



## Online Worship, Communication Continues During Pandemic & Pastoral Transition

“What a time to be alive!” That’s a phrase that often gets included in social media posts when a person experiences something they can’t quite believe. Well, that’s certainly appropriate for this time we are all collectively making our way through. How many people can say that they’ve experienced a simultaneous global pandemic and a pastoral transition? What a time to be alive!

All members of FPCE should have received a postcard a few weeks ago reminding you that even though our physical building may not be available, that doesn’t mean your church family has disappeared! The Session and church staff have been meeting virtually, Judy is back in the office, Sunny, Shaun, and John meet on Friday afternoons with our guest preachers to record worship, and we’re providing communication through emails, website and social media updates. Our “prayer warriors” team is still active with their online communication, keeping up on the joys and concerns of the congregation. The Pastor Nominating Committee has been continuing their work. The Parish Life Committee has reactivated and is attempting to reach out to our members, keeping us connected. It may not be gatherings in the Lounge, Gathering Place, or Sanctuary, but it’s a connection, nonetheless. We are trying to live out our mission to love God, to love each other, and to love our neighbors.



Until it is safe to be together in groups again, we will continue the online worship we have offered since closures began in March. We record on Friday afternoons for those interested in joining us socially distanced in the back of the sanctuary with masks. You are invited to join in the responses but to refrain from singing hymns. The video is edited after recording to include text and is posted on YouTube. Shaun sends an email out on Sunday morning with the link. If you are not receiving the emails and would like to be included, please email [music@fpcedgewood.org](mailto:music@fpcedgewood.org).

### Sunday, August 2

The Reverend Kellie Weekley-Mills joins us again this week. She will preach part 2 of her mini-sermon series, this week based on Exodus 32:1-6 and titled “Tethered. Yet Boundless.”

### Sunday, August 9

The Reverend Brian Wallace, Associate Pastor to Pittsburgh Presbytery, returns to FPCE to lead us in worship that includes the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. For those attending the recording session on Friday afternoon, we will have the elements sitting in the back of the sanctuary to take upon arrival so that you may partake when invited to do so. Those watching from home are invited to prepare bread and cup before watching to partake as well.

### Sundays, August 16, 23, and 30

The worship committee is working on securing guest preachers for these weeks. Stay tuned!



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www.fpcedgewood.org  
412-241-4613



*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

Office & Cleaning Manager  
FROGS Program Director

**Judy Mysels**

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Building Manager

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Minister of Music

**Shaun Cloonan**

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Pianist

**Sunny Sakal**

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**LOVE GOD  
EACH OTHER  
OUR NEIGHBORS**

## Wilkinsburg Community Ministry – Mission in our Back Yard



You hear it mentioned almost weekly in our worship services. We've mentioned our partnership with them for years. They are the largest portion of our mission budget. But do you know what WCM does for the community just a few blocks away?

Wilkinsburg Community Ministry provides services to approximately 5,000 residents per year, including senior citizens, citizens with disabilities, at-risk youth, and families who are economically challenged, unemployed, under-employed or facing emergency situations. The outcomes of our programs include reducing hunger in Wilkinsburg, ensuring the health and well-being of our senior citizen neighbors, helping economically-challenged families have basic necessities, such as food, diapers, clothing, and heat in their homes, and keeping Wilkinsburg streets safer through partnerships with educational and after-school youth programs. WCM is a collaboration of seven area churches, with members of the board representing each of the churches. In 1968, a number of clergy and lay leaders from ten congregations formed the Board of Directors for the Wilkinsburg Community Ministry. *The unity of several congregations makes it possible for WCM to meet the extreme needs of poverty and hunger in our community and provide effective community services to all persons regardless of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation and creed.*

**WCM Mission: Wilkinsburg Community Ministry, a non-profit supported by area residents and congregations, responds to persistent needs of all faiths, addressing the human service crises in our community.**

Wilkinsburg Community Ministry Programs include:

- **Youth Meal Partnership** – we prepare meals for school-aged children through after-school, summer, and special needs program partnerships;
- **Urban Survival Program** – helps families in tough situations through several initiatives: Emergency Food Pantry, Holiday Food Distribution, Clothing and Household Donations, SNAP Assistance, Energy Assistance and other Social Services.
- **Our Warm Hearts initiative**, with our partners at KnitOne, coordinates volunteer knitters and crocheters throughout Allegheny County to make hats, mittens and gloves for children. These are distributed through the school district, specifically through Kelly and Turner schools. This year we will also distribute some to crossing guards and bus drivers.

We welcome you to get involved in the Wilkinsburg community by volunteering and/or making a donation. **We appreciate your support and interest in making our community a better place to live, work, pray, and play.** For more information, visit their website at [wcm15221.org](http://wcm15221.org) or talk to board member Tom Ochs.

