



Edgcombe Presbyterian Church

Midweek Update - June 9, 2021

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Trust Part II: Other Options

At outdoor worship this week, we continued our exploration of being people who TRUST. The New Testaments does not just suggest but actively proclaims that living in full trust of God is available to us in every moment--and that living in trust brings us all the abundance of the Spirit's gifts: love, joy, peace, etc. On Sunday, I asked, When we are not connected to trust and the Spirit's gifts, then what do we spend most of our time focussed on?

- Money
- Regrets
- Planning ahead
- Death, or becoming obsolete or unneeded
- The past
- What else--take a moment to ask yourself what you spend your time thinking about...

None of these topics is evil in and of itself. But not one of them leads to salvation, to healing, to peace. Do you want peace? If you want it, we know with certainty that God will give it. I invite you again: If you are willing, set a timer on your phone and do this little exercise every hour. Notice resistance inside yourself; welcome it. Notice your desire for peace; welcome that.

Take a deep breath and then pray:
God I trust you completely.
Repeat this three times--breath & prayer
Allow trust to seep into the marrow of your being

Worship June 13 - TBD

The scheduled plan for this Sunday is to be on Zoom. At the same time, Session is meeting this Thursday, so if that plan changes, look for an email later this week. We are quickly approaching the time when we will return to our sanctuary. You can celebrate that you are not standing in the sanctuary at this very moment, because it is uncomfortably warm in there right now!

The plan is to worship outdoors again on June 20--with a very favorable forecast!

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 for email updates!)
- Sunday evening Bible Study at 6:30pm
- Tuesday Centering Prayer at 3pm
- Wednesday Evening Gathering at 7pm

June Mission Focus: Plaster House

Plaster House (see photo above) provides preoperative and postoperative care for children in need of orthopedic, plastic and neurosurgery in conjunction with Selian Lutheran Hospital in Arusha, Tanzania. Over 1000 children will be cared for in 2021 with 95% of the cost funded by donors. Ingrid and Ron Eggert volunteered at PH and SLH for 8 & 1/2 years. They will make a short presentation about their work during the Sunday service on June 6. The first 2 links below are to 4 minute and 11 minute videos about PH.



The Plaster House

An introduction to Plaster House by Director Sarah Rejman:
<https://www.theplasterhouse.org.au/media-and-current-events>

A Plaster House Journey through the eyes of one of the children. This is on the Plaster House website, scroll down to the **A Healing Journey** video:
<https://www.theplasterhouse.org/>

Donations should be labeled "Plaster House" or "June EPC Mission."

Racial Justice & Me

We have just finished discussing the chapter entitled "But what if I hate Al Sharpton" from Ijeoma Oluo's book 'So You Want To Talk About Race'. This chapter isn't really about Al Sharpton, but about the objections white people have to the tone that black people use when discussing racism and its impact. She discusses "tone policing", which is when someone (usually the privileged person) in a conversation about equality and justice shifts the focus from WHAT is being talked about to HOW it is being talked about. This is often used as an excuse for not joining the fight for equality and justice since "we weren't asked nicely". This prioritizes the comfort of the oppressor or dominant culture over the real suffering of the disadvantaged. However, just as we learned from Ibram X. Kendi, there is no neutral. If you believe in equality and justice then you fight for anti-racist systems no matter how the request for help comes. We are all on the same side.

In our small group discussions we noted that some of the discomfort may come from not being familiar with how black people speak to each other. We have no experience listening to black activists or representatives. I found out Al Sharpton has an Instagram account, so I decided to follow him. He often posts videos of himself sharing his thoughts. I have only listened to a few of them, and while his tone is indeed unfamiliar to me, its turning out that I kind of LIKE Al Sharpton!

Here is a link to Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/real_sharpton/?hl=en

Or on MSNBC, where he is a columnist: <https://www.msnbc.com/author/rev-al-sharpton-ncpn818216>

Please join us next week (June 16 on Zoom at 7pm) when we will be discussing the next chapter "I just got called racist, what do I do now?" All are welcome; even if you haven't read the chapter feel free to just listen.

Clothing Exchange

Gather your items now for Eleta's Clothing Exchange Birthday Party!

Drop off June 19-24.

Shop for FREE June 25 & 26!

(will be set up in my garage: 788 Ottawa Ave, St. Paul 55107)

If you are interested in participating, contact Eleta for more details (eleta.pierce@gmail.com)



EPC Hosting a New Congregation?

I (Phil) recently fielded a request by Dr. Fekadu from the Rehoboth Ethiopian Church of Minnesota, who is looking for a place to worship on Sunday afternoons. Dr. Fekadu shared with me the struggles of being an immigrant community throughout the Covid time, with many of their community working frontline jobs while also caring for children and elders at home. He shared the challenges of finding a job with a PhD and an accent. He shared how God is calling us to live in God's reality and not by human standards, remembering that God made us from a speck of dust and God brings us home at last to the New Jerusalem. He also shared that the neighborhood just down the hill from our church building is a growing and dynamic Ethiopian immigrant community.

Session will talk this week about whether or not to continue conversations with this congregation about the use of our building. I'm asking all of us to pray for the Spirit's wisdom in this matter. Are we being called to share our space with another congregation? Are the inevitable set-backs and irritations a reason to say NO, or simply an invitation to adjust our expectations and make room for brothers and sisters?