



Edgcombe Presbyterian Church

Midweek Update

March 31, 2021

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Life-Death-Life

I've been reflecting lately on the cycle of life-death-life because of the ash trees in the EPC backwoods (see article below). Ash trees are tall and beautiful and super hard--think baseball bats. Walking through the ash grove in the northwest section of the church property is like walking through a high-domed natural cathedral. Also, the shade from these trees is so thick that essentially nothing grows beneath them.

Here comes a shock to the system: the emerald ash borer. This spring we will go from having several dozen huge ash trees to possibly none. This loss is real. It will look and feel different. These are trees that take decades to replace. As nature does, new life will emerge and change and grow as soon as the once mighty trees are gone. Life-death-life.

This year we remember again the story of Jesus emptying himself, even to the point of death, so that he might be lifted up and draw all people to God. We remember that change does not happen without shock and loss. We remember that in our own falling and dying, we are transformed from a single seed into the full abundance of God's fruit and purpose in our lives. Here-Now-Change-Trust. Life-Death-Life.

Holy Week Worship Schedule

We gather together to worship and support one another in our dying and resurrection moments and stories. Here are our opportunities to be together this week. Each of these gatherings will be on Zoom.

- **Wednesday Evening Gathering** at 7pm, March 31
- **Maundy Thursday worship with communion** at 7pm, April 1*
- **Easter Sunday Worship** at 10am, April 4
- **Bible Study** at 6:30pm, April 4

**On Maundy Thursday we celebrate the Last Supper by celebrating communion together. Each of us is invited to bring our own communion elements to this service, which will be organized around the Holden Evening Prayers.*

March Mission Focus: MN FoodShare

Last chance to give to our March Food Drive benefiting Francis Basket Food Market.

Thank you to everyone who has given throughout this month, you are making a difference in the lives of those in our community. If you have not yet had a chance to give, donations can be given through our online giving or checks can be made out to EPC with "March Food Drive" in the memo line. And again, if you would like to learn more about Neighborhood House's programs, or would like information on obtaining food for yourself, visit <http://neighb.org/>

RJAM

We have been reading 'So You Want to Talk About Race' by Ijeoma Oluo and the latest chapter was on cultural appropriation. Cultural appropriation is "the adoption of an element or elements of one culture or identity by members of another culture or identity." Issues of racism arise when a dominant culture appropriates elements of minority cultures and does not credit or acknowledge the source - in other words, they MIS-appropriate. One example of this is that many music styles which are rooted in the struggles and genius of black artists have been 'claimed' and monetized by white singers (think Elvis Presley). It was easier for me to understand this if I compare it to things like patent infringement, or situations where ideas of women are not considered until that same idea is voiced by a male. It may be difficult to determine when cultural appropriation is appreciative, which is OK, or exploitive. Again, the key here is understanding that this can happen and asking and listening to see if your actions are hurting someone.

-Liz Schiferl & The RJAM team (Eleta, Leslie, Connie, Luna, Liz & Rich)

Backwoods Ash Removal

Last year it seemed likely that the emerald ash borer blight had reached the ash trees on the church property. This spring it is clear that most of our ash trees are dying, with the flaky white bark that marks infestation. Over the next month or so, these trees will be coming down--some with the church chainsaw and some with professional help to protect both people and power lines. Almost all of these trees are along the northern edge and northwest corner of the backwoods. If you want to say goodbye to these trees or get a before-and-after view of this area before the deforestation, the nice weather coming up this weekend would be a good

time to do it. We are sad to lose so many towering, beautiful trees, but we look forward to the new plants and ecosystems that will emerge with increased sunlight.

Prayers

- Prayers for health in the Clary family, especially for Fred who is in the hospital this week for treatment on his back and a stomach ulcer.
- Prayers of celebration for Ruth Andersen who is home and recovering well from her recent.
- Prayers for Liz Schiferl as she adapts to fluctuating pain levels and ongoing treatment for cancer.
- Prayer of clarity and comfort and for anyone and everyone who is affected by the Chauvin trial happening now in Minneapolis. We pray that the Spirit might work miracles of transformation and reconnection out of both tragedy and hope.

April Birthdays & Anniversaries

Happy Birthday to:

Cali Clary 4/17

Ruth Anderson 4/19

Happy Anniversary to:

Meredith & Tom Holt 4/22