



news from the **EDGE**

120 East Swissvale Avenue

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15218

412-241-4613

office@fpcedgewood.org

DECEMBER 2012

LOVE GOD LEACH OTHER OUR NEIGHBORS

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**.

WORSHIP

Sunday Mornings
11:00AM
in the
Sanctuary

www.fpcedgewood.org

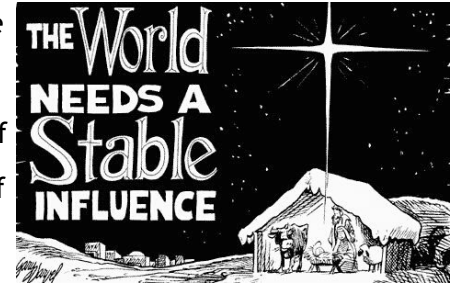
This month's
news from the **EDGE**

is sponsored by

YOU?

Sponsors are needed for upcoming issues. Contact the office.

“Advent” means “coming” or “arrival.” During the season of Advent, we celebrate Christ’s coming into the world and watch with expectant hope for his coming again. In its historical origins, the season of Advent was patterned after the season of Lent, a six-week period of penitence and preparation for Easter. Similarly, the four weeks of Advent present an opportunity for communal discernment and personal examination, as the church prepares to celebrate the Nativity of the Lord and looks with hope for Christ’s return.



BETWEEN MEMORY AND HOPE

An excerpt from the *Companion to the Book of Common Worship*:

In Advent we expectantly wait for the One who has already come. We anticipate the promised justice of God’s new world, yet we praise God who raised the “righteous branch” to rule with justice and righteousness. We hope for the restoration of the afflicted, the tormented, and the grieving, yet we delight that healing has come in Christ. We long for the beating of swords into plowshares, yet we rejoice that the Prince of Peace has appeared. We yearn for the barren deserts of our inner cities to flourish, yet we laud the desert Rose that has bloomed. We dream of the land where lions and lambs live in harmony, yet we acclaim the child born to lead us into the promised land.

Christ has come! Christ is risen! Christ will come again! In Advent, we are living between the first and the second coming of the Lord. The dialectical tension of maranatha [alternately translated “Come, our Lord!” or “Our Lord has come!”] – placing us between memory and hope, past and future – may strengthen our Advent liturgies. Perhaps we need to cling to the ancient cry of *maranatha!* and its paradoxical meanings so we may freely embrace “the new thing” prophesied by Isaiah (Isaiah 43:19) that God is doing among us right now. The tension and paradox we find in Advent shapes our celebrations during the season.

Sunday Worship Schedule

Worship Alert!

Sunday morning worship at FPCE can become a vital, meaningful and (yes) fun part of your weekend. Join us - bring a friend!

Sunday, December 2

We usher in the season of Advent with a worship service including the Sacrament of Holy Communion. Come prepared to sing a few of our favorite advent songs.

Sunday, December 9

The words of scripture, song and sermon, John the Baptizer will make his annual rousing visit. Read Malachi 3:1-4 & Luke 3:1-6.

Sunday, December 16

Our Emerging Worship Ensemble will help us worship in a variety of musical styles.

Sunday, December 23

The Fourth Sunday of Advent will focus on Mary’s powerful song celebrating the salvation her baby boy will bring to the world. Read Luke 1: 39-55 and Malachi 5: 2-5a. A dramatic reading will give us a vivid insight into the personalities of the Christmas story.

Sunday, December 30

Quiet joy will fill the hearts of all who gather in the parlor for a service of lessons & carols.



First Presbyterian Church of
EDGEWOOD
The Community Church



STAFF DIRECTORY

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

Interim Pastor	Michael P. Rucker mprucker@fpcedgewood.org
Pastor Emeritus	Dr. Gerald Hollingsworth
FROGS Program Director	Debbie Pike frogs@fpcedgewood.org
Minister of Music	Shaun Cloonan music@fpcedgewood.org
Organist/Pianist	Sunny Sakai sunnysakai4@gmail.com
Section Leaders	Tyler McGuigan Mandy Rineer
Office Manager	Judy Mysels office@fpcedgewood.org
Building Manager	Rob Mysels
Nursery Attendant	Kristi Cloonan LittleK815@aol.com

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

After nearly 60 years, I've reached a conclusion that the wiser among you may have figured out years ago. Note to self: I will never be done "getting ready" for something. My Mom started me down this "getting ready" path. When I was still in diapers, she got me ready to go on a walk, or shopping or to church. Then I had to "get ready" for kindergarten, then grade school, then high school, then college, then... - you get the idea. Now I'm getting ready to help my third child, Micaiah, into college and my fourth child, Desmond, into adolescence (assuming anyone can be ready for adolescence!) Depending on when you ask me, getting ready for something is either invigorating or exhausting; inspiring or depressing. As the ever-wise Kurt Vonnegut said, "So it goes..." (See Slaughterhouse Five.)

