

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

March 2020

PASTOR'S POINT OF VIEW



Michael P. Rucker
Pastor

Welcome to Lent brothers and sisters,

Although I resisted at first, I have begun to rely on the Google Maps app for directions to my travel destinations. As I clumsily finger my way through the app's maps and driving routes, I often find myself looking at street names that are nowhere near where I want to go. But often, a button will pop up on the screen, RECENTER, it reads. When I click it, I can find myself on the map again.

During Lent, God is setting before us a RECENTER opportunity. It is said that we live in "the age of raplexity". Rapid and complex change. All of us lose our way. Our crazy life becomes crazier. Unfortunate decisions reap difficult circumstances. As the poet William Butler Yeats writes in his powerful, foreboding poem, The Second Coming:

*Turning and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;*

Christians believe there is a center in our lives that does hold, that does point toward a true north. As Jesus assures us, "I am the way, the truth, and the life."

The Jesus way: **Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples..**

The Jesus truth: **"For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many."**

The Jesus life: **I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them will bear much fruit.**

The center that does hold strong and true is the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Lent is the season to re-center, let Jesus be our focus.

Praying a meaningful Lent for all of you,

Pastor Michael

WORSHIP SCHEDULE FOR MARCH

LENTEN SERMON SERIES

Christ Encounters:

stories of six people who encountered Christ in a dark place and emerged from the encounter into the light and lived a new life. I hope you can find yourself in at least one of these stories.

MARCH 1

A member of Jerusalem's religious ruling class visits Jesus. Nicodemus is in the dark in more ways than one. Yet the Q and A he has with Jesus does give us insight to a transformative way of thinking about life in this world.

MARCH 8

I love this woman. She's a foreigner with a tainted reputation, a nobody who has the chutzpah to challenge Jesus and his faith. As they talk, Jesus tells her and us, that eternal life is not something we must wait for – that life is already here.

(cont'd. p. 2)

STAFF DIRECTORY

120 East Swissvale Avenue
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15218
Phone: 412-241-4613
www.fpcedgewood.org

Pastor:
The Rev. Michael P. Rucker
mprucker@fpcedgewood.org

Pastor Emeritus:
Dr. Gerald Hollingsworth

Minister of Music:
Shaun Cloonan
music@fpcedgewood.org

Organist & Pianist:
Sunny Sakai
sunnysakai4@gmail.com

FROGS Director, Office &
Cleaning Manager:
Judy Mysels
frogs@fpcedgewood.org
office@fpcedgewood.org

Building Manager:
Rob Mysels
building@fpcedgewood.org

Office Hours:
Monday–Friday
9:00AM–2:00PM

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 MARCH

MARCH 15 – An Emerging Worship experience

A blind man suddenly can see; people with healthy eyes are the blind ones. A social curse is removed, but the curse of religious rejection takes its place. Are we the ones who can see, or are we blind? Do we reject even those whose eyes are opened to the amazing truth and power of God's healing?

MARCH 22

The story of Jesus, two sisters, and their dead brother. Light pierces into the pitch dark; life overcomes the bitter loss of death. Jesus gives us a glimpse of the eternal and seals his painful fate in this life. This is the beginning of the end.

MARCH 29

Do you remember the one person, the only person who had the love and paid the cost to prepare Jesus for his future? Of course, it's a woman. And, of course, the men, save one, don't get it. Jesus protects the kind woman with his gratitude.

SEEKING JUSTICE

CONVERSATIONS WITH THOSE STRIVING TO LEVEL THE PLAYING
FIELD FOR ALL OF GOD'S CHILDREN

7 P.M. —8:30 P.M.

Four Wednesday Evenings in March
Waverly Presbyterian Church Social Hall

During this Lenten season, come and learn firsthand about the impact systemic injustice has on our community through candid conversations with those who are on the front lines striving to make a difference in their own lives or in the lives of those they serve. Please join us for these programs that promise to enlighten our minds and call us to action!

Weds., March 4—Immigration
Weds., March 11—Criminal Justice System
Weds., March 18—Homelessness
Weds., March 25—Environment

These programs are free, and the public is encouraged to attend. Childcare is available for children 5th grade and younger. ***Please call Waverly Presbyterian Church at 412-242-0643 to let us know how many children will be coming and their ages.***

Refreshments provided. Just Desserts!

