

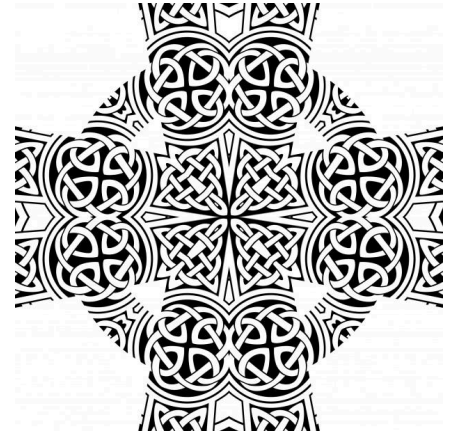
Edgumbe

Presbyterian Church

Midweek Update

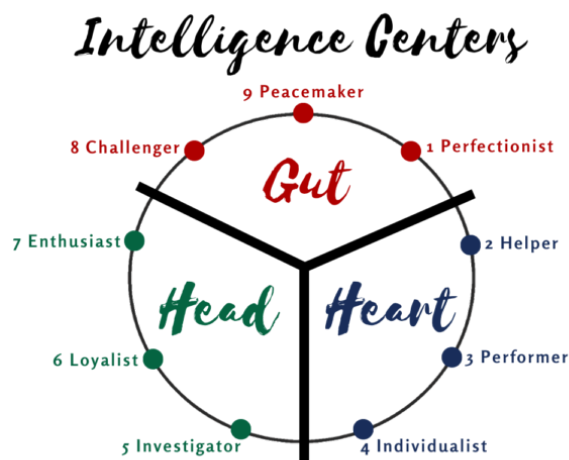
February 14, 2024

In this issue: Three Centers, New Liturgical Season of Lent, New Members & Conversation with a Pastor, Feb Mission, Training for Pastor Luna



Three Centers of Intelligence

A foundational teaching in Enneagram studies is that every one of us has three centers of intelligence: the mind, the heart, and the gut (sometimes called the Body Center). We tend to be familiar with the intelligence of our minds, but we sometimes forget how much we can learn and grow from listening to the intelligence of our hearts and our guts. Scripturally, this same invitation shows up, beginning in Deuteronomy and repeated by Jesus several times, with the command to “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your strength, and all your mind.”



Because we all have heads and hearts and bellies, we all have all three Centers available to us. We also all have one dominant Center of Intelligence; one that we tend to listen to above the others. We all use our gut, heart, and head in different ways and at different times but we definitely default to a favorite and that can limit the natural intelligence that is within us.

Without going into an extensive teaching about all three Centers, one exercise that can help restore some balance to our inner intelligence is to simply listen to all three of our Centers when facing a challenge or making a decision. We

could even do this as a form of prayer. Let’s say I’m trying to decide whether or not to take a big trip in the near future. I could say, “God, I open my mind to you; what do you want to say to me about the rational wisdom of going on this trip?” Think for a moment about what works for you to listen to yourself and to God: Silence? Journaling? Walking? Whatever method you choose, I would encourage you to write down what you learn. Then turn your attention intentionally to your heart, saying in your heart, “God, I open my heart to you; what do you want to say to my heart about going on this trip?” Use your tools again, paying special attention to your emotions. What is arising in your heart? Most of us are not nearly as accustomed to this kind of listening, so please be patient with yourself. Finally, turn your attention to your guts. Ask God one more


time, “God, I open my guts to you; what instinctual wisdom do you have for me about going on this trip?” Listen again, paying special attention to the sensations in your belly and your whole body. Again, write down what you discover. Now reread what you wrote from all three Centers. Have any new possibilities or insights emerged within you?

Reading the above exercise, I’m telling myself that none of you will actually do what I’m suggesting here. Does it sound corny or weird or useless? My question for us today is this: Would we rather be stuck in our old habits of being and thinking or are we ready and willing to listen to God’s Spirit in a new way? If we are willing, the Spirit will answer our prayers with more abundance and goodness and freedom than we can even imagine. Peace, Pastor Phil

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

It’s a new liturgical season: Lent

Ash Wednesday (today) ushers in the next chapter of our liturgical calendar year as we begin the season of Lent. Lent marks the period when Jesus went into the desert for 40 days and 40 nights and faced temptation. (After Lent is Holy Week, which includes Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, and Easter Sunday—more on that in the coming weeks!) Lent offers us new symbols and themes, and we will surround ourselves with these to enhance the experience of this Season. Lent allows us to get to the bare bones of our lives and faith, and so you will see this reflected even in the sanctuary. All decorations have been taken down, and the room will be very stark. Your invitation is to allow these changes to disquiet you. To perhaps unsettle you. Allow the loosening of the familiar and the comfortable, so that perhaps the Good News might find new ground to seed and sprout within you.