Advent is all about getting ready, isn't it? We decorate, entertain, mail cards (or not), send emails, buy gifts, make cookies, plan meals and figure out how to pay for it all (or not.)

Actually, I've become more accustomed to "getting ready." It means there's something else to do with the too brief years we are given in this grand, glorious, befuddling world. I'm not getting ready to leave it—that's for sure!

One of the phrases that echoes through the advent season is "Come, Lord Jesus, come!" This week we are going to sing "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel", a favorite hymn of the church. As we sing, we ought to remind one another, *be careful what you ask for*. The coming of the Son of God into our all-to-human flesh, into our families, our church, our communities, our world is not all about angelic choirs, lowing cattle, kneeling shepherds and cute, poor, little drummer boys. Do we really know what it is we are asking for? In the words of N. T. Wright, my favorite biblical theologian, in Jesus Christ, God is all about "putting the world to right." (see his book Simply Christian.) And when so much in the world is "not right" there is a lot of "putting the world to right" to go. God is far from being done with us.

During Advent, God comes to us in Jesus — just like we begged him to — and now, God calls us to join Mary and sing with her the very first Christmas carol (the words to the song can be found in Luke 1: 47-55)

**"My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices with God my Savior...
He has scattered the proud
in the thoughts of their hearts,
he has brought down the powerful
from their thrones and lifted up the lowly;
he has filled the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away empty...
according to the promise he made
to our ancestors, to Abraham and to
his descendants forever."**

That is what God means by "putting the world to right." That is what we are asking for when we sing "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel. We're asking a lot. It's a big dream God has for this world...too big? I

don't think so; not too big for that baby boy God gave us early on that first Christmas morning. Through Christ, all things are possible!

In closing, I pray all of you have a safe, joy-filled time with family and friends this Christmas and New Year. I pray the children who have enough get what they need and the children who don't have as much be filled with good things. I pray the Spirit of Christ be enthroned in your hearts and may his reign bring you peace. I pray that we continue to "get ready" for the amazing and wondrous things the Lord has planned for us. God has planted this congregation in this beautiful little corner of creation to help him make the world right again. What a blessing!

Merry Christmas everyone!

Pastor Michael

ADVENT

You may or may not have noticed over the years that we've gone back and forth between using blue and purple as a designation for Advent. We've lit the Advent wreath with three purple and one pink candle, we've done all white candles, and we've done all blue candles. Ever wonder why? Read this article from a Lutheran pastor who explains a bit more about where the ideas came from for both liturgical color designations. Incidentally, this Advent we're using blue.

Advent: Blue or Purple?

By Rev. Chris Duckworth

Posted on November 29, 2010 at lutheranzephyr.com
Reposted from my congregation's December newsletter, *The Steeple Light*

What is the "proper" color of Advent - blue or purple? Purple was the long-standing color used by Lutheran congregations, as well as other liturgical churches, through most of the 20th century. The purple of Advent and of Lent served two purposes - emphasizing the royalty of Christ, as kings in western culture over the centuries were often adorned with purple garments. Furthermore, purple has a penitential nature to it, inviting introspection and repentance on behalf of the believer.

Indeed, the connection of Lent - with its pilgrimage to the suffering of the cross - with penitential acts is pretty easy to make. As we reflect on the sin of the world that nailed our Lord to the cross, we also confess our own sin and seek to live more faithful lives.

But penitence in Advent, in preparation for Christ's birth? *Absolutely.* For as we prepare to see Christ face to face, in the Christmas incarnation and in his promised return to earth, we anticipate both joy and judgment. Joy, for in coming to us God is bridging the gap that separates humanity from its Creator. But judgment, too, for in coming to us God will confront our sin and brokenness, and pass judgment on the degree to which humanity has been unfaithful to God's commands and vision for human community.

