

A Prayer for Walking into a New Year

by Karen Rohrer, *Presbyterian Outlook*

Holy God,

As we look out on the horizons of a new year, it is hard to see your promise with fresh eyes. The memories we carry in our bodies, the patterns we know from the lives we have lived, and the stories we have told cloud our vision. We are weighed down by the fears of all the years, the old fables, the generational wounds, the trusty and cautious hopes that got us through this far.

But God, you are not the slowly bending arc of history. You are not the past warmed up to meet us yet again in infinite and gently looping cycles. You are not likelihood and probability, plausible outcomes and logical conclusions. You do not come to us in the slow march of progress or the incremental degradation of structures and institutions.

Your story is the deeper magic from before the drums of history, before our forming stories and earthen bodies set us here to walk this particular, human road — and yet you walk with us even here in this in-between space.

As we look to a new year, we ask that you dispel the ghosts we conjure and fear.

Meet us again with genuine newness. We are so tired of what has been, so afraid of what may come again.

Stay with us as we wait for what will be.

Spirit of new life, give us eyes to see what feels implausible. Grant us the hope and the diligence to follow the seeds of revolution and revelation already planted. Point us again to the surprise and delight of nature and neighbor. Reintroduce us to the people you have made and the communities to which you have called us. Grant us the presence and good sense to look up and out, to seek eyes that might meet our own and sun to touch our skin. Remind us that the past we drag with us does not govern your future, that the future you bring is broader and wider and newer than all we have ever known.

As we look out on the horizon of a new year, give us the courage and trust to see you even there. Join us as we walk into your new morning. Amen.



10 intentions to en flesh in the new year

by anna blaeel and m jade kaiser, *enfleshed.com*

1. I will disrupt the destructive stories and beliefs I have internalized, and cultivate habits of body, mind, and spirit I wish to grow in the world.
2. I will remember we are of the earth, and pay attention to how I/we can (re)align with the earth's rhythms, seasons, and cycles.
3. I will seek out, savor, and share food that brings me pleasure, nourishment, and connection.
4. I will approach other human and non-human animals with curiosity and respect, honoring and learning from their unique embodied wisdom.
5. I will pay attention to habits of thought and action that are rooted in individualism and separation, and actively seek collaboration, cooperation, and solidarity.
6. I will shed aspects of religion and spirituality that diminish collective aliveness, and turn toward, reclaim, and open to practices and beliefs that enliven.
7. I will say yes to generative desires and ordinary pleasures, and no to pressures and prejudices that stifle.
8. I will prioritize care—collectively and intimately—in how I relate to every body's unique vulnerabilities, limitations, and needs.
9. I will cherish and celebrate that which transphobia, racism, misogyny and other forces of oppression demonize.
10. I will resist exploitative expectations and invest in endeavors that serve the common good.

WORSHIP & FORMATION

January 2025 Worship Formation Schedule

Join us Sunday mornings at 11:00AM in the Sanctuary for worship.

Services are livestreamed on Facebook and posted to YouTube and our website.

January 5:

Epiphany of the Lord – “The Road Isn’t Straight” (Communion)

Isaiah 43:16-21; Matthew 2:1-12

Much like the magi’s journey, the path that lies ahead isn’t always clear or straight. Thankfully, we have the guidance of the Spirit to light our way.

January 12: Baptism of the Lord (Communion)

Isaiah 43:1-7; Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

We will ordain and install our new Ruling Elders and Deacons! After worship, we will have our annual congregational meeting as well as a potluck. Please bring a dish to share.

January 19: Second Sunday after the Epiphany

Isaiah 62:1-5; John 2:1-11

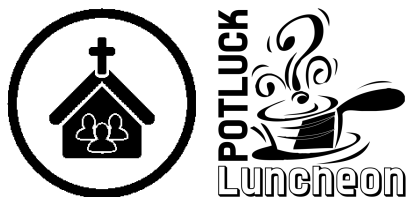
January 26: Third Sunday after the Epiphany

Rev. Liddy Barlow will offer the Word this morning. The Rev. Liddy Gerchman Barlow serves as Executive Minister of Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania. Christian Associates brings together 26 church bodies – Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican, and Protestant – in the 10 counties of greater Pittsburgh to make visible the unity of the church and work for the wholeness of communities. Pastor Liddy grew up in New Hampshire and graduated from Mount Holyoke College. After teaching public school with Teach for America in North Carolina, she earned a Master of Divinity degree from Andover Newton Theological School in Massachusetts. Pastor Liddy is ordained in the United Church of Christ and has served congregations in downtown Pittsburgh and North Huntingdon. She is married and has two children: Pippa, age 5, and Edmund, age 2. You can find her on Twitter as @RevLiddy.

