

Volume 15
Issue 1
January
2011

The Edgewood Exchange

Dear Church Family,

In 2004, I spent a month backpacking through Europe and Northern Africa. The United States had invaded Iraq about 8 months before my trip and the on-going war created tension during my travels throughout Morocco. In fact, when I first arrived in Tangier, a man offered advice, which felt like a veiled threat, that I was in danger as an American woman in this primarily Muslim nation.

After that intimidating encounter, I began my time in Morocco with a bit of trepidation. As one of the only women not wearing a veil, I knew I stood out, and by the time I got to Marrakech, my nerves were a bit raw. And so, when I was wandering through that breathtaking walled city, passing the vivid colorful spices, the beautiful artwork, the intricate tiling, I was hesitant to respond to the invitation offered to me by one of the shopkeepers. "Hello, hello...Are you American? Can I talk to you?" The man stopped me in the alleyway. "Please, come in to my shop. I just would like to talk to you." I came up with an excuse and continued on.

Over the next few days, I passed by his shop a couple more times, and he continued to extend his invitation. Finally, I gave in. Figuring I could simply buy something from him, I agreed to come into his shop. But what he wanted was truly a conversation. He made some delicious mint tea and sat down with me to talk. Over the next hour, we discussed politics, religion, and the current war. He expressed his deep desire for peace, his strong commitment to the Muslim faith, and his belief that we are all children of God, all sacred and valuable, and that every religion that teaches love is a true path to the divine. He asked me, as a Christian and as an American, how I understood this war and this tension between Muslims and Christians. As we continued our conversation, we found deep similarities in our world views, in our faith lives, in our hopes for peace. This stranger in the middle of Morocco and I, an American traveler, encountered our oneness over a cup of mint tea.

I think this is what happens when we stop being afraid of one another, when we stop believing that we are all so very different, when we sit down and talk, when we share our stories. As we enter 2011, I hope that this happens more. Maybe we can sit down, Christian and Muslim, religious and agnostic, straight and gay, black and white, Latino and Asian, human beings with human beings, finding the things that unite us. May this year be a year where barriers and divisions dissolve, where we discover in one another that which is sacred and beautiful and whole. May 2011 be a year where fear disappears and peace, understanding, justice, and love take its place.

This month, as we honor MLK Day with fellowship, food, and film, and as we prepare for a joint event with our brothers and sisters at St. Stephens UCC, may we find our oneness and unity. May divisions dissolve and love increase, in our individual lives, in our church, and in the world.

May it be so!
Kari

Dear Folks,

Ah, New Year's. A time for resolutions made, and sometimes quickly given up. A time of expectation—what will this year bring? A time for looking back and seeing what has been and looking ahead to what the new days will bring. A time awash in promises, possibilities and a faint sense of guilt as we remember the excesses of the holiday season.

The coming of a new year can be a time in which we strive to improve ourselves. We take up jogging; we try to quit smoking or potato chip snarfing. We try to be nicer or to set a goal for our work life. This threshold between old and new is an opportunity. And we often use it to aspire to new personhood believing that with a new body, new exercise, new attitude, all will be well.

Well...perhaps it does not work that way. Our happiness is not ultimately lodged in our dress size or our work life. Perhaps our challenge instead is the eighty-fourth problem.

A man with many problems traveled a great distance to visit the Buddha for advice. Upon arrival and a lengthy description of his problems the Buddha told him simply, "everyone has problems. In fact, we all have exactly eighty-three problems. And even if you solve one problem, another one will turn up. So I'm sorry I cannot help you with your eighty-three problems." The man became angry and said, "But I thought you were a great teacher! I came all this way so you could help me with my problems!" The Buddha replied, "Well, then, perhaps I can help you with your eighty-fourth problem." "What is that?" asked the man. The Buddha replied, "your eighty-fourth problem is that you don't want any problems."

This New Year, I encourage us to think about our eighty-fourth problem. We all have problems--big ones like divorce and abuse and alcoholism and disability—and little ones like computer bugs and holes in our socks. But I think what pains us the most perhaps is the eighty-fourth problem.

With New Year's resolutions we try to fix the eighty-three problems, fix ourselves, never realizing that the entirety of our being, the whole of our potential happiness is not the resolution of these problems. Our wholeness, our being, is instead part of the mystery of a child born on a still night, the magic of a star leading strangers to complete joy, the call of Jesus newly born to us saying, "follow me, follow me."

