



All of Holy Week points toward the passion — the death and resurrection of Christ. The week's final three days (from sunset Thursday to sunset on Easter) complete the commemoration of Christ's passion. These three days are called the Triduum.

Because of this interrelationship of the three days, each service of the Triduum needs the others to tell the whole story. For example, resurrection is incomprehensible without Christ's self-giving in crucifixion and at the Lord's Supper. Therefore, Easter needs Good Friday and Maundy Thursday to be fully understood. The way to the triumph of Easter is through the Triduum.

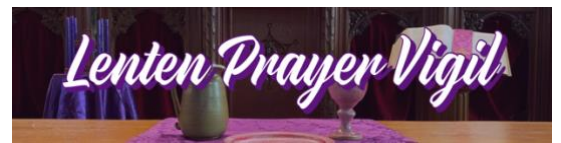
All of Holy Week, and particularly its three concluding days (the Triduum), provides an opportunity to undertake a pilgrimage of renewed commitment and joy; to travel Christ's path of servanthood, through the Lord's Supper and the suffering of the cross, as we move toward Easter. Our joy during the great festival of resurrection will be enhanced by faithful participation in worship during the preceding week, especially during the whole of the Triduum.

Here at First Presbyterian Church of Edgewood, we will observe the Triduum in several ways:

Lenten Prayer Vigil

Maundy Thursday, April 1 from 9:00AM-2:00PM

Our sanctuary will be open and available for individual prayer and meditation. A prayer station will be set up in front of the sanctuary with candles, a Bible, and devotionals for you to enhance your contemplative time of reflection.



Sign up for 30-minute slots by either calling or emailing the Church Office. You may also reserve your slot online at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C48A9AB29A1F8C07-lenten>



Good Friday Worship

Friday, April 2 at 7:00PM in the Sanctuary

We will begin with communion in honor of the Last Supper on Maundy Thursday before moving into the events of the Passion, including the death of Jesus on the cross. The service will be live streamed on Facebook as well for those who choose to worship from home.

Easter Sunday

Sunday, April 4 at 11:00AM in the Sanctuary

We celebrate the resurrection of Christ, share in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and proclaim "He is Risen!" Pastor Tony will preach from 1 Corinthians 15:1-8.



PASTOR'S POINT OF VIEW



No passage in the entire corpus of Scripture captures the intensity of Good Friday like Isaiah 53. Known as the chapter of the Suffering Servant, the prophet Isaiah gives a vivid description of Jesus as He hung on a cross for six long hours, and the significance of what was transpiring that day.

“Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of parched ground; He has no stately form or majesty that we should look upon Him, nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him.”

“He was despised and forsaken of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and like one from whom men hide their face He was despised, and **we did not** esteem Him. Surely **our griefs** He bore, and our sorrows He carried; yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted.”

“**But** He was pierced for **our transgressions**, He was crushed for **our iniquities**; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed.”

“All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned his own way; but the Lord has caused **the iniquity of us all** to fall on Him.”

“But the Lord was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief; if He would render Himself as a guilt offering, He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, and the good pleasure of the Lord will prosper in His hand.”

“As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it and be satisfied; by His knowledge, the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify many, as He will bear their iniquities.”

“Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, and He will divide the booty with the strong; because He poured out Himself to death, and He was numbered with the transgressors; yet **He Himself bore the sin of many** and interceded for transgressors.”

Indeed, who *can* believe this report? Jesus hung on the cross, the Lamb of God. Jesus, as the Lamb, takes upon Himself the wrath of God; Jesus, as the Lamb, is the guilt offering lifted up to God for sin. On that day, human time and eternity came to a climatic crescendo. Humanity was, and continues to be, in a state of separation – in a



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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.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

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LOVE GOD
EACH OTHER
OUR NEIGHBORS

state of war with God because of sin. No relationship exists between the two due to the human fraction of disobedience and self-pride. In the Triune God's infinite grace, God saw fit to send God the Son to reconcile humanity back to the Father (2 Corinthians 5.14-19). At the appropriate time, God the Son incarnated in human flesh to reveal the character and nature of the Godhead. Jesus came for this moment. There was nothing humanity could do to restore what had been lost, and to correct the infraction committed by Adam. It took the Triune God to do it all! God "[The Father] made Him [God the Son] who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf. . ." For what reason? ". . .So that we might become the righteousness of God in Him," (2 Corinthians 5.21).