ANNUAL REPORTS from Committee Chairs and other groups are due January 6 to print for Congregational Meeting, January 12.

Notice of Congregational Meeting: January 12

All active members of the First Presbyterian Church of Edgewood are asked to attend our annual congregational meeting immediately following worship on Sunday, January 12. At this meeting, the final 2025 budget approved by Session will be received, annual reports and the pastor’s annual terms of call will be voted upon. A potluck luncheon will take place after the meeting in the Gathering Place. Please contact Judy in the church office (office@fpcedgewood.org) to let us know what side, entrée, or dessert item you will bring for the meal.



120 East Swissvale Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15218
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

Pastor

Rev. Jason Dauer

pastorjason@fpcedgewood.org

Office & Cleaning Manager

Judy Mysels

office@fpcedgewood.org

Building Manager

Rob Mysels

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Minister of Music

Shaun Cloonan

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Associate Music Director

Sunny Sakai

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**LOVE GOD
EACH OTHER
OUR NEIGHBORS**



Blessing Bags

FPCE is going to be building Blessing Bags on January 12 following the church service and our congregational meeting. These bags will be available for anyone to take and pass out to those in need. If you would like to make a financial donation please do so by January 5 or consider dropping off requested items (see list below) before January 11. Our goal is to fill a minimum of 200 bags with each of the items listed below. If you have any questions please email Tyler McGuigan at mcguigant Tyler@yahoo.com

Please limit donations to the following items:

toothbrush
toothpaste
mouthwash
comb
chapstick
small packs of tissues

hand sanitizer (small bottles)
applesauce (squeeze packets)
granola bars
crackers
tuna/chicken packets (squeeze, not canned)

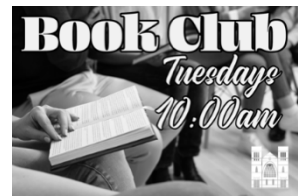
jerky sticks
dried fruit
fruit snacks
bottled water
socks
plastic forks/spoons



FOCUS 
CHRISTIAN FORMATION

Tuesday Book Club

Our Tuesday Morning Book Group continues to meet weekly 10:00AM at the Apossos home, 361 Maple Avenue. Snacks and coffee are provided. We are currently reading *Watch for the Light: Readings for Advent and Christmas* (Plough Publishing House.) In the new year, the group will begin *The Scent of Bright Light* by Jean K. Dudek (2024). This book is available for free with your library card on Hoopla.



2025 Evening Book Group

Thank you to everyone who filled out the form to help select our reading list! We will start off the year with the book that received the highest score from your votes: *Disarming Leviathan: Loving Your Christian Nationalist Neighbor* by Caleb E. Campbell (2024). More info to come in the new year!

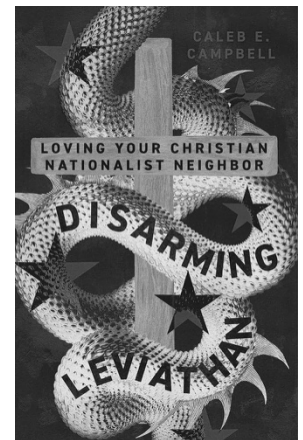


What's on the back cover?:

"Pastor Caleb Campbell has watched as Christian nationalism has taken over large swaths of the United States. And he's suffered the relational fallout of standing against it, both in his community and his church. While it's possible to be both a Christian and hold Christian nationalist ideas, Christian nationalism itself is an un-Christian worldview, rooted in ideas about power, race, and property that are irreconcilable with Christian faith. Campbell has come to see himself as a missionary to Christian nationalists, reaching out to them with the love and freedom of Jesus Christ.

