

Edgcumbe

Presbyterian

Church

Midweek Update

August 21, 2024



In this issue: Loads of photos!, freedom in not knowing, Backwoods Weeds & Dead Hedge, Aug Mission: HPSH, Jenya photos--leaving Belarus

freedom in not knowing!

it was such a joy this past weekend to immerse ourselves in the story of solomon (2 Kings 2 & 3), who pleased god, so god told him to “ask for whatever he wished”. anything!! and how does our brother solomon respond? “...i know next to nothing...please give your servant a discerning mind in order to govern your people and to distinguish good from evil, because no one is able to govern this important people of yours without your help.” wow!! solomon saw that he knew next to nothing, he admitted out loud, and then what he wanted was **help from god!** when he came to the cliff edge of himself, he showed us that freedom and wisdom comes from god! thank you, solomon, for sharing this surprisingly contemporary story with us!! 😊 by coming to the end of ourselves, we follow jesus in dying to ourselves. and, in the words of the prayer attributed to saint francis: ***it is in dying that we are born to eternal life!***

so, knowing that turning to god is helpful, but it is a different matter **to actually embody and practice it.** one way to practice this surrender is through the welcoming prayer. we often have habitual responses to life and stress—to worry and be anxious, to try to exert control and power, to reach for approval and affection. finally, we admit to ourselves that our responses do not lead us into peace. so, we ask ourselves: what do we really want? **we want the peace and wisdom of god.** our impulse will be to effort ourselves into this peace, but the path is actually to welcome whatever is front of us, knowing that it is for our healing. we turn to god, asking to be released from our ways, and for god’s ways to be ours.

The Welcoming Prayer

Welcome, welcome, welcome.

I welcome everything that comes to me today because I know it's for my healing.

I welcome all thoughts, feelings, emotions, persons, situations, and conditions.

I let go of my desire for power and control.

I let go of my desire for affection, esteem, approval and pleasure.

I let go of my desire for safety and security.

I let go of my desire to change any situation, condition, person or even myself.

I open to the love and presence of God and God's healing action within.

what is troubling you right now? if you were honest with your self, where is the pain? are you willing to stand with solomon and admit that you know next to nothing about whatever this is? i invite you to move into a time with the welcoming prayer.....gently breathe into the prayer right now, coming into presence with your physical self, and taking a moment to really land in the present moment. allow yourself to admit that you don't know what this is for. consider slowing on the words in the welcoming prayer that need time and space....what do you notice?

dear ones, our freedom lies at the end of ourselves. and, i want freedom for myself and you and for all—and i will hold this in my prayers for you!💕 may the light of christ be our path!!

*holy spirit, in this holy moment, **you** be in charge, and we will follow **you**, trusting that your direction will lead us to peace!!*

in joy!! pastor luna🌀

Backwoods Focus For August: Weeds & a Dead Hedge!



Luna and I (Phil) and our son Micah have been busy this summer in the Backwoods pulling invasive species, clearing fallen tree branches, and other general tasks. With all the rain this year, the one area where we are woefully behind is keeping the stations and mediation pathway clear of weeds. Thank you to those of you who have been able to offer some time toward this monthly focus. [See the before/after photos above from Station 8 (Love) that Luna and Mark and Connie worked on this week!!] Now we are tending to stations 9-12. Speak to me and/or Luna if you are able to share in this stewardship opportunity.



Also,
Micah
and I
installed

a parallel line of posts along the south edge of our meditative pathway over the past two weeks [see photo]. We hope to fill this 24” gap with cut and fallen trees and branches from all over the property, thus creating a “dead hedge.” Although it sounds a bit macabre, we hope to create both a sight barrier from our neighbors and a habitat for local wildlife. Here’s a photo of a finished dead hedge and what ours could potentially look like.

August Mission: Highland Park Sr High

August missions collections will go to Highland Park Senior High School. Highland Park Senior High is next door to the church and has about 1300 students in grades 9 -12. Both facial tissue boxes and money are requested for the August mission. You can choose to contribute to either or both.

Facial tissue boxes will be distributed to the teachers at the school in early September. Please drop off the tissue boxes in the sanctuary or church office.

The money collected will be used to purchase gift cards that school counselors will give to parents/guardians when they become aware of specific needs. This was suggested by Principal Dr. Tucker who once told us that EPC is the "Little church that is MIGHTY!" You can contribute to this mission for August by indicating "August Missions" on the memo line of your contribution check to EPC or by noting this in the Notes Box of any online contribution.



Jenya on her way back to Minnesota...

Jenya is transitioning from Belarus back to Minnesota. We lift up in prayer Jenya and Victor for their times of tender good-byes with her family, and for their travel transitions in these days!!

