



Edgcumbe Presbyterian Church

Midweek Update - July 7, 2021

In this issue: Quick announcements, Worship Sched, Mission, RJAM, Traffic report, Questionnaire, Ice Cream!

Coming Right Up

Here are several important events that are happening soon at EPC:

- RJAM firepit gathering this evening at 7pm - see below
- Worship in the sanctuary this Sunday, July 11!
- Graduation reception for Micah G following worship (with ice cream)
- Edgcumbe road closure on July 12 - see below
- Don't miss the exciting Mission updates in today's Update

Together, Hymns, a First, and Love

This Sunday, we plan to **worship in-person in the sanctuary** for the first time since early March 2020. That's sixteen months. We do hope to have a Zoom room open as well, in case you can't be there personally but still want to join us. Praise God and pass the ice cream (see below for annc about Micah's graduation reception). We have **eight hymns** picked out for this service (!!!) so come prepared to sing and praise and worship together.

Rehoboth Ethiopian Christian Church did meet in our sanctuary for the first time this past Sunday. Six of us joined them for the first 30 minutes, with shared blessings and prayers.

I wrote the following in an email to one of you this week, and it seemed worthy of repeating to all of us. *"Let me tell you a secret. There is only one path to happiness and that path is **allowing others to love you**. And the only way to allow others to love you is to let yourself love yourself. And the only way to love yourself is to remember and trust that God loves you already, exactly as you are."*

Summer Worship Schedule

Here is the worship schedule for the next months:

- 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 Worship Team is working right now on creative ideas for those Sundays!

From our Mission Team: Our Mission Is ACTION

Our July Mission is Project Home, a division of Interfaith Action of Greater St. Paul. In recent years we have volunteered at First Presbyterian Church in South St. Paul, while guests of Project Home lived in their Fellowship Hall for the month. When the pandemic hit in March 2020, area faith communities could understandably no longer host guests. Project Home families moved to two sites downtown Saint Paul until March 2021, when Interfaith Action joined with the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet and Ramsey County to open a shelter in the Provincial House, the former home of the Sisters, located at 1880 Randolph Avenue in the Highland Park neighborhood of Saint Paul. This site is now providing shelter, employment and rapid exit housing support for approximately 20 families with minor children. Post-pandemic, Interfaith Action would like to re-open the rotating shelters at our network of faith community partners, while retaining the Provincial House location as well. Typically, there are dozens and dozens of families waiting to get INTO emergency shelter. With the increased capacity at the Provincial House, if we add a tier of the mobile model, we could very possibly eradicate the need for an emergency shelter waitlist in our area. This year we will collect cash donations to support Interfaith Action's Project Home, but look to next year for more hands-on volunteer work. Donations can be made to Edgcumbe with "Project Home" in the memo line.

This morning Pastor Luna and myself (Eleta) met with Philip Romine, the congregational contact person from **Interfaith Action of Greater St. Paul**, who also happens to be a Presbyterian minister. We had a beautiful meeting in our backwoods where we introduced our Edgcumbe community to Philip, and he talked to us more about all of the wonderful things that Interfaith Action is currently doing, and how they, like us, have went through a beautiful metamorphosis over the years and since they were St. Paul Area Council of Churches. Both Luna and myself heard the Spirit starting to steer us towards how our communities can work together. Philip also shared what currently has been happening with Interfaith Action, including updates on Project Home, and a new program in restorative justice circles that they have started training and certifying faith communities on. We ended our meeting with a walk through the mediation path and warm feelings around, despite the unusually chilly morning. Watch in the coming weeks and months for some hands-on involvement as we become more connected with Interfaith Action.

Thank you to everyone for your support of our "**Missions of the Month.**" A couple of years ago we decided to take out of the budget some of our regular mission giving and instead focus on our missions outside of the budget. At the beginning of this year, a team was created and agreed to start giving this mission of the month idea a try. We also asked Session to add back to our budget a \$100/month allowance to use either in addition to any monetary donation given, or to use for items needed for any hands-on project that month. Below is our giving report for the first half of the year. Seeing these numbers are amazing and beautiful, and we should all be proud of this giving above and beyond your regular giving:

- January - Migizi - \$275 + \$100 budgeted mission giving
- February - RJAM - \$160 + \$100 budgeted mission giving
- March - Food Shelf - \$460 + \$100 budgeted mission giving
- April - Backwoods - \$1560
- May - 8218 Truce Center - \$485 + \$100 budgeted mission giving
- June - Plaster House - \$1310 + \$100 budgeted mission giving

RJAM Update

Please join us tonight IN PERSON in the backwoods around a firepit at 7pm to celebrate a year of reading and reflection. Bring a treat to share if you like and your thoughts on the past year. What have you learned and unlearned? Everyone is welcome, whether or not you have participated in the recent book study!

We are planning on taking the summer off from meeting as a group. Since much of the past year has been spent looking inward, we are thinking this summer is a time for more outward/community exploration. Here are some ideas to consider for summer activities you can do on your own.

Other ideas? Bring them on Wednesday.

- *Listen to the new podcast, "Be Antiracist", by Ibram X Kendi (With different guests for each episodes, this podcast imagines what an antiracist society might look like and how we all can play an active role in building one. Listen on Apple Podcasts: <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/be-antiracist-with-ibram-x-kendi/id1564144316?i=1000518086214>)*
 - *Reach out to the 8218 Ministry to volunteer*
 - *Join the conversations sponsored by MacGroveland Antiracism Learning and Action 2021 (Includes recorded webinars aimed at exploring 5 questions related to home ownership and the ability to create more equitable wealth; speakers are local community groups). Sign up was supposed to be by July 1, but I was able to access the sign up page today. <https://macgrove.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Mac-Grove-Antiracism-Series-2.pdf>*
 - *Investigate volunteer opportunities with the St. Paul Interfaith Action group. See: <https://interfaithaction.org/get-involved/volunteer/>*
 - *Get involved with activities to welcome the Rehoboth Ethiopian Christian Church for the use of our worship space on Sundays. And let's learn more about Ethiopia!*
- RJAM team (Leslie, Connie, Eleta, Liz, Rich, Luna)

July Traffic Report

From July 12-30, the St Paul Public Works will be tearing up Edgcumbe Ave from Snelling Ave to the Highland Park Senior High driveways. The church driveway will be accessible this entire time--by driving the "wrong way" up the northern lane of Edgcumbe Ave. This should all be marked with signs. The other option is to enter the Senior High parking lot from Montreal Ave, park in their lot, and then walk to the church property.

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*

Trying Again: Ice Cream for Micah GG

It looks like this Sunday after worship will work as a time to celebrate the high school graduation of Micah GebbenGreen. Micah has chosen ice cream as his favorite treat to share. So the GebbenGreens will bring ice cream for our post-worship gathering. If anyone wants to bring a favorite topping to add, that would be fun too!