Our Church Community



SESSION NOTES...

At their January 14, 2020 meeting Session:

- Approved the use of the sanctuary on Sunday, March 1, for a Galina Istomin piano recital.
- Elected Mr. Tom Ochs Church Treasurer for 2020.
- Elected Mrs. Florence Raisig Clerk of Session for 2020.
- Elected Mrs. Rhonda Apossos Chair of the Nominating Committee for 2020.
- Approved Rev. Rucker's last Sunday to preach will be June 14, followed by 2 weeks of vacation.
- Approved joint Ash Wednesday and Good Friday services with Waverly Presbyterian Church. We will host the Ash Wednesday service and attend the Good Friday service at Waverly.
- Approved the following dates for communion: 1/5, 2/2, 3/1, 4/9 (Mandy Thursday), 4/12-Easter, 5/3, 5/31 (Pentecost).
- Scheduled a Session retreat for Sat., Feb. 1, 2020, 9:00AM-Noon.

At their February 1 retreat Session:

- Voted to hire a part-time pastor, following the retirement of Rev. Rucker, with duties to be determined.
- Voted to compile a list of activities for the incoming pastor.
- Voted that FPCE will remain in this building.

At their February 11, 2020 Session:

- Approved the use of the sanctuary by the ESO on Tuesday, December 1, for a rehearsal and Saturday, December 5 for their Christmas Concert.
- Received the resignation of Elder Charlie Baldwin.
- Voted to redefine the mission of our church, state it clearly, and follow it.
- Met with Rev. Brian Wallace, Presbytery East Branch and Elder Ann Turnock, Congregational Care Assistant. Rev. Wallace and Elder Turnock shared ideas and information about the process of searching for a part-time minister. They will continue to help during the search process.

NEWS AND NOTES

- Sympathies to the family of Vicki McMahon, who passed away on January 20, 2020
- Many thanks to the Scouts who helped during the service on Scout Sunday, Feb. 2.
- Elaine Cloonan is walking unassisted after her second successful knee replacement!
- Congrats to Shaun Cloonan on a stunning performance with Voces Solis on Feb. 23.
- Thanks to Judy Mysels for organizing the coffee, tea, etc. in the back of the Sanctuary before/during church and to those who are helping to keep it going.

FOR THOSE WHOSE LIVES ARE FEELING THE PRESENCE OF CANCER...

What Cancer Cannot Do

Cancer is so limited...It cannot cripple love.

It cannot shatter hope.

It cannot corrode faith. It cannot eat away peace.

It cannot destroy confidence.

It cannot kill friendship. It cannot shut out memories.

It cannot silence courage.

It cannot reduce eternal life.

It cannot quench the Spirit.

Your FPCE family is praying for you. Is there another way we can support you?



During February, we celebrated Chinese New Year by doing crafts and using chopsticks for dinner with fortune cookies for dessert. The children also made Valentines for their own families.

Food and drink donations are needed. A big thank-you to those who did donate snacks – they are really appreciated by all!

Judy Mysels, Director

From FEBRUARY SESSION MEETING

Since Pastor Michael has announced his decision to retire in June, the session has taken the first steps to prepare for the next pastoral leader of the congregation.

Rev. Brian Wallace, Presbytery East Branch and Elder Ann Turnock, Congregational Care Assistant, met with Session at the February 11 meeting to share ideas and information about the process of searching for a part-time minister. They distributed a document entitled the Pittsburgh Presbytery Commission on Ministry-Part-Time Ministry Guidelines and Worksheet. The document breaks down the part-time position into 5 tiers. We received a second document that outlined the part-time into duties and the hours needed to fulfill time based on the 5 tiers of Pastoral leadership.

There is a difference between sharing a pastor and yoked churches. Yoked churches share a pastor and both churches contribute elders to a shared Session. Sharing a pastor means that two congregations share the pastor, only. The session decided to either seek a part-time pastor or, possibly, share a pastor with another congregation.

Our first jobs are to establish a mission statement and to determine what tier of part-time responsibilities we would like to have the person fulfill. We then check with Presbytery to see if there are any natural matches. We will then write a description of our church and the tasks we expect our minister to do. This will be listed on a Presbytery website.

