



Edgcumbe Presbyterian Church

Midweek Update - July 28, 2021

In this issue: Abundance, Pastor Vacation, Worship Sched, Art Gathering, Play Tickets, Dying Grass, Session Report, Sabbatical, Road Open, Prayers, August Birthdays & Anniversaries

Abundance & Gratitude

From a mechanical perspective, it has not been a good week. On Monday, I got out of my connective tissue massage and our minivan would not start. Called our usual garage and found out the owner's father had just died, closing the garage until Monday. Today, after a message from our custodian Sol, I went into church to see that the vacuum cord was broken and needed to go to the shop. Before doing that errand, I sat down at my office computer to create a flyer for the neighborhood and this Update. After a half hour of the AC unit bravely trying to keep up on this scorcher of a day, the fuse for the office blew. I spent the next half hour looking for the correct fuse and never found it.

Bummer upon bummer, right? What else could go wrong (please don't ask that, the list is long). Bummer-ness is part of the story. Here's more:

- It's a week when we don't need two cars. The minivan can easily sit right where it is. Plus, it broke down only two-thirds of a mile from our house, and I could easily walk home. Abundance & gratitude.
- The vacuum shop (Regina's at University & Aldine) was both open and on the way home from church. They can fix the vacuum in the next two days. More abundance & gratitude.
- When the fuse blew, only the office was affected--no power out in the Preschool area on one of the hottest days of the year. Abundance & gratitude.
- After I gave up on the fuses and dropped off the vacuum, I sat down at my home computer (the Lenovo paid for with a Presbytery grant) and opened the Google

document that I had been working on at church. Not a word lost. Abundance & gratitude.

- There is already an email from Ron that he can work on finding and replacing the fuse this evening. Others are available to help or back him up as needed. Abundance & gratitude.

When Jesus saw 5000-some people headed his way, he did not see a problem to be solved. He saw grass for sitting; he saw food for sharing; he saw community and friends and potential for generosity. Abundance and gratitude.

Pastor Vacation

Pastors Luna & Phil are taking vacation time off from August 2-September 12. We share our deep appreciation for this time to rest and rejuvenate. While we will miss our lovely church community, having six weeks off sounds like a generous and needed gift of abundance after an amazing but exhausting past 18 months.

Here are some areas of church life and how they are being covered while we are away.

- **WORSHIP:** We have a team of folk planning worship led by Connie
- **BLDG & GROUNDS:** Contact people for any issues will be Jay and Rich
- **COMMUNITY CARE:** If any special health or spiritual needs emerge over these weeks, please reach out to any of your Elders: Jay, Connie, Meredith, Rich or Ingrid
- **MIDWEEK UPDATE:** Send anything you want in the Update to Krysta at epchurch2149@gmail.com
- **EVERYTHING ELSE:** For new mask mandates or moving the pews or organizing a campout in the backwoods, you are on your own!

Summer Worship Schedule

Here is the worship schedule for the next weeks, with coordinator in parentheses.

- Aug 1 - Outdoor worship with Communion (LUNA)
- Aug 8 - Sanctuary with Rev. Jodi Houge from Humble Walk (CAROL)
- Aug 15 - Brunch potluck Sunday! (CONNIE)
- Aug 22 - Bring a friend or family Sunday (TODD)
- Aug 29 - Special theatrical guests: The Word as Worship (CONNIE)
- Sept 5 - Outdoor worship with Communion (RUTH)
- Sept 12 - Shelley & Lisa musical extravaganza with member speakers (TODD)

EPC Art Gathering Aug 7

On the first Saturday of the month starting in August we will gather for some art time. You could also just bring a book or a guitar, knitting or whatever you find relaxing. In August there will be an introduction to art journaling and instructions to make postcards. Each month we can do something different.

RSVP Please to Carol: 651 468-9888 or cschweickhardt@gmail.com.

Tickets for Play Starting Next Weekend

Tickets for Aquelelles, the play that will be performed in our backwoods later this month and into August, are now available. See <https://www.showtix4u.com/event-details/55057> for ticket reservations/purchases. For frequently asked questions also see: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1XFbYVZIOvcAnKoPu9zts7i_xFYqkRBoTi2FAARL2pco/edit And the show's Facebook event link is <https://fb.me/e/1vLyR45Lx>

Tickets are pay-what-you-can with suggested prices between \$10 and \$50. EPC members can also attend the show for free, if desired. Just email birthplayproject@gmail.com with the date you'd like to come, the name to reserve tickets under, the number of tickets requested, and whether you'd prefer to sit in chairs or on the grass.

We (Rich and Liz) are also looking for volunteers from EPC to help during each performance to unlock the EPC building before the performance and during intermission to give guests access to the restrooms. We will be able to cover most dates but if you are interested in helping out, the following dates are available: July 31, Aug 1, Aug 5, 6, 7,8,11,12,13,14,15 - all at 7:30 . Just email lrschiferl@gmail.com if you would like to help with dates you are available. You should be able to leave after intermission.

