



## From the Pastor's Pen:

It's hard to believe that it was just last week the (hopefully) last polar vortex of the season held our region in a deep, deep freeze. As the temperatures now look to be holding steady above freezing, it feels like spring has coming bursting through the door. Signs of it are everywhere as my personal calendar fills up with soccer, baseball, concerts, volleyball, and (of course) Lent. Yes, it's true. It's a late Lent and Easter this year. With Ash Wednesday starting next Wednesday, March 5, it's time for us to talk about sin.

Sin. It's a concept that's gone in and out of vogue over the centuries. As you'll hear in our first Sunrise Road Podcast of the year, sin has a troubled history in the church. Some of us may remember learning about sins of omission and commission, individual and communal sin, original sin and inherited sin. Some of us may have stayed away from the church because of its insistence that sin has a hold on our lives and that to receive

God's goodness and grace we must pray a prayer acknowledging our sinfulness. Others of us find the beginning of our faith in our beloved createdness and work our way around to sin as a way to express frustration at hurts and wrongs in our lives and world. My definition of sin is anything that keeps us from abiding with God and loving one another.

Our Lenten journey this year will be guided by an exploration of the seven "deadly" sins. As the session started our study to prepare for this season, one person remembered studying those seven deadly sins - or most of them. If you're not familiar with them, the seven

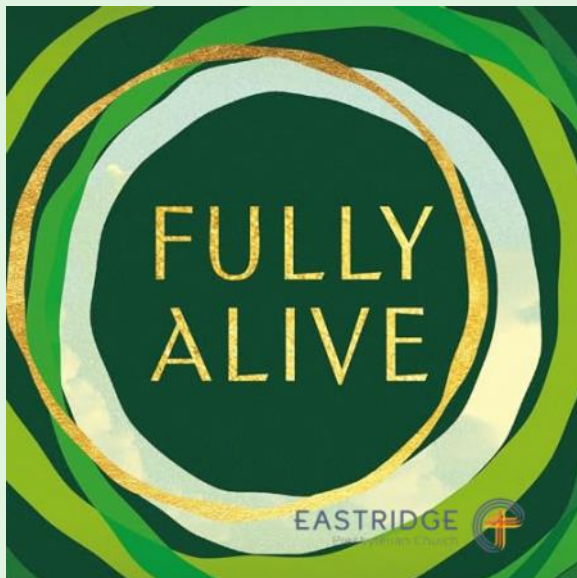
deadly sins can be traced back to fourth century Egyptian monk named Evagrius of Pontus, who first named eight temptations. Over the centuries, that original list of eight was sort of agreed upon with the seven deadly sins you might be familiar with today: wrath, greed, sloth, envy, gluttony, lust, and pride.

For me, though, an exploration of sin cannot just be about sin. Yes, I believe it's important to confess our sin-brokenness-wrongdoing. I believe confession is not an end, but is a way to healing, forgiveness, and restoration. In the end, I agree with British author and podcast-

er Elizabeth Oldfield when she says, "I want a luminous soul."<sup>1</sup> And, "My deepest fear is not being fully alive."<sup>2</sup>

What does it mean to be fully alive? In her book, *Fully Alive: Tending to the Soul in Turbulent Times*, Oldfield says, "Fully aliveness, for me, is summed up in connection, and my definition of sin is everything working against that."<sup>3</sup> An exploration of these seven temptations or sins might just lead to a spiritual transformation that allows us to be fully alive. How can understanding wrath lead us from polarization to peacemaking; greed lead us from stuffocation to gratitude and generosity; sloth lead us from distraction to attention; envy lead us from status anxiety to belovedness; gluttony lead us from numbing to ecstasy; lust lead us from objectification to humanism; pride lead us from individualism to community? How does this all lead us to be fully alive? As we journey towards Lent, how does engaging in spiritual practices transform us and our celebration of Christ's resurrection?

(continued on following page)





## From the Pastor's Pen *(continued from previous page)*

As you will see in this month's Newsletter, there are many ways to join the journey - the Sunrise Road Podcast, listening to our Lenten playlist, book studies, daily spiritual practices, online classes, local events, and weekly community spiritual practices to name a few. There are also ways to stay involved in practices already begun - joining a choir, working at the Eastridge Food Pantry, ongoing Bible studies, fellowship events, and of course our communal worship services.

