

Presbyterian Church

Midweek Update

May 1, 2019

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Hello EPC family!!

Phil is en route to Portugal as I write this (actually, I am writing this at Tuesday, 1pm, and he probably hasn't even cleared through the MSP security check as of yet....). We send him on his way with our prayers and care!!

FORGIVENESS

This past Sunday, in his first full post-resurrection appearance to the disciples (John 9:19-23), Jesus offers peace, tells them to receive the Holy Spirit, and then he talks about forgiveness. Isn't that interesting? The very first interaction with the risen Christ, and he is offering peace and teaching about forgiveness. I am starting to suspect that forgiveness is an essential part of what it is for us to live a life of resurrection.

As we continue to explore forgiveness in the upcoming weeks, the first move we made this past Sunday was to untangle from what we have been previously taught about forgiveness. It is probably not a moral action of someone in the right and another in the wrong. It is different than an amend--restoring to connection. It is different than "forgive and forget".

Forgiveness is an act of the Holy Spirit and an extension of love. God is the love in which I forgive. I am starting to suspect that forgiveness is actually the acceptance of our at-one-ment with God.

DAILY PRACTICE

Where are the places in our hearts, our minds, our histories where we long for healing?? Mention each one by name, and say:

God is the Love in which I forgive you, [name/situation]

After you have applied the idea to all that comes to your mind, tell yourself:

God is the Love in which I forgive myself.

SESSION COMMUNICATIONS

Your elders met last week. At the end of this email, please read Elder Fred Clary's summaries.

SPECIAL OFFERING OPPORTUNITY

Session has created a special opportunity to meet additional costs which will come from the Camino de Santiago. (Deep appreciation from me to the session!!) If you are interested/inspired to contribute, please indicate on the memo line of your check.

PRAYERS

- Our former administrator, **Lois Glewwe**, who is having intense leg pain from a pinched nerve
- **Pastor Phil** for his travels and presence at the International Enneagram Conference in Lisbon, Portugal as he shares about the Enneagram Prison Project

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

Happy Birthday to:

Vincent Hogen	5/5
Pastor Phil GebbenGreen	5/7
Belinda Clary	5/9
Brian Dietz	5/11
Lucie Dietz	5/29

AND – Happy Anniversary to:

Naomi & Mel Houle	5/21
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Holding you all in my heart and prayers!!
With joy~

Pastor Julie



SESSION REPORT

Session met at 6:15PM on Thursday April 25th. This session's agenda began with the personnel committee. Bonnie Lonbaken has graciously chosen to join the Personnel Committee with Fred Clary and the pastors. The Personnel Committee will serve as a liaison between the congregation and church staff. Fred and Bonnie are available as a sounding board for any concerns, critiques or praise for the staff or church environment. They are there for the congregations to send thoughts and comments directly to session. They will also serve to make the working environment and culture for our small staff as user friendly as possible.

Our congregational meeting is scheduled for May 19th. This will serve as our nominating time for those who are hearing from God about being more involved at EPC as a deacon or elder.

Conversations have begun on the best use of our worship space. Should we have more chairs or keep the space the same?

Our sanctuary recently hosted a couple well attended events and dinners. Transitioning the space so it can be more readily used in these outreach capacities was discussed and we will have our ears open to the congregation for their valuable input.

The Pastors reports included discussions of Phil's upcoming trip to Portugal. Pastor Julie related her plans for the Camino journey and blogging her daily insights was considered. Session suggested that since the entire congregation benefits from the deepening of our Pastors' spiritual life, that following Pastor Julie on her journey through a blog would be an amazing way for us to live her journey also.

In the Finance report, our expense budget should be at 25% of the year and we are at that or below. Our income is higher than expected for this time in the fiscal year.

For over 30 years, EPC though Tom and Meredith Holt has hosted a home cooked dinner on Thanksgiving for the residents of the Montreal High Rise. Hundreds and hundreds of residents have been blessed by the Holts and many others that have spent their time and talent away from their families on a holiday to give to those that don't have a family Thanksgiving dinner. The Holts have decided to step back from this outreach. Everyone at EPC have been blessed by Tom and Meredith's hard work. A warm, tear-filled thank you goes out to the Holts. Well good and done trusted servants. The session ended with conversations on outreach and a possible second pie social.