

Edgcumbe

Presbyterian Church

February 25, 2026

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The Garden. It Begins and Ends

Here...

Our opening scripture for this year's Lenten Season brought us into the passages of Genesis where the first ones (fun fact: the word here, *adam*, means "man," "humanity," or "humankind" as a species—closely related to *adamah*, ie ground or earth, denoting that the first humans were created out of the stuff of the earth) dwelled in the Garden of Eden (*eden*: delight, softness, wonder). Dwelling there, not only were they in full alignment with God the Creator, but also in full Oneness with each other and in perfect safety, support and peace. It is the Kindom, in infinite Love and Completeness. When in God, there is no need.

Then Lord God commanded the human, *"Eat your fill from all of the garden's trees; but don't eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, because on the day you eat from it, you will die!"* So there is something for us to see here—that the fruit that comes from the knowledge of good and evil brings us to death. So, what exactly is this tree??

When we develop "knowledge of good and evil" we open into the world of dualities and automatically into judgment—seeing right & wrong, black & white, me here & you there— and now life includes an opposite of life, which is death. When the cunning one (the serpent) opened the door to eat of this fruit, *they both saw clearly and knew that they were naked. So they sewed fig leaves together and made garments for themselves.* Eating this fruit began the story of the separated ones, the ones whose eyes now saw shame and fear, and then hid from God. I have come to understand it as the First Trauma that is born of each "individual"—to be an individual, we have separated ourselves from God and our Home.

"The chief thing that separates us from God is the thought that we are separated from God.

~Thomas Keating, *Open Mind, Open Heart*

This Garden story is the **keystone story** of the human journey. It is not only our beginning, but it is our end. We ourselves decided to separate from God, and that opened the possibility of anxiety, threat, fear, death. What happened when the apple was eaten was the possibility of an individualized false self with its own independent will. It opened the world of

dis-ease. We left our Home, and we have been unconsciously searching for it ever since.

The Lenten story– of Jesus' life, death of resurrection– shows us that this story of dying to fear, trauma, and even death itself, is **every** person's story. We all come to the end of our individuated selves–these false selves–and we choose to lay them down, and we allow them to die, so that we may be born again, back into our birthright, of the Human One from Creation. The Garden story is also the eye of the needle–we can bring nothing with us through the eye, so that we can arrive where we began, as the pure and innocent extension of God's love.

So, how does this journey back happen? It can only happen when we **become willing to see**, and **want only the Peace of God**. The individuated self becomes willing to put down the apple, and then surrender our will and our life into the care of God. And we ask the Holy Spirit to repurpose our life, the world, and the fruit of the tree for the Kingdom and for God's will. **The Holy Spirit is the how of our homegoing.**

Lent is a journey to see that there is only one curriculum, this dying of our false/separated self, and consenting to surrender our will and our lives back into the care of the God—who is *Absolute Love*. We don't get to choose the curriculum. We only get to choose **the when** –the timing of our surrender and consent. The Christ Self, the Essential Self—the first born of Creation is What we Are when the apple is put down. Easy? You only have to die... But we cannot do not do this Work alone...this is our Work *together*. We can only do this with the Holy Spirit and in community. We each have a portion of the healing and home going. *Together, we go home.* ❤️

So grateful for you all! In Joy, Pastor Luna 🌀

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.

>>OTHER RESOURCES<<

Neighbors Helping Neighbors

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

-Crowdfunding Campaigns:

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



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

New Group Forming—for those with Emerging Call into Ministry

For the Word of God in Scripture,

For the Word of God among us,

For the Word of God within us.

There is such a glorious movement of the Holy Spirit among us at Edgumbe Presbyterian in these days! One of the ways this is demonstrating itself is that three people have had conversations with the Pastors about their own emerging sense of a call to ministry over the past few months!! In response, we will be forming a new small group for those folks who might have a stirring within—a wondering—about stepping toward some kind of ministry, whether it be as a Pastor, or Chaplain, or some other emerging Vocation for the God's Kingdom!

Regardless of your age, have you ever wondered if you might have a call to use your gifts and skills to support, nurture and work for the Living Body of Christ?? We would love to support and nurture you as you are in discernment and step into that call! Please speak to either Pastor Phil or Pastor Luna, and we will include you in this group!!

Healing Corner during Worship

During the 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

Prayers & Connections

Special prayers this week for:

- Emily Trudeau and her daughter who planned a quick trip to New York City, right when the massive winter storm hit the east coast. After several unplanned (and expensive) days in NY, they are scheduled for a flight home today.
- Jan Fitzgerald who is scheduled for shoulder surgery next Tuesday.

Recently, we have received hand-written notes from two sister congregations.

- From the youth group at First Presbyterian Church, Muscatine, Iowa: *Dear Friends, please know you have been in our thoughts and prayers. Thank you for being the hands and feet of Christ. You are amazing and are so loved.*
- From Bridgewater Presbyterian Church, Bridgewater, Virginia: *We took time in worship today to pray for peace in our nation and specifically for peace in your communities. We will continue to pray for your safety and wellbeing. We pray for your mission and ministries as you follow Jesus in extending care, hospitality, welcome and love to your neighbors. We hope you find some encouragement in our love from afar.*

February Session Report

Session met on Feb 19th, and here are a few notes from that meeting from Chelsea W:

- Since the EPC Annual Meeting lasted so long, we will experiment with dividing it into two meetings next year: one will be a business meeting, and the other will be committee reports and celebrations about the community
- Ratchet Mattison has been nominated (and she accepted) to be both our clerk and an

elder on Session! Three cheers for Ratchet! Thank you and congrats!

- Ron gave a financial report, and we're looking good. It was decided that we will take out about \$12,000 from the emergency Vanguard fund to pay for the steeple renovations.
- Session will be in conversation with the Mission Team about how to raise money this Spring for the pastors' sabbatical
- The Worship Team is feeling excited and confident about how we will fill the 14 weeks while the pastors are away on sabbatical
- We've given permission for the Birth Project Play and the Midway Clothing Exchange to use the EPC building. Exciting!
- The bookshelves are in the process of being turned into a free library. Stay tuned!
- The Session plans to buy several new Bibles and make them available to anyone who doesn't have a Bible for free--more info soon.

March Birthdays and Anniversaries



Happy Birthday to:

Chloe Clary	3/4/2004
Connie Howe-Vielmetti	3/4/1961
Chelsey Burden	3/6/1990
Dave Howe-Vielmetti	3/11/1951
Lydia GebbenGreen	3/15/2005
Michelle Trebtoske	3/16
Dani Brua	3/16
Jenya Trubnikava	3/26
McKenna Reedquist	3/29/2002
Naomi Houle	3/30/1960

Happy Anniversary to:

Dean & Anna Gussendorf

3/21