Our happiness as a church, too, is not bound by our eighty-three problems. Our heating system is failing. We are working on an energy efficient solution. Our finances are tight. People are pledging to this investment in our future. We are in the midst of wrestling with what it might mean to minister to ex sex offenders. We have problems. We always will. We won't see eye to eye. We will argue about worship music and finances and how often to serve communion. And about outreach and globalization and our vision for this church.

But these problems, these realities of our life together, our eighty-three problems, do not define us as a church. Instead, we are gathered because God loves us, individually and together. We are whole because Jesus blesses us with the hard work of trying to make the kingdom of God real in our midst. The Spirit draws us near with inspiration and hope.

We will struggle with the problems of 2011 as we did with those of 2010. All eighty-three of them. But, with our eyes on the guiding star over Bethlehem and our ears tuned to the voice of Christ calling us, we can put the eighty-fourth problem to rest.

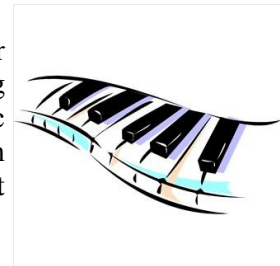
Christ is with us. Your wholeness, our wholeness as a church, is founded on Emmanuel, God with us. Happy New Year to that.

Blessings,

Karen

Children's Choir Needs Musician Helpers

Our Children's Choir is looking for Edgewood members to lead in the choir program. We're looking for folks who have some musical talent (can you sing or play guitar or some piano?) and who like spending time with our energetic group of K-5 children. We'd like to gather together a list of folks to rotate in serving. Please contact Jon Ritz if you'd like to help or with any questions at jpritz@gmail.com or 412-973-0906.



*Mark your calendar for the Annual Meeting:
Sunday, February 6 after the worship service!*

Outreach and Mission

*Don't forget . . . the Outreach/Mission team will be selling
Equal Exchange coffee, tea and chocolate the first Sunday of each month.*

PERSONAL NEEDS

We collect Personal Needs three times a year (January, May and September) to help supply the Westminster Presbyterian Church Personal Needs Closet in Lansing, which has been serving the people of the Greater Lansing area for approximately 25 years. January is our next collection. Please help. Products available from the Closet are: dish soap, paper towels, toilet paper, deodorant, tissues, bleach, laundry soap, bar soap, toothbrushes, toothpaste, tampons, pads and cleaning supplies.

Submitted by Mary Hartung

BLOOD DRIVE!

Blood Drive at Edgewood on **January 7th, 1:00-6:45 p.m.** We are hoping many will be able to donate. Tell your friends, neighbors and co-workers! Contact Ada Kidd for more information at 517-351-7510 or kidds@tir.com.

MLK Day 2011

Please join us for Sacred Conversations about Race on **Monday, January 17, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.**, which will include opportunities for participation for all ages. We will start with a potluck at 6:00 pm for all ages. Then we will split up, with children in one room and youth and adults in another room. The adults and youth will watch a short video and join in a conversation about race and racism. The children will engage in MLK Day activities. During this event, we will also begin conversation on a joint event with St. Stephens UCC in honor of Black History Month in February. Please join us for this important event!

Aqua Clara and Edgewood United Church of Christ

An Evolving Partnership

This is a story about the growth and development of a partnership between Aqua Clara International and a small progressive church, Edgewood United Church of Christ, in East Lansing, Michigan.

I first learned about Aqua Clara at the 2007 annual meeting of the Lansing United Nations Association, where Dr. Robert McDonald was the guest speaker. I became interested in world water issues a few years before and actively supported UNICEF's TAP Water Project, recruiting local Lansing restaurants to assist in raising funds for UNICEF's clean water projects around the globe. Aqua Clara's program to develop and disseminate low cost, locally sustainable, water purification technology in third and fourth world countries immediately caught my attention. I was also very excited by the fact that Aqua Clara had initiated a program in Nicaragua, where in the early 1970s, I served as a Peace Corps Volunteer.

