

Edgcumbe

Presbyterian Church

Midweek Update

December 24, 2024

In this issue: Upcoming Worship, Next Sunday Worship, Seeing the Christ-Child, Sabbatical forum, Dec Mission, Year End Giving, Kombucha!, Session Minutes



Upcoming Worship at Edgcumbe Church

- **Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion worship will be TODAY at 4pm.** Music will start around 3:45pm, so come early to get a seat (this service actually fills up...).
- **Sunday, December 29 - Worship & Brunch.** Pastors Phil & Luna will be away, but the rest of us will gather around tables to eat and sing and fellowship together. Bring something to share or just your appetite!
- Saturday, January 4 at 1pm - **Memorial service for Barry Magnan**, husband of EPC member Warner Gunsell.
- Also, please note that **Sunday, January 12th** will be an **All Church Zoom Worship**....that morning worship will be **online** only so that we can have a conversation with January's Mission Focus partner, Angelie Ryah.

Next Sunday Worship

Merry Christmas to All!

I (Elder Connie) am truly blessed by the community of Edgcumbe Presbyterian Church and the wisdom that we are embodying, We are Small, but Mighty in Love.

A reminder that Pastors Luna and Phil will be visiting family in Michigan next Sunday (12/29), so we will be gathering to sing, pray and EAT together. If you can bring a food item to share- Great! If you can't, please come anyway (there is always more than enough!). We'll gather at 10am. I hope to see you there!

Seeing the Christ-child Everywhere

"For unto us a child is born; unto us a son is given. And his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Almighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."

That's a quote from Handel's Messiah, who was in turn quoting Isaiah 9. You can listen for those same words during the lighting of the Christ candle at the beginning of our Christmas Eve worship service. What I want you to notice today about this text is that the promise of a child is written in the present tense. It's not a prophetic promise about some far distant light at the end of a miserably long tunnel. It's not talking about a future messiah, nor is it referencing something that happened 2000 years ago in a stable in Bethlehem. The appearance of the Christ-child, the expression of God's love for us, is an ongoing outpouring of grace occurring right now. The author of Lamentations says it this way: "The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; God's mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning." The question of scripture to us is not, Do you believe that Jesus is the Messiah? The question is, Am I willing to see God's mercies every single morning? Am I willing to see Christ in every child and every person, even in the mirror?

The shepherds outside Bethlehem on the night of Jesus' birth get this same choice when the legions of angels show up on their hillside. What do they find when they wander into Bethlehem? A little child wrapped up snugly and lying in the animals' feeding trough. That's enough; they don't need to see any more. *For unto us a child is born.* God, open the eyes of our hearts so that we might see innocence and love in every person this Christmas. Amen.
–Pastor Phil

2026 Sabbatical: What Makes Your Heart Sing?

Thank you to everyone who stayed for the Sabbatical forum after worship this past Sunday. We had a wonderful discussion and heard many creative ideas for congregational participation around the theme of Singing & Nature.

The Personnel Sabbatical team will meet again in early January to begin the process of writing the Lilly sabbatical grant proposal, which is due in March.

December Mission: Neighborhood House

Neighborhood House serves people from over 50 different cultural backgrounds with programs in youth programming for ages 10-18, tutoring, parent and early childhood education, and food and housing support.



One of the most important programs is Adult Education. Education provides adult learners with ongoing educational support and learning opportunities. This includes classes in citizenship, continuing education, career readiness, and English skills for adults. Through partnerships with Hired and Minnesota Tech for Success, they also offer career training programs in high-demand fields including healthcare, office administration and IT.

For December, Edgumbe mission team asks for your support for this vital community service group. Please consider a gift to Neighborhood House this month. You can contribute by putting "December Mission" in the memo box on Give Now, or on the memo line of your check.

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 2024 tax year, they need to be received in the church office on or before December 31, 2024. Donations can also be made through the church website by clicking on the GIVE NOW button in the upper left. Thank you!

KOMBUCHA!

Kombucha making class with Chelsea & James Witbrook

Friday Jan 17th, 7-8:30pm

Where: The Witbrook's Home in south Minneapolis

Do you like kombucha? Did you know it costs about \$3 to create 16 bottles of kombucha at home, compared to \$56 if you buy 16 bottles from the store?

Chelsea & James want to set you up for getting your own simple home brewing system up and running. The tutorial will include:

- A very brief lesson on fermentation, gut health, and why kombucha is great for your health (antioxidants, fights off bad bacteria, etc)
- demonstrations of how to care for the living scoby and create the tea
- demonstration on doing a "second fermentation," which is where flavors are added and creativity comes in!
- tips, tricks, Q&A
- Recipe/instructions to take home
- a live scoby sample to get started in your own kitchen!

What you need to acquire at home before the class:

- a [2 gallon, wide mouth glass jar](#), (it doesn't need a spout at the bottom)
- eight 16oz glass bottles with plastic lids (we collect them by buying kombucha in the store), or [four 32oz bottles like this](#). (Don't use mason jars or other jars with metal lids because your kombucha will taste metallic)

What you should bring to the class

- a quart-sized tupperware to transport you scoby home from the class.

RSVP [HERE](#). (We can accommodate up to 10 people)

December Session Notes

Session met on December 12, with both pastors and all session members present.

Ron Eggert (treasurer) reported that finances are on track, with a significant reduction in the cost of utilities (budgeted \$12,000 to actual \$7,000). Final year-end figures and the 2025 budget will be available at the annual congregational meeting.

The Annual Congregational Meeting is scheduled for Sunday February 2, 2025. It will include a brunch! All team reports for the annual meeting are due to be submitted by January 15. Phil and Luna will be on vacation December 25 - Jan 1. Worship plans during this time: Dec 29: brunch worship.

Sabbatical plans for pastors: 3 months in 2026, preparations beginning now. The sabbatical team is looking at applying for a Lilly grant, which would involve setting goals for learning and growth for pastors AND the congregation, with the theme of "What makes my heart sing". The first meeting with congregation involvement will be on Sunday, Dec. 22 after worship, to discuss how to foster congregational participation in the sabbatical plans. Are you interested in being part of the team? There is room for you!

Worship zoom schedule: Christmas Eve service will be in person and online. Zoom worship is planned for Jan 12, to connect with Angelie, whose project will be the January mission. Otherwise, zoom only worship will be when there is inclement weather during the winter months.
~Ingrid Eggert