In *Disarming Leviathan*, Campbell equips Christians to minister to their Christian nationalist neighbors. He introduces the basics of Christian nationalism and explores the reasons so many people are attracted to it. He also addresses a variety of American Christian nationalist talking points and offers questions and responses that humbly subvert these claims and cultivate deeper, heart-level conversations.

Christian nationalism is an established feature of the American landscape. *Disarming Leviathan* can help prepare us to confront it with compassion and hospitality, and with the truth of the good news of Jesus."



Sunday School

Sunday School for our littlest ones takes place during worship in the Gathering Place. Just drop your child off and Rhonda or Lorraine will lead them in a Bible activity while you are in worship!



Session Notes

At their December 10th meeting, Session reviewed the proposed 2025 budget. Following discussion, Session voted their approval. Session and Deacons will attend a retreat on February 8, 2025.

Deacon News

Our Deacons enjoyed connecting with our church family and the broader community in many different ways this December:

- Sending Christmas cards to the congregation and reaching out to our care teams
- Singing Christmas carols on December 7th at Edgewood Light Up Night as well as caroling at various homes on December 12th
- Distributing 10 harvest baskets as well as delivering poinsettias to our neighbors
- Thanking the groups that regularly meet in our building with cards and cookies
- Participating in worship services through greeting, singing, reading scriptures and prayers, preparing and serving communion, and even using puppets



As we look back on 2024 and look ahead to 2025, our deacons are thankful for the many opportunities we've had to work with each other as well as collaborate with other groups to serve God's people. In January and February, the Deacons will work to identify our key goals for 2025, which will inform the ministries and events we will focus on for the year.

Happy New Year!

In Christ,

-David Falk, Deacons Vice Moderator



WCM Mobile Food Pantry @ FPCE

The Wilksburg Community Ministry Mobile Food Pantry offers a distribution site at FPCE, parked on East Swissvale Avenue in front of our side lawn Fridays from 2:00-4:00 PM. Stop by to say hi, pick up some fresh produce, or volunteer to help with the distribution! Sign up to volunteer at <https://tinyurl.com/WCMatFPCE>

CROP Walk Wrap Up

Our FPCE Team would like to thank all who participated and contributed to the 2024 Pittsburgh East CROP Hunger Walk. Our total here was our highest to date: \$850



While the calendar changing to a new year might be a time for resolutions, it's also important to look back at the year behind us and give thanks for the gifts God has given us. My annual report will give a more detailed list, but during December, our community music friends shared many performances from Light Up Night to the annual ESO holiday concert to a weekend of Vocal Confluence barbershop shows to a recital by the Steranka Flute Studio. We're blessed to have such a wonderful facility to open to our friends and community partners.

In our own music ministry, we were treated to a visit from my North Hills High School choral students, Tyler and I shared a duet, and our gracious Sanctuary Choir members showed hospitality with a yummy meal. Sunny blessed us with gorgeous piano mediations during our Longest Night service, our puppeteers sang during their show, and Christmas Eve featured Inori on violin, David, Spencer, and me on vocals for a lovely evening worship.

Thanks to all who give of their time and talents to contribute to our music ministry regularly. Your presence helps us to enhance our worship experience, and I'm grateful to you all. Happy New Year! -- Shaun

MARK YOUR FEBRUARY CALENDARS

Edgewood Community Planning Meeting

Wednesday, February 5 at 7 PM in the Gathering Place so all of our Edgewood neighbors can meet, coordinate calendars, organize, etc. If you would like to come to this meeting and didn't receive an email invitation, please let us know.

Elder-Deacon Officer Retreat

Saturday, February 8 from 9 AM - Noon in the Gathering Place. The Class of 2024 elders and deacons are invited for the first part of the day. Coffee and snacks will be provided; please bring a packed lunch.

WCM Update from Executive Director Ruth Kittner

The ground floor of this building will be dedicated to the food pantry. The 4200-square-foot space will allow us to have all our food facilities in one space, and our neighbors can wait inside and out of the weather. We are negotiating with another non-profit to rent the second floor. The third floor will be used for community space, including meeting rooms, temporary offices, and other spaces. The property includes the building *and* nine adjacent lots, totaling about 65% of a city block.