For me, hearing Bob's presentation was serendipity. Edgewood United Church of Christ, www.edgewooducc.org, of which I am a member, initiated a mission outreach program in 2005, which included both a domestic and international mission component. Edgewood chose to partner in Nicaragua with the Council of Protestant Churches of Nicaragua (CEPAD), www.cepad.org.ni on supporting their development projects and building relationships with our Nicaraguan brothers and sisters.

By the time I heard Bob's presentation, Edgewood had undertaken two trips to Nicaragua, but we were still uncertain about the focus of our long term efforts in the country. Here's where serendipity, or you might say, God's will, came into play. Edgewood church was searching for a meaningful way to bear witness to the economic and social justice struggles faced by the Nicaraguan people. Our church wanted to support development programs that focused on critical needs identified by local Nicaraguan communities, supported economic, physical and social development, and were sustainable and replicable in Nicaraguan communities. Aqua Clara met all of those requirements and more.

Our first step to building a partnership with Aqua Clara and our Nicaraguan partners was educating our congregation on clean water issues, domestically and internationally. In 2008, we invited Bob McDonald and other people to speak to our congregation about the lack of clean drinking water in the developing world. I introduced Aqua Clara to our CEPAD partners in Nicaragua. I, along with a number of other Edgewood members, participated in Aqua Clara training sessions and learned how to build purifiers.

In 2009, Edgewood church decided to provide \$1500 to Aqua Clara Nicaragua to build up to 100 water purifiers in Nicaraguan communities. By the end of the year, Edgewood decided that the focus of its 2010 mission trip to Nicaragua would be to work with Aqua Clara and CEPAD to build 100 water purifiers in a community that identified clean water as a critical need.

At its 2009 annual meeting, Edgewood decided to focus on clean water as our 2010 social justice issue. We conducted a wide range of educational events. We built a purifier at Edgewood Church, supplied the unit with untreated water from the Grand River, and on a Sunday, twenty one days later, our pastor, Kari Nicewander, kicked off a year of clean water education, action, and advocacy by drinking water from the purifier. We thank God for our own access to safe drinking water and prayed that clean water initiatives, like Aqua Clara, would have a significant impact on the need for clean water throughout the world.

Over the winter, Edgewood focused on educating ourselves on clean water issues. We organized a variety of fundraisers to finance 100 purifiers (\$3500) that would be installed in Nueva Guinea, Nicaragua, located in the Autonomous Region of the South Atlantic. While this Nicaraguan region has 350 inches of rainfall annually, the local water supply is heavily polluted, resulting in high levels of water borne illness among the local population, especially among children.

While we, at Edgewood, were preparing ourselves for the June, 2010 trip to Nicaragua, Mario Benavides, Director of Aqua Clara Nicaragua, his team and a team from CEPAD, led by Rev. Douglas Orbaker, undertook all of the preparatory work for this project: identifying the communities to target, recruiting families for the program, conducting local training sessions, and arranging for all of the logistics necessary to acquire and transport the purifier materials and our team the 300 kilometers from Managua to Nueva Guinea. Importing the materials from Managua was necessary because the soils in the Nueva Guinea region were unsuitable for use in filter construction.

In May, 2010, the twenty-member Edgewood mission team travelled to Holland, Michigan for hands-on training in water purifier construction. By the end of the day, every team member, from our 17 year old high school student to our 81 year old former Peace Corps volunteer and great-grandmother, came away excited and confident that they could help the Nueva Guinea families construct their water purifiers.

The level of excitement and readiness to get down to work were high when we arrived in Managua on June 20. On the 21st, we met Mario Benavides, his three-person team, Doug Orbaker, the CEPAD team leader and others, who would lead our construction efforts over the next several days. We set out that same day by school bus on the 8 hour trip to Nueva Guinea, mattresses and supplies in tow.

Upon our arrival in Nueva Guinea, we quickly realized that Mario, Doug and their teams had done a superior job in preparing for the construction and installation of the purifiers. All of the materials needed for the filters had been delivered prior to our arrival in Nueva Guinea. The gravel and sand had been already been sorted, washed, and delivered in the appropriate amounts to the families participating in this program. These actions saved us at least one day of additional work. We spent the following day constructing the water containers and delivering them to the families in the five communities.

