

# 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 2015**

## The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light...

In the ancient world, various peoples lit fires to mark the turning of the light into winter's season and to pray for the return of the light. The church has Christianized that practice in the lighting of the Advent wreath. To us, these candles are signs of the growing light of Christ who is coming again in all fullness into the darkness of our world. Until the dawning of that Great Day, we watch and wait in Holy Spirit for Christ's coming into the darkness of our world, lighting candles of hope, peace, joy, and love; and remembering the promises of God with prayer.



## DECEMBER 2015



### Worship Schedule

*"Worship is a way of seeing the world in the light of God"*

*Abraham Joshua Heschel, Jewish theologian*

#### December 6:

##### **A Taizé Service of Worship**

Advent. A season of light. For our Jewish brothers and sisters, the holiday of Hanukkah begins on December 7. Hanukkah means the *"Festival of Lights"* and commemorates the cleansing of the Temple from the pagan symbols put in place by Syrian oppressors. The Jewish revolutionary, Judah Maccabee, defeated the Syrians and reclaimed the Temple in the name of Yahweh. If you recall, Jesus cleansed the Temple in Jerusalem as well. This reflective and meaningful service of worship will encourage us to cleanse our hearts in preparation for the birth of Jesus into lives.

#### December 13

The North Hills Singers, under the direction of our own Shaun Cloonan, will be with us as we hear again the call to WAKE UP! declared by the brave forerunner of Jesus, John the Baptizer. Mini-concert follows the service.

#### December 20

From the insignificant village of Bethlehem comes the one whose name is Emmanuel, God with us.

Special musical offerings by the Sanctuary Choir and contributions by some of our youth highlight this service.

#### December 27: "Snuggie" Sunday

Come in your Snugglies, or sweats, or PJ's. We gather in the Lounge and relax, sing familiar carols, pray, and rest in the grace of the God who gave us His only begotten Son. A light brunch will be served.



### **Christmas Eve Service**

**December 24 @ 8:00PM**

*"For unto us a child is born, and his name shall be called  
Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God,  
the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."*

We will sing songs of joy and celebrate a holy communion. Please bring your family and friends and worship with us.

## 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

### Student Pastor:

Jeff Nine  
jeffrey.nine@westernsem.edu

### Minister of Music:

Shaun Cloonan  
music@fpcedgewood.org

### Organist & Pianist:

Sunny Sakai  
sunnysakai4@gmail.com

### FROGS Director &

### Office 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



Michael P. Rucker  
Pastor

## WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR?

*Advent is a season of expectant waiting and preparation for the celebration of the nativity of Jesus at Christmas.*

### What are we waiting for?

For thousands of years the Jewish people waited for the coming of the Messiah. God answered the longing in their hearts, but did not send the Messiah they expected! Not a mighty warrior...instead a humble, humiliated man who died with these words on his lips: *"Forgive them Father, they (us too?) do not know what they are doing."*

### What are we waiting for?

In these United States of America, we are waiting for Christmas, a day filled with lavish gifts, hearty meals, and the loving embrace of family. But for so many Americans—that day has yet to come.

### What are waiting for?

The long-awaited Messiah who God sent to his people, Jesus of Nazareth, announced that he was ushering in a world of peace; a world where the poor would be blessed, the blind would see and the oppressed set free. Yet, this world is overflowing with violence and poor, blind, oppressed people!

### What are we waiting for?

When I, your pastor, asked myself that question before writing this article, these words came to me: **"And now faith, hope and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love."**

The Messiah who God sent to Israel was not the Messiah they expected. The world we live in is not the world Jesus envisioned. Yet the world we live in, the bodies we inhabit, the families we are part of; this all we have. No denying how messed up this world is. No hiding from it. Let's turn and face this screwed up world that God loves. Take a deep breath and say an even deeper prayer.

### What are we waiting for?

I wait for faith, hope, and love to be born in my heart and yours and in the hearts of people around the world. And I mean the whole world! Christians, Jews, Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, atheists, Confucianists, etc....etc....After all, God did not send Jesus for Christians to cling to. God sent a Jewish man to the Middle East, a man of grace, peace, and justice, a man destined to die for the sins of all people, a man to be embraced by the whole world, and his name will be Christ the Lord.

May your advent be blessed and your Christmas merry!

