

news from the EDGE



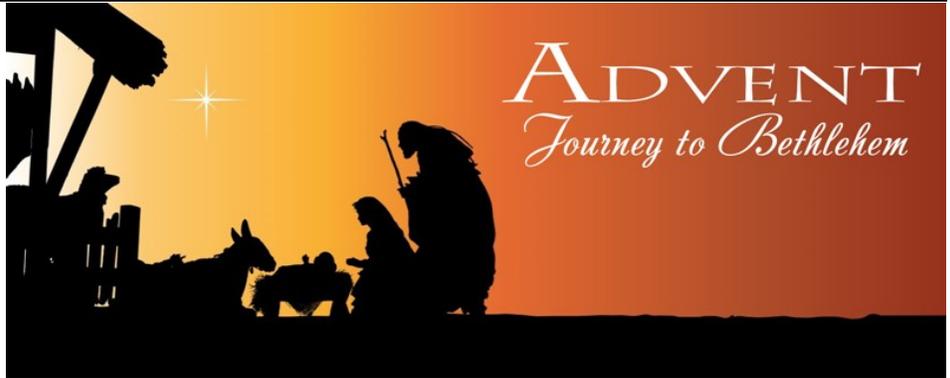
First Presbyterian Church of
EDGEWOOD
The Community Church

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

December 2014

In the weeks before Christmas, the church celebrates Advent. This season gets its name from the Latin term *adventus*, meaning "coming." It is the season when the church waits for the coming of Jesus Christ. This coming is celebrated in its fullness on Christmas Day. But the four Sundays before Christmas Day mark the weeks of waiting, anticipating—the church looking forward to its great celebration of God the Savior coming to us in Jesus Christ.



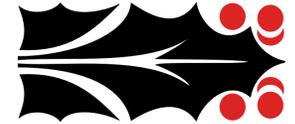
Advent anticipation is often marked in churches by decorations, all the trappings for celebrating Christmas. Many churches feature an Advent wreath. Four candles are set in a circle, often of different colors. In the center is the white candle, symbolizing Jesus Christ and lit on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. At the beginning of worship during Advent Sundays, a Scripture reading and prayer are often offered as one of the Advent candles is lit. So each week, we can see by the lit candles how close we are getting to Christmas Day. The Advent wreath is a kind of calendar of Advent, marking the time as the church waits for the coming of the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

Each of the Advent Sundays is often associated with a theme that captures one dimension of Advent. The four themes are Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love. As we wait for Christ's coming, we focus on what Advent brings as Christ comes. These rich biblical and theological terms center us on the message we proclaim as we tell the world of the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.



DECEMBER 2014

Worship Schedule



DECEMBER 7

On this Second Sunday of Advent we will eat, drink and remember the Word-Made-Flesh as we commune with Jesus the Risen One. Do you remember what the voice echoing from the wilderness is saying?

DECEMBER 14

While the world hustles and bustles along, we will enter a space of quiet reverence and meaningful worship. Calling on the deep, beautiful liturgy and music from the Taizé & Iona Communities, we will include a *BLUE CHRISTMAS* observance during this morning's service.

DECEMBER 21

THE NORTH HILLS SINGERS, directed by Shaun Cloonan, will be singing with us during this service of lessons and carols. The music, some reader's theater, the participation of our young people will create a meaningful worship service for the entire family. A min-concert by the NH Singers follows the service.

DECEMBER 24

CHRISTMAS EVE

Invite your friends, neighbors and extended family to our annual candle-lighting and communion service.

*8 o'clock or 11 o'clock—
that is the question.*

DECEMBER 28—Snuggie Sunday

It really works. It is a lot of fun. It is in the Lounge. Casual, make that very casual dress encouraged.

JANUARY 4—Epiphany Sunday

We're back in the sanctuary to celebrate communion and the coming of the Magi to visit the babe of Bethlehem.

STAFF DIRECTORY

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

Interim Pastor	The Rev. Michael P. Rucker mprucker@fpcedgewood.org
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Section Leaders.....	Tyler McGuigan Mandy Rineer
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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



Michael P. Rucker
Interim Pastor

Grace and Peace to the brothers and sisters of FPCE,

Open your hearts to the season of Advent. It is a season of (be)coming. It is a season of arrival.