It is recommended that we form a Pastoral Nominating Committee (PNC). The PNC would consist of 3 Elders, 1 Deacon, and 1 member of the congregation. We will need to start looking for supply pastors to replace Rev. Rucker when he retires. Brian recommends that we begin the search after Easter (at least 2 months before we need one.)

If we need to find a preacher/worship leader between Pastor Michael's leaving and a part-time pastor starting, we can get a list of supply pastors from Presbytery. The cost/Sunday will be approximately \$150. It was recommended that we keep in contact with Ann Turnock with any questions.

EASTER FLOWERS

We seek your help in making our sanctuary a place of graceful beauty and meaning on Easter morning. Through your donation, we can accomplish this:

I wish to contribute an Easter plant. Lily ___ Tulip ___ Daffodil ___ Hyacinth ___

The wording for the bulletin is:

___ In honor of _____

___ In memory of _____

Order placed by _____

Please check: ___ I would like to take the plant

___ I would like it to be planted in the Prayer Garden

The cost of each plant is \$8.00 Please attach your check (payable to the First Presbyterian Church of Edgewood) to this order form and return it to the Church Office. Deadline is March 29, 2020.

FROM CHRISTIAN BLOG “RECKLESSLY ALIVE” (Sam Eaton)

Lent is a long slow season where we remember who we are, who God is and what Jesus has done for us.

Who are we?

We are crazy beloved children of God more deeply loved than we could ever understand.

Like the perfect parents holding their new born baby for the first time, that baby hasn't done anything to deserve love, if anything the pain and mess he's caused make him more unlovable, yet those parents hold that baby with an awe and wonder that rattles their soul.

That is how God looks at you. **That is who we are.**

Who is God?

God is love. We love because he first loved us. And any love we felt here is tiniest grain of sand compared to the ocean of his love for us.

What Has Jesus Done For Us?

WARNING: Lent spoiler alert: God showed us the greatest act of love in all human history. God sent his son Jesus to earth to show us in human form what the wondrous love looks like. And if that wasn't enough, Jesus, the only person to ever live a perfect life, for all of his kindness and healing was beaten and hung on a cross for us, so that all of our junk would be forgiven.

God gave his one and only son so that we would not perish, but find eternal life. Both in the here and now, and after we return to the dust from which we came.

So to the recent widow missing her deepest love.

To the parent estranged from their child.

To the veteran who can't shake chaos inside their mind.

To the teens looking for love in all the wrong places.

To the single who needs a little bit of hope on yet another Valentine's day alone.

Tattoo this on your heart: **you are deeply and wildly loved by a God who doesn't need anything from you, yet wants you more than anything in the world.**

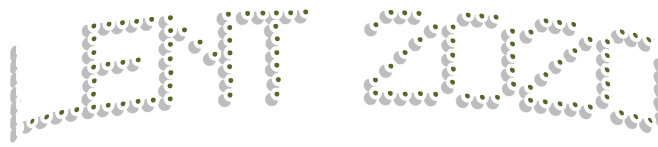
Make today the day you finally stop striving to be worthy of this wondrous love and **rest in the truth that you already are.** Stop looking for your worth in things that won't last past tomorrow, and instead root yourself in the fact that nothing you can do will ever separate you from the love of God.

He loves you for you. Like the actual you. Yes, the imperfect, messed up, just ate half a bag of Cheetos you at 3am you.

This type of love is what we all want, and the crazy thing is we already have access to it every single second we're alive.

I don't know where you are in your relationship with God but starting again can be this simple:

God I'm sorry for the things I've done and I'm ready to start again and become more of the person I was meant to be. Amen.



TWO INSPIRING THOUGHTS:

Throughout the season of Lent, we will be immersing ourselves in the forgiveness, mercy, and new beginnings that God offers us in the life of his Son, Jesus. We will also recall the night Jesus washed the feet of his disciples and called us to that same servanthood. Spend some time contemplating these two thoughts:

“There is no future without forgiveness.” Desmond Tutu
“If serving is below you, leadership is beyond you.” Anon.

Spiritual Development with Pastor Michael...

