

**Edgcumbe Presbyterian Church
Thanksgiving Update – November 30, 2016**

Advent Humility

The root word of humility is “humus,” meaning ground or soil. So when we contemplate our humility, we are thinking about our grounded-ness, our connection to the earth, knowing where our feet are planted. Are you feeling grounded today? Do you remember who you are and where you are planted?

To guide our conversation this Advent, we are using the “Twelve Degrees of Humility” from *The Rule of Saint Benedict*. We will have copies at every worship service this December, but we are also attaching a copy to this message. Last week and this up-coming Sunday, we will be exploring Movement One: Our Authentic Search for God. Take a moment to read the affirmations of Movement One. Read them as if you are praying them. When I read them myself, I find that they change who I am; they open my heart and create new possibilities of faith within me.

This Sunday, we will be reading Isaiah 11:1-10. We will also be crunching up paper and taping it to the wall. Sound interesting? See you Sunday.

Thanksgiving Thank-You's

Once again Edgcumbe has served a Thanksgiving meal to the residents of Montreal High-rise. They are always so appreciative. Brian and I want to thank everyone who gave their time, money and prayers to make the dinner a success.
Meredith Holt

Next Bible Study with Pastor Phil—December 5 & 19

We continue to have fantastic meetings in the Parlor from 6:30-8pm, and we would love to have more people join us. If you want to be a part of this study, but can't make it on Monday evenings, please talk to Pastor Phil because the group is exploring new options in 2017.

Advent Giving Tree

Collecting NEW Pajamas, Slippers & Books for Project Home

It has been our tradition at Edgcumbe to dedicate the tree in the Narthex as our “Giving Tree” each advent and collect items for a local organization. This year's Giving Tree will benefit the homeless families who are currently with Interfaith Action of Greater St. Paul's Project Home. Project Home would like to give each person staying with them a new pair of pajamas and a book for Christmas, and we would like to help them achieve that goal.

Now through December 18, we are collecting NEW pajamas & slippers for all-ages: infants, children, youth and adults, and NEW or VERY GENTLY USED books for all-ages. As you are making out your holiday shopping list, please also consider picking up one or several of these items for these families. Going out shopping on Black Friday? Stores often have great deals for these items on that day. Donations can be placed either on or under the tree in the Narthex.

Christmas Flowers

The order for this year's purchase and donation of red or white poinsettias to decorate the church for Christmas is attached. The form will also be in the

bulletin for the next few weeks. Final orders need to be in by December 11. There are two options – you can purchase plants and take them home following the Christmas Eve service or you can simply donate funds outright to purchase additional plants that will then be taken to those who are no longer able to get out to worship with us in person.

Year-End Giving

As you anticipate and plan for your tax deductible contributions at the end of 2016, please note that all December contributions must be received in the office by December 29 or postmarked on or before December 31 in order to be credited to the 2016 giving year. Year-end giving statements will be distributed beginning on January 15, 2017. Thank you for your faithful support of EPC!

Looking Ahead (It's starting to look a lot like Christmas!)

Here are some dates to put on your calendars:

- December 11 – Christmas music sing-a-long
- December 17 – Christmas cookie baking on Saturday afternoon
- December 24 – Christmas Eve worship at 4:00pm
- December 25 – Merry Christmas with no worship on Sunday morning!

December Birthdays

- Gabby Dietz – 12/12
- Micah GebbenGreen – 12/12
- Warner Gunsell – 12/16
- Budd Johnson – 12/22
- Audrey Carlson – 12/25
- Chet Carlson – 12-27
- Tierra Hunt – 12/27

Put both feet on the ground, remembering that love is the only real thing!

Pastor Phil

Movements of Humility, with Personal Affirmations

Based upon The Twelve Degrees of Humility, The Rule of St. Benedict (@530 AD)

Movement One: Our Authentic Search for God

1. The discovery that God is always with us and within us.

"The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress." ~Psalm 46:7 and 11

- God is my constant companion.
- All is sacred – God is in all.
- I cannot gain more of God – I have all of God present within me.
- I have no more of God than my neighbor – my neighbor has no more of God than me.
- God is with me – God is within me – God is with us!

2. The discovery that God's will is best for us.

"Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." ~Mathew 6:10

- I will seek God's way, not my own.
- God is good and seeks good for my life.
- I will trust God, who created me and blesses me.

- I will abandon my self to God's plan.
- I will pray, "Thy will be done."

3. The discovery that obedience to God results in our highest potential.

"He became obedient unto death, even death on a cross." ~Philippians 2:8

- My obedience is an expression of my love for God.
- I will openly listen to God's Word and the words of others.
- I will honestly receive spiritual guidance.
- I recognize that I do not have all of the answers.
- I am willing to admit that I know I do not know.
- I am aware that I have a false self and desire to live out of my true self.

4. The discovery that life's difficulties are our greatest teachers.

"Weeping may remain for a night, but rejoicing comes in the morning." ~Psalm 30:5

- I believe that God will honor my spiritual perseverance.
- I know and accept the truth the life is difficult.
- I am willing to endure life's journey without seeking escape.
- I believe that life's journey has a refining quality for me.
- I embrace the dark night as a part of my spiritual journey.

Movement Two: Our Attentiveness and Obedience to God

5. The deceptions of our false-self must be faced.

"Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature – put on the true self, which is being renewed in the image of its Creator." ~Colossians 3:5 and 10.

- When I confess my sins, God offers me a fresh beginning.
- There is freedom in sharing with a good confessor.
- I commit myself to the life-long process of dismantling my false self, allowing my true self to emerge.

6. Our status in life must be abandoned.

"If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all." ~Mark 9:35

- I will be content with the lowest and most menial treatment.
- I give up my desire for the best of things.
- I give up my desire for privileged treatment.
- I will be satisfied with what I am offered in life.

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7. Our defense of self and criticism of others must be put aside.

"Be merciful, as God is merciful. Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned." ~Luke 6:36-37

- I am willing to assume an inferior status in life.
- I will begin to hear the insightful criticism of my life.
- I am willing to know that I do not know.
- I am willing to see my life through the lenses of God's mercy.
- I will live my life as a loved-sinner, and see others as the same.

8. The rule of our community must be accepted, refreshed and practiced.

"The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it." ~Psalm 24:1

- I am willing to renew my traditions in fresh ways.
- I am willing to learn the wisdom of my community.
- I am willing to engage in and be formed by spiritual disciplines.

- I will work for the common good of others and all creation.
- I will live my life out of a generous hospitality.

Movement Three: Our Life-long Response to God's Presence

9. Be quick to listen and slow to speak.

"Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry." ~James 1:19

- I will control my tongue, my speech, my comments and my responses to others.
- I learn to listen before sharing my opinion.
- I will listen for the voice of God in all things.
- I will observe the practice of silence.

10. Be slow to join in laughter at another.

"A fool raises his voice when he laughs, but the wise smile quietly." ~Sirach 21:20

- I can have fun in life without making fun of others.
- I can find joy in life, without taking away the joy of others.
- I will live an authentic life, giving up the path of foolishness.
- I will be a fool for my faith.

11. Be gentle in speech.

"In your teaching show integrity, so that your speech cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about you." ~Titus 2:7-8

- I will speak words of peace.
- I will choose my words carefully.
- I will speak the truth in love.

12. Be true to your true self.

"For we know that our old self was crucified with Christ – we have been freed from sin." ~Romans 6:6-7

- I will be patient with myself as my true self emerges.
- I will walk through life with a humble attitude.
- I will seek a simple, quiet and serene lifestyle.
- I will seek my unique place within the universe.