



# Edgumbe

## Presbyterian Church

### August 26, 2026

*In this issue:* Reflection, Community Meal, TC Food Justice Fundraiser, Thank you from Emily, NAMI walk, August mission Sabbatical Photos and submissions, Giving Opportunities, Bible study, Prayers, September Birthdays and Anniversaries

#### Inner Silence: Finding a New Way to Pray - a reflection by elder Chelsea Witbrook

Most of us were probably taught that prayer is "talking to God." As children, we may have memorized simple prayers for bedtime and before meals. As adults, we learn longer prayers that we say aloud by memory (like the Lord's Prayer or the Serenity Prayer) or we try speaking to God in a more spontaneous way, using our own words to express our heart's longing and gratitude. This type of speaking prayer is a good tool for connection, however, many people eventually long for something more in their relationship with The Divine.

When I started seeing a Spiritual Director to accompany me on my Inner Journey, I began to learn that there are many more ways to pray -- ways that don't involve talking to God. Like any relationship, if I'm the only one talking, we've got a problem! I also needed to learn to listen. That meant I needed to stop talking and be QUIET. Entering into silence can be a terrifying experience. At first, we inevitably encounter all the inner noise of our own thoughts -- planning, worrying, replaying conversations, chewing on resentments, and all sorts of other embarrassing mental habits. This is normal -- it's what the mind does -- and we can learn to tune it out as background noise, like a TV that is on in another room. We can learn to not take it so seriously. We can learn to shift our attention elsewhere.

But where can I shift my attention when my mind is so stinkin' loud? The best place to start is with the five senses. What sounds can I hear? Can I smell anything? What shapes and colors do I see? And perhaps most importantly, what sensations do I feel? Can I sense my breath moving in and down? Can I sense my feet on the ground? My hips in the chair? The temperature on my skin? The trick here is not to treat this as a "task" to be done perfectly, but instead as an invitation from Spirit to enter fully into the present moment -- to enjoy the sights, sounds, and sensations of being alive. One good translation of

the word salvation is "to come alive." This means really being here, now. When I am present, the opportunity to be with God opens up. Here in the present moment is the only place where we can spend quality time together, simply enjoying each other's Presence.

To be present is to experience the Presence of God. When we are fully in the here and now, without the mind's fears and commentary, we enter into the Deep Silence of God's "I-Am-ness," and of our own "I-Am-ness." I've always found it curious and instructive that the first time the Divine names themselves it is with this name: "I AM." Present tense. Not "I was," or "I will be," but "I AM." The only place a true communion with Source can be found is in the here and now.

If this type of listening prayer is new to you, you're invited to experiment with finding your own way into the Silence. Here are a few suggestions. (And if you're familiar with this type of prayer, maybe experiment with a new form):

- spending time in nature while sensing your body
- playing music or listening to music while sensing your heart
- doodling or painting with the intention to follow inner nudges or intuitions
- any form of meditation
- sitting quietly with a cup of tea/coffee and inviting Spirit to sit with you
- Centering prayer (Here at Edgcumbe, there are two opportunities per week to practice Centering Prayer in a group: on Tuesday afternoons online and Thursday mornings at the church.)

### **Worship this Sunday - August 30th**

Join us for worship this Sunday. James Witbrook will be our worship leader and Jenya Trubnikava will be back at the piano.

### **Community Meal and Fellowship - Tuesday Sept 15 @5pm**

EPC is invited to a Tuesday evening meal with local food justice organization Zion Community Commons! This is a casual opportunity to gather together for fellowship while also witnessing and supporting a good cause. Meet at Zion Community Commons (enter through back/side door) at 5pm, address is 1697 Lafond Ave, St Paul, MN 55104

Socialize 5:15-6/6:15

Gather a handful of free, organic groceries -- it's important to experience the bounty yourself and to feel what it's like to stand in line for free food. (Bring a reusable grocery bag)

Meals are handmade -- our group will stand in line to get a plate, so expect some down time to chit chat as folks return to circle tables with a plate full of healthy, fresh, home-cooked food.

