prescription costs (see resources below).

To every person facing testing, diagnosis, treatment, or recovery — and to every caregiver walking beside them — you are not alone. May our church be a place of prayer, practical help, patient listening, and steady hope. God's healing presence can meet us in the exam room, the waiting room, and every day in between.

Lee County diabetes resources: Lee Health Diabetes Education & Support (239) 424-3127 · Lee Health Diabetes Prevention Program (239) 468-0051 · Free chronic-disease self-management workshops 239-424-3121 · Florida DOH-Lee insulin prescription assistance 239-332-9565 · American Diabetes Association 1-800-342-2383

See the checklist posted on the bulletin board for diabetes reminders and screening resources.

Health information is general; speak with your healthcare professional about your individual risk. Sources: CDC · ADA · FL DOH-Lee · Lee Health

Dear Worshipers,

We invite your child to join us for Faith Formation learning in Cathy's Place at Thomas Edison Congregational Church. Your children will learn about Jesus through age-appropriate faith activities, songs, prayers, Bible stories, games, and arts & crafts.

November class curriculum Faith Formation

November 15th Matthew 25:1-13
November 29th Genesis 18
Lori


Interfaith Thanksgiving Service
Wednesday, November 25th, 5pm Service
Pie and Cider reception to follow
Iona-Hope Episcopal Church
9650 Gladiolus Drive, Fort Myers Fl 33908
JOIN THE PEOPLE OF TEMPLE BETH EL, TEMPLE JUDEA, IONA-HOPE EPISCOPAL CHURCH, EDISON CONGREGATIONAL, CYPRESS LAKE UMC, AND FRIENDS FOR AN INTERFAITH SERVICE OF GRATITUDE.
Please consider bringing a non-perishable item to donate to the local food pantry and/or a Pie to share at the reception
Call 239-454-4778 or email guest@ionahope.org with questions.

Loving and Liberating God,

As we stand on the threshold of Thanksgiving week here in Southwest Florida, we pause amid the rush of preparation and the busyness of the season to center our hearts on Your grace. While the northern winds turn cold, we are grateful for the warmth of the Gulf breeze, the shifting light over the Caloosahatchee, and the fragile, vibrant beauty of our estuaries, mangroves, and coastlines. Teach us to be faithful stewards of this land and water, honoring the Indigenous Calusa people who cared for these shores long before us, and committing ourselves to the healing and protection of Your creation.

As our communities fill with returning seasonal neighbors, travelers, and tourists, open our eyes to see the full reality of our region. We pray for the agricultural workers in Immokalee and across the fields who harvest the very food that will grace our holiday tables; may they be met with fair wages, dignity, and justice. We lift up our neighbors who are still rebuilding from past storms of nature and past storms of real life, those struggling with the rising cost of housing, and those who feel invisible, unhoused, or alone during a season centered on abundance.

In a time when division often echoes louder than compassion, ground us in the radical, inclusive love of Jesus of Nazareth. Give us courage to set a wider table —not just in our homes, but in our neighborhoods and civic life. Soften our hearts when we encounter differing views around family tables next week, helping us to listen with empathy while standing firm in our commitment to peace, equity, and the marginalized.

Prepare our spirits not merely to feel grateful for what we have, but to actively practice gratitude through generosity, hospitality, and solidarity with all of Your children. Guide our steps in the week ahead, that we may be instruments of Your justice and peace in this corner of the earth.

Praying in the name of all that is good and holy; Amen.

~Slightly adapted from a prayer written about what can a mainstream person of Christian faith pray for, one week before thanksgiving holiday week in Southwest Florida in 2026

Thank you for visiting Thomas A. Edison Congregational Church

To learn more about our church and to make a donation, please scan the QR code below.



Scan me!

Place your phone camera over the QR code to scan. Then scroll down to where it says donate and follow the instructions. You can use either your credit/debit card or your bank account. There is a way to communicate with the staff through the website. Send us a message.

Thank you.

Cards can be sent to the following:

General Dozier
Barrington Terrace, of Ft. Myers
9731 Commerce Center Ct., Room #326
Fort Myers, Fl. 33908

Mrs. Patti Seebock
232 Fern Place
Fox Lake, IL 60020

Mr. Bill Persons
Calusa Harbour Assisted Living – 2525 First St
Ft Myers, Fl. 33901
Room 233

PRAYER LIST

Our Church Members:

Jean Lindenlaub; Liz Lloyd; General Dozier;
Phyllis Contino; Sharlene Dozier; Barbara Buch;
Jean Long, Patti Seebock; Lana Zeigler.

Friends & Family:

Betty Denson; Jim Martin (Teri Martin's husband); Michele Baron (friends of Rod Schaffter and Carol Skaza); Fred & Natalie Johnson (friend of Rod Schaffter & Carol Skaza); Bob Mesce (brother of Patti Seebock); Tom Simpson (brother of Kathy Bolen); Dwight Brzinski (friend of Pat Jessie); Christopher Smith and Darwin Solorzono – missing at sea (friends of Mark Rosandich); Edward Yergeau (brother of Roger Yergeau); Ben Collens - stationed in Quatar (friend of Martha Jean Long); Jennifer McMullen & family (Lori McMullen extended family); Renee Imm (friend of Sandy Cole); Cara (Jean Long's daughter); Tasha (friend of Jackie Sellers); Andrea (friend of Pat Jessie); Larry (friend of Pat Jessie); Patty & family (Jean Long's friends); Phil Denmark (friend of Tom & Jan Sherman).

No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you're welcome here at Edison Congregational Church. Welcome home!

Website:	www.edisonchurch.com
Facebook:	Facebook.com/EdisonChurch
Email Pastor:	Pastorjim@taecc.com
Email Office:	Admin@taecc.com
Office Phone:	239-334-4978
Office Hours:	Monday-Friday 9 AM – 2 PM
Mailing:	1619 Llewellyn Dr., Ft. Myers 33901

Pastor Jim can be reached at the office
or on his cell phone at 502-494-6649 (voice & text).

Our Church Staff
Senior Minister – Rev. Jim Harper, III
Associate Minister – Rev. Anton Pierce
Administrative Assistant – Cindy Wilson
Distinguished Director of Sacred Arts – Alena Michel
Faith Community Nurse – Lori McMullen
Pianist - Stephen Brittain

Your gifts are deeply appreciated and enable this ministry to continue. Our church retains the right to redirect donations to the area of greatest need.

National Association of Congregational Christian Churches

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