

Edgcumbe Presbyterian Church

Midweek Update

February 5, 2020



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WHY CHURCH?

Because at church we get to practice receiving and giving unconditional positive regard. We practice receiving and giving love until we develop the heart-muscle-memory, and it becomes as natural and easy as breathing. Love is the single most powerful antidote to the fear and shame and frustration of our ego prisons. "What is my command?" asks Jesus. His answer: "That you love one another." So simple; surprisingly hard to remember.

Let's practice a moment right now. Wherever you are, send out love from your heart to the people around you, to anyone in your home or building or vicinity, to your neighbors, to anyone and everyone who comes to your mind. Send some love to the people in charge of reporting the Iowa caucus results or to refugees trying to cross the Mediterranean Sea or to the third graders in your local school who are struggling with long division. Be lavish and indiscriminate with your unconditional positive regard. Pick someone who kind of bugs you and send some love their way. There is no downside to generous and faith-filled love. The only side effects are joy and freedom and happiness. Why church? Because there is no downside.

ANNUAL MEETING & POTLUCK

Each year our congregation holds its Annual Meeting to review the movement of the Spirit at Edgcumbe Church over the past year. As usual, we will gather for this meeting after worship on Sunday with a potluck lunch around tables in the sanctuary. Everyone is welcome, whether or not you are an official member of the congregation. Joining us on Sunday will be special guest Jeff Japinga, who is the Executive Presbyter of the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area, the local body of our denomination, the Presbyterian Church (USA). Jeff will also be preaching during the worship service. Hope you can join us!

EPC EVENTS COMING UP

- **Scripture Text** for Sunday, Matthew 5:1-16
- **Sunday, Feb. 9: Annual Meeting** with potluck brunch and guest preacher Rev. Jeff Japinga, our Executive Presbyter.
- **Sunday, Feb. 9: Bible Study** at 6:30pm in the Sanctuary.

- Every Tuesday: Contemplative Prayer at 3pm in Sanctuary. Every meeting is open to Centering Prayer beginners, so consider giving it a try.

CHILDREN'S BOOKS FOR SOUTH AFRICA

Ruth Anderson shares this need with us: A box is set up in the entry sunroom to collect used children's books for ages pre-school through 17 for shipment to South Africa this spring. There are currently few books or libraries in rural and suburban areas of that country. Class sizes are often over 50 with instruction using chalk boards and rote learning, and a single teacher per classroom. Books that are especially needed are used text books and instruction books in science, math, English, geology, geography, biographies, plant and animal life for pre-teens and teens. Also, classic stories and novels, beginning music and art that are culturally appropriate for African students are appreciated. Please help us show love and concern for our far-away neighbors in South Africa.

PASTOR PHIL IN PRESBYTERY ANTI-RACISM PROCESS

This weekend our Presbytery (The Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area—PTCA) is beginning an Institutional Assessment on Race and Equity. The goals of this process include:

- To understand and claim the gospel imperative to undertake anti-racism work (as opposed to just “not being racist.”)
- To build a common understanding as a Presbytery about how racism functions with systems like our communities, interactions, and norms—instead of focusing on individual attitudes, intentions, or opinions.
- To be honest about our complex history as a Presbytery regarding equity, but also to have a path toward concrete steps towards change, including supportive space for black, indigenous, and people of color in the PTCA.
- To develop, from intentional outreach and analysis, tools for self-analysis, change and further growth that we practice together as a Presbytery.

Pastor Phil will be attending the opening retreat for this Assessment this Thursday - Saturday in Saint Paul. Edgumbe Church may be invited to participate in this process in several ways over the coming year, including surveys or educational opportunities. If you have any other questions, please feel free to talk to Phil.