



# Happy New Year

## PASTOR'S POINT OF VIEW



We stand before a new year – 2021! On January 1, millions of individuals around the world will have started the new year with resolutions which they will walk away from in a matter of days. The difficulty of holding on to these self-made promises can exasperate an individual resulting in a life of regrets; long hours sitting in front of the television; reading “success” stories on Facebook; watching endless hours of YouTube videos; always being a follower on Twitter, but never leading a

fulfilled life. What a waste indeed! Consider the following: each new year offers 365 days; each day has 24 hours; each hour has 60 minutes; each minute has 60 seconds. Thus, an individual has 8,760 hours; 525,600 minutes, and 31,536,000 seconds in their hands to work with!

In the eighteenth century, Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758) compiled a list of 70 resolutions that he kept throughout his lifetime. He knew that in his own strength he would not be able to keep them; as such he prefaced his resolutions with these words: “Being sensible that I am unable to do anything without God's help, I do humbly entreat him by his grace to enable me to keep these Resolutions, so far as they are agreeable to his will, for Christ's sake;”; Edwards depended on God's strength. Of his list, the following are worth mentioning:

- *Resolved, that I will do whatsoever I think to be most to God's glory, and my own good, profit and pleasure, in the whole of my duration, without any consideration of the time, whether now, or never so many myriad's of ages hence. Resolved to do whatever I think to be my duty and most for the good and advantage of mankind in general. Resolved to do this, whatever difficulties I meet with, how many and how great soever.*
- *Resolved, to be continually endeavoring to find out some new invention and contrivance to promote the aforementioned things.*
- *Resolved, if ever I shall fall and grow dull, so as to neglect to keep any part of these Resolutions, to repent of all I can remember, when I come to myself again.*
- *Resolved, never to do any manner of thing, whether in soul or body, less or more, but what tends to the glory of God; nor be, nor suffer it, if I can avoid it.*
- *Resolved, never to lose one moment of time; but improve it the most profitable way I possibly can.*
- *Resolved, to live with all my might, while I do live.*
- *Resolved, never to do anything, which I should be afraid to do, if it were the last hour of my life.*
- *Resolved, to think much on all occasions of my own dying, and of the common circumstances which attend death.*
- *Resolved, that I will live so as I shall wish I had done when I come to die.*
- *Resolved, to live so at all times, as I think is best in my devout frames, and when I have clearest notions of things of the gospel, and another world. Resolved, never to do anything, which I should be afraid to do, if I expected it would not be above an hour, before I should hear the last trump.*
- *Resolved, to endeavor to obtain for myself as much happiness, in the other world, as I possibly can, with all the power; might, vigor, and vehemence, yea violence, I am capable of, or can bring myself to exert, in any way that can be thought of.*
- *Resolved, to study the Scriptures so steadily, constantly and frequently, as that I may find, and plainly perceive myself to grow in the knowledge of the same.”*

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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**

These are but a sampling of Edwards' resolve to live to the glory of God.

I am looking forward to a year of resolve to seek God, to know God, to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3.18). Throughout 2021 may we devote time to seeking God in prayer, studying the Scriptures, building up one another in the faith (Ephesians 4.11-16), and sharing the message of the gospel with the community of Edgewood. May we be "careful how [we] walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most the most of [our] time, because the days are evil" (Ephesians 5.15-17). Lord, "teach us to number our days, that we may present to You a heart of wisdom" (Psalm 90.12).

God's grace and peace be with you throughout the New Year

*Pastor Tony*

## New Online Ministry Offerings in 2021 Begin This Month at FPCE

### Zoom | PRAYER MEETING

Starting Monday, Jan. 18 at 7:30PM, there will be a weekly prayer meeting via Zoom. Will send a weekly email Zoom invitation.



On **Wednesday, January 20, 2021**, and every week thereafter, you are invited to join me in studying "the permanent essentials of Christianity." Topics such as "revelation," "the attributes of God," "creation," "humanity," "the Incarnation," "last things," and much more will be

covered. Opening the Scriptures (i.e., the Bible) as our primary text, we will dig into pages to understand God's revelation to humanity and learn the time-tested essentials of the Christian faith. Our weekly discussions begin at 7:30PM, via Zoom (details will be provided shortly)

*Pastor Tony*

## ANNUAL REPORTS FOR 2020...

...are due January 15. Copies of last year's reports were emailed to those who are responsible for committee reports. Questions, concerns regarding the Annual Report, call or email Judy in the office.



## Session Notes

At their December 8 Zoom meeting, Session:

- Agreed to call a Congregational meeting, via Zoom, for December 22, to formally present the 2021 budget to the Congregation.
- Voted to add the Woodland Hills Foundation to our 2021 Mission giving.
- Heard Rev. Rivera's November report of his current and future activities.
- Voted approval of the 2021 budget.