Three days later, however, as the sun rose in the horizon, the tomb in which Jesus had been buried was empty. The women who went to anoint His body noted that the stone had been rolled and, in their confusion, they met a young man who declared, "He has risen; He is not here. Go, tell His disciples!" (Mark 16.1-8). Indeed, Jesus rose from the dead on the third day, just like He said He would; not as a ghost, but in the flesh! As God the Son, Jesus overcomes death because He is God! Nothing can keep God down! And that is the core belief of the Christian faith – that Christ rose from the dead. As a result, the Christian can confidently look at death and not be afraid; it has been beaten; it has been defeated. God has done it all!

Glory be to God!

God's grace and peace be with you.



Session Notes

During March Session approved the following:

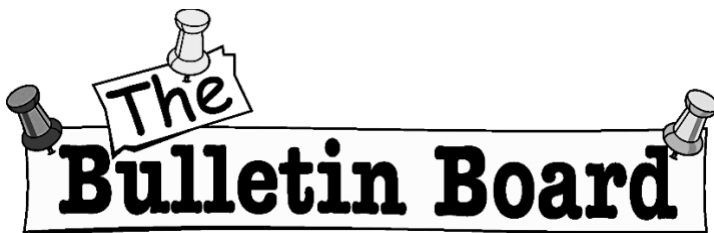
- Space rental by Vocal Confluence on Monday and Wednesday nights at \$50/night.
- Use of the Sanctuary by the ESO for 2 hour practice rehearsals on the following dates: 3/15, 19, 22, 26, 29, 4/2 at a cost of \$100/session during the time frame of 10AM-2PM.
- Communion dates: 3/7, 4/2 (Joint Maundy Thursday/Good Friday), 4/4, 5/2, 5/23 (Pentecost), 6/6, 7/4, 8/8, 9/5, 10/3, 11/7, and 12/6/2021.

Wilkinsburg Community Ministry Easter Distribution

We are planning an Easter dinner distribution on the Thursday before Easter. Easter this year is April 4, so we will be distributing on (no joke) April 1. The plan is to buy some pork roasts, chickens, and hams at Costco and to include various fixings with the meat entrée. We are planning on up to 70 families. This is not as intensive as our other Holiday distributions. If you want to contribute, or your congregation wants to collect items, we need Giant Eagle gift cards (\$25), corn bread mix, cans of green beans, stove top stuffing, canned pineapple, or cash donations to help fund the purchase of the meat. We will be applying funds for this event until the end of April.



WILKINSBURG
COMMUNITY MINISTRY



Sharing the Joys & Concerns of FPCE

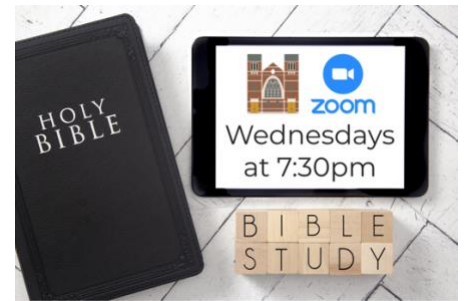
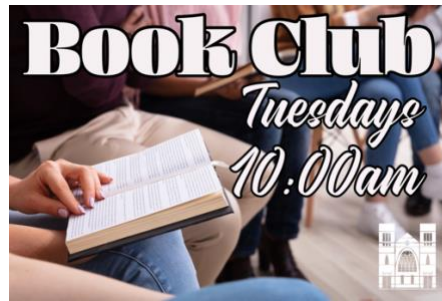
- Sympathies to Marian Neilson and family in the passing of Joanne Peterson Neilson on 3/22/21

Online Zoom Meetings Continue in April

We will continue our weekly gatherings on Zoom for prayer, discussion, and study.

On Mondays at 7:30pm, we gather for intentional prayer focusing on our members, community, and world. Tuesday mornings at 10:00am is the weekly Book Club meeting. The group decides on a book that they read together and discuss the week's portion. During March, they focused on Lamentations as a Lenten study. And Wednesday evenings at 7:30pm is a Bible study led by Pastor Tony.

An e-mail invitation is sent out weekly with Zoom links, meeting ID and passcode. To be added to the email list, contact the office. And if you don't use Zoom on your device, you can call in to the meetings to participate by voice. Call Judy in the office to receive the number, meeting ID and passcode to participate if you don't receive the email.



