

Edgcumbe Presbyterian Church

Midweek Update – Dec. 15, 2021

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Advent Season:

we are travelers. advent reminds us that our lives are the journey (as well as a classroom!). we already have immanuel—god with us— guiding our way, *if we only ask*. one of my latest learnings in my yearlong class of devotion is that talking to the holy spirit and knowing she is real is only *a part* of the equation of faith. **asking the holy spirit to come into my mind**, into my thinking, is *the key* that opens up christ’s vision to me. but to ask, we have *to be willing* and *to trust*...so we allow the words from the prophet isaiah to ground and inspire us. i invite you to join with me as we surrender our lives into the care of god by praying these words together:

**God is indeed my salvation;
I will trust and won’t be afraid.**

for me, these days of traveling are leaving me a bit weary. as i mentioned in last week’s update, my mom was admitted into hospice care, and did go home to her apartment. unfortunately, with the medical events she was having, it aggravated her dementia. after the first night back, the facility required us to move her into their memory care unit. i mentioned on sunday that her move into memory care has been emotionally harder for me to grasp than her admittance into hospice. i visited her on monday, and it has taken me a few days to realize that i am *heartbroken* right now for this next chapter for her. it leaves me with waves of grief, as well as “grief brain” which makes my brain a bit mushy. however, i am realizing, i can be heartbroken, **and i can still trust god**. trusting the overall arc of my mom’s journey with god is actually the thing giving me permission to be heartbroken right now...i can *allow what is*. my overall prayers these days are for *presence and surrender*. thank you for adding your prayers for my family in



these days...i am so utterly grateful to have you all walking alongside of my family.

Next Sunday, and Christmas Eve Worship

THIS Sunday, December 19, we will have a **carol hymn-sing** throughout our worship service. So come prepared to request a favorite. The carols we already have planned for Christmas Eve, by the way, are “O Come, All Ye Faithful”, “Hark, the Herald Angels Sing”, and “Silent Night.” Everything else is available this Sunday!

We will gather to celebrate the birth of Jesus into our world and into our hearts on **Friday, December 24 at 4pm** in the sanctuary or on Zoom for a service of good news and music and candles. We will **not** have worship services on the next Sunday, December 26, but will regather on January 2, 2022!

Heather Grantham Update

Blessed Advent to you all! This past Monday night, Luna, Connie, Jay, and I met with the Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) of the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area (PTCA). We met with them so that I could be transferred into the care of the PTCA to progress in my ordination journey. And they voted unanimously to receive me into care (pending the Oklahoma presbytery's signature on a couple of documents) and to work with the Hamline Church United Methodist congregation to figure out the next steps. Edgumbe is such a special place and I feel so blessed the Spirit led us to one another. My heart is filled with gratitude for this community. Thank you!

And, if y'all are interested in being part of a Nativity Petting Zoo, feel free to stop by Hamline Church (1514 Englewood Avenue, St. Paul, 55104) after Edgumbe worship. We will have a petting zoo and treats from the bread oven from 11-1230ish.

Zoom Worship in the New Year

Session voted last week (see Elder Connie's complete notes below) to have zoom only worship (without an in-person gathering) on the 3rd Sundays for the first quarter of 2022. Please mark your calendars that **January 16th, February 20th, and March 20th** we will **gather on zoom for worship**. If you need assistance in setting up Zoom on a home device, please let Pastor Luna know. She is happy to virtually meet with you during the week to make this a smooth transition!

December Mission: Project Home

Christmas List

for Project Home Families

- Winter Gloves, Hats & Scarves
- Warm Socks
- New Undies
- Lotion!
- Bath Towels & Washcloths*
- Pillow Cases*
- Sheet Sets (Twin & Full)*

Shop for all sizes and genders: adult, youth, child, infant, male, female and gender-neutral. Items should be new. Those marked with * can be gently used. Place your donations under the tree in the Sanctuary, now through December 19.

For more than 23 years, Project Home has provided overnight shelter for area families facing homelessness in partnership with dozens of area churches, synagogues, and schools. Additionally, in 2019, Project Home added day shelter services and rapid exit case management services. This 24/7 support helps families achieve both stability and economic mobility through assistance in finding permanent, affordable housing and employment.

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.

December Session Notes

Session Met via Zoom on 12/9/21 - Notes from Elder Connie

- Elder Meredith Holt started us off with a Reflection on the Season of Light. Why do we call it the Season of Light in the darkest time of Year? She shared a story of Faith and then asked Session members to talk about times we have glimpsed the Light of God and how we have (and have not) recognized and responded to that Unconditional Love.
- As Session, we talked about checking in with the Holy Spirit in prayer and "Making No Decision on Our Own".
- Treasurer Ron and Pastor Phil walked us through the 2022 budget. Discussion of Pastor's salary and housing allowance as well as staff compensation were discussed.
- Clerk of Session Meredith talked about an upcoming audit of church finances to be done by church member volunteers.
- Jay from the Hybrid Worship Team shared how the process of working on the team has helped him personally. He reported that the technology is still unfolding but sound has improved. We want to eventually have better interaction with the folks on Zoom. A special shout out to the whole team and to Ron's son Mark who has helped this team with his expertise—we would not be where we are today without Mark's help.
- The Session approved having Zoom Worship (no in person) on the 3rd Sunday each month in Jan, Feb, and March of 2022 (and perhaps also in times of inclement weather—watch email).
- The Clerk Report - Meredith noted that there are many people who are not 'Active' but are still on the EPC membership rolls. Session will reach out to these people and check in with them. It is our desire to connect and be in communion with all EPC's community whatever way works for people.
- Luna checked in regarding a meeting with the Presbytery to support Heather Grantham in Heather's desire to serve in Prebyterian Ministry as a Pastor. Luna also checked in about her mom and the outpouring of support she has received from the church community.
- We concluded with prayer and our individual takeaways from the night.

Year-end Giving

Thank you for your generous giving to the work and ministry of Edgcumbe Church over the past year. Remember that for donations to be counted for the 2021 tax year, they need to be received in the church office on or before December 31, 2021. Donations can also be made through the church website by clicking on the GIVE NOW button in the upper left. Thank you!