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## ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING: January 31, 1:30pm (via Zoom)

A PDF copy of the report will be emailed on 1/27, along with a link to join the Zoom Annual Congregational Meeting. Should not be required to log in. Just follow directions in email to join Zoom meeting.

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### Worship Committee News

The Worship Committee met on Zoom the night of January 5 to discuss the current worship format. A lengthy discussion regarding virtual only as well as returning to in-person worship took place. The suggestions have been compiled and will be discussed at the January Session meeting to determine if and when we will open the doors to have the congregation present for live worship again.

It was also discussed that there has been some confusion over how to watch the online services. Currently, when we meet in real time on Sundays, we broadcast a live video from a camera connected to the WiFi at the church which streams to our Facebook page. If you “like” our page, then you should get a notification that church has gone live and can click on the video to watch.

We’re working on figuring out how to simultaneously stream to YouTube, but so far have been unsuccessful, so the edited service is uploaded within a day for viewing there. When we have pre-recorded our services (such as Christmas Eve and the 3 Sundays following), those have been set as “live premiere” videos on both Facebook and YouTube. This means that they play in real time at a scheduled time (11:00am on Sunday) so everyone is watching the same thing as though it was live. Members can comment as the video is playing, add reactions, etc. On December 27, January 3 & 10, this was the format. Members could either go to our Facebook page or YouTube channel and watch the service “live” at 11:00 on Sunday or wait until later to view it on demand.

Our goal is to be able to stream live on Facebook and YouTube Sunday mornings so that members without Facebook accounts may access the service on YouTube. Once we get that working, we’ll communicate through e-mail/newsletter. Until then, we will continue to send out the bulletin PDF on Fridays and stream live Sunday on Facebook, then have edited videos available by Monday on YouTube.

### Financial Update

When this was written, 2020 had not ended, but here is a list of some FPCE financial items of interest for 2020:

- FPCE received a Payroll Protection Plan (PPP) loan in the amount of \$19,500 early in 2020 to help cover payroll and to be a forgiven loan if used as designated. The forgiveness has not happened, but is expected.
- In 2020 Pastor Michael was retiring and Pastor Tony was hired. The 2020 budget reflected the unknown timing in the transition by showing a \$21,242 surplus which was to be used to cover expenses for guest pastors and a new pastor to start sometime in 2020. I expect 2020 to end with about a \$10,000 surplus.
- Account 4010 Donations budgeted in 2020 at \$115,000 is currently about \$4,000 under budget. This is an important account and is budgeted at \$110,000 for 2021. Since all expenses usually increase over time, we need this account to grow over time.
- On the expense side, the COVID pandemic has reduced the operating expenses for the building. The natural gas budget over the past years has gone from \$20,000 down to \$9,600 and the actual in 2020 is \$3,063. Since the Personnel Expense for a new pastor was unknown and not budgeted, that account is about \$20,000 over budget and in line with the \$21,242 surplus in the 2020 budget. Most other expenses are lower than budget.
- We will have a balance of \$172,000 on the PHLF loan for the HVAC renovation, but there is \$41,143 in the Building Renovation Fund and we continue to get donations.
- The conversion to forced air heating and air conditioning has proved successful by reducing utility cost and by eliminating repairs and potential water damage from a 100-year-old steam system.
- The heavy rains in 2020 have flooded the basement and caused unexpected expenses. Tim McKee has been working on a remedy and those improvements have been made and expensed in 2020.
- Tim McKee has been working on reducing insurance expense and It is expected that the insurance carrier will change in 2021 resulting in a \$2,000 to \$3,000 annual savings
- The 2021 budget is balanced and realistic.



Thanks to everyone for your support in 2020.

*Tom Ochs, Treasurer*



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## Sharing the Joys & Concerns of FPCE

- Thank you to Flo Raisig and Lorraine Douthett for arranging the poinsettias so beautifully in the sanctuary for Christmas.
- Thank you to Sunny, Inori Sakai, Tyler McGuigan, Mandy Rineer and of course, Shaun Cloonan for their music at the Christmas Eve service. We are truly blessed to have such fantastically talented musicians in our church family.
- Happy 1<sup>st</sup> birthday to Meadow Elizabeth Pocratsky, born 12/18/19.
- Sympathies to Scott Leatherbery on the passing of Kathy Clevenger on 12/5/20
- Sympathies to Ruth on the passing of her sisters
- Sympathies to family/friends of Sandi Masten Cloonan on her passing, 12/28
- Congratulations to Jeremy Pike on his engagement

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ONLINE WORSHIP**

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