

Edgcumbe

Presbyterian Church

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To Carry Down Deep

The English word “suffer” comes from the Latin, *sufferre*. This is a compound of *sub* (under) + *ferre* (to carry, bear). So one meaning could be “to undergo or submit to.” But the definition I really like is more literal: “to carry deep down.” Instead of being called “to endure torment, affliction, stress, or pain,” (our usual definition of suffering), what if we are called to hold the world and our own lives in the deep and quiet parts of our minds, our hearts and our bodies? Instead of flinching away from the pain we see in others or in the mirror, Jesus invites us to take it all in, to trust that God's grace sustains us and reminds us that we have nothing to fear.

“The eternal God is your refuge; and underneath are the everlasting arms.” (Deuteronomy 33)

“To carry deep down” could be as simple as allowing yourself to take a deep breath when you hear bad news, or when you are feeling stressed, or when you need to make a hard decision. So often when we are stressed, our breathing becomes shallow and panicky. Taking our fear and breathing it all the way in, allows us the space to use all our inner resources and allows the Holy Spirit to replace our fear with trust and love and peace. We do not need to be afraid of whatever life holds for us today.

Within myself, I can feel the monumental difference between being called to suffer for the gospel and being called to carry everything down deep. That second option doesn't sound easy, but it does sound grounding and transformative. Just while writing this reflection, I need to keep reminding myself to take deep breaths. Every time that I do, I feel an expansion of hope and clarity in my own belly, and I get a sense of the everlasting arms that are holding me, protecting me, loving me. How is your breathing into the deep down? -Phil

Holy Spirit, in this holy moment, you be in charge, and we will follow you,
trusting that your direction leads to peace. ♥

January Mission - EPP



EPP is on a mission to understand why we do what we do, using the Enneagram to inspire transformation —on both sides of the bars— through self-awareness, self-regulation, and self compassion. On January 18 in worship, Pastor Phil will talk with Ashley, a graduate of several EPP courses at Shakopee Prison, along with fellow EPP Guide Susanne Gawreluk. If you would like to support this life-changing work, please donate to this month's mission either online at www.epchurch.org or with a check or cash designed for "January Mission" or "EPP."

Looking Ahead: Annual Mtg & Brunch, Sunday Feb 8

Mark your calendars! On Sunday, Feb. 8, we will gather at 10am in the sanctuary as usual for a shorter worship service followed by a potluck brunch and our Annual Congregational Meeting. At this meeting, we look back at how God has been working through us in 2025, vote on our pastors' terms of call, hear reports from the Teams of the congregation, and see our budget for 2026. Hope to see you there.

30-Day Meditation Challenge

It's not too late to join Chelsea Witbrook's 30 Day Meditation Challenge. Bookmark or save [THIS LINK](#) to the meditation playlist on Youtube. A new meditation will be posted every day from Jan 1-30. Each one is about 20 minutes long. See you there!

From Pastors Luna and Phil: Hold this opportunity in your prayers as we step into 2026 and look forward to being shaped into Who the Holy Spirit wants us to be in this time and in this place!!

In-house Little Free Library

With Spirit's nudging, we will be re-purposing our library and hallway shelves to release the books the community no longer wants and fill the shelves with books about the spiritual journey that can be shared with the wider community (think like an inside Little Free Library model). There are multiple ways you can help:



- There is a table in the narthex with the books we are releasing—look through them and take what you want
- Bring the books that have been helpful and impactful for your spiritual journey and that you no longer need, and we will get them into circulation
- Does thinking about organizing and planning books sound like fun to you?? The Thursday morning Ora et Labora group is shifting from backwoods during the frozen winter, to working on this project. Join us at 6:30a on Thursdays for prayer and 7a for books
- Interested in this project, but that Thursday time doesn't fit with your schedule?? Talk to Pastor Luna about your interest
- Perhaps you might be interested in finding an organization that wants many Bibles

We will see how this develops, and what Spirit has in store for us!!

From the Director of Music

Dear all, I would like to extend my invitation to share your musical gifts with the EPC community. If you play an instrument, if you sing - please consider sharing it with us all. I am here to help you to make it happen (if you need an accompanist; if you need another singing partner; if you have a song in mind, but don't know how to proceed; or just to help you to coordinate the dates). Everyone is welcome, and please remember that you can't perform for a more appreciative and kind audience.

Also, if you are interested in joining the choir - please contact me. If you have questions about the time commitment, or the extent of your involvement - it is flexible and can be tailored to your current comfort level and availability. You don't have to attend all rehearsals, and you don't have to sing every single Sunday. If starting with 1-2 anthems per semester sounds right - let me know and we will make it happen. EVERYONE is welcome. You can reach me by email jenya.trubnikava@gmail.com or feel free to talk to me on Sundays. Thank you!