## WCM Backpack Program

FPCE has helped WCM in previous years with the purchase and assembly of backpacks stuffed with items needed for Wilksburg students returning to school. Here is a note from WCM Director Ruth Kittner about the program this year:



*"Hi all, Kerry at Kelly has said that they **do** need the backpacks and school supplies and hygiene kits. Regardless of how classes are run this year, kids will need these things to keep their stuff together. There are about 560 kids. I usually order the bags and kits separately, but given that there won't be any assembly space or community assembly, I can order everything pre-assembled. Our budget for this is \$2,500, so I'm going ahead and doing this. I'd like to add another \$650 for wholesale hand sanitizer. It's still hard (impossible?) to buy in regular stores. I hope the Board will approve this additional expense. For those of you with Congregations who want to collect hygiene items, Combs/brushes, tooth brushes (individual, and for little kids), tooth paste, soap, hand soap, wash clothes, hand towels, hair ornaments, small tissue packets, shampoo and conditioner (small and large bottles), hand and/or body lotion. There is also always a need for socks and underwear. Boys sizes 6-14 Girls sizes 4-16 "Socks child sizes: Toddler size L, Child size S-L Ankle socks, crew socks. Cotton or cotton blend is best."*

If you would like to participate by providing some of the needed items or a donation to help pay for the backpacks, please bring hygiene items to the side entry hall of the church or directly to WCM, 702 Wood Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15221. Check donations may be sent to FPCE marked "Backpacks."



## Pastoral Search Update

The Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) consisting of Tom Ochs, Marcia Haley, Tim Hoffman, Tim McKee, and myself has been working with Rev. Brian Wallace (Pittsburgh Presbytery) and Elder Ann Turnock on our Pastor Search process. Earlier this month, we posted an advertisement for a Tier 3 (part-time, 26-28 hours) pastor position on the Pittsburgh Presbytery website. Currently, we are waiting for responses.

*In Christ,  
Paul Ochori, PNC Chair*

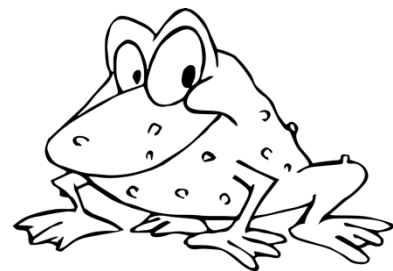
## Session Notes

- Weekly worship services at FPCE continue to be recorded and posted on the church website and social media pages on Sunday morning. People are invited to attend the recording sessions on Fridays at 1:00PM, if they choose. In this time of Coronavirus, we ask people not to come if they feel sick, have a fever, or have been to a COVID-19 hot spot over the last 2 weeks. Worshippers will be asked to enter through the Swissvale Ave. doors, sit near the rear of the sanctuary, wear masks, and practice social distancing. Hand sanitizers or sanitizing wipes will be available. Worshippers will be asked not to sing but may participate in responses as listed in the bulletin.
- Getting quotes for locking the side and social room doors.
- Approved use of the church side lawn for an Eagle Scout ceremony and reception for Tanner Maue on August 9, 2020 at 2:00PM. They will set up and take down. This approval is contingent on following the recommended social protocols.
- Authorization for Shaun Cloonan to spend \$500 to purchase a Mevo camera and needed accessories.

# F.R.O.G.S. AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

## FRIENDS, READING, & OTHER GREAT STUFF

Our FROGS program is ready to start up again in September/October... as soon as we hear what is decided at the Woodland Hills Board Meeting Tuesday night, July 28. Depending upon what is determined, we have a full roster of 15 youngsters and of course, our fantastic volunteers ready to resume. Judy and her volunteers met carefully in June to review last session and look forward to the upcoming session in September/October. We all miss our FROGS, especially since we really didn't get to say goodbye before abruptly ending in March. Will keep everyone posted on the developments.



### Who's on First?

It can sometimes get a little confusing with a congregation our size, when just about every member has served in a leadership role on Session or the Deacons at one point over the last 10 years, to remember who is currently serving and who oversees specific areas of our ministry. Especially considering we had a couple of virtual congregational meetings and email votes between January and April, it was suggested that we post the current elders and deacons for your information. As of the last official vote by the congregation, here is the leadership of FPCE:

#### THE SESSION

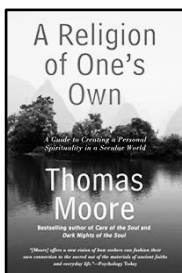
<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>
John Foster		Rhonda Apossos
Tyler McGuigan	Nancy Ernst	Tom Ochs
Tim McKee	Judy Mysels	Paul Ohori
Jim Segedy	Lisa Segedy	Florence Raisig

