

Edgcumbe Presbyterian Church

Midweek Update

May 24, 2023

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To Know God

In our scripture passage for last Sunday, John 17:1-11, Jesus says a very interesting thing, defining eternal life in a way that I have rarely heard. While praying to his Father, Jesus says, "This is eternal life: to know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ who you sent."

I want you to notice what Jesus does not say. He doesn't say that eternal life is...

- Something that happens after we die
- Something that can be earned or lost
- Something that depends on believing the right things

What he says is that the miraculous life that he is offering us is based on a relationship with God. It's that simple and it's that complex. If you have heard me say it once, you've heard me say it a hundred times: I believe with all my heart that God is good, all good, all day, good and only good. There is not one speck of darkness in God. If we can begin to understand that in our heart of hearts, then the next thing to realize about God is this: God wants to be known. By you. God wants to be known by you. God knows that God has so much goodness in store for you for all eternity, that God is like an antsy parent on Christmas morning, just waiting for their child to open that one present that the parent knows the child is going to absolutely love.

What does it take to know God? There must be a five or ten-step process, right? An entry fee? A secret handshake? The one and only thing it takes to know God is willingness. You can say it right now: God, I am willing to know you. As I write that sentence, my own heart gets wobbly



because I have experienced the power of that simple offer. If you can be willing, even for one brief moment, to fully and completely know God, then the Holy Spirit rushes in with all the goodness and power and love of the creator of the universe. And there is nothing that God's light and knowledge and love cannot heal or transform or comfort or inspire. God says to each one of us today— You are worthy. You are loved and lovable. You are known. You are one.

Summer Worship Schedule

The EPC session set our worship schedule for this summer. We will plan to meet outside on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month, starting on May 28. This also means that we will be taking the summer off from Zoom worship, re-evaluating our monthly schedule next fall.

Here are the specific dates:

- Outdoor Worship: May 28 (Pentecost), June 11 & 25, July 9 & 23, August 13 & 27

Not every outdoor worship experience will be around the stage. Some weeks we may gather in the chairs under the big maple tree, other weeks we may circle in the front yard; other days may be an outdoor brunch picnic or pancake breakfast. One outdoor week, we will be joined by youth from First Presbyterian Church - S St Paul! We are looking forward to what the Holy Spirit has in store for us this summer.

May 28 Congregational Meeting called for Election of Elders

Session has called for a congregational meeting after worship on May 28th (this Sunday) for the election of Elders. NOTE FOR THIS SUNDAY: The backwoods are very buggy this year, so please dress and chemical appropriately!!

Two Upcoming Celebrations

• GRADUATION PARTY FOR LILLY LECLAIR

Lilly LeClair is graduating this year from Central High School, so Lilly and Fred and Belinda are inviting the congregation to her Graduation Celebration on Saturday, June 17, 2-5pm at Edcumbe Church. The whole congregation is welcome to attend! Lilly's plans for the fall include pursuing history, fine arts, and language studies at Concordia University St Paul. Congratulations Lilly!!

• CELEBRATION OF LIFE FOR CAROL SCHWEICKHARDT

Carol's family has set the date for a gathering and celebration of her life. It will be on Friday, July 7, from 2-6pm, at Holman's Table, which is next to the Saint Paul airport. RSVPs will be required and we will share that information when it becomes available.

Five New Trees!

With an assist from the Schiferl's brother-in-law's contractor account at Gertens, we are now the owners of five new trees. Two Red Oaks, one Burr Oak, and two small Western Cedars. It was too mosquito-y to plant them today, but all five are potential heritage trees that will hopefully bless the church backwoods for generations to come! Pastor Phil and Rich barely got fit all five into the GebbenGreen minivan, as you can see in the photo at the top of this Update. Thank you to everyone who donated to the May Tree mission!

In other backwoods news, we have ordered a new mower deck to replace our fatally broken deck on the riding mower after 13 years of service, bumping up and down on our very uneven lawn. Gratitude to Dean for helping us diagnose and fix our workhorse mower.

And we just today talked to Dave Busch, our neighbor to the northwest of our property, who once again offered to bring a hose out from his house for our use. So anyone who needs to water trees or plantings should feel free to use the Busch's hose. Dave also said that we should feel free to use any tools or wheel barrows or anything else that we see on his property. He is thrilled with all the improvements being made in the backwoods and wants to support us in any way that he can.