

Edgcumbe

Presbyterian Church

February 18, 2026

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Life. Death. Life. Repeat.

Today is Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, which is the church season that lasts until Easter. Lent has a delightful double-meaning. On the one hand, it is the season that leads to Good Friday, to the cross, to death. On the other hand, the original meaning of the word *lent* is Spring—a time of new life and new beginnings.



This past Sunday in worship, we explored the dualism that exists in everyone of us between the false self and the true self. Our true identity is a child of God, a Divine Spark, innocent and beautiful and whole. When we forget this identity, we feel so vulnerable and alone that we create an elaborate defense system, a personality, a mask to show the world. This is how Genesis 3 puts it: *Adam and Eve looked at themselves and knew that they were naked. So they sewed fig leaves together and made garments for themselves.*

We walk through life, feeling guilty and ashamed, trying to cover ourselves up with our flimsy ego garments. Jesus shows up each Lent, each Spring, and invites us again to lay down our lives so that we might live. This seems impossible, until we understand that Jesus is asking us to lay down our false sense of self, our defenses, our anger/shame/fear habits that we think is our real self. Don't get me wrong, it is terrifying to set down my defenses. It is understandably vulnerable to let the fig leaves fall. But it's the only way we can experience love and acceptance and forgiveness. By allowing our ego habits to die, we live.

As a reminder, we cannot use the tools of the ego (anger, shame, and fear) to overcome the ego. I can't shame myself into not feeling ashamed, for example. The single-most potent method I've ever discovered for transformation is Honesty + Forgiveness (a parallel wording could be Self-Awareness + Self-Compassion). And the best shortcut to employ this method is: **God you be the love in which I forgive _____.** Can you feel a desire to die to your false self this Spring? Then try using that simple bolded phrase with abandon today and see what happens. Pastor Phil

P.S. We do not have an Ash Wednesday service at Edgcumbe Church, but a quick internet search could connect you to a congregation near you that does have one. If you want the concrete reminder of ashes on your forehead to hear again the invitation to die to the flesh so that the spirit within you might live, then be brave and go to a service. =)

February Mission

February's mission is the broad area of support for our immigrant neighbors. We are asking folks to use your resources, skills, time, knowledge and money, to support our neighbors in any way that best suits you. We understand that many of you are already doing this. Below are some websites with lists of ways you can help. There are a few ways you can do this:

- 1) Please select the charity/ies or agencies that align with your values/concerns or those that you are called to, and provide whatever assistance you feel comfortable providing, by giving directly to the chosen agency. (You will get a tax statement from that agency)
- 2) You can choose to give funds to a particular agency through EPC. Just make note of the name of the agency on your giving card or on-line platform, and Krysta will send the funds to that agency. (It would be helpful if you add an address). With this option, you would get a tax statement from EPC.
- 3) If you'd rather, you can simply give to "February mission" via EPC donation plate or on-line, and EPC will donate the funds to Highland Park High School in the form of gift cards for Aldi or Cub foods.
- 4) **Roseville volunteering opportunity:** talk to Chelsey B. to learn about helping with food distribution for families in Roseville. Volunteers needed every Monday at a Roseville school to sort and pack groceries. Donations of food and supplies needed. Additionally, this Friday the 13th, any hour between 8:20 am and 4:20 pm, volunteers are needed to organize a space at the school to become a storage and staging area. Email chelseykburden@gmail.com

>>OTHER RESOURCES<<

Neighbors Helping Neighbors

<https://nhn-tc.org/>

Click "Become a Carer" and fill out the application with what you'd like to help with (shopping, food delivery, giving rides, or other options).

Stand with Minnesota:

<https://www.standwithminnesota.com/>

Tons of different places to donate or volunteer. Because it's so overwhelming, here are some suggestions:

-Mutual Aid & Materials Purchasing:

-->Under "Food Support," there are links to volunteer or donate.



**STAND WITH
MINNESOTA**

-Crowdfunding Campaigns:

-->Under "Funds for Faith Communities Doing Direct Aid," you'll see churches who have operations you can volunteer with or donate to.

Additionally, at the very top of the website, "Actions to Take" lists places to contact to request they stop supporting ICE.

Thank you for all you are doing!! Lisa Holden, for the Mission Team

Artplayce: New Exhibition

The sanctuary has new artwork! Ron Eggert has hung his beautiful photography of wildlife and nature. It's stunning and we're so fortunate to have their photos surround us while we're in worship. Look forward to the Artist Interview on a Sunday in March. 🎨

Healing Corner Opens this Sunday

During the next six Sundays in Lent you will have an opportunity to come to the back corner of the church for healing (with or without direct touch). Some examples could be a hurting heart, pain in your shoulder, calming anxiety, or a pain too deep to talk about. Maybe you are asking for healing on someone else's behalf. All is welcome in the healing corner!

What happens in the healing corner? You will be quietly greeted by someone from the newly formed healing ministry who wishes to be present to you for your healing request. Your only job is to write your prayer/healing request down, if you desire gentle touch or not, and to join with the Holy Spirit to receive healing, grounding, and to take in the FULLNESS of God's Love. We are trusting what God will do in this time. You will

simply sit comfortably in the chair and help to usher in the healing grace of our Lord by receiving healing touch or energetic holding (if you prefer no touch), while your prayer is held in the space. This will be available during each service in the back corner of the church. This new offering will also be explained and displayed at the beginning of the service; but we wanted to give everyone a heads up. All you have to do is sit down and receive. It's something very new we are trying and offering, and we look forward to seeing how the Holy Spirit shows up. Let us be Jesus's hands and feet, and let us join in the Mind/Heart of Christ. The healing team consists of Rachel Swan, Clyde Green, and Michelle Trebtoske. Also, please let us know if you wish to be a part of this healing ministry.



by Michelle Trebtoske