That's a pretty good case for a purple Advent, don't you think?

Well, blue has a pretty good case to make, too. In the late 20th century, some churches began to use blue for Advent, while retaining purple for Lent. Why?

I can't give you the historical details - what great church councils or scholars or congregations first began the shift. But I can tell you that blue offers us a different shade, so to speak, of Advent. If the purple of earlier years resonates with the penitential nature of the season and draws certain parallels to Lent, the deep blue of Advent highlights the expectant nature of the season, and of our faith.

Deep blue is the color of the clear, predawn sky, the color that covers the earth in the hours before the sun rises in the east. Most of us are not looking at the sky at that hour - perhaps we're still asleep, or too weary to notice it as we get onto the Metro or hop into our car for a long commute. Nonetheless, a deep, dark blue is the color that covers us in the dark, cold hours before the sun dawns.

Thus we use deep blue for Advent to shade the season with a hint of expectation and anticipation of the dawn of Christ. Surely penitence and spiritual discipline is part of the traditional Advent observance, and this is why so many of you are using Advent wreaths and our congregation's Advent devotional to mark the days of Advent. Advent is a time to recommit to our faith and to our God - no matter the color! But Advent involves more than penitence, and by using deep blue we err on the side of emphasizing the church's hope-filled and faithful watch for Christ. The deep blue of Advent is meant to inspire in us the hope of faith, and to encourage us to keep watch for the promised light of Christ to break over the horizon, changing night into day, darkness into light, and filling our lives and our world with a holy and righteous splendor.

No matter your color preference, I hope and pray that you will find this season to be shaded by both the purple and the blue, by the reflective self-examination suggested by the penitential purple, and by the hopeful anticipation suggested by the predawn blue ... for both colors call us to lives of faithfulness in this time before the coming of our Lord.





DECEMBER

Events & Activities

CHURCH CLEAN-UP DAY

Saturday, December 1, 9AM-?

A dumpster has been delivered and is ready to be filled. Anyone and everyone is invited to the church on Saturday, December 1 starting at 9AM to clean, move, and throw out various items in the church.

ADVENT DINNER & WORSHIP

Wednesdays, December 5 & 12, 6:30PM

Come and celebrate Advent on Wednesday nights with a soup and bread meal on **December 5 & 12**. The services will include singing, prayer and scripture. These celebratory dinner/services will begin at 6:30PM in the Lounge.

ESO ANNUAL HOLIDAY CONCERT

Saturday, December 8 at 7:30PM

Featuring selections from the Nutcracker Suite by Tchaikovsky, selections by John Rutter, traditional sing-along. Will be once again be joined by the Renaissance City Choirs, Jeffry Johnson, Artistic Director.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Sunday, December 9, following worship

We'll have a congregational meeting immediately after worship on **December 9**. This will be an informal meeting at which you'll get a chance to see and comment on the 2013 budget before it is formally adopted by the session and also the election of officers. The session values your input and seeks to be responsible stewards of your money. Copies of the proposed 2013 budget will be available at least one week prior to the meeting.

BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE

Wednesday, December 19 at 7:00PM

The holidays can be a time of anxiety and sadness for those dealing with loss and grief, financial insecurity, difficult family situations, addictions and other less-than-merry circumstances. This quiet, contemplative service is for those who need a break from the frenzy and false cheer of the holiday season. Through music, scripture and liturgy, we'll seek to provide a genuinely sacred experience that reveals the deep compassion and love of God.

ADVENT PRAYER VIGIL

Friday, December 21

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 21** our sanctuary will be open from 6:30AM to 9:00PM.

You are invited to sign up for half-hour "watches" beginning at 6:30AM. A sign-up sheet will be at the side vestibule entrance. You may come as an individual, couple, small group or family. This is a great opportunity to enter more fully into our journey toward Bethlehem.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

December 24 at 7:30PM

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.

CALL FOR 2013 REPORTS

On Sunday, **January 13** immediately following worship, the Annual Meeting of the Congregation will be held to receive the 2013 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 7**. It can be given in hard copy or e-mailed as a Word file attachment to Judy Mysels at office@fpcedgewood.org.



PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

member of First Presbyterian Church of Edgewood.

I have another year as Moderator and I look forward to working with all of you.