One more thought regarding the subtitle of Oldfield's book, *Fully Alive: Tending the Soul in Turbulent Times*. As a student of history and an experienced participant in life, some times are more turbulent than others. It is our hope and prayer that in tending to our souls together we will find companionship for whatever turbulence we are facing individually, as a community, and as a world.

In Christ,  
Melodie

Oldfield, Elizabeth. *Fully Alive: Tending to the Soul in Turbulent Times* (pg 5). (Function). Kindle Edition.

ibid, 14.

ibid, 26.



**Check out the Eastridge Lent & Easter Playlist**, curated by pastors Melodie and Thomas.

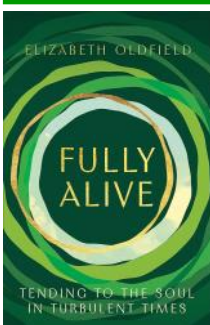
Spotify:

<https://tinyurl.com/EPCLentSpotify>



Apple Music:

<https://tinyurl.com/ECPLentApple>



**FULLY ALIVE book study:**

Pastor Melodie will be leading a Lenten Study on the book, *Fully Alive* by Elizabeth Oldfield on Thursday mornings at 10:00 am beginning March 6 on Zoom.

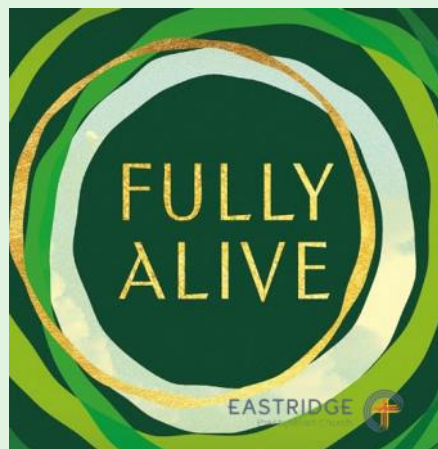
Books are available at the Welcome Desk. Please sign up in the office or here:

<https://bit.ly/fullyaliveepc>



## LENT AT EASTRIDGE

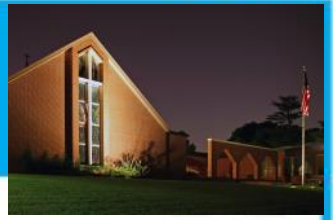
- ◆ Lenten Spiritual Practices posted daily on Facebook, Instagram, and the online devotion site. Printed copies available at the Welcome Desk.
- ◆ Fully Alive Book study via Zoom (weekly...check out page 2 of this newsletter for more info)
- ◆ Wednesday, March 5, 6 pm - Ash Wednesday Dinner followed by worship at 6:45 pm (Welcome Center)
- ◆ Wednesday, March 12, 6:30 pm - Holy Anger "Smash Room" 6:30 pm (at EPC)
- ◆ Monday, March 17, 5:30 pm - Take a Holy Walk on the Sunrise Road (begins at EPC)
- ◆ Monday, March 24, 6:00 pm - Join in a Centering Prayer (Sanctuary)
- ◆ Tuesday, April 1, 5 pm - Make a card or write a letter to someone you love (Welcome Center)
- ◆ Tuesday, April 8, 5 pm - Join us for a food taste test (Welcome Center)
- ◆ Wednesday, April 16, 6 pm - All abilities yoga and meditation (Sanctuary)



## Join us at Eastridge during Holy Week!

- ◆ Sunday, April 13, 9:30 am - Palm Sunday Worship (sanctuary)
- ◆ Wednesday, April 16, 6 pm-7 pm - All abilities yoga and meditation (sanctuary)
- ◆ Thursday, April 17, 6 pm - Maundy Thursday dinner followed by service at 6:45 pm (welcome center)
- ◆ Friday, April 18, 12 pm - Good Friday worship
- ◆ Easter Sunday, April 20, 6:30 am - Sunrise Service (weather permitting, east patio)
- ◆ Easter Sunday, April 20, 9:30 am - worship with traditions old and new (sanctuary)





