

# Edgumbe Presbyterian Church

*Holy Week Update*

*April 17, 2019*

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## **WHY THIS DYING AND RISING BUSINESS?**

The death and resurrection of Jesus are generally considered the central story of the Christian faith. It is the only major story that is told in all four Gospels (even Jesus' birth is in only in two). A question I would like us to ponder a bit this week is: Why is it important for Jesus to die and rise again? Couldn't God just show up, say: "I love you all and you're saved forever. End of story; see you in heaven"? That would be so much cleaner, safer, less bloody, less violent, nicer.

The problem is that life is a constant choice between safety and love—and God chooses love every time. Safety is actually an illusion made up by the ego to limit us, to cage us, to trap us. As long as the ego has us running around trying to be safe, we never rest in the beautiful, risky, vulnerable present. Jesus comes along and says, "What if I lived my whole life in complete trust of God's grace?" Our egos yell back, fear for their safety: "Then you will surely die!" Jesus responds by reminding us that even death, even a violent, bloody, miserable death, even a three-day beginning-to-rot death, cannot separate us from God or from love. Jesus tells his disciples over and over: "I'm going to die and then come back in three days." Not one disciple believes him. Who would?

So the second question for us this Easter is this: Do I believe that resurrection is possible? Not for Jesus but for ourselves? Most of us have heard the story of Jesus' resurrection so many times that we believe it by default. The trickier question is whether we believe it's true in our own lives right now—that we can trust God's love so completely that nothing can threaten us and we can relax. Here are some questions to ponder.

- Would I rather be safe or loved?
- Which do I trust more—my ego's fears about death or God's promises about life?

- What if I didn't fear death at all? Would I live differently right now?
- Am I able to relax into God's all-encompassing love? Have I ever relaxed into God's love? If not, what is stopping me?

Easter only means something if we actually feel different inside, if we can feel the love of God flowing through us so that we live with freedom and kindness and joy and hope. Let's make this an Easter to remember.

### **MAUNDY THURSDAY & EASTER**

This Thursday, April 18, at 5:30pm we will also have a potluck dinner followed by worship and communion. This is the evening that Jesus gathered with his disciples to share a final meal, including the washing of feet. This year, Pastors Julie and Phil will provide a station to have your feet briefly held and blessed as we transition from the meal to worship. Everyone is welcome. Guests are encouraged. Come whenever you can.

On Easter Sunday, we will have a music-filled service at our usual 10am time, with the friendly reminder: *Have you invited anyone to church lately?*

### **BIBLE STUDY**

Our next Bible Study will be Sunday evening, April 28, at 6:30pm in the church office.

### **INVITATION FROM PASTOR JULIE**

thank you for the many ways the community has received my own story of "how i am being changed." if you were not able to attend worship this past sunday, i would be thrilled if you'd consider taking the time to listen to the service at some point. so much in my life is shifting, and i'd love to have you come along and be kept up-to-date with the ways that i am evolving.

did you know that most weeks Jay records worship, and the Ron posts them to our website???? this is an amazing gift to the community, and i have heard from others near and far that they utilize this to support and nurture their spiritual journey (on our website, [www.epchurch.org](http://www.epchurch.org), under the sermon archive link). a deep word of appreciation and gratitude to Jay and Ron!!

also, i am trying to walk several times each day as i prepare for this great camino adventure. if you'd ever be interested, i'd love to have you join me at some point. let

me know if you'd like to walk with me someday!!!



### **ARTPLAYCE AT THE EDGE**

Deep gratitude to Dr. Keri Schultz and Ms. Meaghan Shimion and their Highland Park High School art classes for sharing their art work with us these past weeks. This week we will be opening a show by fellow Presbyterian (Hope/Richfield) Kirsten Malcomb-Berry, who will be sharing with us her images based on various Biblical passages. One of her images is at the top of this email Update. A deep word of appreciation to Carol Schweickhardt who co-ordinates ArtPlayce, and provides for the arrangements of these exhibits!!

### **PRAYERS**

- For Carol Schweickhardt and Meredith & Tom Holt who are welcoming new grandchildren in to their lives.
- For Bonnie Lonbakken who lost a longtime friend in the past weeks and is not preparing to move to a new apartment.