



Edgcombe Presbyterian Church

Midweek Update - May 17, 2021

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Pentecost!

This Sunday is Pentecost when we celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit as Christ's gift to the church. We often talk about the gifts of the Spirit listed in Galatians: love, peace, joy, patience, kindness, generosity, trust, gentleness, and self-control. Which gift would you choose today? They're all free, so don't be shy!

In the Pentecost story in Acts 2, the disciples don't get to choose. And maybe we don't either. The Spirit gives us exactly what we need to share the mighty acts of God in a way that others can understand. Do you worry about sharing your faith with others? Worry no more because the words and the willingness have already been given to you.

The original plan was for this service to be an outdoor worship experience, but right now my weather app says there is a 60% chance of thunderstorms on Sunday. So please watch your email on Saturday for a final decision between outdoor or Zoom worship. Either way, worship will be followed by a short congregational meeting to vote on the proposal from Personnel and Session to grant the pastors two extra weeks of vacation this year (see the Session Report at the end of this Update).

Worship Plans

Thank you to everyone who participated in the congregational forum last Sunday to discuss worship plans. Here are a few reflections on where we are right now.

1. Anyone who is vaccinated is almost completely safe from Covid. The very few vaxxed folk who do get Covid don't get very sick. So for vaccinated church people, there are now no restrictions, either outdoors or indoors. To be clear, for our up-coming outdoor worship services, if you are vaccinated, you do not need to wear a mask and you are welcome to sing to your heart's content.
2. A huge change like this takes time. We are working on rebuilding trust: of other people, our institutions, our own immune systems. Our plan right now is to worship outside as much as we can over the next two months to practice being together and make some good plans for worshipping inside again.

3. In the meantime, let us be gracious with each other and ourselves as we seek to follow the Holy Spirit in all that we do.

Zoom Gatherings Schedule

We have four Zoom meetings scheduled for our congregation for each week. The links can be found on our church website homepage. Here is our current schedule:

- Sunday morning Worship at 10am (watch Updates and email for schedule)
- Sunday evening Bible Study at 6:30pm (**No Study on Sunday, May 23**)
- Tuesday Centering Prayer at 3pm
- Wednesday Evening Gathering at 7pm

May Mission Focus: Pentecost Offering

During the month of May, our Mission offering for Edgcumbe Church will focus on youth through the Presbyterian Pentecost offering. A gift to the Pentecost Offering helps the church develop, and support its young people, and address needs of at-risk children. 60% is used to support children and young adults through ministries of the Presbyterian Mission Agency. An example of mission programs for youth is in building skills and opportunity for leadership in worship through camps and direct congregation support.

Our 40% local contribution will be used to support the 8218 Truce Center in Saint Paul (on the corner of Lexington and Selby). I was fortunate to get a tour of the 8218 Truce Center this past week. There are areas with African art, information about the history of African Americans in the USA (including blatant and not-so-blatant discrimination) and prominent figures in the civil rights movement, a classroom for short courses or a place for students to do homework with internet access, a small game room, a place where local art is on sale, a canteen with free drinks and snacks and a place to contemplate a wall of photos of those in the Twin Cities who were victims of street violence. The center is open M-Sat 10am to 8pm and focuses on youth ages 8-18. Check out their photo gallery at: <https://8218trucecenter.org/>

Racial Justice & Me

Please join us this evening on Zoom at 7pm when we will be discussing the next chapter "What is the model minority myth?" from Ijeoma Oluo's book *So You Want To Talk About Race*. All are welcome; even if you haven't read the chapter feel free to just listen.

Bach Society Mini-Concerts

We have had three very nice short concerts sponsored by the Bach Society of MN. The final mini-concert is this Saturday, May 22, at 6:20pm. All are welcome and invite friends!

Graduation Party

Belinda and Fred Clary are celebrating the high school graduation of Sami LeClair and Belinda's college graduation (Midwifery) with a party at church on Sunday, June 27, 2-6pm. The entire congregation is invited to this celebration--the Clarys just need to know how many are planning to come for food prep, so please email Belinda at brealfit75@gmail.com to RSVP. Congrats to Sami and Belinda!

Helen Meyers Info

Helen Meyers, a former member who moved near Rochester and the mother of trumpet player Gordy, was recently in a Rochester hospital for about ten days but is now doing rehab in St Paul at the Episcopal Church Home at Fairview & University. Her address, if you want to visit or send a card is:

Helen Meyers
ECH
1879 Feronia Ave, St Paul MN 55104

May Session Report

From the Session meeting on Thursday, May 13

1. **Outdoor Worship: On May 23, Pentecost Sunday, we will meet in the backyard for the church service.** Bright, colorful clothing is appropriate for this Sunday. We will meet on Zoom if the weather doesn't cooperate.
 2. **Congregational Meeting:** Personnel has requested an after service **congregational meeting on May 23** to discuss adding an addendum to the terms of call just for the year 2021 to give the pastors two extra vacation weeks.
 3. **Vacation Homes:** Personnel is also asking if there are any members of the congregation with summer homes who would be willing to make them available to the Pastors and their family for vacation time?
 4. **Finance:** As last month, **pledges** are on target. We have collected one third of the pledges at this point in the year.
 5. **Mission:** **\$1,510.00** was given in April for the backwoods, including the \$100.00 budgeted monthly.
 6. **Property Use Requests:**
 - a. **Clary Graduation Party** - Sunday, June 27, 2-6pm
 - b. **Marlo McGregor and Jason Michael wedding** - Saturday, July 17, 12noon-4pm
 - c. **World premiere of play called "Aquelarres"** - 4-6 evenings in early August
 - d. **MN-IEA Enneagram Mixer** - Thursday, September 9, 6:30-8pm
 - e. **Tuesday Centering Prayer Pop-up** - dates to be determined
 - f. **Micah GebbenGreen graduation celebration after church** - date tbd
- Elder Rich Schiferl will design a form that would be applicable for all people or organizations requesting to use the backwoods for an event.** It will contain information such as dates and times for the event, contact person for the event, church contact person, whether use of the garbage bins would be needed, clean up, bathroom availability, etc.
- Event Calendar:** Rich volunteered to ask Liz Schiferl if she would be willing to coordinate a calendar of events for the backwoods.
7. **Sabbatical:**
 - a. A Sabbatical team of Meredith Holt, Carol Schweikhardt, Rich Schiferl, Pastors Phil and Luna GebbenGreen was formed. This team will apply for grants and work with the congregation to clarify their experience when the pastors take their sabbatical. Volunteers from the congregation would be welcome.
 - b. Session discussed the establishment of a line item in the budget that would be savings for future Sabbaticals. We discussed ideas such as putting aside \$100 per month or designating money from savings or asking for specific donations, and decided to revisit this topic when preparing the 2022 budget.
 8. **Worship:** A worship team consisting of Elders Connie Howe-Vielmetti and Ingrid Eggert will be considering ways to creatively lead worship experiences on the Sundays that the

Pastors are on vacation. Members of the congregation are encouraged to join this team, also.

Respectfully submitted, Meredith Holt