## HIGHLIGHTS



### Session Highlights:

- Communion was served at 9:30 a.m. on February 2, 2024
- Rev. Thomas Dummermuth officiated at the funeral of Virginia Dietrich on January 17, 2025
- Rev. Dr. Melodie Jones Pointon officiated at the memorial of Duane Olsen on February 1, 2025
- Steve Anderson was elected as treasurer for two-year term (voice without vote)

- Cathy Schapmann was elected Justice in Action in Orlando, Florida, in February (voice without vote)
- Deb Merritt was elected as clerk for two-year term (voice without vote)
- The four seasons of the church are listed below with each season having two conveners from Session.
  - Lent/Easter/Pentecost
  - Summer/Ordinary Time I
  - Fall/Ordinary Time II
  - Advent/Christmas/Epiphany
- Rev. Dummermuth reported he would be attending a National DART Clergy Convention through
- Shirley Flynn and Renae Oestmann will be attending the Homestead Presbytery Meeting by Zoom
- Eastridge Youth will be involved in the services throughout the month of February
- The Session Retreat was held with new members learning what the session is, what it does, and how it functions. The meetings are to be a place where members can debate and argue respectfully with an invitation for conversation.



## AN INTERFAITH APPROACH TO SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

SPEAKER:

REV. STEPHEN GRIFFITH



March 12

12 PM | WED

AT EASTRIDGE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
1135 Eastridge Drive



### FAITH COALITION MEETING FOR MARCH:

Many Christian denominations practice some form of spiritual direction, although it is often described in different terms. And many other faith traditions have ways of helping adherents to be attentive to the inner life. Rev. Stephen Griffith will guide us as we explore some aspects of spirituality, what it means in different faith communities, and how conversations about spirituality and belief can acknowledge and learn from differences.

Rev. Stephen Griffith trained in the Interfaith Spiritual Direction program at The Chaplaincy Institute, in Berkeley, California, and is a member of Spiritual Directors International. He sees a small number of clients, as well as leading classes and workshops on a variety of topics.

Date & Time: Wednesday, March 12 | 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

Location: Huxtable Lounge

In-Person or Online Participation: If you're attending in person, please bring your own brown bag lunch. For those joining remotely, Zoom access is available. Please contact the office to receive the link.



**What Do I Do with My Anger?** Richard Rohr and Brian McLaren host a 90-minute live online gathering on March 14 from 10:00 – 11:30 am PT

Featuring: Brian McLaren and Richard Rohr

Cost: \$95, \$30, \$10, \$5

Many of us feel growing anger about politics, economic opportunities, persistent racism, our threatened environment, and broken institutions. What do we do with our anger—and can ancient wisdom from the contemplative Christian tradition offer guidance for us in these times?

Join us in a shared online space to explore these important questions alongside CAC founder Fr. Richard Rohr, author of the new book, “The Tears of Things,” and CAC Dean of Faculty, Brian McLaren.

Richard Rohr and Brian McLaren will guide attendees through teachings, conversations, and practices designed to help us explore where our anger fits within the contemplative Christian tradition. The gathering will take place on March 14, 2025 from 10:00 – 11:30 am PT. Participants will need a device with reliable Internet access, such as a smartphone, tablet, or computer to access Zoom.

If costs are prohibitive, we are offering scholarships. A discussion group following may be planned, depending on interest.

**For more info, click here:** <https://bit.ly/eventonlineeepcanger>

**Devotion Ministry:** We are always looking for new writers for our online devotion ministry. If you are interested in writing, even just occasionally, please contact the office for more information. If you'd like to receive a prompt and the link five days a week via email, let the office know as well.



**Sign up to provide a meal for our youth!** Each Wednesday evening, youth group begins with a meal. Providing a meal includes a main dish, side(s), and dessert. The church provides drinks and all the paper products. This year the group will consist of about 12 people.

Link is here: <https://bit.ly/youthmeal2425>





## LEARN HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR FRIENDS, FAMILY AND NEIGHBORS

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) teaches you how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental health and substance use challenges among adults.

You'll build skills and confidence you need to reach out and provide initial support to those who are struggling. You'll also learn how to help connect them to appropriate support.

AFTER THE COURSE, YOU'LL BE ABLE TO:

- Recognize common signs and symptoms of mental health challenges.
- Recognize common signs and symptoms of substance use challenges.
- Understand how to interact with a person in crisis.
- Know how to connect a person with help.
- Use self-care tools and techniques.

