

Edgcumbe Presbyterian Church

Midweek Update

November 15, 2023



In this issue: parable reflections; This Sunday: BRUNCH!, Artist talk with Dave, and Carol Schweickhardt Quilt; Giving Statements; Nov Mission; Thanksgiving Service; Highland AA Gratitude Meeting; Christmas Decorating; Nov Session Report

the parable of the 10 bridesmaids

jesus begins matthew 25 with “the kingdom of god is like....” and begins to tell a parable of the foolish and wise bridesmaids, and of a delayed bridegroom. as i was holding this in prayer, the first thing i noticed is that the kingdom has **both** the wise and the foolish... **together!!** that does not match what many of us were taught about heaven. i was told that heaven is a place outside of myself with pearly gates and streets lined with gold!! oh! the kingdom of god, jesus is saying, **looks nothing like your expectations!!!**

often the teaching of this parable elevates as the wise bridesmaids as the ones to emulate, but all i could notice was their non-kindom responses to the foolish ones when asked to share their oil. “No,” the wise ones respond, “if we give you some of our oil, we will run out ourselves.” That is **not** kindom economics, where crazily we have to give away so that we can keep it. so, then, the wise ones are not the (s)heroes of this story. and then we see that actually all of the bridesmaids fell asleep! and, the bridegroom doesn’t hold up any better!! not only is he delayed, but he shuts the door on the foolish bridesmaids—which is also **not** kindom behavior. and then we begin to see that there are no heroes in this story.....*interesting!* and yet, jesus says, the kindom of god is like this gathering of people where there are no heroes and no one is in the “right”.

so, how does this apply to us?? in every way!! i think there is a tendency to imagine the kingdom happening in a **space** that is other than where we are, and in a **time** that is not “now”, but will come when we die. it sure seems that jesus is teaching us that none of our expectations are true. apparently, the kindom of heaven has the wise and the foolish, and even the ones who are countering kindom behavior. which means, that who we are, in the trickiness of this time and place, *right now, with nothing changed*, **the kingdom of god is already here!!** but, we tell ourselves, i don’t experience it!! and to that, jesus says, “keep alert!!” the kindom doesn’t need things to be perfect at the level of form, because honestly, nothing will ever be perfect at this level.

the kindom of god isn't found by using our physical eyes, but with the eyes of christ. and, jesus assures us **that the kindom is occurring right now**. and so, i invite you to bring this parable into your prayers this week, and talk with the holy spirit. and, if you are willing, ask the holy spirit to see. see the kindom of god.□ the invitation from our teacher is to **keep alert!!**

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

This Sunday, November 19: BRUNCH and Artists!!

This Sunday will be a potluck Brunch Sunday, where we gather around tables in the sanctuary to eat and worship together. Bring a dish to share, if you desire. If you can come early to help set up, that would be great. See the next two articles to read about the artists who will also be joining us.

ArtPlayce Talk with Photographer Dave H-V

The photography that is hanging in the sanctuary is the work of our very own Dave Howe-Vielmetti. On Sunday November 19th we will have the chance to talk within worship Dave about his art and ask him questions about his process and inspiration. Thank you, Dave, for sharing your artwork with us!!

Carol Schweickhardt Memorial Quilt Gift

Local fabric artist, Sarah Ganett, has made a quilt from the scraps from Carol Schweickhardt's fabric stash, and is gifting this quilt to the Edgumbe Presbyterian Community!! Sarah will present this quilt **this Sunday** in worship!! Thank you, Sarah, for your creativity and your generosity!! 

Giving Statements

All members who have pledged will be receiving your 2023 Pledge/year-to date contribution statements. Please contact the office at epchurch2149@gmail.com if you have any questions about your statement. We thank everyone for ongoing support of our Edgumbe community.

November Mission: Small Sums

Our mission recipient this month is an organization that is new to Edgcombe Church. Small Sums is a St Paul-based non-profit that helps unhoused people obtain the work gear, tools, training, and transportation they need to start employment. Since 2005 the group has helped thousands of newly employed workers obtain the proper uniform or shoes, equipment, licenses, etc. so they could start a new job. The website (www.smallsums.org) offers more information about this organization and a few stories about some of the workers they have helped. You may donate to this group by indicating so in the memo line of your check or online by indicating "November Mission" in the notes of your online contribution to EPC.



