



Edgcumbe

Presbyterian Church

Sept 9th, 2026

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Reflection from Jay McGregor

When Pastor Stephanie looked at the lectionary texts for this Sunday, she shared with us that she cringed a bit. That reaction is understandable. Ezekiel speaks of warning the wicked to turn from their ways, while Matthew lays out a process for confronting someone who has sinned. If reconciliation fails, Jesus says to treat that person “as a Gentile and a tax collector.” These passages can sound harsh, judgmental, and even exclusionary.

But Pastor Stephanie invited us to look more closely—especially at the way Jesus himself treated Gentiles and tax collectors. Jesus did not avoid them or cast them aside. He ate with tax collectors, called one to be his disciple, praised the faith of Gentiles, and welcomed people whom religious society often kept at a distance. To treat someone as Jesus treated Gentiles and tax collectors is not to stop loving them. It is to continue meeting them with truth, compassion, and an open door.

The words from Ezekiel also reveal that God’s deepest desire is not punishment: “I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from their ways and live.” The purpose of speaking honestly is not to condemn another person. It is to make repentance, healing, and restored relationship possible.

Pastor Stephanie connected this with her own experience of finding safe places—communities in which she felt able to bring her full self. A truly safe community is not one in which difficult things are never spoken. It is one in which we can speak honestly because we trust that we will continue to be loved. It is a place where correction is offered humbly, where listening matters as much as speaking, and where no one is reduced to a

mistake, a disagreement, or a label.

Jesus' instructions in Matthew begin privately: go first to the other person. Do not gossip, recruit allies, or publicly shame them. Speak directly, listen carefully, and seek understanding. Each widening of the circle is meant to serve reconciliation, not punishment.

This is the kind of community Pastor Stephanie encouraged us to continue creating for one another within our church: a place where each person can bring their whole self—their gifts and joys, but also their wounds, questions, failures, and fears. We will not always agree, and we will sometimes hurt one another. But we can choose to face those moments with honesty and grace.

Jesus promises that where two or three gather in his name, he is there among them. Christ is present not only when our fellowship feels easy, but also when we do the difficult work of listening, forgiving, changing, and beginning again. May we continue becoming a church where truth is spoken in love, where reconciliation is always sought, and where every person can know the safety of being fully seen and still welcomed.

Worship this Sunday -Sept 13th

Please join us for worship this Sunday. Rev. Stephanie Friant will be leading worship for us through October 4th.

Volunteers Needed at First Nations Kitchen

Hi, Friends! I LOVE the above photo of volunteers H. and S. from yesterday at First Nation Kitchen. We had a great crew of volunteers and lots of beautiful fresh food, quite a lot of neighbors coming through and definitely JOY! We are short some volunteers for all 3 shifts. Wyatt is our lead cook and could use helpers 8:30-11:30 am. If you can help him or help on **any Sunday** on this shift we would welcome it!! We need to fill the calendar for the rest of the year! Here is the link to sign up for **Cooking Shifts**:
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0848AFAA28A3F49-first>

To sign up to volunteer for **Sunday, 9/13**, joining up with St. John's Episcopal, Mpls folks on Prep/Set Up 12:30-3:00 pm or the Give Away 3:30-5:30 pm hit this link: Sept. 13:
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0848AFAA28A3F49-61676477-september>

Need a **different Sunday** to serve and like planning ahead? Here are a some current options:

Oct. 4: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0848AFAA28A3F49-61676611-october>

Nov. 22: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0848AFAA28A3F49-61676891-november>

Dec. 6: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0848AFAA28A3F49-61677007-december>

Dec. 27: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0848AFAA28A3F49-61677093-december>

If Sunday does not work, or you are wanting more FNK time, we also have **Friday Afternoons, 2:00-4:00 pm** and 4th Saturdays (below). Read the SignUpGenius for more detail on these respective

shifts and sign up here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0848AFAA28A3F49-60305741-friday>

Please Help!! On **4th Saturdays** we need 4 volunteers to pick up a significant staples donation not far from All Saints/FNK (Minnehaha United Methodist Church Food Shelf). Upcoming dates are Sept. 27, Oct. 24, Nov. 28 and Dec. 26. For all the details please read and sign up here:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0848AFAA28A3F49-64866907-last>

We are continuing our **Laundry Detergent Drive** on behalf of our neighbors the **Central Free Store!** If you can bring in some detergent anytime please drop off in the bins in the FNK Volunteer Room. We have shared 36 jugs/boxes so far! Thank you if you have already given! So many good things have been happening recently at All Saints/FNK and I hope to share more soon!

Grateful for you all, Ritchie Two Bulls, M.A., A.T.R. Program Director, First Nations Kitchen

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 5:15-6:15

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.

Artplayce update

The beautiful quilts have been taken down to continue their travels and be shown in other Twin Cities communities. The artwork currently on display in the sanctuary was created by our very own Michael Conroy. Thank you, Michael!

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

Free park and ride from St. Catherine University. Shuttle bus leaves approximately every 15 minutes

EVENT SCHEDULE 8 a.m. - Noon

- 8am Registration Opens
- 9am: Opening Remarks
- 9:30am: Walk Begins

- 10am: Mental health resource fair, activities, DJ, and more!
- Noon: event ends

EDGCUMBE SEPTEMBER MISSION IS NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) Minnesota Chapter



Through education, support, and advocacy, NAMI Minnesota champions justice, dignity, and respect for all individuals and families affected by mental illnesses.

Here are some of the programs offered through NAMI Minnesota.

- Crisis Resources
- NAMI Minnesota Helpline
- Parent Warmline
- Advocacy Resources
- Legal Resources
- Youth Resources
- General Mental Health Resources
- Health and Medical Resources
- Perinatal Resources
- Education Resources
- Employment Resources
- Financial and Housing Resources
- LGBTQ+ Resources

One primary focus is education, including classes for employers, faith communities, suicide prevention, veterans and seniors, and LGBTQ+ communities. Education and public awareness play an integral role in NAMI Minnesota's mission to improve the lives of children and adults with mental illnesses and their families through changing public attitudes associated with mental illness. NAMI Minnesota offers over 30 different classes and provides vital information about mental illnesses, treatment, and resources through publications, presentations, and newsletters. Check out their website at [namimn.org](https://www.namimn.org) for a huge number of resources and community connections.

Please consider a mission donation during September. You can indicate "NAMI" or "September Mission" on the memo line with a check, or on the Give Now application from the <https://www.epchurch.org/> website.

Thanks for your support!

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 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.

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...

Prayers of gratitude for each of our volunteer worship leaders and participants this summer. We thank God for the countless ways this sabbatical time has brought us closer together and deepened our faith.