#### THE BOARD OF DEACONS

<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>
Wayne Dean	Mary Ann Hartman	Tim Carr
Amy Moore	Angel Lehrian	Diane Kemmerer
	Ed Masten	Glenn Allen Monk
	Rick Masten	Sallie Monk
	Karen Schoedel	

<u>Name</u>	<u>Email</u>	<u>Phone</u>
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Tyler McGuigan	m McGuigantyl@yahoo.com	728-4782
Timothy McKee	wtm396500@yahoo.com	680-4501
Jim Segedy	jimboseg@yahoo.com	680-2219
Nancy Ernst	melnern@comcast.net	731-4633
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Angel Lehrian	angel@lehrian.com	915-1120
Ed Masten		
Rick Masten	rmasten1@verizon.net	400-1136
Karen Schoedel	karenschoedel@gmail.com	422-0809
Tim Carr	j.timothy.carr@gmail.com	247-1721
Diane Kemmerer		
Glenn Allen Monk	Glennmonk66@gmail.com	727-6378
Sallie Monk		371-4344



### Christian Education News

The Tuesday Morning Book Club continues to meet each week outdoors on the Apossos' front porch. On July 1, we started a new book: *A Religion of One's Own* by Thomas Moore. This book is described as "a guide to creating a personal spirituality in a secular world". We discuss the book, problems facing the church and pray together. Coffee and cookies are provided. If this interests you, please contact any of our members, Rhonda Apossos, Marcia Haley, Liz Held, Sallie Monk and Tom Ochs.

### Parish Life Committee

Judy Mysels has revived the Parish Life Committee by reaching out to members/friends of the church by making phone calls, sending notes. Hope our calls and notes aren't obtrusive. We just wanted you all to know we are thinking about you, especially during these trying times.



## Financial Update

*Submitted by Tom Ochs, treasurer*

As of June 30, the income and expenses for FPCE are as follows:

Total Income - \$112,383.08 actual (YTD Budget - \$110,767.54)

Total Expense - \$112,865.13 actual (YTD Budget - \$122,068.25)

For both income and expenses FPCE is doing well considering the difficult current conditions. Although the budget for Donations 4010 has declined over the last several years, this year we are doing well and are about \$2,000 over budget. Since the church has been closed for the last three months, expenses have been below normal, especially utilities. This accounts for net income being \$10,818.66 over budget. All salaries have been maintained and we have received a loan of \$19,500.00 from the Payroll Protection Program, which should be forgiven in August. In addition, Pastor Michael's retirement on June 30, 2020 will reduce personnel expenses, even after a part time pastor position is filled. FPCE is fortunate to have a committed congregation that has maintained support of the church during this period of change.

## COVID-19 Safety Precautions for Recording Sessions

- The sanctuary is cleaned before and after each recording session, including wiping the pews, door handles, etc.
- Hand sanitizer is available at multiple stations. There is a touchless dispenser at the side door, and we are ordering additional touchless dispensers.
- We ask that you wear a mask when in the building.
- We ask that you stay home if experiencing any of the symptoms identified by the CDC.

## Prayer Warriors

Did you know that we have a dedicated group that prays for you constantly? A core group of FPCE members maintain a prayer list that is continually updated as joys and concerns are passed along in the life of our congregation. They set aside intentional time and pray for specific individuals or situations that are brought to their attention and follow up on those prayer requests with calls and emails. If you would like to know more about our "Prayer Warriors" or would like to be added to the email list and make intentional prayer a focus of yours, please contact Michelle Santo at [cshell73@yahoo.com](mailto:cshell73@yahoo.com).



## The Digital Upper Room

As a subscriber to *The Upper Room* devotional, FPCE was given access to a PDF version of the July-August issue through a private link on the publisher's website. Shaun attached it to the email announcing the link to the July 12 worship service. If you accidentally deleted the message and would like the file sent to you again, just email [music@fpcedgewood.org](mailto:music@fpcedgewood.org).

## Our Online Adventures

The COVID Crisis forced everyone to become instant experts in digital communication. Teachers converted lessons into online formats, recording videos, setting up Google Classrooms. Companies instituted remote working procedures. Zoom was no longer a word that was whispered in a Mazda commercial but rather a way to hold meetings, virtual happy hours, family group chats, and more. Late night TV hosts began doing their shows from home. And of course, the church had to adapt as well.

*(continued on next page)*

When we began the closures, physically meeting in the church was not something we were able to do. There was exposure in the Sakai household due to Ted's hospital work, and Sunny had to self-quarantine for 2 weeks. But we wanted church to take place. So, I made us a SoundCloud channel and began creating audio versions of our service. Pastor Michael recorded a voice memo on his phone doing all of the spoken parts of the worship, Sunny recorded herself playing the hymns, which she emailed me, then I recorded myself singing overtop of her track. Then I put it all in GarageBand and made it seem like we were all in the room together doing a regular worship service. Technology is pretty cool, huh?