*Pastor Michael*



# DECEMBER

## *Events & Activities*

### THE CHRONICLES OF **NARNIA**

#### **Advent Gathering Wednesday Evenings**

On Wednesdays, December 2, 9, 16, 23:

Pastor Rucker will be teaching a class based on the wonderful, magical book by C.S Lewis – *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* – the first book in his *Chronicles of Narnia* literary masterpiece. Please join us. Call or e-mail Pastor Michael for more information. Books are available.

#### **Believing Little Ones Can Know and Serve!**

## **BLOCKS**

**Tuesday, Dec. 8, 6:30PM, Gathering Place**

The name is more than an acronym. It's a guiding principle for Christian Education. So far, the children discussed the meanings of church, kindness, rejoicing, prayer, and sharing. We read Bible stories, talk together, sing songs, dance, and complete an art activity. And, of course, we play!

Please spread the word to your friends, neighbors, and family and help us build our base audience for BLOCKS. Our current regulars would love to make new friends! **BLOCKS is for babies, toddlers, and preschoolers.** All children must be accompanied by a parent or caregiver. Please join us for the last 2015 BLOCKS session,

#### **Jewelry Sale** by Lisa Segedy

Jewelry sale after church Sunday Dec 13. Once again I'll be selling my handmade jewelry at deep discount, with all proceeds going to the Deacons' ministry.



#### **Advent Prayer Vigil Friday, December 18**

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 18** our sanctuary will be open from 9:00AM-2:00PM. 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. 20**

This serves as official notice that we will conduct a congregational meeting immediately after worship on **Sunday, December 20**. At this meeting you'll get a chance to see and comment on the 2016 budget before it is formally adopted by the session.

We also will elect officers to the class of 2016, allowing new officers to attend their January meetings, and then they'll be installed at a later date. The Nominating Committee has a proposal for discussion as well that could reduce the sizes of both boards of Deacons and Session, which would require amending our by-laws.

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. Please make every effort to attend this meeting.





# COMFORT & JOY!

DECEMBER 5, 2015 7:30PM

Featuring the Renaissance City Choir

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
OF EDGEWOOD SANCTUARY

The holidays come home with a fresh and inspiring celebration for this joyous season! The ESO showcases its magic alongside the terrific voices of the Renaissance City Choirs. Fast becoming a family tradition in its own right, this sparkling concert features classical Christmas and holiday favorites. A fun program for the entire family that truly rings in the holiday season!

Tickets available at the door or at [www.edgewoodsymphony.org](http://www.edgewoodsymphony.org)

## Project Manger Tree

The Board of Deacons will be working with Action Housing Homeless Service again this year. 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 Dec 6**. Thank you for your support of this project.

God Bless, *The Board of Deacons*



## "Time" for a New Year's Resolution

Shaun Cloonan  
Minister of Music



Happy New Year! The beginning of Advent marks the beginning of a new church Lectionary year, we start fresh with new scriptures, eagerly anticipating the Christ child's arrival. For those of you unfamiliar with the term "lectionary," this is a prescribed set of scripture passages that go in a 3-year cycle so that a good majority of the books of the Bible are covered in worship. The scripture cycles are shared across denominations, so the messages and even music are common from church to church. It's how we get the hymns to line up so well. We are now in Year C, and the gospel stories will follow Luke, the great storyteller.

Before diving into the new "time" we have together, I would like to take a moment to thank the many folks that were involved in making last month's Women's Choral Festival a success: Judy, Tyler, Jim, Lisa, Marcia, Sunny, Tim, Tom, Mandy, Ruth, Sunny, Rob, Elaine, Jeff, and Pastor Michael. We had nearly 300 singers from 5 choral groups and around 100 or so in the audience for a wonderful afternoon of music.

As we turn our attention toward Bethlehem, our music ministry will be a vital part of the worship experience. Taize on the 6th, my North Hills Singers on the 13th, the full choir on the 20th, Tyler & me on Christmas Eve singing "O Holy Night," and of course YOU all joining in on "Silent Night" at the end. Beautiful music for a beautiful season. Make sure you're with us for each service!

Returning to the topic of "time," a new year, and thoughts of resolutions...we recently had a challenge set forth to the choir by Sunny. She reminded us that according to our calendar, we are supposed to begin our rehearsals at 9:30AM each Sunday. Over the past several months (even years!), that 9:30 time has become a little bit more of a *suggestion*, with folks sometimes not arriving until closer to 10:00, and being the social bunch we are catching up with each other, we sometimes turned what was supposed to be an hour rehearsal into as little as 30 minutes. Time is valuable to us all, and the gentle reminder got us back on track. We as a choir have resolved to be better stewards of our limited time together so that we can be the best we can be for that sacred hour we all share together.