Dying Grass

You may have noticed the dead and dying grass on the berm behind the EPC parking lot. The current mix of grass and weeds is being killed to make room for alternative landscaping, including eco-grass that only needs to be mown once or twice per year. Hopefully by next spring this area will be transformed into a beautiful and easier to maintain part of our back yard.

July Session Report

Here is a brief Update from the last Session Meeting (7/25/21) - Rich [NOTE: Rich's very first Session Communication: Yay for us!]

- Meredith began with devotions that focused on "What question do you struggle with in your relationship with God?" Are you willing to trust that God is in control even though we sometimes feel uncomfortable surrendering our (perceived) control?
- We discussed the upcoming Pastoral vacation (Monday, Aug 2 through Sept 12).
 - The Worship team has put together a great schedule that includes both EPC member led and outside pastor and theater participation Sunday worship services. Check out the schedule provided in the July 21 Midweek Update (and likely repeated in this Week's Midweek update).
 - We were reminded that the Pastors will be absent but the Holy Spirit will still be present. Remember to check in with the Holy Spirit in the coming weeks as we all journey through this special time.
 - Please contact one of the Elders (Connie, Meredith, Jay, Ingrid, Rich) during the Pastors' vacation for all EPC related activities or needs.
- We were asked to pray for the family of Dr Fekadu of the Rehoboth Ethiopian Christian Church that is sharing our sanctuary space on Sundays. Dr Fekadu has returned to Ethiopia due to a serious illness in his family.
- Budget review shows that we are financially on track for the year through June.
- Jennie Reedquist led a discussion about methods to create a sense of community for all who participate in our Sunday Worship services; both in-person and connecting

through Zoom to the in-person services. We should be moving toward a video and audio setup that is constructed of technology pieces that are either permanently mounted (in the sanctuary) or easily put in place (for outdoor services) with minimal setup and consistent results. Achieving this will broaden the community that can be reached as well as make it easier to trouble-shoot issues during services. Cost should be minimal as technology to do this has dropped in price and has become more available during Covid. Scarcity has led to abundance here! A team (Jennie, Jay, Ron, Rich), with Jennie as the coordinator, was set up to develop a plan to improve our audio and video capabilities in a step-by-step fashion and then implement this plan.

- Covid transmission risks with in-person services were discussed. This is due to the fact that there are several immunocompromised members attending our worship services who are at higher risk of becoming infected that can result in serious health consequences. Mask wearing serves two purposes: 1) avoid breathing in virus particles that are in the room air and 2) avoid spewing out virus particles for those who have Covid. Masks are much better at item 2) than at item 1). After extended discussion Session approved the following policy statement that will be posted in the church building: "Per CDC guidelines, it is the EPC policy that all who gather in the church building for indoor worship or church business wear a mask if they are unvaccinated or have been exposed to Covid 19. If they are feeling ill, we ask that they stay at home. This policy is in order to protect those of us who are immune compromised or have underlying health issues."
- The Personnel Committee provided an update on upcoming Pastor Sabbaticals based on discussions with Luna and Phil. Per the Terms of Call, the Pastors are to take a Sabbatical every 6 years with the most recent one to be taken in 2020. Due to Covid, the 2020 Sabbatical was not taken so that Sabbatical will now be taken in 2022. Previously it was thought that a Lily Grant would be pursued for this Sabbatical but that would likely have delayed taking it until 2023. Other grants will be investigated for the 2022 Sabbatical. In keeping with the Terms of Call, the next Sabbatical after 2022 will be taken in 2026 and every 6 years after that.
- The Backwoods will be busy in the coming month with the play (Aquelarres) starting performances on July 30 (this Friday!) and a large memorial service being held on July 31. All were reminded to check out the new stage backdrop that was installed in the last few weeks.

Personnel: Sabbatical Update

The Personnel Committee met with the Pastors on July 24, 2021, to continue sabbatical conversations. It became apparent during the discussion that applying for the Lilly Grant and waiting till 2023 for a sabbatical seemed more like a burden than an opportunity; therefore it was decided to research other grants and plan on a sabbatical for 2022. This would tie in nicely with Pastor Luna's plans to participate in a retreat at the Iona Abbey in Scotland for 10 days in March of 2022. Other sabbatical activities involving Pastor Phil could be built around that activity or the Pastors could choose to have a separate and a combined time while on sabbatical. Ideas for this are still in flux and will be reported to the congregation as they are determined.

Thank you, Carol Schweickhardt and Meredith Holt

Edgumbe Road now Open

Edgumbe Road and the EPC parking lot is now completely open to the regular traffic flow after the recent underground work in front of the High School.

Prayers

- Prayers for Dr. Fekadu, one of the leaders of the Rehoboth Ethiopian congregation, who had to make an emergency trip back to Ethiopia to be with his mother in a health crisis.
- For the family and community of Jessa Gamble Roquet, whose memorial service will be in the EPC backwoods this Saturday at 1pm.

August Birthdays & Anniversaries

Happy Birthday to:

Josh LeClair - August 23

Happy Anniversary to:

Elizabeth & Richard Schiferl - August 9

Ingrid & Ron Eggert - August 11