In order to complete the construction and installation of 100 units in two days, we broke up into three teams, each team composed of Edgewood, Aqua Clara, and CEPAD members. In a day and a half, the teams installed 75 purifiers. The remaining 25 units were later installed by the Aqua Clara team in local schools, clinics, churches, and homes too far away for our team to reach in the short amount of time available to us.

This project was a great success and in many ways a life-changing experience for our Edgewood team. We all came home with great memories, a strong sense of accomplishment, and a desire to continue our efforts to support the work of Aqua Clara Nicaragua. We developed great friendships with our hosts and with the Nicaraguan people. We were awed by the dedication, planning and organizational skills, and professionalism of Mario and his team.

Our hearts were deeply touched by the first-hand testimonials from members of Mario's team on how these purifiers had improved their own and their community's lives. We were grateful for hard work, commitment, and support provided by Doug and the CEPAD team. We hoped that the partnership developed between Aqua Clara Nicaragua and CEPAD would continue to grow after our departure.

As for Edgewood Church, is this the end of our support for Aqua Clara? Not by a long shot. All of us came home excited and wanting to find new ways to help Aqua Clara Nicaragua. We plan to go back to Nicaragua in 2012 to build more units.

Last month Mario visited Edgewood, informing us, upon a return trip to Nueva Guinea the following month, that all of the purifiers were in use, and that the families were pleased with the taste and quality of the water produced. We also learned that a local pastor in Nueva Guinea, one of those receiving a purifier, was looking to start a business manufacturing, installing, and servicing the purifiers in the region. So we are confident that our efforts will continue to bear fruit for years to come.

In the meantime, we will look to financially support Aqua Clara Nicaragua and to spread the word to other congregations about the great work being done by Aqua Clara International and all of its affiliates. If your church or organization is interested in possibly traveling to Nicaragua to help build water purifiers, drop me an email (kwisniewski@ameritech.net) and I'll be happy to share our story with you.

Submitted by Kris Wisniewski

Congregational Life

Adult Sunday Morning Class

Beginning in January the Sunday morning adult class will be discussing the book, "Cost of Discipleship" by Dietrich Bonhoeffer. The cost of the book is \$10.00 and will be available at the class. Anyone is welcome to attend. The class meets at 8:45 a.m. each Sunday.

Another Sunday Morning Class!

Another class will start on Sunday, January 23rd at 8:45 a.m. and will run for 6 weeks. The class will be led by Laura Miller-Purrenhage and we will be reading the book of Job.

Submitted by Laura Miller-Purrenhage



Monthly Lunch

Join us on **Monday, January 17** for the Monthly Lunch. The speaker will be Dr. Robert T. Anderson, PhD. in Hebrew Studies, MSU Professor in Religious Studies Emeritus, on Transcending this Chaotic World. This long time Edgewood friend writes: “The world is chaotic, out of control and threatening, but I’m a survivor.” (T shirt) Into our chaotic world, Christmas brought us the very comprehensible Jesus-- and the enigmatic, but essential Christ. The Christ is the GPS (Global Positioning System) that finds the meaningful transcendent amid what Nietzsche called “a mobile army of metaphors.” The talk and discussion will deal with the nature of the transcendent and its relation to secular and scientific language. Edgewood friends and members of all ages are invited at noon, please bring your lunch and beverage, with the program from 12:30 to 1:30 pm in the Theatre Rm. Anyone who would like to help set up, please meet us at the fellowship hour after church on Jan. 16. Information: Robert Anderson, 351-0976.

Submitted by Elizabeth Anderson

Book Group			
The Book Group meets the <u>third Monday of every month at 6:00 p.m.</u> in the library. If you like to read and enjoy lively discussions of an interesting variety of books—novels, biographies, memoirs, essays—come join us. Newcomers always welcome!			
	<u>Book</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Facilitator</u>
Jan. 17	<i>Snow</i>	Orhan Pamuk	Nancy Muhlbach
Feb. 21	<i>The Elegance of the Hedgehog</i>	Muriel Barbery	Jane Palmer
Mar. 21	<i>Cutting for Stone</i>	Abraham Verghese	
Apr. 18	<i>The Postmistress</i>	Sarah Blake	
May 16	<i>Half Broke Horses</i>	Jeannette Walls	Carol Ezell
June 20	<i>Mennonite in a Little Black Dress</i>	Rhoda Janzen	Ann Stormzand
July	No Meeting		
Aug. 15	One Book One Community Book		
Sep. 19	Book Selection Meeting		

CABIN FEVER UNIVERSITY 2011 IS COMING!