FOR EVERY DAY OF LENT

Throughout the season of Lent, I will send a Lenten reflection, poem, thought, or prayer to all the people on our church email list. All of you will be invited to share a thought or reflection of your own. If you are not the email list and would like to be, call the church office. The internet can link us together into a FPCE web of prayer.

A MID-WEEK ADULT CLASS – ARE YOU INTERESTED?

For many, many years the pastors in our church have offered a Wednesday evening class on at least some of the weeks of the Lenten season. Over the past few years, the number of interested people has become less and less. But please – if you are at all interested or know someone who would be interested in such a class, call or text me at 412-298-3140. I would love to meet with you.

DO YOU WANT TO FAST THIS LENT?

In the words of Pope Francis

- Fast from hurting words and say kind words.
- Fast from sadness and be filled with gratitude.
- Fast from anger and be filled with patience.
- Fast from pessimism and be filled with hope.
- Fast from worries and have trust in God.
- Fast from complaints and contemplate simplicity.
- Fast from pressures and be prayerful.
- Fast from bitterness and fill your hearts with joy.
- Fast from selfishness and be compassionate to others.
- Fast from grudges and be reconciled.
- Fast from words and be silent so you can listen.

pietrafitness.com



ONLINE RESOURCES FOR LENT

From: Pittsburgh Theological Seminary
Daily readings: www.pts.edu/devotional

Daily email: www.pts.edu/e-mail
(click on “Devotionals”)

www.HigherThings.org/reflections/

www.LivingCompass.org/lent

Www.infoFranciscanMedia.org



MARCH

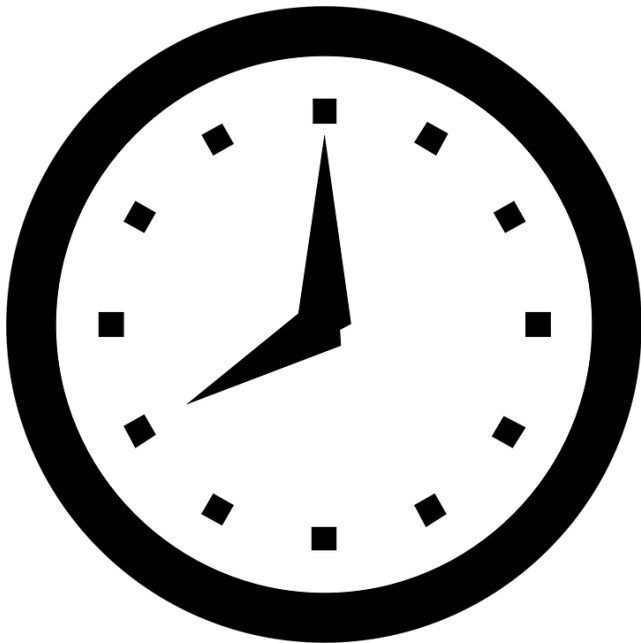


Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9:30 Choir Reh. 9:45 Adult Class 11:00 Worship 12:15 Fellowship 2-4PM Piano Recital		10:00 Book Club 3:45 FROGS 8:00 AA			8:00 AA	8:30 AA
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
DAYLIGHT SAVINGS 9:30 Choir Reh. 9:45 Adult Class 11:00 Worship 12:15 Fellowship		10:00 Book Club 3:45 FROGS 7:00 Session 8:00 AA		3:45 FROGS	8:00 AA	8:30 AA
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
9:30 Choir Reh. 9:45 Adult Class 11:00 Worship 12:15 Fellowship		10:00 Book Club 3:45 FROGS 8:00 AA		3:45 FROGS	8:00 AA	8:30 AA
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
9:30 Choir Reh. 9:45 Adult Class 11:00 Worship 12:15 Fellowship		10:00 Bok Club 3:45 FROGS 8:00 AA		3:45 FROGS	1:30-4:30 Home School Co-op 8:00 AA	8:30 AA
29	30	31				
9:30 Choir Reh. 9:45 Adult Class 11:00 Worship 12:15 Fellowship	7:00 Joy Circle	10:00 Book Club 3:45 FROGS 8:00 AA				



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120 E. Swissvale Avenue • Pittsburgh, PA 15218



**DAYLIGHT SAVINGS
TIME:**

SUNDAY, MARCH 8