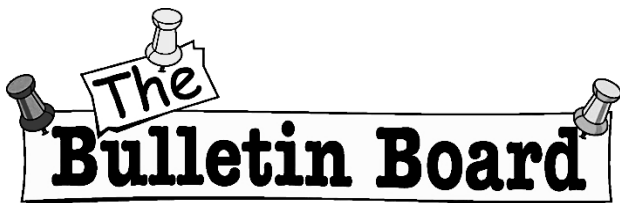
Phase One (2024-2026):

This phase includes purchasing the building and the renovations and "adjustments" to the first floor, to make the space immediately useable. Including the purchase, this will cost approximately \$1.1 million. We have gifts totaling about \$400,000 in place, plus some financing for the rest. Phase One will include parking areas for the pantry vehicles, a safe loading/unloading dock, ADA entrances for the public, and a small parking area (about 14 spaces, including an ADA space). The entrance for our vans and trucks will be off Mill St. The parking area for our neighbors will be accessed off Mill Street and South Avenue.

Phase Two (2026-2028):

Add an elevator on the rear of the building to make the third floor accessible for community events. This phase's estimated cost is \$850,000.

WCM will mount a comprehensive campaign that includes capital funding for this project *and* its annual operating expenses, a so-called comprehensive campaign. This will include encouragement of both short-term and long-term (multiyear) gifts, plus bequests and assistance in establishing donor-designated funds. So far, we have one *known* bequest.



*Sharing the Joys & Concerns
of the FPCE Family*

- Thank you to Ruth Miller, Elaine Cloonan, and Marcia Haley for the beautiful arrangement of the Christmas poinsettias in the sanctuary.
- Great job to all those involved in all of the Advent services: North Hills Singers concert, luncheon, puppet show, Christmas Eve, special music, and more!
- For those dealing with depression, anxiety, addiction, and mental health issues that may have been triggered by the holidays.
- Traveling mercies for all who were visiting family and friends.
- Western Pennsylvania School for the Deaf announces the retirement of Judy Taslov, Administrative Assistant to the Executive Director effective January 2025. Judy has been a tremendous help to us in securing the WPSD parking lots for our various events at FPCE over the years. We wish her well in her retirement!
- Happy December/January birthdays to Jan Forster (December 15), Angel Lehrian (December 23), Mariah Mysels (January 13), Jim Segedy (January 24)

Interfaith Immigration Coalition expresses solidarity with immigrants, refugees and newcomers

LOUISVILLE — The transition taking place at the White House has prompted an interfaith coalition that includes the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to issue a statement reaffirming its commitment to advocating for immigrants, refugees, and other newcomers seeking to make a home in the United States.

The Interfaith Immigration Coalition, which is comprised of more than 56 national, faith-based organizations, released a statement Thursday expressing its solidarity with the vulnerable and showing its concern about the potential impact of Donald Trump returning to office.

“Understanding that the policies that may be in store in the next administration — mass deportation, family separation, curtailing access to protection from persecution — may profoundly impact families and vulnerable people on the move and at the border, the Interfaith Immigration Coalition recommits to the critical work of accompaniment, solidarity and action alongside immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers, DACA recipients, TPS beneficiaries and others impacted,” the coalition stated in a news release.

During his bid for the presidency, Trump claimed that migrants were “poisoning the blood of our country” and promised mass deportations. He has further shown his commitment to an anti-immigration agenda by selecting Tom Homan, his former acting director of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), as his new “border czar,” stating, “There is nobody better at policing and controlling our Borders” and noting that Homan will be “in charge of all Deportation of Illegal Aliens back to their Country of Origin.”

Amid this climate, the coalition remains steadfastly committed to working “across differences to find common ground and pursue just policies that lift up the God-given dignity of every individual,” and is planning to continue “raising the moral voice with clarity, courage, and conviction,” according to the release.

The coalition’s statement is accompanied by quotes from concerned immigration advocates and religious leaders, such as the Rev. Jimmie Hawkins, who noted that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has a long history of welcoming immigrants into its congregations and ministering alongside newcomers.

