

Edgcumbe Presbyterian Church

Midweek Update - April 14, 2021

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Extending LOVE ♥

Lots of important material in this Update--including news about our upcoming Workday, in-person worship and outdoor worship plans and a Pastor sabbatical--so please take a look at this whole message today. Thank you!

Our theme for this Easter resurrection season is extending love. Jesus' raising from the dead only means something for us if it changes our life somehow, if we become vessels and channels for God's love in our hearts and for the world.

We looked at three texts to explore this theme last Sunday. Here is a quick review.

- **Acts 4** - for the earliest church, living as Christ's resurrection people meant not owning any possessions, but sharing everything they had with love and generosity. This didn't lead them to poverty but to an abundance of grace. Are our possessions tools of grace in our lives or are we owned by our own things?
- **Psalms 133** - How good it is when families live together as one! In every conversation and relationship I have, I can choose hurt or love, fear or love, avoidance or love, manipulation or love. This week, what will you choose?
- **1 John 1** - God is light and in God there is not one speck of darkness. What if today I allowed myself to step fully into God's light and joy and forgiveness? If I allowed myself to be fully seen and known and loved for who I am? What if I set down any story that keeps me from accepting and sharing God's light?

Zoom Gatherings 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

April Mission Focus: EPC Backwoods & Workday

Our focus for April is the EPC backwoods. We plan a work day on **April 24th, Saturday, from 9:00am to 1:00pm**. Our goal for the day is to get a jump on the work that is needed to maintain and beautify the backwoods.

Tasks performed will include the following:

- Pulling buckthorn, (some hand pulling for the smaller plants, and use of tools for larger ones)

- Some of the Ash trees have already been cut, and more will be cut down before the 24th (thanks to Phil!), and we will be clearing logs/brush and hauling those to the compost. Some logs will be kept to line the meditation pathway.
- Picking up trash around the church and yard (there's not much!)
- Removing plastic sheeting that's been keeping the mustard weed at bay
- Planting grass seed and THE MOST FUN OF ALL, planting new plants!!

Here's what you might bring, if you have it: work gloves, long sleeves to avoid being scratched by branches, hand trowels for planting (there are plenty of shovels already in the shed - no need for those), and trailers/trucks to haul brush. Please let me (Lisa) know if you have a trailer/truck so that we have an idea of how many we might have and how many we might need.

If you are a person who can not or would rather not do physical labor, there are other ways you can contribute. We will need money! Removal of Ash trees and the purchase of new plantings is expensive. Carol has generously agreed to bring snacks. Driving to the compost site is welcome. Cheering from the sidelines is OK too.

Thank you in advance for any time/funds you can consider donating! -Lisa Holden

Racial Justice And Me

Please join us at the Racial Justice and Me (RJAM) discussion on Wed, April 21st at 7pm. We will be discussing chapter 12 of So You Want to Talk About Race by Ijeoma Oluo. This chapter is focusing on racial Microaggressions- the small and daily insults that are perpetrated against people of color and the cumulative effect that these behaviours have on BIPOC people. It should be a great and heart opening discussion.

In last month's chapter entitled 'Why Can't I Touch Your Hair', I (Connie) got a painful and visceral education of what it means to have a part of your body commented on, treated as public property, and disrespected by majority culture. Hair is personal and part of our bodies. Black people have historically had their body autonomy disregarded (by slavery, by well meaning white people, by police, by office politics that dictate approved hair styles). I left the discussion with a new understanding of how White Supremacy can infiltrate even the most personal of spaces. Celebrate diversity and hands off other people's hair!!!

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

April Session Report

1. **New Theme:** The new theme in the coming months will be "Extending Love. How do we practice resurrection?" We need to live a life that wins over death and everything. We ask that the Holy Spirit's love and strength be instruments in guiding our lives.
2. **Finances:** Pledges are on target. At the quarter of the year, we have collected a quarter of the committed pledges. About 8 people are paying online at this point. Unpledged giving is down, however.
3. **Mission Donations:**
 - January - \$370.00 to **Migizi**.
 - February - \$260.00 to **Voices for Racial Justice**.
 - March - \$560.00 to the **MN Food Share**.
 - All of the above included the \$100.00 budgeted a month for Mission.

April's donation will be for continued work on **EPC's backwoods**.

4. **In Person Church:** After much discussion about considerations for returning to worship in the Sanctuary in the fall, it was decided to form a committee with elders and congregation members who will create a concrete policy proposal for resuming worship in the Sanctuary. This indoor policy would be established and posted; with the understanding that the guidelines of the policy would have to be followed by people using the church.
5. **Outdoor Worship:** Beginning in mid-May we are considering having outside worship every other week with Zoom as an option in inclement weather and for the alternate week.
6. **Sabbatical:** A Sabbatical is the continuation of the biblical concept of "Shabbat", as a day of complete rest and renewal. We assume that everything that pastors do, whether it is changing a light bulb or preparing a sermon, is part of their call. The call then becomes all about work with no time for rest and renewal. By their contract, our Pastors are entitled to a Sabbatical every 6 years, with a time limit of 3 months. This should have occurred in 2020, but was delayed because of Covid. Now Session has begun the conversation with the Pastors about taking one in the future, and has requested that the Pastors submit a plan of how they would like to spend the time, along with the dates being considered.
7. Pastor Luna has been called to **jury duty** during the week of April 19, 2021.

Submitted by Meredith Holt