

Edgumbe Presbyterian Church

Midweek Update

December 19, 2018

BABY JESUS REVISITED

Two weeks ago, I must have been feeling a little Grinchy, because I suggested that the Baby Jesus is not the best symbol for Christian faith or even in the Bible very much at all. Today, I'm not going to retract those thoughts, but I will invite us to rest for a moment in the power of the story of God coming to earth as a newborn.

Having been a newborn once (so I'm told), and having sired three of my own, I'm noting how both helpless and free they are. Helpless in the sense that they are completely dependent on the people around them for basic food, shelter, and care they need to survive. Free in the sense that they simply express whatever they are feeling with no filter. When they are happy, they chortle or giggle with abandon. When they are hungry or tired or displeased or uncomfortable, they frown or grunt or cry.

When Jesus shows up as a newborn, he is helpless and free. When he starts his ministry as an adult, he remains helpless (he will eventually be killed), putting his full trust on the will and mercy of God in every moment. And he remains free, choosing life and love and miracles in every moment. You are an adult. What do you have to learn from the helpless trust and freedom of the newborn baby?

ADVENT-CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

- Sunday, Dec. 23 – Advent 4, Julie preaching
- Monday, Dec. 24 – Christmas Eve candlelight communion worship at 4:00 pm. Special offering on that evening for Project Home.
- Sunday, Dec. 30 – Elder-led worship with Fred Clary preaching

GEBBENGREENS AWAY

Pastors Julie and Phil will be off next week while visiting Phil's mom in Michigan. If you need anything, Office Administrator Krysta should be in the office on Wednesday afternoon, or contact one of our Elders, Fred, Eleta, Meredith or Jay, or Treasurer Ron Eggert.

GRATITUDES

Remember that GRATITUDE is one of the most powerful spiritual tools that is available to us in any moment (rivaled only by FORGIVENESS). So if you are feeling lonely or

bumped or cynical this Christmas season, take a moment to feel, recognize, and express gratitude. For anything at all. Here are a couple of quick gratitudes from me to get the ball rolling. I am grateful for:

- The TWO people who volunteered to help bring donations to Joseph's Coat after last week's request. From famine to feast.
- The un-carded gift that showed up in the pastors' office this past Sunday. Thank you to the mystery giver!
- Three Eagle Scout projects, one Senior Project, a Presbytery grant, and a Gordie that have made our backwoods meditative pathway come to life.
- Having Deb Carlson as our Music Director and her ongoing gift of bringing Jenya into our lives.

What are you grateful for?

SPEAKING OF JENYA

In case you have not heard, Jenya is planning to accept an offer from our Session for an ongoing salaried position of being the EPC accompanist and choral director. Wanted you to know! Squealing in joy is an appropriate response.

PRAYERS

- For Angelie Ryah as she finished her first year of ministry and life in San Diego. Prayers of discernment and serenity as she faces a whole set of questions and opportunities on her next steps and financial goals.
- For anyone who is lonely or down or feels a bit off this Christmas.
- That the "good news for all people" will be heard and felt by each of us and the whole world.

YEAR-END FINANCIAL REMINDERS

Please note that all contributions for 2018 must be either received in the church office by 12/31/18 or postmarked by 12/31/18 in order to qualify as a tax-deductible donation for the current year. The same deadline also applies for gifts of stock and securities.

If you have questions about giving or church finances, please contact either Treasurer Ron Eggert at ireggert@gmail.com or Office Manager Krysta Niznick at secretary@epchurch.org or 651-698-8220.