



**Edgcumbe**  
**Presbyterian**  
**Church**

***Midweek Update***  
***February 17, 2021***

In this issue: Grain of Wheat, Session Report, Feb Mission, Zoom

**A Grain of Wheat**

In John 12, Jesus says a startling thing: “I assure you that unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it can only be a single seed. But if it dies, it bears much fruit.” Today is Ash Wednesday, the traditional beginning of the season of Lent, the season that means “Spring” but that leads to the crucifixion and death of Jesus. We know about the following resurrection, but apparently there is something important, something perhaps essential, about the experience of dying.

This is an easy-enough insight with a seed or acorn. A grain of wheat might make a tiny snack but is really only useful if it “dies” as a seed and becomes a plant bearing much more food. Same with an acorn: squirrel snack or mighty oak tree producing hundreds or evens thousands of acorns and leaves and shade and beauty. No death = no tree.

Here is the question for us this Lent: What part of me needs to die to make room for something new? Am I holding on to any precious acorns that are meant to be oak trees? This same question can be asked of our community: What parts of our church life need to die--not because they are bad (seeds and acorns aren't bad, after all)--to make room for new life, new growth, new learnings, new people? Take some time this week in your writing or prayers or rumination to consider these questions for yourself. Ask God directly, “Holy Spirit, what in my life do you want to die right now?” I know that sounds terrifying. Which is why we don't do this work alone.

Pastor Luna and I would love to have some of you share an experience from either your past or your present where you feel like that little grain of wheat: ready to die to make room for delicious fruit. Let us know if you have a 3-5 minute reflection to share at worship, or we may be calling you!

## **February Session Report**

- Session started with a devotion led by Jay. He asked us to ponder "What am I missing?" We were asked to think of a gravestone marker with the Date of Birth and the Date of Death separated by a dash -. The dash is **This Moment**. Jay described how we can be so distracted that our moments just 'slip away'. We shared moments in our lives where we felt fully present.
- Phil led us in looking over The Book of Order (the call to Ordained Ministry). It was good to remember that all that is required for the role of Elder is: to Receive our gifts from God, to Listen to the Holy Spirit, and to Trust and Be Present.
- We had interesting conversations with Todd, Ingrid, and Rich and voted to Approve these people as Elders. Todd has since removed his name from consideration, with gratitude for the honor of being considered.
- We said a heartfelt 'Thank You' to Eleta and Fred for their gifts of service as they leave the Session.
- **Ordination and Installation of Ingrid and Rich will be on Feb 21 during our Zoom Worship time**
- Pastors Luna and Phil asked us (and all) to be in prayer and discernment about what might be different as we move toward in-person worship.
- We did a debrief of the Annual Meeting and then wrapped up!

## **February Mission Focus: VRI**

Our mission for the month of February is the group **Voices for Racial Justice**. If you want to learn a bit more about their efforts, a good place to start is their online magazine called The Quilt. Online link is here:

<https://voicesforracialjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/2019-The-Quilt.pdf>

They are also involved in advocating for racial justice at the legislature. One way they do this is by promoting the use of a Racial Equity Impact Assessment (REIA) when looking at proposed policy. You can learn more here:

<https://voicesforracialjustice.org/voices/what-we-all-should-know-about-the-2021-legislative-session-and-the-state-budget-if-we-care-about-ending-racial-disparities-and-structural-racism-in-minnesota/>

If you would like to contribute to Voices for Racial Justice, please put their name in the memo line of your check or, if donating online, specify their name in the Notes box.

## **Zoom Schedule**

We have four Zoom meetings scheduled for our congregation for each week. All of these meetings have been updated and are open to you and to everyone. The links can be found on our church website homepage. Here is our current schedule:

- Sunday morning Worship at 10am
- Sunday evening Bible Study at 6:30pm
- Tuesday Centering Prayer at 3pm
- Wednesday Evening Gathering at 7pm