

Edgumbe Presbyterian Church

Midweek Update

July 29, 2020

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Sadness and Hope

In Romans 9, Paul writes, "I have great sadness and constant pain in my heart." He's talking in this passage about the religious split between Judeans and followers of Christ, both of whom he sees as children of God.

On Sunday, I'll talk a little more about this split, but right now I want to point out Paul's willingness to talk about his own sadness and constant pain in his heart. Over the past month to six weeks, I have felt, off and on, deep sadness and disorientation, even depression. And as I talk with some of you and neighbors and fellow pastors, I see signs of this sadness and depression all around me.

I can't address all the issues of depression in this column, but if you are feeling sad, or in pain, or lonely-sad, let me say at least this: There Is Nothing Wrong With You. Breathe that in for just a moment. Let yourself feel what you feel. Accept yourself as God accepts you. Part of the suffering of depression is not just the feeling of sadness; depression is the state of feeling bad for feeling bad, which is a downward spiral of yuck.

I am taking care of myself in a variety of ways--letting myself feel my feelings rather than repression or denial; exercise, rest, taking vacation time; opening up to receiving support from family and friends. Living into God's vision for us--a vision of health and love and wholeness--means taking radical care of ourselves, especially in these times of disruption and change. So here is question #1 for you today: Are you taking care of yourself? Here's a good exercise--Do five really kind and caring things for yourself today. Then do three more. This leads to question #2: What would happen inside of you if you completely accepted and loved yourself right now?

People of God, God loves you. God loves you not DESPITE who you are. God loves you AS you are. God loves me AS I AM. Beginning to accept this love is the first and essential work to healing ourselves and healing the world. Loving ourselves and accepting love into our hearts is the only way to begin loving people around us. Now do five kind things for yourself. And then do three more.

Outdoor Worship - This Sunday, Aug 2

Our second outdoor worship is planned for this coming Sunday, August 2, at 10am in the EPC listening woods. Last month, we not only got to hear Jenya play live music again but the birds serenaded us for the benediction. There is some rain predicted for Saturday evening, but Sunday looks clear right now. As usual, we will plan to decide by 8am on Sunday morning if worship is possible and send out an email if we are switching to Zoom. Once again, we will also plan to stream the service live on Zoom in case you cannot be there in person.

Here are the basic safety guidelines:

- Keeping 6-10 feet of distance from anyone not in your family group
- Masks on for times of mingling before and after worship. During worship, while we are appropriately spaced and outdoors, masks may be removed (this is from Ron Eggert).
- No singing (still a bummer, I know), with or without masks. We will have soloists who sing from the microphone.
- Bring your own chairs or blankets to sit on and **BRING YOUR OWN COMMUNION ELEMENTS**--bread and juice (or whatever, really)--to celebrate communion together. If someone is willing to bring a few individual ziplocs with communion elements for guests, please let me know at pastorphilgg@gmail.com.

Pastors Back from Vacation Time

From Pastor Luna and I, Thank You for the two weeks off. The theme of this time for us was REST. We did take three days to visit Lake Superior, but mostly we slept and did almost nothing at all. It was glorious and restful and healing to body and soul. And it is good to be back with you all.

Racial Justice and Me

Hello EPC Family,

The RJAM (Racial Justice and Me) Group is launching a Resource List that will be accessible on our Church Website Homepage (hopefully Thursday).

If you are interested, we invite you to identify goals and areas of learning that you'd like to focus on and use this list to assist you. It includes links for websites, books, articles, movies, commentaries, podcasts and various forms of media. It is a launching pad... for learning, discussion, education, empathy, and reflection.

If you would like to participate in this initiative, you can think of a goal you have for your own learning and use the Resource list for ideas. I, Connie, for example, want to learn how our country's history of racism shows up as trauma in the body. I want to learn tools to heal my own unconscious biases. I am reading the book, *My Grandmother's Hands* by Resmaa Menakem (listed in the Resource List).

Please feel free to reach out to anyone on the Team if you have questions or comments. The RJAM Group is Eleta Pierce, Leslie Snow, Rich and Liz Schiferl, Luna GebbenGreen and Connie Howe-Vielmetti.

Free Art Kits

On Sunday at outdoor worship there will be art kits for you to help yourself to. The supplies will have been quarantined for 4 days. The kits will be in a clear bag so you can select your kit easily.

Instructions/suggestions for use of the contents will be included. Have fun.

Questions: Call or email Carol Schweickhardt: 651 468-9888

cschweickhardt@gmail.com



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/>

August Birthdays & Anniversaries!

Happy Birthday to:

Josh LeClair 8/23

Dorice VanVorst 8/27

Happy Anniversary to:

Ingrid & Ron Eggert 8/11

