



PASTOR'S

## POINT OF VIEW



Michael P. Rucker  
Pastor

Welcome back brothers, sisters

The new church calendar year is days away from starting. We return to 11:00 a.m. worship on Sunday, September 10, and regular office hours on Monday, September 11.

I am looking forward to this coming year. The church renovation project soon will become brick and stone instead of drawings and explanations. (See article in this newsletter.) The session is praying and planning a renewed focus on ministry with young people. A new confirmation class will begin this fall. I sense a renewed enthusiasm among Sunday morning worshippers. It is going to be a year of blessings and laughter.

*BROKEN* is the title of one of the books that made my summer reading list. I mentioned it in a couple of my sermons this summer. The subtitle reads: "Restoring

*Trust between the Sacred and the Secular.*" "What is broken?" you might ask: Trust. Trust is at the heart of every successful and meaningful relationship. Trust develops over time: after experiencing both the ups and downs of life and relationships. The author of *Broken*, Greg Frumholz, suggests that as a church and society we are in need of rebuilding trust; trust between families, communities, races, social classes, political parties, religions, churches, the list goes on. We are in sore need of healing. Greg's down-to-earth assessment is that trust, the tie that binds a church community to the surrounding community, needs to be renovated.

Nearly all of us learned that finger game and accompanying ditty, "Here's the church. Here's the steeple. Open the door and here's the people!" That ditty needs to be rewritten, doesn't it? "Here's the church. Here's the steeple. Open the door and....where are the people?" That question is being asked by mainline and Roman Catholic congregations across America. There are exceptions, primarily in thriving suburbs, and those are mega-churches whose successful ministries are based on a very different worship and ministry style. How can we get people back who, Greg Frumholz suggests, no longer trust us?

(cont'd. p.2)

### Worship Schedule for September

#### September 3 – 10:00 a.m. in the Gathering Place

Pastor Michael will conclude his summer preaching series on "Women of the Bible." On this Labor Day weekend Sunday, he will talk about the incredibly vital (and sometimes controversial role) women played in the life of the early Christian churches. A heads-up: if not for the ministry of women, the church would not have made it out of Jerusalem. *Join us as we hear the words of scripture, sing the songs of faith, and celebrate the Lord's Supper.*

#### September 10 - 11:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary

Being in a community that is loved and learning to love one another is a blessing! But what about those people who seem to slip through the cracks, or drift away, or simply lose their way? And who among us has never "lost their way" for a while? Pastor Michael will address these issues during his sermon. (read Isaiah 49: 8-15; and the Gospel According to Matthew 19: 13-15 and 18: 10-14) *We will install Christian Educators during the service.*

#### September 17

As a time when accusations, judgements, and worse are frequently and carelessly thrown about our national life, we will ask ourselves: is it ever appropriate to judge others? What about the times when a person's wrong-doing is obvious and injures our relationship with God and our fellow brothers and sisters? Do we have license to judge then? We will turn to John 8: 1-11 and Romans 9: 20-26 for some insight.

(cont'd. p.3)

## 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.

### *Pastor's Point of View (cont'd.)*

Here is my response to that question after 37 years of suburban, urban, small town, and multi-cultural congregations. Trust will not be restored by new worship styles, new kinds of music, new ministries, renovated buildings, new staff, new worship hours, new social and justice statements, renewed evangelism efforts, etc....etc. Trust is restored when relationships are restored. Those of us who have been committed church people for the last four decades know what it means to build, lose, regain, break, and restore relationships with one another. We mostly trust one another. People who have not been committed to church these past forty years are not like us. They do not understand why we do things, how we "do church" – and, frankly, they probably think we are mostly OK...but they do not trust us.

To regain trust, I believe have to take the first step. The first step is this: we are called by the Lord who accepts and loves us to accept and love others just the way they are. People in our community do not really care if the pews on Sunday mornings are empty, if we need new church officers or Sunday school teachers, if our youth ministry program has disappeared, or if we cannot meet the church budget. New people will trust us when they believe we want to be with them *as they are*; to know them *as they are*; to build new beginnings *with them, not for them*.

