

Edgcumbe Presbyterian Church

Midweek Update

July 15, 2020

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Pastors Time Off

Pastors Luna and Phil will be off July 13-26.

Notes from the July 9 Session Meeting

Your Elders met this past Thursday for our regular stated meeting. Here is what we discussed and accomplished:

1. We approved vacation time off for Pastors Luna and Phil, from July 13-26. For these two Sundays Session decided that we will watch worship videos, followed by a Zoom discussion/Fellowship Time. The first Sunday will be a video from the church that Eleta works for, and the second Sunday will be a video from the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area, and both are recorded as intention to use on those Sundays. See the separate announcement for more detailed information about those Sundays.
2. Update on Finances: Our rental payments are starting to increase up from the discounted/waived rents that we have been giving to the Montessori and Highland AA. We are starting to fall behind in pledges received and although it is not impacting us right at this moment, a continued decrease will affect our budget for this year. A reminder that you can either mail your donation to the church, or give electronically. See our webpage for the ways that you can give electronically: <http://www.epchurch.org/contact.html> (see report from Treasurer below)
3. Our next outdoor worship service will be on Sunday, August 2, weather permitting. We all felt that this month's outdoor worship service went very well and it was great that we could combine in-person and Zoom. We discussed possibly doing more than once a month outdoor for this summer, but there is a lot of prep work that has to be done, especially with equipment, so for now we are weighing that option and will continue with the 1st Sunday of each month.
4. The Racial Justice team is meeting weekly to come up with a plan for education, discussion, and action for our congregation. See the separate team update below for more information.
5. Presbytery report: During this pandemic there are a lot of our churches doing wonderful things to connect with their congregations and community. But there are also some churches who are really struggling with finances and connectivity and facing some real challenges. Please keep our churches in your prayers.

6. Overall, the building is doing good other than a couple of small leaks that are being addressed.
7. Backwoods update: There is a new sculpture in the prayer garden and lots of people have been using and walking our backwoods. It truly is a blessing to all! Luna continues to tackle the burdock bushes and welcomes anyone to help out by removing them. More information below.
8. Our next meeting will be August 13.

Next Two Sunday Worships - Worship for July 19 & 26

While Luna and Phil are on off, we will be watching worship videos for both Sundays, July 19 and July 26. We will then have a Zoom gathering at 11 am, using our same 10 am worship link, to have a pointed conversation on the message we just watched and to check in. Eleta will email out the link to these videos by 8:30 am each of these Sundays, and it is expected that you will watch the video prior to the Zoom gathering.

Backwoods update

Deep gratitude to Leslie S for coming in and tackling more burdock, and for the brilliant idea to cut off the burr pods before they fully bloom. But wait!!! there is still MORE! While Pastors Luna and Phil are away, it would be so appreciated for **continued help in removing the burdock**. There are shovels in the shed, and a wagon to haul out the plants to put in the dumpster. **Another need** is to haul the pulled-out buckthorn to a compost site. There is a pile on the east end of the epc's parking lot (between the dumpster and the cottonwood tree) that is ready to go.... thank you!!!

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 **cancelled** until Pastors return from vacation.
- 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/>

Racial Equity Team Update

This group has been tasked with investigating how EPC could take an active role in examining racial disparities and racism in our communities, circles, groups, and the wider world. Here are some more details on this activity which we are calling "Racial Justice and Me". We had envisioned a three part process of 1) Education, 2) Discussion and 3) Action. There is a ton of stuff out there to help with Education, so we are trying to pick what we think is a good starting set of things to consider. Sources

include books, movies, podcasts, articles and online classes. As part of this Education piece we are proposing that you choose a personal goal that will help you narrow the resources you want to review. Some examples of goals might be

I want to learn more about the history of racism

I want to get a better handle on the statistics/numbers around racism

I want to be able to tell my story about how racism has affected me

I want to explore how white privilege has affected my ancestors and me

I want to learn what other churches are doing about Racial Justice

At some point those who want to share what they have learned could do so in a Zoom meeting. This approach allows us to benefit from our different perspectives. We would welcome any feedback or questions on this first step of our adventure.

Your RJAM team - Eleta Pierce, Pastor Luna, Liz and Rich Schiferl, Leslie Snow, and Connie Howe-Vielmetti.

Treasurer's Report

Mid-year Financial Update

On the expense side of our budget, expenses are less than anticipated due mostly to non-use of most of our building since March. On the income side, pledge collections are down. At this halfway point in our fiscal year, collections are well under 50% for most of us who pledged. (In recent years, we have always had over 50% in pledge collections by June 30.) Also, there has been no regular income from AA since March and income from the nursery school has been reduced. However, our overall income is stable because of one-time grants of \$10,000 from Presbytery to support salaries and general operations during Covid-19 and of \$1,500 from Highland AA. On June 31, we had approximately \$28,000 in Associated Bank checking, \$3,000 in Associated savings (designated funds) and \$39,000 in the Vanguard reserve account: these amounts are almost the same as our cash on hand at the beginning of the fiscal year (\$71,000). We do not anticipate additional grants in the second half of the year, so it will be increasingly important for those of us who are able to keep our pledges up to date.

With no Sunday collections during Covid-19, other ways contributions can be made are:

1. A check by mail
2. One-time or recurring electronic payments through our website

<http://epchurch.org.html>

3. One-time or recurring electronic payments directly from your bank to ours (contact Ron Eggert for details)

Ron Eggert, Treasurer