Save the last three Sunday afternoons in January (16, 23 and 30) and come to Edgewood to learn or teach something new from 4-6 pm and then join friends and neighbors for a potluck supper at 6 pm. “Classes” are beginning to take shape as people volunteer to teach something they know to others. If you want to teach a class (2 one-hour sessions each week) or if there is something you would like to learn about, please contact JoAnn Hubbard (351-0901) or the Congregational Life Team.

Watch the bulletin board by the water fountain for more information about class times and topics. Here are some of the classes being offered:



Funeral Procession, Ellis Wilson

Cabin Fever Series on Funeral Practices

One cultural universal is that every person has to deal with death and grief. The Member Ministry Team is offering a series on funeral practices that may help to take some of the mystery out of the questions that arise when a loved one dies, or when we think about planning our own funeral. There are three sessions, starting with a global perspective, showing the great variety of ways that different religious and cultural groups deal with death. Then there is a session on the practical aspects of planning a funeral or memorial service. Finally, there is a session where we can share our own stories of dealing with the death of loved ones, and discuss how we can deal with bereavement. You are welcome to attend one, two or all three sessions, as they fit your interests and your schedule.

Session 1: Religious and ethnic diversity in aspects of dying, death and grief

Facilitator—Jan Bernsten

January 16, 5-6 pm, Theater Room

When John Kennedy died, many Americans greatly admired Jackie Kennedy for her stoicism during the days after his death. Many Africans thought her to be cold and uncaring because she didn't cry or make an outward show of her grief.

- › What are the customs surrounding death and burial in different cultures and religions?
- › What are differences immediately following death, including treatment of the body, funeral ceremonies, and body disposal?
- › What are expected actions and rituals which happen later on, as on a death anniversary?
- › How do cultures differ in their beliefs about an afterlife?

Session 2: Planning the funeral or memorial service

Facilitator—David Kidd

January 23, 5-6 pm, Theater Room

- › What goes into planning a funeral or memorial service?
- › How do you choose a funeral director?
- › How do you decide between burial and cremation? How do you select a coffin?
- › What is the Edgewood Memorial Garden?

You will receive a copy of an Edgewood form where you can record your own wishes for music, rituals, and other aspects of the funeral or memorial service. These forms are kept on file in the church office to help the pastors and your loved ones know your wishes.

Session 3: Facing death, grief and bereavement

Facilitator, John Baumgartner

January 30, 5-6 pm, Theater Room

- › Tell your own stories: Share your personal experiences with death, grief, and remembrance.
- › What are societal/cultural expectations about dealing with grief?
- › Is it important to view the body? How do we achieve closure following death, especially if there is no body or remains to view?
- › How can we remember/memorialize our ancestors?

God is Still Speaking:

Scripture, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in the 21st Century

The Rev. Cheryl Burke

January 16, 4-6 p.m.

In this forum we will consider seven Old Testament and three New Testament passages that are often used to condemn homosexuality. There will be lots of time for conversation and learning around this important topic in the United Church of Christ. The Rev. Cheryl Burke is the Associate Conference Minister with primary responsibility for serving our Vital Growth and Spiritual Discernment Mission Area Teams.



Cooking for a Crowd

Sally Burroughs & Jan Bernsten

January 30, 4-6 p.m.

Would you like to cook for Super Thursday some time and just feel overwhelmed? Would you just like to learn to cook for a big group? Have we got a class for you!! We will also prepare some of the potluck food for that evening.

Building and Grounds

We have come to the decision phase about the engineering firm that would do the “Evaluation of the building internal systems, envelope and surrounding area” and once we have written a contract with a company it will take about 6 weeks for them to have information to give us and recommendations on how to proceed with our short range need (heating distribution system) and long range actions to make our building energy efficient.

An “Emergency Response Procedure” (for all sorts of emergencies) for Edgewood is in its final stages before it can be introduced and then placed in easy access places. It has been a long and eye-opening process for us.

The Memorial Garden is almost finished. Gutters and downspouts need to be installed to avoid water damage and icing problems, a tool box and some more planting material will be installed. The plan is for an April dedication.