Now, I'd like to challenge you all to do the same. It's almost frightening to look out into the pews 10 minutes before 11:00. We generally hover around 50-70 in worship on a regular Sunday, but even 5 minutes before we're set to begin, there are sometimes only 15-20 ready to go! By the time the first hymn is finished, usually we're all there...but half have missed the announcements. We're all busy...but isn't the One who brings us together worth it? Can we resolve to give God our best in time and talent? Think about it! Happy New Year!



## P.W. Corner

Lori Stutz  
Moderator



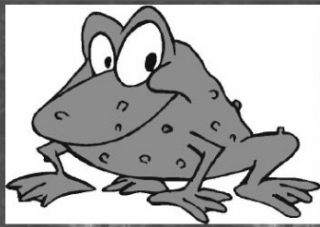
# PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

It's December, so many endings, but some new beginnings, especially with PW. We had a business meeting in October and at that point, two significant things happened. First, I will no longer be the Moderator for PW, in fact we won't possibly have a Moderator. But this is a great thing. We voted to restructure PW to work best for everyone's needs without feeling like it's all business. This is also a way to save PW as a whole. We will still have our circles, prayer chains, events, mission. There will be a meeting after the first of the year to discuss more particulars to keep our group growing and going strong.

Also, to all the ladies we will be having our potluck Christmas Party on December 12, at Tina Nine's home from 4:00-7:00PM. For more details, please contact Sallie Monk.

Well, thanks to all of you for reading my articles: they will stop today. You may in the future see an article from PW from time to time, but probably not, whose to say, our ladies are literally trail blazers with mixing things up to keep and improve PW for all the women in the church.

Merry Christmas and a Happy NEW YEAR to you and your families!



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

(FRIENDS, READING, & OTHER GREAT STUFF)

## FROGS News

Judy Mysels  
FROGS Program Director



December is another short months for FROGS because of holidays and school in-service days, but we are still busy: making holiday cards for Deacons' shut-ins. Lisa Segedy is blessing us with her talent of storytelling on Dec. 17.

Many thanks to wonderful FPCE family for providing snacks for our FROGS...Nancy Ernst, Kathy Clevenger, Betty Sheridan, Ruth Miller, Dan Mielke, Chris Baldwin, Flo Raisig, others who dropped off anonymously...we are forever grateful.

**FROGS need your help...**volunteers are needed to help with FROGS on Tuesdays/Thursdays from 3:30 -6PM. Clearance papers need to be filled out and are available in the Church Office. Attendance has increased to 15 kids; more adult supervision is needed. If you are interested or have any questions, call Judy Mysels at 412-241-4613 or email [frogs@fpcedgewood.org](mailto:frogs@fpcedgewood.org). Also snacks are needed: fruit snacks, crackers, chips, cookies, and/or drinks: Capri Sun, juice, etc.

## Looking Ahead

### "Un-Hanging of the Greens"

Immediately following worship on **Sunday, January 3**, we will need a crew of worker bees to help us take down the Christmas decorations as we move into the next season of the Church year. Those who helped to hang last month found it very helpful that everything was neatly boxed with photos showing where the decorations went. Let's make next year just as easy by working together to put it all away!

### Call for 2015 Reports

On Sunday, **January 31** immediately following worship, the Annual Meeting of the Congregation will be held to receive the approved 2016 budget and ministry team reports.

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 19**. It can be given in hard copy or e-mailed to Judy at [office@fpcedgewood.org](mailto:office@fpcedgewood.org).

Sharing in the  
**Joys & Concerns**  
of the Family of FPCE

# The Bulletin Board

- Congratulations to Connie Black for receiving the 2015 William Limpert Award from the Edgewood Foundation.
- Condolences to Jerry Coleman in the passing of his mother.
- Thanks to Shaun and his team on a successful choral festival on November 8 in our sanctuary.
- Thank you to all who stayed after worship on November 22 to decorate the sanctuary so beautifully for the Advent and Christmas season.
- During this holiday season, please remember the people from your families, our church family, and our community who are feeling lonely and distant from the joy and laughter of the season.

and suddenly there was with  
the angel  
a multitude of  
the heavenly host  
praising God  
and saying  
Glory to God  
in the highest, and on earth  
peace, goodwill toward  
men  
Luke 2  
13-14