Are we ready to do this? Do we want to?

I ran across an article from a church newsletter that speaks for me as I begin this fall season. Take a moment. Read this open invitation from a church to its community. Does it make sense to you? Does it speak for you? Could this statement become our first step in establishing a deeper level of trust between FPCE and the community that surrounds us?

### **A COVENTRY WELCOME from The Coventry Church in England**

*We extend a special welcome* to those who are single, married, divorced, widowed, straight, gay, confused, well-heeled or down-at-heel. We especially welcome wailing babies and excited toddlers. We welcome you whether you can sing like Pavarotti or just growl quietly to yourself. You're welcome here if you're just browsing, just woken up or just got out of prison. We don't care if you're more Christian than the Archbishop of Canterbury or haven't been to church since Christmas 10 years ago. We extend a special welcome to those who are over 60 but not grown up yet and to teenagers who are growing up too fast.

We welcome keep-fit moms, football dads, starving artists, tree huggers, latte sippers, vegetarians, junk food eaters. We welcome those who are in recovery or still addicted. We welcome you if you're having problems, are down in the dumps or don't like organized religion. We're not that keen on it either. We offer welcome to those who think the Earth is flat, work too hard, don't work, can't spell, or are here because Grandma is visiting and wants to go to church. We welcome those who are inked, pierced, both, or neither.

We offer a special welcome to those who could use a prayer right now, had religion shoved down their throats as kids, or got lost on the wrong road and wound up here by mistake. We welcome pilgrims, tourists, seekers, doubters, and you.

*Pastor Michael*

*Worship Schedule for September (cont'd.)*

**September 24**

The worship service will be led the Reverend Virginia Mayo. Virginia and Pastor Michael have been close friends for many, many years – they go back to the 1980's! Virginia has served as pastor to area United Methodist congregations and as hospital chaplain. Her passionate and compassionate ministry has touched the lives of many. Come prepared to be inspired, Virginia preaches straight from the heart.

**October 1**

World Communion Sunday! All creation sings God's praise and the world is fed by bread from heaven. We will read the astonishing and breath-taking lyrics from one of the earliest Christian hymns. (see Psalm 148, John 6: 35-40, and Colossians 1: 15-20 for a preview of Sunday's theme.) Songs from Germany, Jamaica, South Africa, the Caribbean, France, African-American Spirituals and both traditional and contemporary America will resound throughout the sanctuary. Add your voices to ours!

# communitydinner



What has become our signature summer outreach program, our monthly community dinners, ends this month. Weather dependent, we will always try to be out on the side lawn to show our hospitality to the community.

Dinners run from 6:00-8:00PM,

and each time we welcome help for set-up, donations of side dishes, and clean-up.

**This month we could use some extra help**, so everyone please come!!! Please join us for this last meal on **Wednesday, September 6.**

## THANK YOU!!!

To my entire church family:

A note of thanks for all your prayers, encouragement, comfort, food, gift and well wishes. I have been richly blessed by all of you.

May God bless you for all that you have done – thank you so much. Psalm 126:3

The Lord has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy

Love you all, *Mary Ann Hartman*



*Sharing in the joys and concerns of our family & friends at FPCE*

- Sympathies to Rev. Gerald Hollingsworth and family in the death of Mrs. Frances Hollingsworth, June 28.
- Many thanks to Jim Segedy, Tyler McGuigan in hosting the August 2nd Community Dinner, along with help from Desmond Rucker (and friend), Michael Rucker, John Foster, Lisa Segedy, Mysels family, Gregg and Bill Baldwin, plus those who provided side dishes, desserts, etc. who fed many community people, despite the weather!
- Congratulations to Amber Wilson in receiving the 2017 Deacons' Melfard Douglass Scholarship , where she will be attending Slippery Rock.
- Sympathies to Russell Jones and family in the death of Violet Jones, July 25.
- Community Day thanks to Mariah and Judy Mysels, Sallie and Glenn Allen Monk, Rick and Ed Masten, Tina and Jeff Nine (2 hours) for "manning" the FPCE booth.
- Judy Mysels and family pulled off a surprise 90th birthday celebration for mom, Eleanor Elliott on Aug. 13