**Eastridge Faith Partners**  
is hosting this event!

Sign up here:

<https://bit.ly/mhfaeastridge>

**OR sign up at the Welcome Desk.**

For more information, visit  
MHFA.org

Hurry, SPACE IS LIMITED!

**EASTRIDGE**  
Presbyterian Church

**Mental Health  
First Aid**

March 16 & 23,  
11:00 am - 3:00 pm  
Eastridge Presbyterian  
Church

**created concert**  
the lutheran center - unl  
april 04 | 6:00pm | 555 n 16th st

Announcing the Lutheran Center (UNL)'s 2025 Created Concert Artist, **FLAMY GRANT!** is a shame-slaying, hip-swaying, singing-songwriting drag queen from western North Carolina. Her 2022 debut record, *Bible Belt Baby*, reached the #1 spot on the iTunes Christian Chart (the first drag performer to achieve this feat)... She has been featured in *Rolling Stone*, *Entertainment Weekly*, *People*, and more, and her music has over 1.2 million streams on digital platforms. A powerhouse vocalist and intrepid songwriter who blends country, folk, gospel, and roots music, Flamy delivers a theatrical, therapeutic, and wholly original storytelling experience, all shared through the evocative art of drag.





## COLLEGE CARE PACKAGES

It is time to send care packages to our EPC college students! We hope you might be willing to donate some items that we can use to fill the boxes to the brim. Below you can find a list of some of the favorites. Once you have shopped, the items can be dropped off in the church office. If you don't want to go out a shop, you can also purchase online and just have it shipped to the church. If you are looking for ideas, you can you the following link to access our Amazon Wishlist. (<https://a.co/bWV3MwR>) Please send it ATTN: Kris Adler-Brammer. And if you aren't up for shopping, cash donations are also helpful to purchase those last additional items or help cover the cost of postage (\$17.10 per box shipped).



Individual servings of cookies, oatmeal, crackers, etc.

Mac n Cheese (in the packets), ramen noodles

Individual sized peanut butter (they are small cups)

Candy, granola bars/protein bars, gum, crystal light/drink powder packages

Laundry pods (non-scented – for two reasons. One, they are better for skin sensitivity issues. Two, scented pods will “scent” everything else in the box for the packages we mail), dryer sheets (non-scented)

Highlighters, pens

Band-aids, cough drops, small hand sanitizer

We will be filling about 25 care packages so items in multiples are appreciated. If you have any questions about donating, please feel free to contact Kris Adler-Brammer at [kadlerbrammer@eastridge.org](mailto:kadlerbrammer@eastridge.org). Please have all items to the church office by Wednesday, April 2 so we will have everything to pack them up on Sunday, April 6. We will be packing baskets/boxes on the 6th following worship and we would invite you to join us!



**Thank you** to everyone who donated to the **Souper Bowl of Caring**. We collected 111 bottles of Dawn dish soap for the Eastridge Food Pantry and collected \$ 465 for showers. The collection for the showers will go to the “F” St. Recreation Center.

This goes a long way in support our Lincoln residents!

The **EPC Book Club** meets the second Monday of each month September through June at 7:00 pm. Locations vary...check the Welcome Center for info when you arrive! A copy of the list can also be found on the church website, in the “What’s New” pull-

down menu, then click on “calendar”. Our selection at right, **Pineapple Street by Jenny Jackson** is our pick for March.

Join us March 10!





## NEHEMIAH ASSEMBLY

MAY 1 (Thursday) 6:30-8:00 pm

St. Mark's United Methodist Church

You've no doubt heard, "YOUR VOTE MATTERS." Attending the Nehemiah Assembly is the local version of that adage.

When 1,500 people show up and fill the seats we are telling our local officials that we care about the good life for everyone in our community. Your presence tells them that better access to mental health care, diversion for non-violent offenders is more humane, useful and economical than incarceration and that keeping people in their homes is always preferable to eviction.

You can do that by just showing up for 1 ½ hours on May 1st. Please say yes when a member of the Justice in Action team from Eastridge approaches you about joining this night for justice.