The Room behind the kitchen is now a Recycling Center and Storage for paper products like toilet paper, hand towel rolls etc. and liquid soaps and cleaning liquids.

Submitted by Laila Sundh

See insert for items that can be recycled!

Member/Ministry Team

New Picture Directory coming soon!

Please stop by the “picture booth” in the social hall to have your picture taken, especially if you are new, or if your “family” has changed since the last picture directory. You may also send a digital photo to the church (cindy@edgewooducc.org) if you prefer. SAY “CHEESE!”

Health Ministry Corner

Care Partners: A New Ministry for Caregivers

Bear one another's burdens and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. —Galatians 6:2

The Care Partners Ministry, to be implemented in March 2011, is being developed by the Health Ministry/Member Ministry Team in response to the needs of caregivers in the congregation. National and state data, as well as Edgewood's experience, underscore the great need to encourage and support individuals who are in a caregiving role with its unique challenges and stressors. A caregiver is defined as an individual of any age who provides daily or episodic unpaid care and assistance to a family member or friend who has chronic illness, physical limitations, and/or cognitive impairment.

There are many community resources for caregivers, so we asked the question, “What can a faith community uniquely provide to caregivers?” The Care Partners Ministry will assist the pastors in providing intentional care and one-to-one information and support to caregivers; each caregiver will be paired with a Care Partner who will provide support through personal visits, phone calls, notes/inspirational messages and prayer. Care Partners will also be knowledgeable about community resources and will assist caregivers to access these resources as needed.

If you are a caregiver and would like to have a Care Partner, if you know someone at Edgewood who is a caregiver and think they could benefit from this ministry, or if you would like more information, please contact Sue Haviland (517-339-0552) or Nancy Martling (517-346-7352).

Submitted by Sue Haviland



YOUTH NEWS

Beginning January 9 we are returning to the previous model for youth music at Edgewood. Bells will meet from 11:10 - 11:30 (in the Bell Room) and choir from 11:30 - 11:50 (in the Theater Room).

Youth Fellowship will resume with a trip to Zap Zone on Sunday, January 16. Meet at Edgewood at 4:00 p.m. We will return around 6:30. Details later! Please feel free to bring friends, I must have a good count so I can arrange transportation.

Submitted by Marcia Beer



Let's Hear
It For . . .

Thank you to the wonderful Sunday School teachers and helpers: *Deb Wieber, Jessi De La Cruz, Sarah Kwilinski, Meghan Pineda, Melissa Lehti-Shiu, Barb Thibeault, Julia Grant, Ben Pineda, Mary Bendall, and Dottie West* . . . 4th/5th Grade Beginner Bible Class: *Laura Miller -Purrenhage and Linda Mondol* . . . *Funeral/memorial services committee and all who have helped set up, serve and clean up during this past year* . . . **Building and Grounds Kudos:** Steeple repair: *Bob Gibbs provided ladders and advice* . . . Gutters: *Monica Murray, Marv Dunn, Laila Sundh* . . . Mounting of door stoppers: *Marv Dunn* . . . *Karen Dean* for recycling . . . *Marv Dunn* for building a new ladder in the sanctuary . . . Kitchen Clean Up: *Carol Grayhawk, Laila Sundh, Judy Martin, JoAnn* . . . Tree Cutting and stump removal: *Bob Gibbs & Ken Dagner* . . . Measurements of walls etc.: *Enrique Betancourt, Ed Smith, Carol Grayhawk, Laila Sundh, Bob Hubbard* . . . Cleaning Robe Room: *JoAnn Hubbard* . . . Kitchen Store Room: *Kathy Fay, Phyllis Mullins, Marv Dunn, Laila Sundh* . . . Fall work days: *Chris Farrow, Heidi Connealy, Lucy, Bob Muhlbach and Laila* . . . Tear down old playground: *Ed Smith* . . . Prep work for new: *Laila Sundh, Michelle Bryant, Heidi Williams, Bill Thomas, Barbara Thomas, Frank Dennis* . . . New playground swing set: *Dan Harvey* . . . Entrance pillars: *Marv Dunn, David Stove, Sally Burroughs, Monica Murray* . . . **EVERYONE who has given the time, sweat and expertise to improving our building and grounds.**

CE CORNER
by Emily Barr

Beginner Bible Class for 4th & 5th grade students!

