

Edgcumbe Presbyterian Church

Midweek Update
May 27, 2020

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Process for Exploring In-Person Gatherings

If you've noticed, Pastor Luna and I have been repeating this prayer in the Wednesday Update for the past several weeks;

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

Take a moment and say that prayer right now. Say it out loud or to yourself as many times as you like. Notice what happens inside of you as you pray it. Say it as if you don't believe in the Holy Spirit, and then say it as if you hunger for every word to be true. Again, notice the differences inside of you. For me, at this very moment, I'm a bit distracted and anxious. What I notice inside me when I say this prayer is that my guts un-clench a bit, my heartbeat slows down, and my mind opens to both ideas and trust. A deep remembrance bubbles up that I am not my own, but I belong in body and soul to my faithful savior, Jesus Christ, to the God of love, to the Spirit who makes all things holy.

The Session of EPC has delegated a sub-group of folks--Eleta, Jay, Ron and me--to explore whether we are ready to consider, and what it would entail, to meet together in-person again. This group is reading material, talking to each other, designing a congregational survey, looking into issues like air-flow and insurance and sanitation and group singing. And we are working to follow the lead of the Holy Spirit. The beautiful thing about being the church is that we get to do all the usual stuff--study and think and learn and talk and process--but we also get to trust. We invite you to join us. Here are some quick thoughts about the process:

1. We are not talking about re-opening church; church was never closed. What we are talking about is how to begin gathering in-person again.
2. We are very interested in input from the whole congregation. Please be patient with us. We are close to a finished survey and will get that out when it is ready. There will be room in the survey for any comments or questions you have.
3. It is the Session who is responsible for any decisions about meeting in person and policies for gatherings (for us and for Highland AA). The sub-group will prepare a report, but it is the Session who will make any major decisions.

4. We are committed to keeping each other, and those with whom we share our space, as safe as possible. We believe we all belong to each other, and that means we are responsible not just for our own well-being, but our neighbors as well, especially the most vulnerable among us. We want a ministry that finds ways to include everyone in our community.

May the Holy Spirit bless us with wisdom and peace as we follow her lead.

Pentecost Sunday!

It's Pentecost this Sunday, May 31, the day the Holy Spirit blew into the disciples lives and the church was born. No Jesus = No Problem, because the Holy Spirit came and still comes to us with power and comfort and understanding and healing. If you don't want to be changed, then stay away from the Spirit, but if you are ready to see the new and amazing things God is doing right now in our lives and the world, then join us for worship this Sunday at 10am. Pentecost is a day of dynamic fire and wind, so feel free to wear bright and fun clothes to our mutual Zoom room this week. Bright colored pajamas or robes certainly count.

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 Edgcumbe 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). Thank you all for your ongoing support!

Zoom Update and Schedule!

We 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 & EPC Grounds

The backwoods of EPC is always open for walks, praying, decompression, and fern planting. That last example is just a reminder that if you have extra ferns, our woods

would love to have them! The entryways to all of the twelve stations along the pathway already have some ferns. Feel free to add more to those same areas. Also, our front sign along Edgcumbe Road has an oval of ground around it that could use some tender-loving care. If you want to adopt this little spot (weeding it, mostly, although new plants or ideas are welcome) or even just pull some weeds out of it when you walk past, that would be helpful. Let Phil or Luna know if this is something that interests you.

Prayers

- Prayers for Liz Schiferl and her dad **Ken**, who contacted the coronavirus recently in a facility in Mankato. Ken is struggling but feeling a bit better.
- Prayers for our brothers and sisters in **Tanzania** who are experiencing a virus outbreak right now, and the friend of the Eggerts who recently died.
- Prayers for members of **Ruth's extended family** who have come in contact with coronavirus.
- Several folks have been talking to Luna and I about exhaustion, past trauma, sadness, and loneliness. Prayers of **comfort** and healing for us all.
- Prayer of joy for **good news**. I can't always share details in this public space, but just know that some very specific good things are happening in our community right now.

For example!: Prayers of blessing and gratitude for **McKenna Reedquist** on her graduation from high school. In this tricky year for public rituals and ceremonies, we celebrate you, McKenna, giving thanks to God for your life and gifts and future.