

news from the EDGE



First Presbyterian Church of
EDGEWOOD
The Community Church

Believing we are called together
by God's love through Jesus Christ, our mission as
the First Presbyterian Church of Edgewood is to
love God, to love each other and to love our neighbors.

The monthly newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church of Edgewood

June 2018

PASTOR'S POINT OF VIEW



Michael P. Rucker

Someone is calling you.

Do you remember being that little girl or boy playing outside with your neighborhood friends, the sun is slipping beneath the horizon, the daylight is moving into the mysteriously lit dusk, and the voice you did not want to hear calls out: "*Michael, time to come inside!*" Do you remember dating in high school, nervously waiting to either receive or place the call to your girlfriend or boyfriend? Do you remember being called on in class at school to answer the one question that you did not know the answer to?

Someone is calling you. Even today. No matter how young or old you are. You are being called.

I learned that the word *vocation* is what we often think of as something we *do* with our lives. We pursue vocations to teach, manage a business, be a nurse, become a contractor, or preach. What I learned is that the root of the word *vocation* is the Latin word for *voice*. Vocation is not something we do, it is something we hear. Something we listen for. Something we listen to.

Someone...some voice...is calling you. We hear different calls for the different stages of our lives. But echoing somewhere in the depths of who you are is a voice calling you to a new place, a new way of being you.

Over these summer weeks, take some time. Sit quietly for ten minutes ever day. Listen. Someone... something...is calling you. What you are being called to be or do is very important. It is the next step in your life. As Jesus says to his followers, "*Let anyone with ears, listen!*"

Have a blessed summer everyone!

Pastor Michael

Worship Schedule for June

June 3 – *Can Anything Good Come Out of Stress?*

Stress! Stressful times! Stressful lives! Stress leaves no one untouched as it rummages through our nation and our lives. What to do? The Apostle Paul knew a little bit about stress, too! What did he do? (see II Corinthians 4: 5-12.)

June 10 – *Prep Time is the Best Time*

The best thing about a home-cooked meal is the one who cooks it, of course. And the time that person puts into preparing it. Just the right ingredients. Just the right amount of slicing and dicing. Prep time is the secret to a great meal...and a great life. Prep time is God's time to prepare you for life full of meaning, joy, and peace. A life God has prepared for those who love him. (see II Corinthians 4: 13-5:1)

June 17 – *And the Low are Lifted High!*

Greed and arrogance destroy lives and nations! The rich want to be richer. The powerful want more control! God's kingdom does not work that way. People of God turn away from greed and power to find a much richer, more rewarding life. (see Ezekiel 17: 22-24 and Mark 4: 26-34.)

(cont'd. p.2)

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News from the Edge is the monthly newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church of Edgewood. If you have information you would like to include in the next issue, email Judy Mysels at office@fpcedgewood.org by the 15th of the prior month. Sponsorship is available for \$40 per month.

Worship Schedule for June (cont'd.)

June 24 – *Even the Storms Obey Him!*

I had the good fortune of catching the final performance of *The Tragedy of Hamlet – Prince of Denmark* at Pittsburgh Public Theater in mid-May. It is the story of a young man facing storms within and in the *rotten state of Denmark*. After a harrowing adventure with Jesus in a boat on the Sea of Galilee, the disciples caught a glimpse of just how powerful the calm and peace of Jesus can be. (see Mark 4: 35-41)

July 1 – *A Guide for Healthy Living*

Most of us have been there at one time or another. Things didn't work out like we thought they would. Even the wonderful, God-given promises we depended on. Our dreams fall apart, lives end too soon, our body is invaded by a disease that will not let go. Jesus meets us there. Where we are most broken. Amazing things can happen. (see Mark 5: 21-43)

The Kingdom of Heaven and Giving

Jesus preached much about the Kingdom of Heaven. He associated the Kingdom with a mustard seed that becomes the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree. In another parable, He said that the Kingdom is like a treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again and in his joy sold all he had and bought the field. For us, the Kingdom of Heaven is near. However, the representation of the Kingdom on earth, our church, is in crisis. Membership is down due to those brothers and sisters who passed on to our Father or have moved to other congregations. Consequently, giving is down as Elder Tom Ochs has described. The church finances are running over budget. By our estimate, FPCE will run a \$40,000 to \$50,000 deficit by the end of this year. While we may survive this year, the current state is not sustainable. How can we solve this problem? Our Session has met and discussed this matter. The crisis is not unsurmountable. There are solutions to this problem.