Reminder of In-Person Worship Guidelines

- everyone must wear a mask properly
- there is a 50-person maximum capacity in the sanctuary, including the pastor and worship staff
- refrain from singing, handshaking, and hugging
- please move personal discussions after the service outdoors to avoid inside gatherings
- please observe social distancing in the pews - space apart from each other in the marked pews

We understand that each person is different with the possible risks he or she may have. Live-streamed online worship will continue to be available on Facebook and YouTube for those who choose to stay home until they feel safe to rejoin in person.



In addition, we have pre-made communion kits available for those who would like to participate in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper from home. You can pick them up at the church during normal office hours, Monday-Friday 9am-2pm.

Eagle Scout Project to Benefit the Community of Edgewood, PA

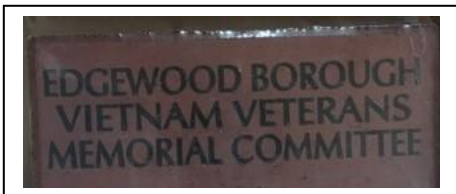


My name is Edward Lockman and I am a senior at Central Catholic High School and a Life Scout with Boy Scouts of America Troop 23. I need your assistance in helping me to build a 14-foot octagonal handicapped accessible Gazebo with benches, Walkway and Landscaping at Memorial Park, so that the residents and veterans can enjoy them.

The cost of materials for the Gazebo, plants and bricks for the walkway is over

\$15,000. Please help achieve this goal by visiting my gofundme page: <https://gf.me/u/y8sr5g>

And/or, ordering personalized, engraved bricks to be used around the flag pole and/or lining the walkway to the new gazebo. Your engraved inscription must follow the following directions. A character is defined as a letter or number, a space or punctuation mark. The bricks can be engraved with upper or lowercase letters.



You can order a 4"x 8" brick with up to 3 lines of engraving and up to 18 characters per line for only \$50.00.

You can order an 8" x 8" brick with up to 6 lines of engraving and up to 18 characters per line for only \$125.00

Please return information and your check payable to:
Gazebo Eagle Project
c/o Wayne Dean
710 Walnut Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15221

Please include: Name, Address, Phone Number, Email Address, and Amount Paid.

Thank you for your generosity in helping this special project that benefits the Edgewood Community. I appreciate your support with my Eagle Scout Project!

To learn more about my project please visit my YouTube video: <https://youtu.be/kc2uvaAJvqc>

If you know anyone that would like to support my efforts, please share the information with them. Questions: Please email: noreenlockman@yahoo.com or call/text: 724-920-4281.

Hurry Up and Wait

A Letter to Pittsburgh Presbytery from Rev. Dr. Sheldon W. Sorge, General Minister
Thursday, March 18, 2021



Jesus gave his disciples repeated warnings that soon he would be crucified. Understandably, one of their reactions was to object, something Jesus responded to with sharp rebuke. ([Mark 8:33](#)) But the reaction most often reported was bewilderment. They did not understand what he was talking about, as their foreboding over the unknowns that lay ahead burgeoned.

This much they did know – they were already being threatened by the religious establishment, and that threat was escalating. All they could do was wait for what was sure to come, for the other shoe to drop. Dread over the gathering storm was mixed with and muddled by their hope that Jesus would deliver Israel from its captivity to Rome and its vassals.

We think of Advent as the season of waiting, but surely Lent is also such a season. [As I said last week](#), our COVID curtailment feels like a year-long Lenten journey. Like Jesus' disciples as they walked to Jerusalem that final time, we have journeyed this year not knowing what lies ahead and when our distress will pass.

A new kind of waiting has consumed us recently, the vaccination wait. We must wait until we are deemed eligible for a vaccine before we can even sign up for one. Then, when we become eligible, we must wait until we can find an available appointment – some have waited on the phone and online for weeks just to get on the schedule. Once we get the appointment, there is usually another wait of several weeks before administration of our first dose. Then we must wait at least three weeks for the second dose. Then we must wait for another two weeks before the vaccine is fully effective.

Once we are finally immunized, we will still have to wait – we know not for how long – until enough of the population is immunized, before we can begin gathering again unrestricted.

Like Jesus' disciples, we find signs and words of death and resurrection bewildering at best. We fear that we'll never be able to return to "normal," forgetting how we had complained pre-pandemic about how untenable our "normal" had become.

Only after Jesus' resurrection were his disciples able to understand what he had been telling them all along. I suspect that we too won't really understand the journey we have walked this past year, until our own resurrection from its ashes has taken place.