“As Presbyterians, we believe in a God who promises, ‘I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert,’” said Hawkins, who leads the Presbyterian Office of Public Witness and the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations, quoting from Isaiah 43:19b. “Today, we rededicate our call to be with immigrant, migrant, and refugee siblings as the wilderness and desert surround them. Today, we recommit to solidarity as we live into hope and faith that God is making a way. We will sit with (and shout with) our immigrant siblings during this time, seeking dignity, protection, and security.”

Others showing their solidarity include Rick Santos, President and Chief Executive Officer of Church World Service.

“As we prepare to usher in a second Trump Administration, CWS stands firmly with our immigrant and refugee neighbors, and vulnerable families around the world — as well as people of faith and conscience across the nation who support them,” Santos said. “We will never stop working to defend our nation’s tradition of compassion and welcome, and to protect the rights of the most vulnerable.”

Santos also is calling for others to speak up.

“We ask for our supporters, neighbors and friends to make their voices heard and to join us in calling for the new administration to maintain the programs and policies that support newcomers and to reject misinformation and fearmongering about immigrant and refugee communities,” Santos said. “Together we will work to safeguard protection for our immigrant and refugee neighbors and defend pathways to safety and lifesaving aid for families who remain in danger.”

The [Presbyterian Office of Public Witness](#) and the [Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations](#) are part of the [Compassion, Peace and Justice](#) ministries of the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

This article was originally published on November 15, 2024. This version has been abbreviated by Pastor Jason Dauer. You can read the full article here: <https://pcusa.org/news-storytelling/news/interfaith-immigration-coalition-expresses-solidarity-with-immigrants-refugees-and-newcomers>

JANUARY

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 <i>HAPPY 2025!!</i> OFFICE CLOSED	2 7:00 SAA (L)	3 2:00 WCM (SL) 7:00 AA (SR) 8:30 AA (SR)	4 8:00 AA (SR)
5 <i>Epiphany Sunday</i> 9:30 Choir (S) 11:00 Worship (S) Communion 12:00 Fellowship	6 6:30 Scouts (SR) 7:00 VC (S)	7 10:00 Book Club 7:00 ESO (S)	8 7:00 Milepost6 (B)	9 7:00 SAA (L)	10 2:00 WCM (SL) 7:00 AA (SR) 8:30 AA (SR)	11 8:00 AA (SR)
12 9:30 Choir (S) 11:00 Worship (S) 12:00 Cong. Mtg. Luncheon	13 4-5:30 Flute 6:30 Scouts (SR) 7:00 VC (S)	14 10:00 Book Club 3:30-6:30 Flute 7:00 Session (GP) 7:00 ESO (S)	15 2:30-4 Flute 7:00 Milepost6 (B)	16 7:00 SAA (L)	17 2:00 WCM (SL) 7:00 AA (SR) 8:30 AA (SR)	18 8:00 AA (SR)
19 9:30 Choir (S) 11:00 Worship 12:00 Fellowship	20 OFFICE CLOSED 4-5:30 Flute 6:30 Scouts (SR) 7:00 VC (S)	21 10:00 Book Club 3:30-6:30 Flute 7:00 ESO (S)	22 2:30-4 Flute 7:00 Milepost6 (B)	23 7:00 SAA (L)	24 2:00 WCM (SL) 7:00 AA (SR) 8:30 AA (SR)	25 8:00 AA (SR)
26 9:30 Choir (S) 11:00 Worship (S) 12:00 Fellowship	27 4-5:30 Flute 6:30 Scouts (SR) 7:00 VC (S)	28 10:00 Book Club 3:30-6:30 Flute 7:00 ESO (S)	29 2:30-4 Flute 7:00 Milepost6 (B)	30 7:00 SAA (L)	31 2:00 WCM (SL) 7:00 AA (SR) 8:30 AA (SR)	Feb 1 8:00 AA (SR)

Meeting Locations:

AH=Apessos Home, B=Basement Band Room, CR=Choir Room, CE=CE Office, GP=Gathering Place, L=Lounge, MS=ESO Music Suite, O=Office, PS=Pastor's Study, S=Sanctuary, Sc=Scout Room, SL=Side Lawn, SR=Social Room

Happy New Year



First Presbyterian Church of
EDGEWOOD
The Community Church
120 East Swissvale Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15218

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