“...and there were  
in the same country shepherds  
abiding in the field,  
keeping watch over their flock by night.  
And, lo, the angel  
of the LORD came upon them,  
and the glory of the LORD  
shone round about them:  
and they were sore afraid.  
And the angel said unto them,  
**FEAR NOT:** for, behold,  
I bring you good tidings of  
great joy, which shall be to all people.  
For unto you is born this day  
in the city of David a SAVIOUR,  
which is Christ the LORD.”  
Luke 2:8

## To a Church Family:

On October, 12, Carol Ann Wilson, the mother of our Pastor Michael's wife, Heather Wilson, slipped from this mortal coil to join our Lord in God's eternal realm. Heather writes:

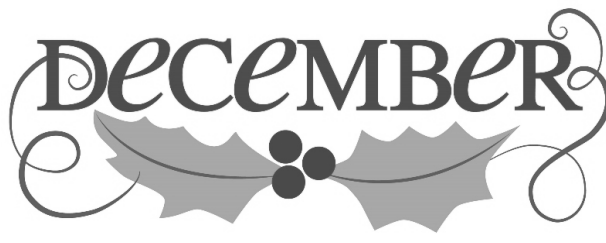
*At my mother's funeral mass, I was reminded vividly of the Old Testament story of Ruth, who stayed with her mother-in-law, Naomi, after her husband died saying, "Wherever you go, I will go, wherever you lodge, I will lodge, your people shall be my people,..." In the pews that day were Michael's birth family and his church family...who have become my family. I am immensely grateful for your love and support.*

*So many people go through life wondering what their "mission" is. But, as I read recently, "the little things we do, especially for others,, are not unimportant...moved by unseen grace, our prayers and charitable actions directly participate in the saving work of our Redeemer.... In that way you fulfill your mission."*

*Just another thing I love about FPCE: you know your mission—and you live it.*

Heather Wilson

# December



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
C=Choir Room GP=Gathering Place L=Lounge O=Office PS=Pastor's Study S=Sanctuary SC=Scout Room SR=Social Room		1 10:00 Book Club (L)  3:45 FROGS 7:00 ESO Rehearsal	2  7:00 Advent Gathering	3  3:45 FROGS	4  8:00 AA (SR)	5  7:30 ESO Holiday Concert
6 9:30 Choir (C) 9:45 Adult Class (L) 11:00 Worship (S) Taize Service 12:15 Fellowship (L) 2:00 Court of Honor	7  7:00 Scouts (SC)	8 10:00 Book Club (L)  3:45 FROGS 6:30 BLOCKS (GP) 7:00 Deacons (L) 7:00 Session (GP) 7:00 AA (SR)	9  7:00 Advent Gathering	10 1:00 PW Circle (GP)  3:45 FROGS	11  8:00 AA (SR)	12  4:00-7:00 P.W. Christmas Party (Tina's)  8:30 AA (SR)
13 9:30 Choir (C) 9:45 Adult Class (L) 11:00 Worship (S) 12:15 Fellowship (L) NH Singers Mini-Concert (S)	14  7:00 Men's Group 7:00 Scouts (SC)	15 10:00 Book Club (L)  3:45 FROGS 7:00 AA (SR)	16  7:00 Advent Gathering	17 3:45 FROGS	18 9-2 Prayer Vigil  NEWSLETTER DEADLINE 8:00 AA (SR)	19  8:30 AA (SR)
20 9:30 Choir (C) 9:45 Adult Class (L) 11:00 Worship (S) 12:15 Congregational Meeting	21  7:00 Scouts (SC)	22 10:00 Book Club (L)  3:45 FROGS 7:00 AA (SR)	23  7:00 Advent Gathering	24 CHRISTMAS EVE 7:00 Choir (C) 8:00 Candlelight & Communion Service	25 CHRISTMAS DAY OFFICE CLOSED 8:00 AA (SR)	26  8:30 AA (SR)
27 11:00 Snuggie Sunday Worship (L)	28  7:00 Men's Group	29 10:00 Book Club (L)  7:00 AA (SR)	30	31	1 NEW YEAR'S DAY OFFICE CLOSED	2





First Presbyterian Church of  
**EDGEWOOD**  
*The Community Church*

120 E. Swissvale Avenue • Pittsburgh, PA 15218



*Christmas Eve Service  
8:00PM December 24*

## 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 6, 2015.**



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.