Invite a friend and increase membership.

Increase our own giving. If each of the 70 giving units of our church was to increase the giving by \$20 per week or \$3 per day, we can conquer this deficit.

The session will look at the 2019 budget at midterm and will plan to make adjustments.

Finally, let us remember the Parable of the Sower. Some seeds fell along the path and were taken by birds. Some fell on rocky places and others fell among thorns. The question is – can we become the seeds that fall on good soil and multiply 30, 60, or 100 fold?

Stewardship is a Spiritual Matter and a Matter of our Life Priorities.

Stewardship is Worship.

Paul Ochori, Chair of Stewardship

A SPECIAL NOTE TO REMEMBER: The General budget of the congregation, what is presented in the January Annual Report, IS DIFFERENT FROM the Renovation Fund.

We are very grateful for any and all support that you do give – but there are two giving opportunities available – the general budget and the renovation budget. Please keep this in mind. If you have questions, talk with an elder, our treasurer, Tom Ochs, Elder Paul Ochori, or Pastor Michael.



The Church Community



Hello Everyone!

Join us on **June 17**, after worship in the Gathering Place immediately following worship for Donuts for Dad Father's Day celebration. Bring your Dad, Grand-Dads, Uncles....to help us celebrate the men in our lives.

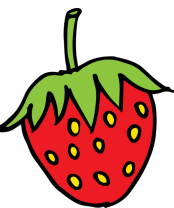
Then come for our Annual Strawberry Festival on June 20 from 6—8 p.m. It will be held in the Gathering Place. Delicious strawberry desserts, hot dogs are on the menu.

Once again, we are asking for cereal, peanut butter, jelly, tuna helper, cereal, spaghetti sauce, pancake mix and syrup, Kleenex, toilet paper, canned tuna, chicken, and ham for our **Food Pantry**. We thank all of you for your continued help for those in need.

Hope to see everyone at the Strawberry Festival. Bring some friends and neighbors. Help spread the word.

Have a wonderful summer. Be safe! I know we can get pretty busy during the summer months. Just remember we all need fed—that is, fed with the Word of God. God's blessings to all!

Mary Ann Hartman, *Moderator*



STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL, JUNE 20, 6-8PM

\$3.00 for adults, \$2.00 for children under age 12, \$2 for second helpings, \$1 for hot dogs. Take-out, too!

COMMUNITY DINNERS

**JUNE 6, JULY 11, AUGUST 1, SEPT. 5
6-8PM, SIDE LAWN**

We'll be grilling hot dogs and hamburgers and will appreciate any side dishes and dessert donations. Watch for bulletin inserts for the donations, as well as volunteer times for set-up and break-down. Please join us to have fun with our church family and the community.

WOMEN'S SUMMER PICNIC

**SAT. , JUNE 16, 1-4PM AT FLORENCE PICKELS' HOUSE,
342 RIDGE AVE., FOREST HILLS**

Please RSVP by June 14 to Church Office at 412/241-4613 or Sallie Monk at 412/371-4344

Side dishes and desserts are welcome!

COMMUNITY DAY IN EDGEWOOD

SATURDAY, AUGUST 25, 12NOON TO 5PM?

It's that time of year again when FPCE is looking for volunteers to help run a game booth for **Edgewood's Community Day, August 25**. We need 2 people to "man" the booth for an hour. Usually the booth is located by the field house; we bring down church brochures to spread the news about FPCE, interact with the children/parents, etc. We are looking for 2 people per hour. Look for upcoming bulletin inserts/blurbs for sign-ups, or call the Church Office at 412/241-4613 if interested.

SESSION NOTES

At their May meeting Session voted to move forward with phase 1 of our renovation, including air conditioning in the sanctuary.

Session approved the use of the Gathering Place on Tuesdays, 7:30-8:30 AM by BNI Regent Square Chapter (a business networking group). They also approved the use of the Gathering Place and choir Room by ESO on Aug. 12, 2018.

The use of the Sanctuary was approved for the Julia Weir wedding on September 22, 2018.

Session divided into committees to continue working on the suggestions from the Congregational Conversations. These committees will report back at the June meeting.