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION: Learning and Growing Together

*“Jesus played with the children and taught the adults:  
the church is doing just the opposite.”*

### YOUNG PEOPLE: GROWING TOGETHER ON SUNDAY MORNING

*For our young people:*

*at 9:45 a.m. ....*

*during worship all school age children will be invited to leave the sanctuary for Children’s Hour  
in our Gathering Place.*

*Nursery: Child care for infants in available in our nursery beginning at 10:50 a.m.*

### ADULTS GROWING TOGETHER

#### **9:45 A.M. SUNDAY MORNINGS** (beginning September 10)

Pastor Michael will lead a class in the lounge. You are encouraged to join us at any time. If you miss a week or two, not a problem, hop back on board at any time.

**“What are the earliest known writings about Jesus?”** Many of us assume that the books of the New Testament were written in the order they appear (first Matthew, then Mark, etc.) Not so! The earliest known writings about Jesus are the letters the Apostle Paul wrote to the earliest Christian communities. This fall we will take a week or two to look at each of Paul’s letters. How should Christians live together? How are we to live out our faith in a culture which does not profess Jesus to be Lord? We will mull over and discuss these questions together. And, yes, we do have a good time together.

For Sunday, September 10, read Paul’s *Letter to the Romans chapters 1 - 4*

#### **7:00 P.M. WEDNESDAY EVENINGS**

Pastor Michael will teach a class on various subjects of interest to all involved. Sometimes we will read a book together. Sometimes the classes will be seasonal (advent and lent), sometimes we will study a certain subject of interest.

7:00 p.m. Wednesday, September 20

September 20 marks the first of ten days known as *“Days of Awe.”* Intrigued? I hope so. Jesus celebrated *“the Days of Awe”* during his years on earth. This will be a great way to get us started!

## Looking Ahead to October...

### **CROP WALK: October 8**

On Oct. 8, the Pittsburgh East community will celebrate its 40th year of walking to end hunger one step at a time. The oldest walk in the country, is sponsored by Church World Service ([www.churchworldservice.org](http://www.churchworldservice.org)). 25% of what we raise is returned as grants to East End Common Ministries and Wilkinsburg Community Ministry. Youth and adults from this congregation will gather at the South Avenue United Methodist Church at 1:00 to gather in preparation for the 10K loop through Squirrel Hill and back. The walk distance is 6.2 miles. Walking time is approximately 2.5 hours.

You can participate by either walking or sponsoring a walker. You can also go to their website: <http://www.crophungerwalk.org/pittsburgheastpa> to electronically send money or sponsor a walker. Watch for upcoming bulletin inserts, emails and/or announcements.





## Renovation Progress Update



The church renovation will go forward in two phases: one is the replacement of the steam heat system with a forced air system, and second is the reconfiguration of the first floor which includes wheelchair lift, new bathrooms, larger Gathering Place and kitchen.

Before any construction contracts can be issued, building permits need to be obtained from Edgewood Borough which requires additional detailed drawings of the proposed HVAC additions and modifications. Phase 1 covers HVAC in all areas of the church, including the basement Social room, second floor day care, and Sanctuary. These drawings are being completed and then will be submitted to the Borough for approval. Hopefully that process can be completed in the next 30 days.

