

Edgumbe Presbyterian Church

Midweek Update – October 19, 2016

Steering the Boat

Here is Christianity 101, according to the first question and answer of the Heidelberg Catechism, one of our Presbyterian creeds of faith.

Q. 1. What is your only comfort in life and in death?

My only comfort is that I am not my own, but belong—in body and soul, in life and death—not to myself but to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ.

That has long been my favorite section of our creeds. First the question: What is my comfort? Not: How do I get into heaven? Not: How do I take charge of my life? Not: What are the five proven ways to have success in this world? Not: How can I...get my children to listen to me, or ...balance the church budget, or ...find someone to make me happy, or ...eat as much as I want and not gain weight? Wouldn't it be nice to know the answers to those questions?! Instead we take a breath and ask, What is my only comfort? Just asking that question is calming, is humbling, is an act of faith.

Then the answer: The answer is an invitation to take my hands off the steering wheel of my own life—to give not just my money and time and gifts and energy to God, but the whole shandango. To give my self. To remove my hands in complete trust from the steering wheel of life and give God my body and soul, my life and my death. That is absolute craziness. And apparently, it is absolute comfort.

This Sunday we will do a Steering Wheel exercise in worship to increase our awareness of our own need for control and comfort in different areas of our lives. If you want to read ahead, our two texts will be Psalm 65, a beauty, and Luke 18:9-14, a story about control and humility.

Crescent Cove Task Force

Crescent Cove recently put a bid on a hospice center for sale in Brooklyn Center. Yesterday their bid was accepted by the seller. That doesn't make it a done deal yet, but it is clearly a new direction for Crescent Cove at the moment, putting the process of exploring our land on hold.

I have a couple of reflections of this development.

1. I want to encourage you to feel whatever range of emotions come up for you. Feel the feels, as my friend Jamie Schultz says. Personally, I am feeling a combination of resigned and sad and trusting and excited and some more sad. I was truly excited about both the mission of CC and the financial benefits of a new tenant, so I am doing some mourning at the probable loss of this connection in the near future. I really do believe that being honest about these emotions is healthy and gives us a platform to be creative about our next steps.

2. I am proud of the EPC community for the way we have gone about this exploration, and I believe that the Holy Spirit can use our open-heartedness for amazing and miraculous things. The EPC Crescent Cove task force will take a little break to catch our breath while we discern what is next. Deep gratitude to everyone on that task force and to everyone who asked questions or helped

out or prayed for wisdom. No prayer is made in vain, so we will trust God to show us where we go from here.

Confirmation Faith Statements—This Sunday

Confirmands – Please join the Session for lunch and the presentation of your faith statements this Sunday, October 23, after worship. If anyone cannot make that date, please contact Pastor Julie or Pastor Phil right away and we'll set up an alternate time. If you want more feedback about your faith statement, please talk to your mentor or Pastor Phil. I (Phil) would be happy to meet with any youth during MEA school-free days, if that would help you prepare.

Chili / Soup Gathering on Sunday, November 6

Some have been asking about gathering outside of worship. In that spirit of connecting as a community, we will gather after worship on November 6th over soup/chili. A sign up for soup, chili, bread, salad, dessert will be in the narthex this coming Sunday. If you know what you want to bring or have questions before Sunday, contact Faith Dietz. Bring a friend and let us break bread and gather together. Thank you! Faith

Lectionary Bible Study with Pastor Phil—Next Monday!

The launch date for this new study is now Monday, Oct. 24, at church at 6:30pm. Besides reading the text together, we remind each other of Bible and faith basics, like:

- Every line of the Bible is super good news.
- We read the Bible from outside to inside.
- The Holy Spirit gives us everything we need.

Hope to see you!

Prayers

- Prayers for Zarrick and Eleta's son Zack who has been quite sick the last several days with no clear diagnosis. Comfort and quick recovery for Zack!
- For the confirmation students who are finishing up their faith statements and preparing to share them with the Elders this Sunday. May the Spirit give them the clarity and courage that they need.

People of God, where do you turn for comfort? Three of my favorite comforts are sugar, reading, and bed. There is nothing wrong with good food, a good book, and sleeping. But none of those things is God, and whatever keeps me from God quickly becomes an idol, an attachment, an addiction. What is our only comfort? That we belong to God, in body and soul, in life and in death at every single moment, forever and ever.

Comfort to you today!! Pastor Phil