VOLUNTEER F.R.O.G.S

JUST THE FRIENDS THE KIDS NEED!

Our after-school FROGS (Friends Reading and Other Good Stuff) program enriches the lives of up to 15 children who come over to our social hall every Tuesday and Thursday throughout the school year. The program has come to an end for the 2017-18 school year, and it is a good time to remember that, in the words of Samuel Richardson, "Love is not a volunteer thing."

I have seen the FROG volunteers in action. Trust me, the kids in the program are tutored, fed, exercised, led in activities – and it all comes with hearts full of love for each and every one: Christian nurturing in action.

FROGS Volunteers (cont'd.)

Take a moment and give a pat on the back and a big THANK YOU to Judy Mysels (the director), Flo Raisig, Mary Ross, Ruth Miller, Mariah Mysels, Rick Masten, Ed Masten, Dan Mielke with special assists from Mary Ann Hartman, Sallie Monk, Sunny Sakai and Emily Lilly.

Pastor Michael



May 31 was our last day of FROGS for this session. During this last month, we made special crafts for Mother's and Father's Day. Between the raindrops, we did have 3 field trips to Koenig Field to play. We were also able to play on the church's side lawn when weather permitted. On our last day, we had a pizza party and sundae bar with some of the parents/grandparents. During the dessert portion, the FROGS explained their day's artwork/craft which told of their favorite activity this past session. They ranged from favorite crafts, seasonal activities, outdoor activities, homework help, etc. It was truly touching! Thank you to all the volunteers: Flo Raisig, Mary Ross, Ruth Miller, Dan Mielke, Rick Masten, Ed Masten, Sallie Monk, Mary Ann Hartman, Mariah Mysels— without them, the FROGS program would not exist. Please spread the word about next session starting September 4, 2018!

Judy Mysels, Director



FPCE HVAC Renovation

The HVAC unit order has been placed with Elk Air and installation work has started in the basement area. There are holes in the walls/ceiling for ducts supplying the first floor halls, women's restroom and choir room by a furnace located to the right of the boiler room door. Next week orders will be placed for the electrical work and for the gas lines to the furnaces. The single phase and three phase electric service will be enlarged and new distribution centers provided that will update the electrical system and will cover the requirements of phase two of the renovation, if we elect to proceed. This will bring our electrical room up to code.

Not much change will be visible on the first floor but installation in the daycare and some parts of the electrical installation will create temporary inconvenience for everyone. We will try to keep these to the minimum for the daycare and the AA meetings.

MISSION/ SERVICE VOLUNTEERS AND DONATIONS NEEDED



Whatever you do for the least of my brothers, that you did to me. *Matthew 25:40*

In response to our Conversations with the Congregation, Session has committed to working on a church wide mission project. In June, we will be helping Wilkinsburg Community Ministry and their mission to serve the hungry in Wilkinsburg and the 15221 zip code. WCM serves over 10,000 meals per year to the young, old, veterans, disabled, families in need and the homeless.

We are asking for volunteers to serve lunch at South Avenue Methodist Church. Lunches are served daily from 6/11/18 through 8/24/18. We will work in teams of 3-4. Training and lunch is provided. Volunteers serve lunch, track participation and help clean up. **Orientation is 6/11/18 at 10:00 am at SAMC. We are looking for a commitment of one day per week or one week in the summer (between 11:45 and 1:15).** No experience is needed and I was told even one handed volunteers are welcome. If you are interested in working as a team member or captain, please see me or any of our Mission Committee. A free t-shirt is provided.

Also, we will be assembling hygiene kits in the Fall. In June, we are asking for donations of shampoo.

Thank you for considering WCM and our mission work. Grace and Peace to you.

Rhonda Apessos, Charlie Baldwin, Lorraine Douthett, Nancy Ernst, Stephanie McGuigan

A JOURNEY WITH GRIEF A small group of people who are learning to journey through life while bearing the weight of grief will be meeting on the **Monday evening of June from 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.** The Grief Support Group is led by Chaplain Virginia Mayo, M.S. Ed. Counseling, M.A. Theology. Most of you know Virginia from the times she has led worship and preached during Pastor Michael's absence. IF you are interested in becoming part of this group, either come on Monday evenings, or call Virginia at 412-247-5628. "Grieving together is growing together."