Recently, I had a conversation with a good friend that sent me scurrying for a book of poetry I had not pulled off the shelf for some time. As I had hoped, some poems by William Stafford were included in the anthology. I quote a couple of lines from his poem, *"In A Museum."*

*The clock ticks on, every second
wandering down like a snowflake,
while an avalanche whispers our names.*

The verse speaks powerfully to me. How appropriate for me to read these lines as the first snowflakes of winter settle on the front lawn. It dawns on me, "How apt these words for this season of advent."

I can say out loud now what I could not admit even ten years ago. God graciously and wondrously blesses each one of us with the countless seconds, minutes, days, months and years of our lives. But we are not the keeper of the clock, God is. **I trust in you, O Lord; I say, "You are my God," My times are in your hand...Let your face shine upon your servant; save me in your steadfast love." (Ps. 31:15-16)**

During these Advent days, I pray that we are inspired by the wondrous and awe-filled story of how God, the keeper of the clock entered our times as a vulnerable infant and lived (literally, *pitched his tent*) among us.

Open your hearts to the season of Advent brothers and sisters. Surrender the seconds, minutes, hours of your life to the keeper of the clock. God is redeeming these days. God is redeeming our lives Prepare to be humbled, joyful and grateful as we receive Emmanuel—God is with us.

Pastor Michael

HOLIDAY SERENADE

Featuring the Renaissance City Choir

December 6, 2014 7:30PM



The holidays come home to the FPCE sanctuary with a fresh and inspiring celebration for this joyous season! The ESO showcases its magic alongside the terrific voices of the Renaissance City Choirs.

Surround yourself in the inspirational theme from *Home Alone*, an assortment of Arthur Harris Holiday Confections, plus the ESO's annual holiday sing-a-long and much more! Celebrating the joy of the holidays remains our most beloved concert tradition. Tickets available online or at the door. www.edgewoodsymphony.org

Project Manger Tree

The Board of Deacons will be working with Action Housing Homeless Service again this year. Action Housing assists families in securing public assistance housing, utilities, furnishings, etc. Gifts are purchased for children, but given to parents, allowing them to provide something for their children *on Christmas morning*. Serves *single parents, teen mothers, etc. in surrounding areas*. We have had an overwhelming response from the congregation in the past and would like to continue this wonderful project.

Please select a tag from the tree and buy an age-appropriate gift. Money can also be donated to buy wrapping paper, gift bags and ribbon. See any Deacon for more information about the project, for help in selecting a manger tree tag and for gift ideas. Please sponsor one of God's children.

We would like your UNWRAPPED gifts along with the tag returned to the church **by Sunday, December 7th**. Thank you for your support of this project.

God Bless,
The Board of Deacons



Wednesday Evenings: Advent Dinner & Study

On Wednesdays, December 3, 10, 17, Pastor Rucker will lead a discussion on two of Advent's background stories. Come and discover which two key "figures" unveil the significance of the Christmas stories found in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. The evenings begin at 6:30PM. Join us for a fun and relaxed evening of food, fellowship, study and prayer.



Advent Prayer Vigil Friday, December 19

Advent is a time of expectation, a time where we keep vigilant watch for the coming of Christ because "...you do not know when the time will come." (Mark 13:33)

Our Advent prayer vigil is an opportunity for you to practice the discipline of watchfulness. **Friday, December 19** our sanctuary will be open from 9:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.

A sign-up sheet will be at the side vestibule entrance. People may come for as long as they are able. You may come as an individual, couple, small group or family. More than one person or group may be present at the same time. If you would like to come for the traditional 30 minute period, that will be fine as well. This is a great opportunity to enter more fully into our journey toward Bethlehem.

Congregational Meeting



Sunday, Dec. 7 following worship

We will conduct a congregational meeting immediately after worship on **Sunday, December 7**. This will be an informal meeting at which

you'll get a chance to see and comment on the 2015 budget before it is formally adopted by the session. We also will elect officers to the class of 2017. The session values your input and seeks to be responsible stewards of your money. Copies of the proposed budget will be available at least one week prior to the meeting.