Michael felt he needed to provide spiritual guidance since this was all new for all of us. His weekly emails became almost daily inspirational messages and check-ins to see how we were doing. In the absence of a choir and regular worship, Sunny and I began recording hymns and anthems, and I posted regular videos to keep us connected musically. Our presence on Facebook and Instagram increased dramatically.



By the time May arrived, we felt we could finally begin doing videos of our services in person, in the sanctuary. While many churches are doing a live streaming version of their worship at the time they would normally meet in person, we didn't yet have the equipment to pull that off. So, we began what is now our regular schedule of recording on Fridays, which I then edit to include all of the responses and hymns before posting on YouTube and emailing to everyone. A special shout-out to elder John Foster for meeting us each week and running the camera!

Once Allegheny County moved to the green phase allowing group gatherings, and after MUCH discussion with the Worship Committee, we compromised with offering an in-person experience socially distanced in the sanctuary to anyone interested when we record. The largest group we have had so far is 5, but that's ok!

So now, here we are in August. The virus is dictating how we live our lives. As cases increase, more restrictions are put in place. Schools and Universities are trying to decide how best to get students back in class. Musical organizations and sports teams are canceling whole seasons or making dramatic changes to how they function. While we search for a pastor, I've assumed the duties of sending out emails (which I hope you find meaningful and helpful in your spiritual lives). I thought it was worth sprucing up and updating our website since we're basically trying to sell a virtual version of our congregation to a potential new leader. If you go to [fpcedgewood.org](http://fpcedgewood.org), you'll notice a nice, clean, and modern new look, with more current photos, and updated content to reflect our activities, events, and ministries over the past couple of years. Any updates or messages that are sent out via email are posted on the website, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

We don't know how long this will go on...both the pandemic and our search! What we do know is that we have an amazing guide who gifts us with talents to continue the work of the kingdom in whatever way works best at the time. One of the hymns we have used as a gathering song (which I just realized was written by our own Pastor to Pittsburgh Presbytery, Sheldon Sorge!) paraphrases Psalm 62 as follows:

"God is my rock; God is my strength;  
God is my salvation,  
my refuge, my abiding peace.  
I shall not be shaken."

May we rely on that rock for strength as we keep moving forward as the family of faith in Edgewood.

Peace,  
Shaun

## Sharing the Joys & Concerns of FPCE

- Proud Grandma, Ruth Miller's grandson, Daniel, graduated from Washington & Jefferson on May 16 and was on the Dean's List – “so very proud of him”
- Cathy Fisher makes her daily walks more exciting. She found an old kite in her garage and decided to try it out as she walked at one of the Penn Hills schools. It worked so well that she now has four kites and takes turns with them. She has fun talking with people old enough to remember kites and younger people who never used one when they were kids.
- Flo and Russ Raisig welcome grandson Kenneth Craig Simon, born June 28, 2020, to their daughter and son-in-law, Elizabeth and Scott Simon.
- Sympathies to Brenda and the extended McCrady family in the passing of Ed McCrady



## EDGEWOOD

Typically, this month you would see calls for volunteers to help us work the FPCE booth at the annual Edgewood Community Day celebration. For obvious reasons, this year Community Day will not take place in person. However, the Edgewood Volunteer Fire Department invites you to a “drive-thru” pasta dinner, Saturday, August 15th, from 2pm-7pm! Enjoy a night off from cooking, while supporting the EVFD!

In lieu of our famous Community Day chicken & rib dinners this year, we will instead be hosting a “socially distant” pasta dinner. Stay in your car and drive through the fire station on Race Street! \$10 per dinner. Each dinner includes rigatoni with red sauce, salad, roll, & choice of drink (*sauce optional*). Baked goods will also be available for sale, priced between \$1-10. Payments can be made electronically using a credit card, Apple Pay or Google Pay.

Free delivery available for more than 5 dinners ordered by calling Steve at (412) 901-3096.

## A Word from Pastor Michael

You all continue to be a generous and kind blessing to me. Yes, it was very odd to deliver my last sermon to Shaun, Sunny, John, and four masked adults sitting as far from me as possible. What strange, unnerving days these are! Yet the warm memories I have of you have not faded. In spite of the pandemic, you gave me a beautiful retirement. I want to especially thank so many of you for your cards. The video Shaun put at the end of my final service of people wishing us well brought tears to my eyes and put a glow in our hearts. The card and generous gift from all of you that Shaun gave me after the June 28 service was extremely generous. I am remaining in contact with FPCE members who are home bound and will do all I can for those of you who are hospitalized etc. until a new pastor or interim is found. Finally, my new email is [mprucker2@gmail.com](mailto:mprucker2@gmail.com). Heather and I are doing well. May God be with you just as you need him to be!



*Peace,  
Pastor Michael*



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