P.W. CORNER

By Luella Broe, Presbyterian Women Moderator

Merry Christmas! Best wishes for the Christmas Season. Let's remember it is the birthday of our Savior Jesus Christ. Happy Birthday Jesus!

Thank you for the support you have given me in my first year as your Moderator. We have done a lot in 2012: successful Flea Market, Inaugural successful Peach Festival, Young Lives dinner, a page in the monthly church newsletter.

Your support has been shown in the increased participation by the membership. Remember, all the women are members of P.W., just because one is a female



Thank you to everyone who helped with our Thanksgiving feast for the community - food donations, prepping, cooking, decorating, serving, delivering, cleaning, praying, visiting, and yes, eating! A special thank-you goes to Dan Mielke (head chef) and his family (wife Patti, son Corey, and Corey's girlfriend) who orchestrated the kitchen so ably and Kathy Clevenger for serving as Chairperson this year.

PWPP Upcoming Events:

Dec. 10—4th Quarter Mission Pledge Due

2013 Events:

March 10—1st Quarter Pledge Due

March 16—Prayer Breakfast (location and time TBA)

April 20—Spring Gathering at Bethany Presbyterian Church

Local Events:

Feb. 10—2013 P.W. Business Meeting

JOY CIRCLE CHRISTMAS PARTY

Monday, December 10

6:00PM

at the home of
Doris Hamilton
132 Beech Street
Edgewood

RSVP to Church Office
412/241-4613

YOUTH GROUP

Our new small but mighty Youth Group met on Wednesdays in the fall for the same weeks as the adult Bible study. We had a good time playing games, sharing snacks, and getting to know each other through Bible study and conversation. We took a break for Thanksgiving and are thinking about our next steps. If you (or your kid) might be interested in youth activities, check in with the church office for the latest on what's happening!

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

We are working our way to the manger and Jesus' birth in our studies this month. We will not be performing a pageant in December, but are looking at doing something special for Epiphany in January. Parents (and grandparents), please let teachers know if your children will be available January 6, and if you will be in town for the holiday break for practice options.

FALL F.R.O.G.S.

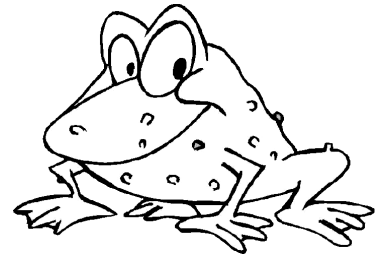
(Friends, Reading, and Other Great Stuff)

Our after-school program has been going well. One of our fall crafts was a "Big Me" with the kids drawing themselves from an outline of their body - some have been on display downstairs. In November we made turkeys with coffee filter feathers for the Deacon Thanksgiving baskets. For December our crafts will be focused on gifts for friends and family.

We thank Liz Held for pinch-hitting as a helper, Russ Raisig for sharing uniforms and information about World War II in recognition of Veterans Day, and Pastor Michael & Wayne Dean for stopping in to see us. We miss our friend Chris Baldwin, but are glad she is able to help out her husband when he needs her.

Fall FROGS will wrap up December 18 with a little holiday party. Friends of FROGS such as past volunteers are welcome to stop by. Winter FROGS will start up the second week of January, with mostly the same kids, but we may have a couple of spots if anyone is interested in joining in the fun.

For more information about the program or our activities, speak with Debbie at church or contact her at frogs@fpcedgewood.org or 412-241-4613.





“Prepare ye the way of the Lord!”

Advent is here, and with it, the beginning of a new church lectionary year. I’m amazed to realize that this beginning of “Year C” will mark my third complete cycle through our church lectionary passages, meaning I’ve been your music director for 9 years now. My, how time flies!

And, how amazingly generous of a congregation you are! I’m pleased to report that we have exceeded the \$3,000 goal for purchasing 150 of the new Presbyterian Church (USA) denominational hymnal, *Glory to God*. Along with my own donation and a few more still coming in, I believe we can actually purchase close to 250 hymnals. Surprisingly enough, that’s only about 50 shy of the number of hymnals we currently have in the pews. So, feel free to continue sending in donations, and we just might be able to replace every single hymnal in the sanctuary (6 per pew).



