

Edgcumbe Presbyterian Church

Midweek Update

July 8, 2020

In this issue: What Zoom Worship Has Taught Me IV, Outdoor Worship Gratitude, Burdock not Thistle, Zoom Mtgs, New Racial Equity Team, Reflection from Leslie S

What Zoom (Hybrid) Worship Has Taught Me

Fourth in a series of reflections by pastor luna



i attended a zoom conference hosted by the synod of lakes and prairies (the regional pc(usa) church body to which our presbytery of the twin cities belongs) a couple of weeks ago on the topic of **hybrid worship**. the idea was that even when communities of faith re-gather for in-person worship, there will be a portion of the community who will choose (for risk factors, geographic distance, or other concerns) not to join the experience. so, no matter what, the worship experience will never “return to how it was,” simply because worship will be a broader experience. within the gathering, the intention and awareness of those gathered need to broaden to weave the in-person and on-zoom people together.

this dynamic not only impacts the people crafting the worship experience, but it also impacts the congregation. essentially, to hold the intention that our experience is beyond the confines of space, which will take some growth into a new sense of orientation, and broadens our sense of “who we are.”

we are only just starting to explore and understand this dynamic, but i think it will be important for the entire community to engage and think through these new aspects of “being church” coming out of the pandemic. one thing to be confident about--if we ask the holy spirit to lead, she will lead and shape us into her vision.

Outdoor Worship Gratitude

It was muggy, but it didn't rain, so we had worship outside together last Sunday, with another set of people on Zoom. Special thanks to Jay for providing and setting up all the technical and sound equipment! Watch this space for the next outdoor worship date.

Backwoods update--not thistles, but burdock!!

after writing last week's email, i went searching for a video about removing thistles, and discovered that i had mis-named the plant that is taking over the nw corner of our backwoods property!! (embarrassed!! 😞) a huge **thank you** to ingrid and mary k

(from the neighborhood) who have already done some burdock (see photo at top) removal. but wait!! there's still more!! might you have an hour or two you'd be willing to help dig them up?? please contact pastor luna (pastorlunagg@gmail.com)

Upcoming time off for the pastors

At Session tomorrow, there will be a conversation about scheduling time for Pastors Phil and Luna to have some time off...watch announcements for dates involved.

Zoom 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

Updated links for each of these meetings are on the church website at <http://www.epchurch.org/>

New Racial Equity Team

Elder Connie here with an Update about a new working group at EPC. The Racial Equity Team was formed in response to the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis. This group came about during a prayerful Session Meeting where we unanimously decided that we wanted EPC to take an active role in examining racial disparities and racism in our communities, circles, groups, and the wider world. The team is composed of Eleta Pierce, Pastor Luna, Liz and Rich Schiferl, Leslie Snow, and Connie Howe-Vielmetti.

We are newly formed and in the process of discernment. Here are the things we know now:

- This will be an ongoing process. We want to dive deeply and that takes time.
- We envision a 3 phase process of 1) Education, 2) Discussion (using Zoom for now and hopefully with a facilitator), 3) Action
- These phases may circle around many times
- Part of this process is looking at our own privilege and biases
- Some initial Education Ideas are: a 21 Day Challenge, Videos and online Resources, Books, Stories from Individuals, Podcasts
- We want to be respectful of all during this time. Part of our Education may be looking at how to have difficult conversations / how to really hear and be open to each other

There will be more information coming to the congregation as we are led forward.
Blessing to All.

Reflection from Leslie Snow

Hi, Members of EPC,

Even though I am not formally a member of EPC yet, I am encouraged and excited about the journey we are about to travel in pursuit of racial equity at EPC and in our community. Racial equity is a personal issue for me, as all of my children are people of color and all of my grandchildren are biracial. We have many painful stories in our family of racial inequity involving many "systems" in our community. I am anxious to share these stories and hear the stories of other members' experiences, too. Years ago I was part of many trainings with Saint Paul Public Schools, and have access still to some of the training materials and one of the nationally recognized trainers in Racial Equity, who is also a Highland resident. I have asked to join the Racial Equity Task Force at EPC and will contribute what I know about the topic to our conversations. This is not easy work, nor does it produce quick results. There are no quick fixes here, but I am hoping we can all commit to remain engaged in the conversations even if we do not agree. I believe that we can do this work, and our community is counting on people like us to do the work and help lead others to make changes that produce equity and justice. Love is also key in this work, and I know EPC to be a community of folks who radiate love to those who are stumbling in the darkness. I was one such person when I walked through the doors of EPC, and you immediately embraced me and I will forever be grateful for that. Let's be ready to create more racial equity together!

In peace, Leslie Snow