EPC Justice in Action Leadership Team: Sarah Herrera, Jean Schultz, Bill Wehrbein & Sara Bevans



## The Green Team is excited to announce our 2025 strategy!

The team has identified nine potential projects so far including: solar panel, EV charger, and heat pump installation; old window replacement; continued light fixture, LED light, and timer/motion sensor installation; basement stove replacement; and critical electrical and technology infrastructure upgrades. Stay tuned as the team works to accomplish their goals - and please join us if you are interested in assisting!



### COFFEE FELLOWSHIP:

Want to sign up to serve coffee and goodies on a Sunday morning? Here is the 2025 sign up. Instructions and helpful hints on the sign up, or contact the office for more info!

<https://bit.ly/coffeehourepc2025>

### Fourth Friday Women's Coffee Fellowship:

Join the ladies in Huxtable on March 28 at 8:30 am for our monthly coffee fellowship! Let the office know if you would like to be included in an email reminder.







### THE GATHERING PLACE:

Eastridge Presbyterian Church arranges to provide 4-5 volunteers at The Gathering Place, a local soup kitchen, on the 4th Monday of each month. For more information on what this entails, contact the church office. Thank you to all Eastridge members who volunteer to serve at The Gathering Place. **Updated sign up:** <https://bit.ly/gatheringplace2025epc>

For more information on what this entails, contact the church office. Thank you to all Eastridge members who volunteer to serve at The Gathering Place. **Updated sign up:** <https://bit.ly/gatheringplace2025epc>

**Updated sign up:** <https://bit.ly/gatheringplace2025epc>



## EASTRIDGE FOOD PANTRY

### EASTRIDGE FOOD PANTRY:

Links for volunteers for Sunday drive thru and Wednesday distribution plus box prep below:

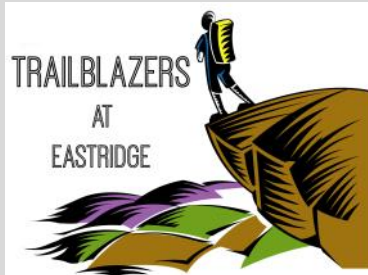
Distribution: <https://bit.ly/FPDistFood>

Filling boxes: <https://bit.ly/FPFillingBoxes>

Filling boxes: <https://bit.ly/FPFillingBoxes>

- Rev. Dr. Melodie Jones Pointon.....Senior Pastor
- Rev. Thomas Dummermuth.....Associate Pastor
- Kris Adler-Brammer..... Youth and Children’s Ministries
- Donna Gustafson.....Office Manager
- Andy Kalnins.....Night/Weekend Custodian
- Brent Shaw..... Organist & Adult Choir Director
- Will McGuire.....Worship Leader
- Vince Ruhl.....Director of Online Ministries
- Brett Meier.....Audio/Visual Technician
- Laura Siemsen.....Administrative Assistant
- Office number.....402-488-7844
- Melodie Jones Pointon: [mjonespointon@eastridge.org](mailto:mjonespointon@eastridge.org)
- Thomas Dummermuth: [tdummermuth@eastridge.org](mailto:tdummermuth@eastridge.org)

## MEET THE STAFF



**Trailblazers** is a group of older adults at Eastridge that provides an opportunity for men and women, singles as well as couples, to participate together in the life of the church—in service and fellowship. We usually meet the third Friday night of the month, September through May.

Trailblazers for March: March 21: **Buffet from Leon’s** (\$ 10 per person)/Clean pews. Join us at 6:00 p.m. – Huxtable Lounge/Sanctuary

### UPCOMING PODCAST:

Our podcast will return in March! Beginning the week of March 2, with Rev. Dr. Matt Mardis-Lecroy - Matt is a repeat guest, and longtime friend of Melodie’s. He’s coming back for a conversation Melodie has jokingly titled, “Let’s Talk About Sin, Baby.” It’s fitting for a conversation at the beginning of lent to have a conversation about sin - how it’s been thought of in the past, and how we don’t like to think about it now. Matt currently serves as pastor for College Hill Presbyterian Church in Easton, Pennsylvania. He is an ordained minister with standing in both the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the United Church of Christ. He has a BA in Religion from Messiah University, an M.Div. from Princeton Theological Seminary and a Doctor of Ministry degree from Chicago Theological Seminary. Before coming to College Hill, he served churches on Long Island and in Des Moines, Iowa.



**EASTRIDGE**  
Presbyterian Church



1135 Eastridge Drive  
Lincoln NE 68510