Call for 2014 Reports

On Sunday, **January 25** immediately following worship, the Annual Meeting of the Congregation will be held to receive the 2015 budget and to elect the church officers.

If you are the staff member, chair or secretary of a ministry team or organization within the church, please have your narrative report into the church office by **January 20**. It can be given in hard copy or e-mailed as an attachment to Judy Mysels at office@fpcedgewood.org.



Financial News

Income and expenses as of October 31, 2014:



Income: \$197,827.88

Expenses: \$207,643.61

Net Income: - \$ 9,815.73

We have had unexpected expenses for roof leaks, plumbing leaks, and repairs and an extra cold 2014 winter. These often caused building damage that needed repair. 2014 is expected to end with a small deficit. The budget for 2015 will be presented at the December 7, 2014 Congregational Meeting.

Taking a Recess...

The weekly book club meets every Tuesday at 10AM. **WE WILL NOT BE MEETING** until January 2015. We are reading "Killing Jesus" by Bill O'Reilly and Martin Dugard; Come join us in January!



CHRISTMAS EVE



This service moves from prophetic expectation to awestruck wonder as we celebrate the Savior's birth with song and scripture. We'll celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper and conclude singing Silent Night in a sanctuary illuminated only by candlelight.

WHAT TIME SHOULD WE MEET? The Worship Ministry Team has been discussing this and would like to have the congregation's input before making a decision. Please help us by casting your vote for either **8:00PM OR 11:00PM**. You can do this in one of three ways by December 5th:

1. Call the church office at 412-241-4613
2. Email your choice to Judy or Pastor Michael
3. Go to the website and click "news" to cast your vote in the online poll.

So that we may properly get the word out (and adjust the sign put on the side lawn), please let us know your choice by no later than **Friday, December 5th**.

Wednesday Night Bible Study Begins Again in January

Due to the Advent dinner and study sessions scheduled for December, the regular weekly Wednesday Night Bible Study is on a temporary hiatus.

Beginning on **January 21, 2015** we will pick up with "An Eagle's Eye View of the Bible." Join us each Wednesday night as we start an adventure through every book of the Bible, continuing over the next year and a half or so. This study is a good way to get introduced to the Scripture and God's story. If you ever wanted to get in on a Bible study at the beginning, now would be the time.



P.W. Corner

Lori Stutz
Moderator



PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

There certainly is a chill in the air these days, however, not for us in PW. It certainly got cold early this year. But our hearts are warm with the activity of fellowship. I'd like to share with you some of things we've done and plan on doing in PW.

This year we will have our officers stay the same until actually January of 2016: Myself, as Moderator, Tina Nine as Vice-Moderator, Sallie Monk as Secretary and Mary Ross as Treasurer.

This past year we had to reschedule our winter months meetings several times. We started some new things, such as a planning committee, our Mission Fund, and did some old things like the Peach Festival and Flea Market. We have decided for this upcoming year not to have the Peach Festival. But the Flea Market is a definite go, we are actually planning on making it a three-day event. Sallie Monk will be this year's Flea Market chair, please contact Sallie, if you'd like to help or donate. The Flea Market will run April 24,25, and 26. We also were lucky enough to have Luella Broe, and Evelyn McKee become our correspondence secretaries.

