

Edgcumbe Presbyterian Church

Midweek Update – December 6, 2017

EGO VACATIONS & THE ENNEAGRAM

On Sunday, Pastor Julie talked about “taking a vacation from your self.” In order to hear the lovely voice of the Holy Spirit, it helps a whole bunch to quiet our own spinning minds and thoughts first. Our faith exercise this week is to take a vacation from your self by doing a series of five-minute meditations (or one-minute, or 20-minute—you decide!) All you do is sit quietly and say to yourself over and over, “**Holy Spirit, show me your love.**” Only that, over and over. Let the Spirit’s love flow into you and out of you with each relaxing breath. Don’t think about whether or not you want to do this. Just do it.

Julie’s primary practice for ego-vacationing and experiencing the peace of God’s Spirit is contemplative prayer. I do a similar meditative practice with a bit less rigor than Julie’s practice. If you would like to try this practice for yourself, everyone is welcome to attend the contemplative prayer group that meets at church at 3pm each Tuesday.

My own primary practice for letting go of my ego and making room for God is through the study of the Enneagram. The Enneagram is a powerful tool for personal and collective transformation. Stemming from the Greek words *ennea* (nine) and *grammos* (a written symbol), the nine-pointed Enneagram symbol represents nine distinct strategies for relating to the self, others and the world. Each Enneagram type has a different pattern of thinking, feeling and acting that arises from a deeper inner motivation or worldview. By studying my own patterns, I gain more and more freedom to escape my limiting thoughts and habits and say Yes to love and connection and self-acceptance. I am mentioning this now for two reasons. One, I am hoping that more people at EPC will say yes to studying the Enneagram, and I have an introductory workshop to recommend in January. Two, I am applying right now to become a teacher in local jails through the Enneagram Prison Project. I’ll be saying more about this at worship on Sunday. If you want a preview, please visit their website at www.enneagramprisonproject.org.

ADVENT SING-A-LONG & CHRISTMAS EVE

This Sunday, Dec. 10, after worship, we will have our traditional Christmas sing-a-long with Jenya around the piano. All are welcome! Christmas Eve worship will be at 10am on Sunday, Dec. 24.

THANKSGIVING MEAL AT MONTREAL HI-RISE PICTURES

If you haven’t seen them yet, there are lovely pictures of the Thanksgiving meal on our website: epchurch.org. Go the Event Photos link.

STEWARDSHIP

Thank you to everyone who participated in our 2018 Stewardship drive. We have received pledges of over \$80,000, which is a 30% increase over last year. Praise God! Session is working on 2018 budget that will be presented to the congregation sometime in January.

CHRISTMAS GIVING AT EPC

We have two wonderful opportunities to give this Advent Season!

Local Mission:

We are collecting pajamas, socks & books on our Giving Tree in the narthex for the homeless families staying with Project Home over the holidays. All ages and genders. Donations can be left right on or under the tree.

Denominational Mission:

This year we are supporting the Christmas Joy Offering through the Presbyterian Church (USA). This offering provides assistance to current and retired church workers in times of hardship and develops future leaders at Presbyterian racial-ethnic schools and colleges. You can give at any time this month or at the special offering on Christmas Eve.

SPECIAL JANUARY SUNDAY

The EPC Deacons will be hosting a "Comfort & Joy" Sunday, January 14, 2018, during the worship service. The modified worship service will be held in the parlor area, with a potluck brunch during the service featuring comfort food or culinary delights that bring you joy. In an effort to add a burst of sunshine in our lives during the winter month of January, the service will be in-part facilitated by young people in our congregation and will focus on the many gifts in our life which bring us comfort and joy. So bring your blankets, an open heart, and a delicious dish to pass for our first "Comfort & Joy" Sunday! Look for a sign-up sheet for the potluck in the Narthex area soon. For more information, please contact Belinda Clary, Ingrid Eggert, or Todd Barnes.

May peace seep into your bones today, Pastor Phil