Following approval, final pricing will be requested and contractors selected to start phase 1. Phase 1 requires forced air furnaces located in the second floor storage room, basement storage room next to Social room, and the basement Mud room and Youth room. Each furnace and A/C condenser will need individual electrical connections, and each furnace requires a gas supply. Several areas that have either frequent or very infrequent use on the 1st floor, such as the Pastor's office, Church office, nursery, and Music Minister's office, will be heated/cooled by ductless units (similar to the unit presently used in the Gathering Place except much smaller). The church presents an unusual occupancy problem in that many areas are only occupied less than 4 hours in a 168 hour week. The most occupied area is the day care at maybe 60 hours per week. No one spends the night, and most often Saturday is unoccupied anywhere in the church.

Insulation will be added in the area above the second floor to make the building more energy efficient. All first floor areas heated/cooled by forced air furnaces will have ceiling or floor supply and returns. The second floor and Social room will have exposed spiral duct, which is popular for use in building and restaurants.

Phase 2 requires some information from Phase 1, but should be able to initiate shortly after contractors are selected for Phase 1. Some minor changes on the LGA drawings will be required, but they are basically ready for submittal.

Regarding a loan for the renovation, the Pittsburgh History and Landmark Foundation (PHLF) has offered to provide a \$250,000 loan at 4.25% 5 year fixed interest rate using the building as collateral. The loan will initially be a construction loan that can be drawn as needed with interest only payments. At the completion of construction, the loan will be converted to a mortgage requiring principal and interest payments for a 15 year term. This is the best offer available so far.

*Tom Ochs*

### **STEWARDSHIP – A Way of Caring**

When we see the word Stewardship, we are most likely reaching for our wallets, purses, checkbooks, and credit cards. For good reasons, the church has often framed our understanding of stewardship around the annual fall fund-raising efforts. The biblical understanding of stewardship is much deeper and broader.

To be a good steward is to be a good care-taker. A steward appears in many of Jesus' parables. In Jesus' times a steward was assigned important responsibilities, deserved great respect, and a person from whom much was expected.

**Two stewardship reminders** for all members and friends of FPCE:

**PLEASE UPDATE** your financial commitment to our church's ministry; we typically fall behind in our giving during the summer months, and this has been particularly true for 2017 - we are behind in our monthly budget support.

**FPCE BUILDING RENOVATION REMINDER:** *Building renovation pledges for 2017 are due by year end.*

***Thank you for helping us take care of our church facility  
and the ministry of this congregation!***

## Fall FROGS Hop Back into Action

# F.R.O.G.S.

## AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

**FRIENDS, READING, & OTHER GREAT STUFF**

Fall FROGS begins Thursday, September 5. Our after-school program operates Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3:15-6:00pm in the lower level of the church building. Students are walked over from Edgewood Elementary School. The program includes snack, homework, reading, craft, outdoor play or games, and dinner. Currently we have 6 students returning from last session and 2 new registrants. The cost is \$25/month, with 6 full-time volunteers and many part-time helpers.

Volunteers find participation a rewarding experience and really make this program possible. If you are interested in volunteering or visiting to share a craft or special interest, we'd love to have you join us. For information on registering or volunteering, please contact me at [frogs@fpcedgewood.org](mailto:frogs@fpcedgewood.org) or call at 412-241-4613. All the info about the program, as well as application forms, can be found on the FPCE website.

F.R.O.G.S. serves the children a snack and dinner. We get the dinner from the Wilkinsburg Community Ministry. We will gratefully accept donations of juice, boxes or juice bags, as well as individually wrapped snacks such as peanut butter or cheese crackers, fruit rollups, pretzels, etc. for snack time. The children enjoy doing crafts. If you like crafts, too, we'd love to have you visit and share your talent with us. Of course we can always use help at homework time too!

Judy Mysels, *FROGS Program Director*

### RMD Charitable Gifts (Good for FPCE and Good for You)

If your retirement finances consists of an individual retirement account (IRA), then starting at age 70 ½ you are required to take minimum distributions from your IRA and declare it as income. This was tax free money when invested in the IRA and the Internal Revenue Service wants to start collecting the taxes, so the amount you must withdraw (minimum required distribution, MRD) will be declared as income on your tax return and taxes paid. There is a formula to determine the MRD and it works to have the complete IRA taxed by age 85.