USING YOUR CHURCH BUILDING WELL

Yes...this is a long article. Read it. Let's continue to think about how to do vital ministry out of this building that is deeply loved by so many of us. Donna Shaper is a pastor in the United Church of Christ serving a congregation in a large old church building in mid-Manhattan. To be sure, Edgewood is not like mid-Manhattan – not even close. Yet it is true we are a small congregation serving the community from a facility that is *way bigger than we are*.

Listen to Donna describe the transformation in her congregation that enabled its ministry to thrive and the building to survive.

"The church I serve, Judson Memorial, is in Manhattan, where one church building after another has been converted into luxury housing or a high-priced restaurant. Judson is growing and thriving—in part because of the wide variety of ways our building is being used.

We took out the pews in 1969. According to congregational lore, there was less energy on Sunday mornings than on Saturday nights, when a postmodern dance group was experimenting in the meeting room. Why not give them more space? With the pews gone, we became a center for dance, theater, music, speakers, and more. Our guests enhance our membership and Sunday morning participation. And we have become dependent on the income from these events, events we see as central to our ministry."

It's a new and creative way of envisioning a future, isn't it? Here are five do's and don'ts (beginning with the don'ts) Donna Shaper offers as a guide for other churches (like us!) striving to survive in a large facility and thrive as a ministry.

- 1. Don't keep denying the problem.** What you may imagine as unthinkable is in fact thinkable. When you move out of denial, an array of possibilities opens up for your land, your architecture, your memories, and your hopes.
- 2. Don't rush to take the lowest offer.** Giving up too soon is almost as bad a strategy as giving up too late. Developers would love to hold your land long enough to get some profit out of it; local politicians often just want it back on the tax roll. Churches' notorious lack of business skills can make us sell too soon. If endowments are for rainy days and it is raining now, why not repurpose the building yourself or with a strong partner?
- 3. Don't set up a binary between the building and the people.** Remember the finger game about the church with the steeple and the people? The game is right. The spiritual and the material, the communal and the physical—it's all related. They are not enemies but friends. Polishing the building without doing a ministry with it is silly. But the building, if it is not idolized, can be part of the mission. The two are one.
- 4. Don't let the pastor off the hook.** The building committee shouldn't be the only ones in charge. Pastors are the ones who can help lead you out. Make them preach about embodiment and incarnation. Get them to help you study the spiritual *why* long enough to become open to the imaginative *how*. Why bother to save church buildings? That is the most important question. Don't ignore it by futzing with the physical details.
- 5. Don't go it alone.** There are probably five other congregations nearby that are going through the same thing. Don't think of them as your competition. Together, you might be able to hire and coordinate the resources you need to make smart, future-oriented, demographically based decisions.

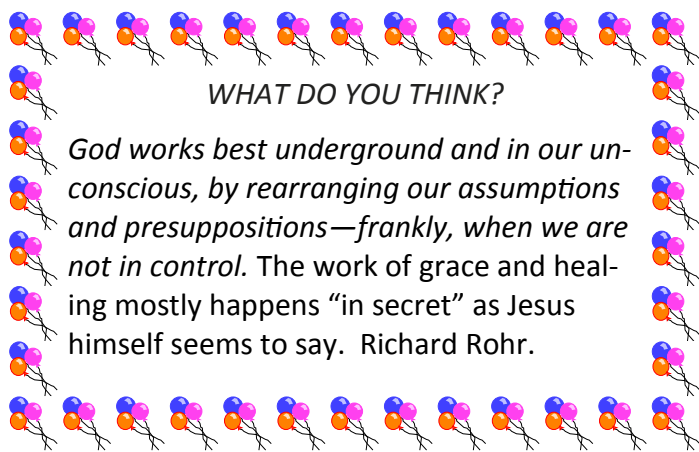
The dos follow from the don'ts. They emerge after you clear the deck of denial and its detailed obsessions. After denial—once we're free from the cobwebs of fear and the monkey mind of intersecting messes—we often find a way to think.

- 1. Remove the pews from your head, then your heart, and then your sanctuary.** When the worship space can change, it can look full with 20 people in it or 200. A full set of chairs is spiritually uplifting

to those leading worship as well as those participating in it. And the flexibility of chairs means you can use the room for different activities all week long. The possibilities are endless with chairs; they are highly limited with pews.