Jesus' disciples did not understand what lay ahead as they walked their journey to Jerusalem with him. But this much they did know – their only way forward was to stick with him. As many of his companions abandoned him, Jesus asked the Twelve whether they too wanted to leave, and Peter replied that anyone interested in words of eternal life has no choice but to stick with Jesus. ([John 6:66-69](#)) "We might as well go to Jerusalem and die with him," Thomas [sighed](#) as Jesus made ready to travel to Jerusalem.

We don't know how long we'll have to wait until it's safe to gather together again, or how those gatherings will look post-pandemic. But this we know – as long as we stay in company with our fellow-disciples as we follow the Master, all shall be well. It is in this company that we have found the springs of life abundant. It is in this company that we have been comforted in sorrow and have celebrated in joy. It is in this company that we have been called and mobilized to serve the world around us.

The pandemic has made us more aware of the importance of keeping company for our own well-being. We tend not to appreciate things of great value until they are taken from us. Being in company with each other virtually is all the more important when we are prevented from being in company physically. Yet we yearn for more than virtual companionship, longing for the day when we can worship together, break bread together, and work together side by side.

I am grateful that I was able to receive both COVID vaccine doses last month. When I entered the clinic for my second shot I realized to my dismay that I'd forgotten my constant companion (*aka* my smartphone) in the car. What would I do for those 15 long minutes that I had to sit there after getting my shot? I struck up a conversation with the nurse who administered the vaccine, and soon discovered that we shared history in upstate New York, and enjoyed a wonderful conversation. That would never have happened if I hadn't forgotten my phone. I find that I must beware settling for virtual connections as a substitute for personal connections.

Keeping company with each other virtually is a wonderful gift when physical company is not possible. But it is just a substitute for something far better. Keeping company with each other requires us to walk together, not just to talk together.

Your companion in the journey,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Sheldon". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional but personal style.

Sheldon

What has the pandemic taught the church?

Posted on the *Presbyterian Outlook* blog March 23, 2021 by [Rebecca Gresham-Kesner](#)

The biggest takeaway in pandemic learning for the church is that we can adapt and change quickly.

I had just a few days' notice to bring worship online instead of in the building — and now, a year later, it is part of our rhythm. In fact, the church's online worship has reached new people and we hope to continue livestreaming worship for the foreseeable future. A year ago, I would have told you livestreaming worship just was not a priority for the congregation. But now, I have watched all sorts of churches adapt in amazing and unique ways. Do not get me wrong – I long to have people in pews again – but having to do this has taught us a great bit about how God can stretch us.

I did not grow up in the church. I made a choice to be Presbyterian. I learned a lot about many of our fellow denominations, but I never quite felt at home anywhere else like I do among my fellow Presbyterians. I love the way our polity works, that we use votes and majorities and that we listen to voices that are not our own (at least in theory, this may be a growing edge for all of us). Yet, our process, which is dear to my heart, sometimes slows down how we live into the call to be the church. Changes do need to be thought out well and prayed through, but they do not, perhaps, need to take years of meetings to accomplish. When left with the choice of not meeting at all or finding a way to do it online, we adapted quickly. I hope this memory can serve us well into the future.

I fear that sometimes we let the process slow us down out of our own fears and desires to stay comfortable. We can forget that God is always calling us to be the church in the here and now — and that the Spirit is always moving and equipping us with the gifts we need to meet the needs of our faith communities and the broader community. I understand that change is hard. I have my own preferences and fears — and I do not always want to embrace change either. It makes us uncomfortable, and yet we are still called to grow in our faith lives and our communal lives to be the church in our current context. I once sat through more than *six months* of meetings about a small, energy-efficient change that would not be visible, but would help reduce expenses and increase our care for creation. If we get bogged down in our own process, we sometimes miss the moment to make the change and we end up doing it too late and then the results just don't turn out how we would like.

During this year of the COVID-19 pandemic, I have learned that we can absolutely embrace our process for decision-making and lead changes in a timely and effective manner. At the end of the day, it wasn't just worship that changed this past year — the entire way we are the church in sacred community has changed, and there was not a single series of meetings to make it happen. Only regular monthly meetings where adaptations were dreamed up, tried, tweaked and lived into. For this I will be forever grateful. I hope we continue to live into answering the call without dragging our feet quite so much.

REBECCA GRESHAM-KESNER is pastor at Faith Presbyterian Church in Medford, New Jersey. Outside of church and family life, you can find her in nature, finding fun ways to be creative or asking awkwardly deep questions of people she just met.



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The Community Church





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A grayscale photograph of a brick church building with a prominent Gothic-style window and a steeple, serving as the background for the banner.

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AND ONLINE WORSHIP**

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