Donations are not necessary! Some say it's best to come and receive first, but choose your own heart's giving adventure. They do need money, which can be donated by Venmo or through cash. The staff are 100% volunteers and all proceeds return to us, the community. They might also accept dish washing if you'd rather offer that. But again, receiving is foremost because it's critical that community members across the spectrum experience that abundance does exist and can continue to exist with community participation!

[Click here](#) if you'd like to learn more about this community service operation.

## Fundraiser concert for TC Food Justice!

Lisa's group Heartfelt, will be singing with guest musicians, Brethren Bones, on August 30th, Sunday, at 4:00 p.m. on the backwoods' stage of EPC! Bring a chair and join us for a fun night of music! Pay what you can to support a wonderful organization, TC Food Justice. Hope to see you there!

-Lisa

## Thank you from Emily Trudeau

Hello, I want to thank everyone for being supportive with my office setup and encouraging me with my new job. My home office is looking ready and less spooky! It has been a lot of work and a lot of hauling stuff, but it's been easier knowing I have the support of my church friends and family.

Best, Emily

## NAMI WALK - SAVE THE DATE: SEPTEMBER 26, 2026



- Please watch this newsletter for info about carpooling from Edgumbe and shuttles. Mission and Belonging teams are working together for this event.
- Event Schedule: 9:00-noon
- 9am: Opening Remarks
- 9:30: Walk Begins
- 10am: Mental health resource fair, activities, DJ, and more!
- Noon: event ends

## August Mission

Our mission focus for August is Highland Park High School. HPHS are our closest neighbors, and we have an ongoing tradition of supporting them through grocery gift cards and Kleenex boxes. We had an especially high demand for groceries last year because of the surge, but there is always a need as some students face continual financial hardships. In addition to grocery assistance, we provide Kleenex boxes so the teachers don't have to purchase them themselves. Our goal is to have one box for each classroom. Disinfectant wipes are also requested as they are also always handy.

## Collecting Photos of EPC Community during Sabbatical

Please take photos of yourself and the EPC community during this unique time of Sabbatical. James Witbrook will be collecting photos to compile a slideshow to share with our community and our pastors at the October retreat during a storytelling event. Photos can be of work in the backwoods, worship services, potlucks, or 1-on-1 hangouts with EPC friends outside of Sunday mornings. Please send your photos to [jameswitbrook@gmail.com](mailto:jameswitbrook@gmail.com) with "EPC slideshow" in the subject line.

## Submissions to this Update during Sabbatical

If you have an announcement or article for the midweek Update during the pastors' sabbatical, please submit it to Office Manager Krysta Niznick by Tuesday morning at [epchurch2149@gmail.com](mailto:epchurch2149@gmail.com).

## Opportunities to Support from Yunyue Liu

Our musician, Yunyue Liu, recommends these organizations that she supports:

- Bridging, a Twin Cities organization that provides donated furniture and household goods in support of housing stability, needs volunteers and donations. [www.bridging.org](http://www.bridging.org)
- The Bach Society of MN: the 2026 - 2027 concert season starts in September. [www.bachsocietyMN.org](http://www.bachsocietyMN.org)

## Bible Study Continues

We'll continue bible study during Phil and Luna's absence. I will send out the texts early on Sundays or they are available here: <https://epchurch.org/lectionary-.pdf> . Access to the bible study Zoom is here: <https://epchurch.org/> . Hope to see you there at 6:30 PM every Sunday night.  
-Ron Eggert

## Prayers For...

- Pastors Luna & Phil for rest and inspiration during their sabbatical.
- Each member of our Edgcumbe family who is leading worship while our pastors are away.
- Jay and Lisa's nephew, Joe, pictured below, who suffered severe electrocution and resulting burns. He is the father of 3 young daughters and the sole provider for his family. He had his left leg amputated below the knee a couple days ago. It's a lot to go through and he's in extreme pain. If you're so moved, here's the Gofundme site that was set up by Joe's cousin (Jay's son Austin). Thank you.



## September Birthdays and Anniversaries

# CELEBRATE!

Happy Birthday to:

|                  |      |
|------------------|------|
| Tom Holt         | 9/4  |
| Shelley Holden   | 9/9  |
| Jennie Reedquist | 9/19 |

Happy Anniversary to:

|                          |      |
|--------------------------|------|
| Chelsea & James Witbrook | 9/14 |
|--------------------------|------|