

Edgcumbe Presbyterian Church

Midweek Update
April 15, 2020



In this issue: Presence, Names (with a big announcement!), MN FoodShare, Church Giving, Scripture, Songs & Worship recordings

Presence

Our Easter theme for worship and community life over the coming weeks is “Presence.” Presence is the capacity to pay attention, to be aware of who we really are in the moment. When we are present, we inhabit our bodies and hearts and minds with fullness and trust--we experience real connection with ourselves and the people and world around us. Synonyms are curiosity, openness, noticing, acceptance, gratitude, groundedness. The opposite of being present is: being absent, being reactive, being distracted, letting stress or threat or thoughts or emotions overwhelm and control us. For someone on the spiritual path, a good question is this, “What good is God’s love if I am not present to receive it?” Or, “Do I allow myself to be fully present to the Spirit’s care and wisdom for me in each moment?”

Hold your own life in your awareness right now? Do you feel present or distracted? Usually, taking a deep breath is the surest way to add a bit more presence into your psyche. Here are some possible examples of presence:

- Openness to someone, receiving their feelings or love, or their needs
- Receiving nurture or love...or appreciation or a compliment or a smile
- Listening carefully to another person
- Fully experiencing what are doing, not being anywhere “half-way”
- Discerning choices for one’s life with complete trust in the leading of the Spirit
- Direct contact with one’s heart’s desire in the present moment
- What other qualities do you experience when you are fully present?

Presence--unyielding trust in his every-moment connection with God--is the most pervasive quality I see in Jesus. The disciple Peter is the exemplar of the “wavering presence” of most human life. At one moment, Peter is so present and in sync with Jesus that he can walk on water; in the next moment, the reactivity of fear has him sinking fast. Peter loves Jesus, but he can’t allow his own feet to be washed. Peter goes with Jesus to the Garden of Gethsemane, but he first falls asleep and then denies Jesus. Peter preaches about the radical

grace of God on Pentecost and then “forgets” to include the Gentiles in Christ’s new church.

We will continue to explore this idea of Presence in the weeks to come. A great starting exercise is to set an alarm for yourself that goes off every...hour? Ten minutes?...and ask yourself, “How present am I right now? What does being present allow me to experience?” Presence is a spiritual muscle--working that muscle takes time and attention and discipline. Let’s learn together how to exercise it and find the gifts that presence offers us.

names

in the scripture texts of easter, mary did not recognize jesus after the resurrection until he spoke her name...and then, she awakened to the christ.

i have long known that a new first name would be coming for me, and i have been simply awaiting for it to become clear. and, friends...it looks as if it has arrived! 🌸

the name which has emerged is luna. it is a name that makes my heart sing, and i also love it’s connection to the moon.

i know that habits are hard to break, and so i don’t have any expectations that this shift will go smoothly! for awhile, i will introduce myself as “julie luna” to help in the transition, but if you feel nudged to simply call me luna right away, i will welcome that! i also want to give space for any potential grief you might have--and i welcome any kind of conversation you would want to have with me regarding this. i am not planning to change my name legally, at least at this point--so, it might take a bit to get things like my email addresses to reflect the change.

but, most of all, i want to acknowledge my deep, deep gratitude for this community of edgcumbe presbyterian which has allowed me to continue to deepen and mature into my own story as i get to walk along with you all. you have grown me into the woman i am becoming, ❤️ and for that, i am most certainly blessed!

Zoom Meetings for Everyone!

We now have four Zoom meetings scheduled for our congregation for each week. All of these meetings are open to you and to everyone. They are:

- Sunday morning Worship at 10am
- Sunday evening Bible Study at 6:30pm
- Tuesday Centering Prayer at 3pm
- Wednesday evening Gathering at 7pm

The links for each of these meetings are on the church website at

<http://www.epchurch.org/>

Please use the website links rather than any links we have sent out in the past.

MN FoodShare Continues through April

During this COVID-19 isolation time, keeping everyone fed is more important than ever. The statewide drive to support food shelves will continue through April. Any donations to EPC designated to “food shelf” will go to this outreach.

Church Giving

The best way to give to church continues to be mailing a check or putting the check in the mail slot at church. However, if you would like to explore giving from an investment account or through direct transfer from your bank, those are both options as well. If interested, please contact church treasurer Ron Eggert. Ron and the church office are also hoping to add a PayPal option for online giving to our church website in the near future.

Text for Sunday, April 19: John 20:19-23

19 It was still the first day of the week. That evening, while the disciples were behind closed doors because they were afraid of the Jewish authorities, Jesus came and stood among them. He said, “Peace be with you.” 20 After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. When the disciples saw the Lord, they were filled with joy. 21 Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, so I am sending you.” 22 Then he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. 23 If you forgive anyone’s sins, they are forgiven; if you don’t forgive them, they aren’t forgiven.”

Congregational Music & Worship Recordings

How Great Thou Art by Shelley Holden:

<https://soundcloud.com/jay-s-mcgregor/how-great-thou-art-shelley-holden>

Deep Peace by Carol Schweickhardt and Connie Howe-Vielmetti:

<https://soundcloud.com/jay-s-mcgregor/carol-and-connie-sing-deep-peace-200409>

Thine Is the Glory by Jenya:

<https://soundcloud.com/jay-s-mcgregor/thine-is-the-glory-jenya-trubnikava/s-OMCNDcngNHR>

Pastor Phil praying an interpretation of the Lord’s Prayer (from Palm Sunday):

<https://soundcloud.com/jay-s-mcgregor/the-lords-prayer>

The whole Palm Sunday worship service:

<https://soundcloud.com/jay-s-mcgregor/edcumbe-palm-sunday-service-04-05-2020>