



Edgcumbe Presbyterian Church

Midweek Update - June 23, 2021

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Rehoboth Ethiopian Church at EPC

Over the past month, we have been in conversation with representatives of Rehoboth Ethiopian Christian Church of Minnesota about using the EPC sanctuary on Sunday afternoons. This conversation has been filled with big and little serendipities and connections. Last Saturday, Carol, Leslie, and I, Phil, met with Dr. Fekadu and Mimi from RECCM. At the end of that time, surrounded by prayer, we decided to implement a trial period of having RECCM use the Edgcumbe sanctuary and building beginning on Sunday, July 4. This Ethiopian congregation have not seen each other in person for over a year-- depending on occasional group calls as their only connection, so they are very excited to have a temporary place to gather and worship together.

The overwhelming response at EPC has been one of openness and trust and hospitality. At the same time, there are some details to work out. Here are some of the common questions I am hearing around this situation.

- **WHY EPC?** EPC because after months of closed doors, I responded to the email of Dr. Fekadu saying that we had been praying about how God wants us to use our beautiful property and building. EPC because there is a significant demographic of Ethiopian immigrants who reside in the St Paul Ave/W 7th neighborhood, within walking distance of our property. EPC because the Spirit keeps saying yes at each juncture of this discernment.
- **WHEN?** The first Sunday RECCM will be in the sanctuary is July 4. Their general time frame will be 12noon-2pm. Some of their worship leaders and a women's prayer group may show up around 11:30am.
- **IN WHAT SPACE?** The primary room would be the sanctuary, with availability of the narthex, parlor, library, and rooms 1 & 2 upstairs for prayer meetings or Sunday school groups, and of course, the bathrooms. RECCM does not plan to cook at church so would only use the kitchen for set up. There is a good amount of storage space in room 2 for the RECCM worship materials.
- **IS THERE A FORMAL LEASE?** Not yet. We are starting with a trial period to see how it goes, with plans to have a full written lease in the coming months, probably for six months or one year maximum.
- **WHAT IS THE EFFECT ON OUR OTHER RENTERS?** Highland AA should not be affected at all. Because RECCM does have some children, it is possible that there could be some use of the rooms that Montessori Preschool also uses. Could this lead to some disruption? Yes it could (I am remembering when my own children would get into the preschool toys). I suspect that most of these disruptions can be handled with good communication. I want to note that our lease with the Preschool is very clear: outside of the Mon-Friday 7-am-6pm time slots, all of the rooms in the church building belong completely to Edgcombe Church. While we certainly want to maintain good relationship with the Preschool, we also do not need to think of those spaces as completely off limits to ourselves or others building users.
- **CLEANING?** Sol would continue to clean the building later on Sunday, leaving it prepared for the Preschool to start on Monday morning. RECCM has been asked to clean up any major messes (spilled food, for example) and tidy any rooms that have been used (preschool toys scattered about). If RECCM usage increased the burden on Sol, we would need to either change our agreement with RECCM or increase Sol's Sunday hours.
- **COMMUNICATION?** We will certainly need a small team of people to be in ongoing communication with RECCM and EPC and the Montessori Preschool. This is especially true when Pastors Phil & Luna take off for 5-6 weeks this Aug/Sept. If you are willing to be a contact person, please speak with me (Phil).
- **SHARED WORSHIP, POTLUCKS, ETC?** Time will tell. My suggestion is that we let our guests settle into this new space and get reacquainted with each other for a few weeks before we pounce on them with too many requests for joint events. If this arrangement of shared space works out for both parties, then I think we could have years of opportunities for support and learning and celebration and fellowship.

Will there be other questions and concerns and connections and misunderstandings? Of course! All opportunities for grace and learning as we go. Todd Barnes shared a wonderful suggestion, which is that we have a time of intentionally learning about Ethiopian history and culture as a way to create more space within ourselves for our newest family members. Look for messages about times for events around this goal, or feel free to share any resources or books or articles that you find helpful in this regard.

Summer Worship Schedule

Here is the worship schedule for the next months:

- Jun 27 - Zoom
- Jul 4 - Outdoors (communion)
- Jul 11 - In Sanctuary!
- Jul 18 - Outdoors
- Jul 25 - In Sanctuary
- Aug 1 - Outdoors (communion)

Pastors Luna & Phil will be taking 5-6 weeks off from August 2-Sept 12. Our newly re-formed Worship Team is working right now on creative ideas for those Sundays!

June Mission Focus: Plaster House

Plaster House 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. The first 2 links below are to 4 minute and 11 minute videos about PH. Donations should be labeled "Plaster House" or "June EPC Mission."



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/>

Community Questionnaire in July

Presbytery has prepared a "Community Questionnaire" with the help of anti-racism coordinator, Anna Kendig Flores. This questionnaire has been sent to all of the congregations in the presbytery as a means of gathering data about the demographics of the congregations, about insights into mission and ministry opportunities, and the one-time Institutional Race and Equity Assessment of the PTCA. This questionnaire has been designed as an easy way for congregation members to confidentially self-report important demographic information. Presbytery asks that the questionnaire be filled out online in a two week period between July 11-July 24, 2021. More in depth information and a web link will follow as we receive it. Thank you, *Meredith Holt, Clerk of Session*

Clothing Exchange--Almost here

Gather your items now for Eleta's Clothing Exchange Birthday Party!
Drop off June 19-24 (or bring to church on June 20)



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)

Prayers

- Helen Meyers died on June 12 in her home. There will be a memorial service for her in Byron, on Saturday, July 31, 2pm at the United Methodist Church, with visitation starting at 1pm. Certainly anyone from Edgcumbe is welcome to attend. If you would like to send a card, Helen's son Gordy Meyers' address is: 1841 Saunders Ave, St Paul 55116
- Prayers for Liz Schiferl who is dealing with pain management after her surgery last week and who found out this week that her father died. May God grant the Schiferl family grace and peace in this hard week.

Enneagram Prison Project (EPP) Opportunity

For the past three years, Pastor Phil has been working with the Enneagram Prison Project to help work for transformation through the healing work of the Enneagram on both sides of the bars. Because outside programming is still paused for most prisons, EPP is offering its prison program to the general public in an online program called **9 Prisons ONE Key**. Phil highly recommends this to anyone who is interested. It is a donation-based program that will run this Sept-November. To sign up for an information session or to see the schedule, go to this website: <https://enneagramprisonproject.org/9prisonsonekey-training/>

Tables??

If you have read this far, then bless your heart. We are missing two of our white plastic 6-foot tables from church. Is it possible that you borrowed two of these tables sometime over the past year? As we move back into more in person gatherings, we will hope to use these tables again. Please contact Phil or simply sneak them back into church, if you happen to know where they are...