

Edgcumbe Presbyterian Church

Midweek Update – October 26, 2016

Steering the Boat – Part 2

Let's just admit that most of us like to steer our boat most of the time. As long as this works, why not? So here's the next question: How do you know when steering your own boat isn't working for you anymore? Here are some signs to watch for:

- Exhaustion or burnout or illness
- Crabbiness toward others or pulling away from relationships (avoiding people)
- Feeling stuck or out of options
- Numbness or a feeling a meaninglessness or despair

This certainly happened to me this fall. After an August and September of overcompensating and overworking, I have been exhausted and sick for the past three and half weeks. My body finally told me, "Enough." We work so hard to avoid suffering that we cause ourselves great suffering. That's called IRONY. That's called FORGETTING WHO WE ARE. Protecting ourselves from suffering in a way that causes suffering is a pretty good definition of the human ego.

If you notice any of these symptoms in yourself, what do you do? Here are a few simple steps that can begin a process of healing and change. 1) Just notice what is happening without judgment. "I'm noticing that I'm exhausted (or numb or crabby or despairing). Something about my life isn't working for me right now." Just admitting this with honesty to yourself or someone else begins to put you on a new path. 2) Take a deep breath. Breath is a name used for God's Spirit in both the Old and New Testaments. Taking a breath, realigns your body and your mind. Paying attention to your breath shows where your barriers are and invites you into freedom.

There are more steps on the path to enlightened transformation—forgiveness, courageous choice, and self-acceptance to name three—but let's start with non-judgmental noticing and breathing for today. Try it right at this moment and see what comes up for you.

October Session Communication Report

The report from the Session meeting of Oct. 20 is attached at the bottom of this mailing. Please read it! It includes several important announcements and reports, including:

- Pastors' vacation scheduled for November 7-20.
- Session challenge to the congregation to pledge support to the mission project of Angelie Ryah. Session members have offered \$60 per month of their own money to Angelie to match any new pledges to the congregation.

Pastor Julie Snowmass Slideshow – This Sunday

Join Pastor Julie after worship this Sunday, Oct. 30, as she reflects on her time of continuing education earlier this month. She'll talk about centering prayer meditation and silence were amazing opportunities for awareness and rest, as well as show photos of the places her group met and the mountains and high deserts around the St. Benedictine Monastery in Colorado.

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

Next Bible Study with Pastor Phil—November 21 & 28

After our first meeting this past Monday, the Monday Bible Study will take a short break before meeting twice in late November—the 21st and 28th. Hope to see you!

Thanksgiving Meal at Montreal Hi-Rise

Two ways you can support this meal. One, we need to know who can be there to help out. If you can come from 11am-1pm on Thanksgiving Day to help prepare the space, serve food, and clean up, then please contact the church office immediately so we can determine if we have enough people to pull this off. Two, if you can donate money to pay for the food, please write a check to EPC with “Thanksgiving” in the memo line. Thank you!

Birthdays in November

Just two birthdays in November – Julie GebbenGreen on November 5 and Jim Turnure on November 22.

Confirmation

We had a wonderful and inspiring time with our confirmation students last Sunday. Attached is a picture of most of the group who heard the faith statements from five our youth. We’ll look forward to hearing from these young people again at our confirmation worship service.

People of God, notice without judgment and breathe. Repeat as necessary.

Comfort and joy to you today!! Pastor Phil

SESSION REPORT

Session was held Thursday October 20 at EPC. Present were Phil Gebben Green, Carol Schweickhardt, Fred Clary, and Bryan Kingsriter. Eleta Pierce and Julie Gebben Green were sick. Agenda items discussed were:

1. While Crescent Cove has decided to pursue the purchase of a facility in Brooklyn Park for their program, we discussed the impact of our conversations with them, that may have ongoing value. One impact has been the sense of having a mission that expanded our identity as a church. With Crescent Cove, that mission focused on relating to families needing a ministry of respite and support through death. We invited ourselves and our congregation to prayer for guidance in finding mission in another form.

We also noted the renewed recognition that we live in the community of Highland Park, and that those relationships have not been developed as fully as we would like.

2. A financial review noted that there is a finance team meeting scheduled this next week. Stewardship month is also coming up in November, and Ron Eggert will be heading this up.
3. Pastors will be gone for two weeks in November, from the 7th till the 20th. One week will be vacation, one continuing education. Phil noted the fatigue factor for him with significant effort put into the Crescent Cove exploration, while continuing with other pastoral duties. They will also be taking their final week of vacation after Christmas.
4. Phil noted that one of our guest preachers, Lisa Largess is being ordained into ministry at the end of this month. He will announce the information of time and place so those interested from EPC can attend.
5. We discussed the confirmation process and the plans for confirmands to present their statements of faith to the session this coming Sunday. We discussed and agreed to a format for this event and noted its significance as the first such event since Phil and Julie have been pastors at EPC. Questions we will ask them to consider ahead of time will be related to understanding their relationship with God, understanding the gifts they bring to the church, their needs from the church to nurture their faith, and whether they wish to join the church.
6. We discussed our member Angelie Ryah's calling to missions and ways that EPC might provide some financial support, in addition to our prayers for her. We agreed that elders would provide some matching funds for other members' contributions. Up to \$60 per month matching funds will be offered for the next year, for new pledges made by EPC members before the end of November. These will not be funds coming from existing pledges.
7. We reviewed the membership rolls and identified some who have not been at EPC for some time to be contacted about their wish to remain connected to our church.
8. Our next session meeting will be December 1, at 6:15.

Respectfully submitted,

Bryan Kingsriter, Elder