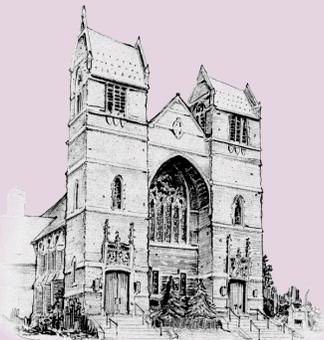
We gave a donation towards church repairs and several mission projects. Mission is a big focus for us, near and far. We collected the Thank Offering to help our Presbytery with their mission projects and national mission projects. We've started a daytime circle under the direction of Tina Nine and Patti Mielke. Some of our circle time is us all coming together and laughing to sometimes, practically, the verge of wiping our eyes. We have concentrated on coming together and supporting each other in laughter and fellowship, not just in circle but in many other times as well. We've come together and planned and thought of new ideas for future Mission Projects, even set up a Mission Fund available to all members of our church. We are grateful to Tina Nine for chairing this project and for Elaine Cloonan, and Mary Ross for serving on this committee. We are also so grateful to Tina for opening her home for many fun times and parties. We would like to thank Elizabeth Hand, who continues to support us even when she cannot physically be present. We continue to have a good time and try to think of ways we can improve the church, also the community around us. I have been truly overwhelmed by the help, hard work, and support that I have witnessed from all of our ladies. We hope that during this time of Advent that you too, may think and reflect, on the wonderful fellowship, work, and all things that you've received this year from our church family.

Wishing all of our FPCE family a magical Christmas and blessed New Year!

**A monthly support group
for people surviving the
loss of a love**

GRIEVING SPACE

at the First Presbyterian Church of Edgewood



First Presbyterian Church of Edgewood
Rev. Michael Rucker, Interim Pastor
120 East Swissvale Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15218

412-241-4613
office@fpcedgewood.org
www.fpcedgewood.org

Here, we understand that finding the space to grieve can sometimes be every bit as challenging as the loss itself.

Should you need us, our support group is here.

Meetings: every third Thursday of the month, 7pm

Call us to let us know you are coming: 412-241-4613

Individual support with a certified grief counselor is also available through:



Edgewood Psychological Services



Shaun Cloonan
Minister of Music

MUSIC Ministry

I know you'll receive this after the fact, but as I write this, it's the day before Thanksgiving, and I feel that I must share my thanks for your overwhelming support of all that we do in the music ministry here at FPCE. November 9 marked a first for us as a congregation, and one of the most well-attended events we've had at our church in recent memory. Thanks to the generosity of our staff, session, music ministry and worship teams, we hosted well over 250 female singers from 5 different vocal ensembles and probably just as many audience members for a regional Women's Choral Festival. The church was filled with music from the first group's arrival at 1:00 until the last note was sung around 4:00. People were everywhere! Cars were everywhere! There was barely a seat to be had in our sanctuary! And our amazing church family put on its best hospitality by making sure everything ran smoothly.

I sent out a separate thank you note to each of the folks involved in the planning and execution of the day, but here's a quick shout-out to: Jim Segedy, Ruth Miller, Marcia Haley, Mandy Rineer, Tim Carr, Elaine Cloonan, Judy Mysels, Jeff Nine, Tom Ochs, and Pastor Michael. From arranging parking to traffic cop, to setting up/tearing down risers, counting and passing out programs, directing groups to their rooms, these folks took care of details while "Mr. Cloonan" was busy taking care of his own group of 70 high school girls. It was a fantastic day, and I'm grateful to you all for helping to make a memorable day.

I'm also thrilled to be able to bring my worlds together again on December 21st. The auditioned ensemble I work with after school, The North Hills Singers, will join us for worship and a mini-concert following worship. I love days like this when you all get to see what I do daily and some of the students I get to work with, and they get to see the other part of me, this wonderful worshiping community and family of faith that is so much a part of who I am. Of course I had to tell them we'd feed them, so if you care to bring in a dish to fill those high school teenager appetites, I'd be most appreciative!

A most blessed and happy holidays, and Merry Christmas to you all!

Jewelry Sale

Jewelry sale after church Sunday Dec 14. Once again I'll be selling my handmade jewelry at deep discount, with all proceeds going to the Deacons' ministry.