Beginning Sunday, January 23rd all fourth and fifth grade students are encouraged to participate in an eight-week introductory series on the Bible. Students will be led through the many books of the Bible and focus their attention on good news shared. On Sunday, March 27th all children involved in the class will be presented a Bible and be recognized in front of the congregation.



Super Thursday Childcare: By Request Only

Starting in January 2011, each family will be asked to request childcare, if needed, for our Super Thursday meals. For requests, please contact Debbie Richmond (dreichmond123@hotmail.com) **one week in advance.**

OWL Facilitators

Every few years, Edgewood tries to offer the *Our Whole Lives* (OWL) sexuality education for our middle and/or high schoolers. At this time, we will not be able to run the program, but anticipate having the capacity to in the fall of 2011.

In addition to the well trained facilitators Edgewood already has, we are seeking new folks to join this important ministry that we offer our youth. The success of the *Our Whole Lives* program depends on the qualified and caring persons who are selected and trained to be Our Whole Lives teachers. The following criteria will help answer some of the initial questions you may have while you prayerfully consider becoming a trained facilitator. Please contact Emily Barr if you have questions or would like to learn more.

1. A commitment to value-based, comprehensive sexuality education. A teacher needs to have values (responsibility, sexual health, justice and inclusivity) in harmony with the *Our Whole Lives* program and goals, and to feel comfortable with his or her own sexuality.
2. Experienced, skilled, and comfortable with the specific age group and its developmental needs. A leader needs to stimulate discussion by asking open-ended questions, encouraging communication among participants, and facilitating activities that foster experiential learning. A leader needs to use sexual terminology and age-appropriate language comfortably, relate well with the age group of participants, and convey warmth and a sense of humor.
3. Anti-bias awareness. A leader needs to understand, appreciate, and celebrate diversity of race/ethnicity, culture, age, ability, gender, gender identity, and sexual orientation. A leader needs to have the skills to work with people of diverse backgrounds as well as the ability to create a safe and engaging/learning environment.

4. An advocate for sexual health and safety. A leader needs the knowledge and skills not only to educate about sexual health but to fulfill the trust inherent in the role of sexuality educator. This role includes the responsibility to recognize and report abuse. The leader must support your church's safety-abuse policy and must follow our state's process for reporting and investigating an alleged abuse.
5. Ability to build relationships. A leader needs to develop a relationship with participants, and with their parents. Leaders need to build community in the classroom and develop relationships of respect, reciprocity, and responsibility.
6. Dedicated learner and leader. A leader needs to be willing to become thoroughly familiar with the content of the program, to work with a co-leader, and to listen to and learn from young people and parents.
7. Person of faith. A teacher needs to be a person who is respected by the congregation and comfortable discussing the integration of sexuality and spirituality with members of the faith community. They should be aware of their own spiritual and religious grounding.

JUST 4 YOU – Bible Riddles & Activities

Bible Facts

Take turns asking a friend or family member these questions:

1. What is the name of the first book in the Bible?
2. Which New Testament book recounts the history of the early Christian church?
3. True or False: The Old Testament was originally written in Hebrew and Aramaic.
4. How many books are in the New Testament?
5. Who wrote the most books of the Bible?

Resource: *4,000 Bible Questions, Answers, Puzzles & Facts*, Chapter 9

Edgewood United Church Staff
A Just Peace Church
An Open & Affirming Church
Web page - edgewooducc.org

Ministers: Every Member
Pastor: Karen E. Gale
Pastor: Kari Nicewander
Office Administrator: Cindy Winter
Christian Education Coordinator: Emily Barr
Adult Choir Director: Monty Bieber
Youth Ensemble Director: Marcia Beer
Children's Choir Director: Beth Lewis
Bell Choir Directors: JoAnn Hubbard & Marcia Beer
Organists: Mary Ann Baumgartner & Jan Bernsten
Bookkeeper: Bob Nordlund
Building Manager: Ken Dagner

Guided by the love of Jesus Christ, Edgewood United Church seeks to be a community of healing, hope, and hospitality for people of all nationalities, races, sexual orientations, gender identities, types of families, marital statuses, ages, and abilities. Indeed, we celebrate the diversity that God has created.



The Edgewood Exchange

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