The good news is that a qualified charitable deduction (QCD) is available to reduce the tax on the RMD from your IRA. (Enough three letter acronyms.) The Qualified Charitable Deduction (QCD) may be made to a qualified 501(c)(3) non-profit, such as the First Presbyterian Church of Edgewood, and for tax filing the QCD can be deducted from the RMD which reduces taxable income. In fact, if the whole RMD is contributed to a qualified charity then there is no taxable income. The limit is \$100,000 per year.

If you make a QDC tax-free transfer from your IRA to charity, you cannot also deduct that money as a charitable contribution. But the tax-free transfer is better than a charitable deduction because it may give you extra benefits. You don't need to itemize your deductions to get a tax benefit from the gift (and many people who no longer have a mortgage don't itemize their deductions). Making the tax-free transfer also keeps the money out of your adjusted gross income. That could help you avoid the Medicare high-income surcharge, which boosts your Part B and Part D premiums if your adjusted gross income is more than \$85,000 if single or \$170,000 if married filing jointly. Keeping the money out of your adjusted gross income could also make less of your Social Security benefits taxable.

Of course, talk to your tax accountant or financial advisor to make sure you are getting the greatest benefits. This is a program that is good for FPCE and good for you.

*Tom Ochs*

As you pass this little Church  
Be sure to plan a visit,  
So when at last  
You're carried in,  
God won't ask, "Who is it?"



# SEPTEMBER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1  8:00 AA (SR)	2  8:30 AA (SR)
3  10:00 Worship  11:15 Planning Meeting	4  LABOR DAY OFFICE CLOSED	5  10:00 Book Club  3:45 FROGS 7:00 Deacon Mtg. 7:00 AA (SR)	6  <b>6-8:00 Community Dinner</b>	7  3:45 FROGS	8  8:00 AA (SR)	9  8:30 AA (SR)
10  11:00 Worship  12:15 Staff Meeting	11	12  10:00 Book Club  3:45 FROGS 7:00 Session Mtg. 7:00 AA (SR)	13	14  1:00 Daytime Circle 3:45 FROGS	15  8:00 AA (GP)	16  8:30 AA (SR)
17  11:00 Worship	18	19  10:00 Book Club  3:45 FROGS  7:00 AA (SR)	20	21  3:45 FROGS	22  8:00 AA (SR)	23  8:30 AA (SR)
24  11:00 Worship	25  7:00 Joy Circle Host: Marsha Morris	26  10:00 Book Club  3:45 FROGS  7:00 AA (SR)	27	28  1:00 Daytime Circle  3:45 FROGS	29  8:00 AA (SR)	30  8:30 AA (SR)

## Autumn Dates to Remember



### Sunday Mornings

- 9:30 Choir Rehearsal
- 9:45 Adult Class
- 11:00 Morning Worship (begins 9/10)

### Tuesday Mornings

- 10:00 Book Club at Apossos' Home

### 4th Monday:

- 7:00PM Joy Circle (church lounge)

### September

- 3: Last 10AM Summer Worship in the Gathering Place. Planning Meeting after Worship
- 4: Labor Day: Office Closed
- 5: FROGS Begins
- 6: Community Dinner
- 10: Communion, 11AM Worship Begins, Staff Mtg.
- 17: Emerging Worship

### October

- 1: World Communion Sunday
- 8: Crop Walk

### November

- 5: All Saints' Recognition/Communion Sunday
- 12: Women's Choral Festival, Manger Tree kick-off
- 22: Thanksgiving Eve Service
- 26: Hanging of the Greens service

Keep up on our social media platforms:

Website: [www.fpcedgewood.org](http://www.fpcedgewood.org)

Facebook: [facebook.com/fpcedgewood](https://facebook.com/fpcedgewood)

Twitter: [@fpcedgewood](https://twitter.com/fpcedgewood)