The Bulletin Board

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

- A Thank-you letter was received from the Pittsburgh Assistance Center for Educators and Students (PACES), the non-profit group we worked with this fall on the Stock-the-School supply drive for Wilkinsburg Middle School. A few highlights from the letter written by FPCE member and PACES Founder, Emily Lilly states: "The generous contribution of instruments and supplies were delivered to Wilkinsburg Middle School on October 31, 2014, in care of music teacher Ray Strobel. The wonderful donation from FPCE included: one baritone, one bass drum stand, two snare drum stands, four drum stick sets, ten clarinet mouthpieces, 25 alto saxophone reeds, 25 clarinet reeds, and various other supplies such as markers, pencils, and posters. Mr. Strobel expressed his sincere gratitude, writing to PACES that the unexpected generosity was 'all a huge blessing.'" THANK YOU to all who contributed on behalf of FPCE! To read the full letter that details all contributions read, go to the website and click "mission."
- Prayers of sympathy go to the Stevens family on the passing of Douglas W. Stevens, Sr., father of former FPCE pastor, the Rev. Dr. Douglas W. Stevens, Jr.. Several members have asked about an address to send cards and notes of condolence. Mail can be sent to:
Doug Stevens, Jr.
1340 Paulton Street
Johnstown, PA 15905
- You'll notice when you come to church this Advent and Christmas season that the sanctuary decorations have been "spruced up" a bit. A new tree was donated by and in memory of Al and Ceil Hartman, and new lighted garland and ribbons were donated by Shaun Cloonan. Thank you to both for your generosity. We hope over the next year or 2 to replace a few more items as well.

DECEMBER



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>C=Choir Room GP=Gathering Place L=Lounge O=Office PS=Pastor's Study S=Sanctuary SC=Scout Room SR=Social Room</p>	1 7:00 Deacons (L)	2 3:45 FROGS 7:00 ESO rehearsal No AA's	3 7:00 Advent Study	4 3:45 FROGS	5 5:00 AA Christmas Party (SR)	6 7:30 ESO Concert No AA's
<p>7 COMMUNION</p> <p>9:30 Choir (C) 9:45 Pollyanna (GP) 9:45 Adult Class (L) 11:00 Worship (S) 12:15 Cong. Mtg.</p>	8 7:00 Men's Group 7:00 Scouts (SC)	9 3:45 FROGS 7:00 Session (L) 7:00 AA (SR)	10 7:00 Advent Study	11 1:00 PW Circle (GP) 3:45 FROGS	12 8:00 AA (SR)	13 4:00 P.W. Christmas Party (Nine's house) 8:30 AA (SR)
<p>14 TAIZE WORSHIP</p> <p>9:30 Choir (C) 9:45 Pollyanna (GP) 9:45 Adult Class (L) 11:00 Worship (S) 12:15 Fellowship (L)</p>	15 7:00 Scouts (SC)	16 3:45 FROGS 7:00 AA (SR)	17 7:00 Advent Study	18 3:45 FROGS 7:00 Grief Group	19 9AM-2PM Prayer Vigil 8:00 AA (SR)	20 8:30 AA (SR)
<p>21 LESSONS & CAROLS</p> <p>9:30 Choirs (C) 9:45 Pollyanna (GP) 9:45 Adult Class (L) 11:00 Worship (S) 12:00 Mini-Concert by NH Singers (S) 12:15 Fellowship (L)</p>	22 7:00 Men's Group 7:00 Scouts (SC)	23 NO FROGS 7:00 AA (SR)	24 7:00 or 10:00 Choir Rehearsal 8:00 OR 11:00 Christmas Eve Service (S)	25 CHRISTMAS DAY	26 OFFICE CLOSED 8:00 AA (SR)	27 8:30 AA (SR)
<p>28 SNUGGIE SUNDAY</p> <p>11:00 Worship (L)</p>	29	30 NO FROGS 7:00 AA (SR)	31	<p>This month's newsletter is sponsored by <i>Bill & Martha Crean</i></p>		

Glory
to the
Newborn
King!

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS



Poinsettia plants may be contributed by anyone to help decorate the sanctuary for the Advent season. Please fill out the order blank below and place it in the offering plate or mail it to the Church Office. **Deadline is December 7, 2014.**

I wish to contribute _____ Poinsettia(s) for the beautification of the Church Sanctuary for Christmas.

I would like choice of color: ___red ___white ___marble

Please attach a check or money to this order form. Make all checks payable to First Presbyterian Church of Edgewood. **The cost is \$7.50 per plant.**

The wording: ___In honor of: _____In loving memory of:

By: _____

___I wish to take my plant after the Christmas Eve candlelight service.