2. **Imagine five congregations in your building.** Why would one building not accommodate lots of different worshipers? The building was built for worship. If the specific kind of worship it was built for continues to fill people's hearts and fill the room, great. If it doesn't, why not be more inclusive? God won't be hurt. And many people will honor this approach to the divine.
3. **Open the space to arts groups and other mission-consistent gatherings.** Encourage group sings. Let dancers rehearse and perform. Bring in musicians of all kinds and invite them to also play in worship. Open your doors to a theater company. An empty space needs partners.
4. **Go green—by using your building more.** The more people use the space, the more efficient its maintenance and energy use are. People who work remotely during the week could use your Sunday school rooms—instead of coffee shops or coworking spaces—and help with the Internet bill. Sunday school parents may want to have a parents' night with child care at the church. Yoga classes can thrive in sacred space. Once your space is being used more and bringing in some income, it's easier to prioritize investing in things like energy conservation, solar power, or even accessibility.
5. **Build partnerships.** The evidence is overwhelming: churches need help raising capital. We need fundraising expertise. Most denominations have offices that attend to building matters. Why not use them? Or work with other churches in your denomination or community to get the help you need. Those same politicians and developers who might want to use you can also help you. There is no reason to go it alone. There are multiple reasons to get together.

Even if you do the dos and don't do the don'ts, your church may not survive. That is not a crime. Things come and go; when they die, they make space for what's next. People, like buildings, will evolve and adapt. They will find a way to the divine—and the holy will find a habitation. It will be interesting to see where God decides to be housed.



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

God works best underground and in our unconscious, by rearranging our assumptions and presuppositions—frankly, when we are not in control. The work of grace and healing mostly happens “in secret” as Jesus himself seems to say. Richard Rohr.

**COLLECTING BLUE GIANT EAGLE
PLASTIC BAGS.
COLLECTION BOX IS AT SIDE
ENTRANCE. THANK YOU.**

A SMILE CAN TAKE YOU AN EXTRA MILE

Every once in a while, people send me emails that make me smile and help the next hour go by a bit better. I thought I would share a few with you.
Michael

Adam and Eve—the first people to not read the Apple terms and conditions.

(On church's outdoor sign) Too hot to keep changing sign. Sin bad. Jesus good. Details inside.

(Snow covered church sign in mid-January) If you are praying for snow. Please stop

Whoever stole the church AC units. Keep one. It is hot where you are going.

Forgive your enemies—it messes with their heads. Just love everyone. I'll sort'em out later. God.

Da-da-bing!
Thanks Ruth Miller.



June

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 8:00 AA (SR)	2 9AM-3PM Scout Flea Market (Lawn) 8:30 AA (SR)
3 9:30 Choir (C) 9:45 Adult Class (L) 11:00 Worship (S) 12:15 Fellowship (L) Deacon Mtg.	4 6:30 Grief Group 7:00 Scouts	5 10:00 Book Club 7:00 AA (SR)	6 6-8:00 Community Dinner	7	8 8:00 AA (SR)	9 8:30 AA (SR)
10 10:00 Worship 11:15 Worship Comm. Mtg.	11 6:30 Grief Group 7:00 Scouts	12 10:00 Book Club 7:00 Session Mtg. 7:00 AA (SR)	13	14	15 8:00 AA (SR)	16 1-4 P.W. Picnic at Florence Pickel's house 8:30 AA (SR)
17 10:00 Worship 11:15 Donuts for Dads	18 6:30 Grief Group 7:00 Scouts	19 10:00 Book Club	20 6-8 Strawberry Festival	21	22 8:00 AA (SR)	23 8:30 AA (SR)
24 10:00 Worship	25 6:30 Grief Group 7:00 Scouts	26 10:00 Book Club	27	28	29 8:00 AA (SR)	30 8:30 AA (SR)



TOOLS OF HOPE
SUNDAY, JUNE 17

Honor your dad by giving the gift of love and hope in their honor or memory. Church World Service (CWS) and FPCE's Mission Ministry Team is sponsoring "Tools of Hope". Your donation of \$5 per tool will help provide tools and the knowledge that someone cares to refugees, victims of natural disasters, and many others across the world. Fill out a bulletin insert or form below through June 10, or call the Church Office.

In Honor of: _____

In Memory of: _____

My name: _____