

Edgumbe Presbyterian Church

Midweek Update *May 20, 2020*

In this issue: Pastor Luna Reflection, Financial Aid, Online Giving!, Zoom Mtgs, Listening Woods, Scripture, Session Report

reflections from last sunday's texts

best made plans....right?!?! we gathered on sunday for worship, only to realize that zoom video was down worldwide!! There were juicy tidbits from sunday's text...i wanted to share some of them with you so that you can still hold and ponder. our texts would have been acts 17:22-31, and john 14:15-21, and i encourage you to read them...maybe even now--do you have a bible handy?? 😊 i can wait...

in acts, the apostle paul was speaking to the folk in athens, people who had relationships with an entire pantheon of gods. they even had a place to worship an unknown god. paul points to this unknown position, and says: this **is** the god i know. part of the journey for these folks is to untangle from what they believed about god, so that they can encounter the living god, "in whom we live, move and exist."

change is an essential path of the walk of faith

paul knows that this walk of faith is fraught with change, and even proclaims that "**god...now directs everyone everywhere to change their heart and lives.**" somehow, this hanging around jesus means that we will be living lives of constant change---but it is different from the change that comes in the world. as we are healed and anchored in god, we experience a grounding and centeredness that allows us to move more freely through the changes of the human experience.

god changes us. our part is to consent.

in our sunday night bible studies, pastor phil regularly invites us to find ourselves in the story, and see what these particular texts say to us. how are you with change?? certainly, we have an active laboratory to practice change in this covid-19 world. But, *how are you doing*, really?? i can imagine various responses, and what might come behind each impulse. which of these statements finds resonance with you?

~"**i don't need to change**" regardless if this comes from the belief that "i am doing okay" or that "the problem is in other people", the hidden part of this belief is that "other people are to change, not me". already lost is a sense of god's presence and god's healing action in our lives. i have heard it said: god loves you just the way you are--and loves you too much to leave you that way. only god is changeless...**being human invites us into a constant practice of surrendering our will and our life into god's care.**

~"**i need to change, and i will be in charge of the process**" the hidden part of this belief is our playing god and taking over god's healing action. we can participate in the



healing path, but **true healing is from god**. we put ourselves in god's river of grace, and allow god's healing presence to bring about the changes.

~**"i don't want to change"** there might be many hidden beliefs behind this, but one is refusal to let go of control. often there is a hardness of heart, an unwillingness, which is *exactly* a spiritual issue. it intersects the movement of trust, which is at the heart of what jesus taught. the opportunity here is to **pray for the grace to be willing**.

this is our path as we hang around jesus. mine, too. today. this moment. may the holy spirit enfold us in grace as we walk this journey of change.  pastor luna

***Holy Spirit, in this holy moment, you be in charge,
and I will follow you, trusting that your direction will lead to peace.***

Member to Member Generosity for Financial Need

The Community of EPC would like to support each other by offering practical financial help to members. We have established a **Blossoming Fund** to give an assist to folks at Edgcombe who might need a little boost during this time of insecurity and in the future. If you need financial help (to buy groceries, pay a bill, make up a gap in rent or mortgage, ect), PLEASE know that we are here for you and want to help! Contact Phil or Luna with this request. We are blessed in the giving and receiving!

Church Online Giving

Our online giving option is now up and running on our website! Go to www.epchurch.org to click on the Give Now button on the top left, which takes you to the Donate page with all the info you need. I tried this myself yesterday, and everything was smooth and easy. All other options for giving to EPC are still available--checks brought or mailed to the office, or direct deposit from bank or investment accounts (contact Ron).

Zoom Update and Schedule!

Zoom didn't work for us this past Sunday morning, but it continues to be an excellent platform for our church gatherings while we are not together in person. That temporary glitch is now fixed, but here are a couple of Zoom updates:

1. If you go onto Zoom and it asks for you to update, please click Yes. Updates to the newest version (Zoom 5.0, I believe) will be required for all users after May 31. This update has several security upgrades.
2. Meetings getting "zoom-bombed" with inappropriate content are still happening very occasionally. The chances of this occurring at an EPC gathering are very slim. However, if it ever does happen and the host cannot remove the person in a timely fashion, then we will simply end the meeting for everyone. At that point, please check your email for a new Zoom link, which we can all then use to join a new room and continue our meeting or worship.

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/>

Listening Woods Update

If you have not visited the backwoods of EPC recently for some good socially distant connection to the earth, then now is a great time. The photo on top of this Update is from the church yard and many different plants are blooming and growing right now. A few things we planted last year didn't make it, but most of the new trees and plants are flourishing in the rich moist soil and mild temperatures.

Almost every time Luna and I are in the woods, we see individuals or families walking the pathway or even AA groups spaced out around the swing and chairs. Last week a neighbor walking her dog called out how much she appreciates all the work happening on our property. We are doing much work right now to finish our planting before the dry season in July and August. If you want to help out in any way (pulling buckthorn is a consistent need), then please talk to Pastor Luna.

Text for Sunday, May 24

Acts 1:6-14

6 As a result, those who had gathered together asked Jesus, "Lord, are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel now?"

7 Jesus replied, "It isn't for you to know the times or seasons that the Father has set by his own authority. 8 Rather, you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

9 After Jesus said these things, as they were watching, he was lifted up and a cloud took him out of their sight. 10 While he was going away and as they were staring toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood next to them. 11 They said, "Galileans, why are you standing here, looking toward heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way that you saw him go into heaven."

12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, which is near Jerusalem—a sabbath day's journey away. 13 When they entered the city, they went to the upstairs room where they were staying. Peter, John, James, and Andrew; Philip and Thomas; Bartholomew and Matthew; James, Alphaeus' son; Simon the zealot; and Judas, James' son— 14 all were united in their devotion to prayer, along with some women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.

Session Report from May 14

Session met on Zoom on May 14, 2020. Pastor Phil led devotions sharing what Jesus said after the last supper: the promises of the Holy Spirit, "An Advocate that will be with you forever." "He abides with you, and he will be in you." "I will not leave you orphaned."

We discussed the emerging changes in Covid restrictions. Session remains committed to the safety of the congregation and also committed to the inclusion of all as we make decisions about how to proceed. We formed a committee (Ron Eggert, Pastor Phil, Eleta Pierce, and

Jay McGregor) that will be carefully considering the information that we receive from the Governor's office, the Presbytery, and the congregation.

The Treasurer (Ron Eggert) presented the budget. We are doing fine.

We will be sending a thank you letter to the Presbytery for the grants that we recently received.

A subgroup of Session will begin talking to folks about becoming an Elder or Deacon at EPC.

Buildings and Grounds discussed options for fixing the crumbling corner bricks on the preschool corner and the leaks in the roof.

Highland Park High School teachers and staff sent us a lovely thank you for our having opened our church for restroom use during the recent strike.

With gratitude, Jay