One benefit of these new arrangements is that the quilt made for us from Carol Schweickhardt’s scrap fabric is available to get cozy in. When the creator and fabric artist Sarah Gannett gave it to the community, she imagined it being available to be used by the people in the congregation when they needed comforting and coziness. Please listen to your nudges and if you want to be enfolded in a blanket of love during worship, wrap yourself up in the beautiful quilt in the sanctuary! 

NOTE: We stopped celebrating Ash Wednesday at EPC about ten years ago because almost no one was coming to the service. However, if anyone is interested in restarting this tradition in the coming years, please talk to Pastor Phil or Pastor Luna.

Pastoral Tending: New Members and Conversation with a Pastor

Edgumbe is receiving the gift of newer folk who are connecting to the community, and so Pastors Phil and Luna will be having a gathering of people who are interested in **exploring membership** at Edgumbe. Please hold this in your prayers, and if you are interested in joining this conversation, please contact the Pastors or Elders (Connie, Todd, Michelle, Jay, or Ingrid).

Also, from time to time, Pastors Phil and Luna feel guided to connect with all persons who attend worship outside of the Sunday morning time frame. The purpose of these conversations are meant to share honesty and to explore what might be supportive for your connection with the God of your understanding and with the community. The desire would be to have these one-to-ones over the upcoming months. If you have an interest in having this conversation with specifically Phil or Luna, reach out to them to set up a time... otherwise they will randomly divide the list of people and reach out to you to set up a time over the next months.

February Mission: Snack Money & Tissues

The February mission collection has two parts; 1) we are collecting money to fund the purchase of snacks for the Saint Paul 8218 Truce Center(s) for the coming year, 2) we are collecting facial tissue boxes to give to the teachers at Highland Park High School (our next door neighbor).

The 8218 Truce Center (<https://8218trucecenter.org>) strives to create lasting solutions to youth gang and gun violence through impactful programs and mentorship. Their vision is to eradicate youth gun violence any place 8218 Truce Center has a presence. They provide clothing donations and food to kids in need of resources due to gang violence or other situations. They also provide a resource Center for youth to have a place of peace. Our Mission collections are used to provide snacks for the after-school and summer programs held at the Truce Centers at Lexington and Selby or on Payne Avenue in St.



Paul. Most of the snacks we purchase are delivered to the Payne Avenue center. The photo shows what we typically purchase (for about \$100) and deliver every other week. For mission contributions please write "February Mission" in the memo line of your check or indicate "February Mission" in the note provided with your online contribution.

The facial tissue boxes that we collect are delivered to the high school for use in classrooms. Normally we collect between 50 and 100 boxes for this mission and when we deliver them to the high school teacher break room they are absorbed by the teachers in a few hours. Please bring the facial tissue boxes to the church and place them in the office.

Thank you for your continued generous contributions to the EPC mission program!

upcoming training for pastor luna

as you have heard me share from time to time over the past months, i have been in discernment about the possibility of training in the field of forest bathing. i can sense that

edgcombe's backwoods spaces are ripe to support people and create different opportunities to share epc's mission to extend love and healing.

as i was exploring training opportunities, one program in particular rose to the top meeting my interests and desired learning. the program is through spiritual guidance training institute (sgti), and their outdoor companionship training. i met the primary instructor of this program this past may at the spiritual directors international conference in madison, and i was immediately impressed with her, not only as a person, but as someone who i would really want to learn from.

as i looked into this opportunity, i was heartbroken when i realized that the teaching modules were scheduled to occur on sunday mornings. i immediately took this opportunity out of my consideration, and continued my exploration with other programs. as i continued to look at other possibilities, i was surprised to realize that my imagination kept returning to sgti's program.

so, it was with a certain wobbliness that i reached out to session last week to be in prayer with me, and to get their feedback and wisdom. i knew if the program met at any other point in the week, i would have an immediate sense of "yes!!" to enroll. (sidenote: this is my first encounter with post-christian dominant culture.... we have been learning about how our larger culture is not orientated to "sunday morning" church-going, and i think this program's schedule is a direct reflection of this shift in the larger culture!)

session was both very helpful in their guidance, and very trusting of holy spirit's leading in these matters. so, with the "yeses" i received from session, i applied, and i was just accepted into this 3 month training program!! here are some details i want to share with you:

-the synchronistic class times are on 8 sunday mornings from march-june (march 10, 17, 24; april 7, 28; may 5, 19 and june 2). phil and i have 4 weeks of continuing ed to use this year, so, we will use a combination of con ed time off, and phil covering the other sundays. if you feel guided to share in worship leadership on the sundays i am away, please let phil and i know. ☺ on the weeks where we are not taking time off, i will be working my regular hours the rest of the days. i am glad we have these all community conversations with the pastors ahead, because i can then stay very connected with folk even on the sundays i will be away.

i look forward to sharing my learnings with you all—not only the ideas, but also in real practical experiential times in the backwoods. if you have any questions about this experience, please reach out to me—i'd love to share more about it. 💜🌱🌿🌲