I can also tell you that from the website poll that ran for about 3 weeks and replies to the email I sent out regarding hymnal color, overwhelmingly (72%) the preference was for the purple hymnal. So, come this summer when the hymnals arrive, the pew racks will have purple hymnals and red bibles, and no longer will you see “red” or “blue” listed in the bulletin because the binders will be gone! Any song or hymn we may want to sing during worship that isn’t in the new book will happen during Emerging worship with the words printed on the screen, so we’ll have no need for “Red” anymore.

Thank you to everyone for your generous outpouring of donations to start this exciting new chapter in the life of our music ministry at FPCE. I’m grateful to be a part of this amazing family, and with you all the most blessed Christmas.

Peace,


Shaun Cloonan
Minister of Music

HOLIDAY JEWELRY SALE



by Lisa Segedy

Check out great prices on my hand-crafted jewelry after church in the lounge on Sunday, Dec. 16. I’ll be selling my gallery-return necklaces and earrings with 100% of the proceeds going to the Deacons. Great for Christmas gifts!



ESO
EDGEWOOD
SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
25th Anniversary

The Nutcracker
& Popular Holiday Music

SATURDAY
DECEMBER 8, 2012
7:30 P.M.

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF EDGEWOOD**
120 SWISSVALE AVENUE, PITTSBURGH, PA 15218

WALTER MORALES
MUSIC DIRECTOR

Tea for Body & Soul



Sunny Sakai
Solo Piano

This is Sunny's jazz piano solo CD including standard tunes and Christmas carols. Makes a good Christmas gift. \$11, part of the profit goes to the church. See Sunny if you are interested.

December



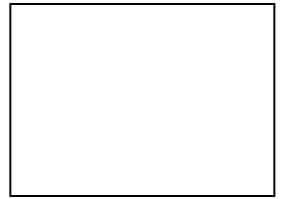
Saturday, Dec. 1,
9:00AM
Church Clean-up
Day (see article on pg. 4)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
2 <i>1st Sunday of Advent</i> 9:30 Choir (C) 9:45 Adult Ed (L) Pollyanna (GP) 11:00 Worship (S) 12:15 Fellowship (L)	3 7:00 Parent Mtg (SC)	4 10:00 Tuesday Group (L) 3:45 FROGS 7:00 ESO (S) 7:00 Deacons (L)	5 6:30 Advent Dinner & Worship (L)	6 3:45 FROGS	7 5:00 AA Christmas Party (SR)	8 7:30 ESO Concert (S)
9 <i>2nd Sunday of Advent</i> 9:30 Choir (C) 9:45 Adult Ed (L) Pollyanna (GP) 11:00 Worship (S) 12:15 Congregational Meeting (S)	10 6:00 Joy Circle Christmas Party 7:00 Scouts (SC)	11 10:00 Tuesday Group (L) 3:45 FROGS 7:00 AA (SR) 7:00 Session (GP)	12 6:30 Advent Dinner & Worship (L)	13 3:45 FROGS 6:30 Pack Mtg. (SC) 7:00 Worship Ens (S)	14 8:00 AA (SR)	15
16 <i>3rd Sunday of Advent</i> 9:00 Worship Ens (S) 9:45 Adult Ed (L) Pollyanna (GP) 11:00 Emerging Worship (S) 12:15 Fellowship (L)	17 7:00 Scouts (SC)	18 10:00 Tuesday Group (L) 3:45 FROGS 7:00 AA (SR)	19 7:00 (S) 	20	21 PRAYER VIGIL 6AM-9PM 8:00 AA (SR)	22
23 <i>4th Sunday of Advent</i> 9:30 Choir (C) 9:45 Adult Ed (L) Pollyanna (GP) 11:00 Worship (S) 12:15 Fellowship (L)	24 <i>Christmas Eve</i> 7:30PM Christmas Eve Service	25 <i>Christmas Day</i> 	26	27 NO FROGS	28 8:00 AA (SR)	29
30 11:00 Worship (S) Lessons & Carols 12:15 Fellowship (L)	31 <i>New Year's Eve</i> 7:00 Scouts (SC)	C=Choir Room; GP=Gathering Place; L=Lounge; S=Sanctuary; SC=Scout Room; SR=Social Room 				



First Presbyterian Church of
EDGEWOOD
The Community Church

120 E. Swissvale Avenue • Pittsburgh, PA 15218



Christmas Eve

Service 2012

7:30pm

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 5, 2012.

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.