Want to learn more about this month's mission, Small Sums? **Small Sums is having an open house this Thursday from 5-7pm** at their office in St Paul and would love to have us attend. The office is at 2375 University Ave West. They do have opportunities for volunteering. Learn more and RSVP at

https://www3.thedatabank.com/dpg/707/personal2.asp?formid=SmallSums_Event&c=20231011145100445079

Interfaith Thanksgiving Service, Nov. 20

Please consider attending the upcoming Interfaith Service of Gratitude and Thanksgiving on Monday, November 20 at 7 pm, hosted at Temple of Aaron Synagogue in collaboration with Interfaith Action and the Minnesota Multifaith Network!

Members and friends from your houses of worship are welcome to attend. While registration is not required, it will be helpful to plan for post-service hospitality—here's the link:

<https://forms.gle/H5SWecTnSi5jkntL6>

Highland AA Gratitude Meeting on Thanksgiving Day

The Edgcombe Community is invited to attend Highland AA's **Gratitude Meeting** on Thanksgiving Day, at 10a in the sanctuary. This is a Spirit-filled gathering where each person has an opportunity to share something they hold in gratefulness. Come and start your Thanksgiving Day by grounding yourself with gratitude and the Presence of God.

Christmas Decorating

Saturday, November 25 at 9:00 am, we will gather in the sanctuary to prepare the tree branches, garlands, and wreaths for hanging (known as *fluffing* at EPC). All are welcome to join us in this tradition. Please bring gloves to protect your hands. Thank you, Meredith



November Session Report

Present on Nov 9: Pastor Phil and Pastor Luna, Ron, Ingrid, Michelle, Todd, Jay and Connie. Treasurer Ron reviewed the financial spreadsheet. All is in balance . Income equals expenses for the first 10 months of this year exactly. Pledges are coming in as anticipated.

Ron reported that he spoke to Rocky Rockenstein, the chair of the Presbytery grants committee, about grant opportunities for Edgumbe. They will approve a grant as long as the project relates to the mission of the church in some way. Phil stated he would like the groups of the church to come up with initial ideas. Todd and others shared that these conversations should come out of the existing groups. What does Outreach dream about, what does Mission dream about, what does Building and Grounds dream about, what does Backwoods dream about? Then have these ideas come back to Session. Phil will write a simple email to each of the groups and send a link to the grant guidelines and ask that they come up with ideas to bring to Session in Feb.

Session reviewed the current Membership roll including Friends of Edgumbe Church.

Session accepted Rich Schiferl's resignation from Session and honored his commitment and dedication over the years. Rich is still ordained as an Elder, just not a Session member. Rich conveyed he wishes to do the duties at Edgumbe that use his gifts most effectively that bring him joy such as the building and maintenance duties. Session and all are grateful for his service!

Session discussed upcoming Sunday services and plans associated. Sunday, 11/19 will be brunch and the two artist presentations by Dave and Sarah. Christmas Eve service will be 12/24 at 4:00 pm. Pastor Phil and Pastor Luna will be out of town for 12/31 Sunday, so Carol and Michelle offered to help lead that service which may include a brunch.

There was a long conversation about the Rehoboth Ethiopian Community. Pastor Phil recently communicated a pause to them, but Dr. Fakuda will be returning soon and session would like to re-engage the topic of how the building can continue to be used with respect and responsibility. Jay offered to head up that conversation and will try to create understanding for proper use of the building. Phil will partner with Jay on this. It was noted that language is a big barrier. No one has done what they need to do to bridge that, and ideas were talked about. More parties are at stake because the day care and cleaning person is affected too by this arrangement. Jay will lead the conversation – what would it look like to move forward in a positive way, and will have a checklist of expectations and responsibilities written down for them. Connie stated that

we should put everything in writing so they can take time with it. Jay stated we have been clear, but it's not reflected back, and their community needs to have the buy-in too and know the expectations. Session members discussed what it might be like for Ethiopians who are refugees here with all of the trauma and war they have been part of and trying to rebuild life and peace here.

Luna shared that Sunday mornings are prime for connecting with the entire community. Elders were encouraged to come to be there for community members, to check in, be available and to be the hosts of worship!

At the very end of Session was Show and Tell Time. A friend of Carol's received Carol's fabrics and made a quilt for Edgcumbe. What will happen with the quilt? She will come to worship on the 19th to do a presentation to talk about the quilt and Carol. It's a piece of art for certain and perhaps can be used in the sanctuary on the communion table or in people's laps or auctioned off as a fundraiser for Edgcumbe, the options are endless.

The next Session meeting will be December 14th. Submitted by Elder Michelle.