

## The Lenten Journey Ends: Holy Week Drama & Resurrection Joy

As we enter March, we continue our journey with Jesus with introspection, fasting, and prayer during Lent. The dramatic events of Jesus' last week on earth play out through Holy Week. We sing and shout Hosanna as the King enters Jerusalem on a donkey, with palms waving and set at his feet. We share in the Passover feast in the upper room at the Last Supper when Jesus washes the disciples' feet, join in the first Communion, and learn of the betrayal about to happen by Judas.

We follow Jesus into the Garden of Gethsemane, agonizing in his prayers, watching his betrayal and arrest. We witness his trial before Pilate and Herod, wince at the 39 lashes, and watch in horror as the "King of the Jews" is forced to wear a crown of thorns and carry his own cross up the hill to his crucifixion. We weep with the women at the foot of the cross as Jesus

proclaims "it is finished."

But we Christians know the rest of the story...three days later he is risen! He is risen indeed! We rejoice in the resurrection of our Lord, as death has been conquered. Alleluia!

Join us at FPCE as we pay tribute to each of these significant events with special gatherings and services throughout the remainder of Lent, into Holy Week, and ending with Easter morning.

### SUNDAY, MARCH 6

Please commune with us. We will come forward to receive communion as women and men who at some point in our lives were lost—but now are found. We will read and reflect on the amazing Parable of the Lost Son.

### SUNDAY, MARCH 13

On the Sunday when Jesus encounters the lavish love of a woman on the night before his final journey into Jerusalem, we will ask ourselves how faithful are we being with our disciplines?

### PALM SUNDAY, MARCH 20

PALM SUNDAY! Emerging Worship! We look forward to an energetic service of song, prayer and hope. The Praise Ensemble and Pastor Michael will take us to the cusp of holy week.

### MAUNDY THURSDAY, MARCH 24

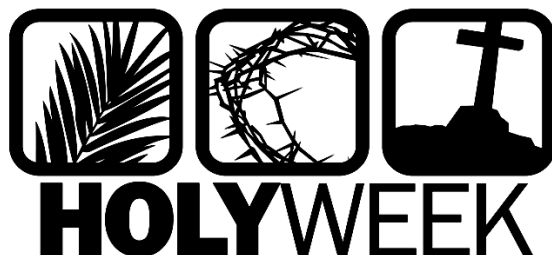
The first time it was celebrated the Christian church did not exist—but Jesus, the Living Word of God—was alive and well and pouring the sacrificial message of love into his disciples. We will celebrate the Lord's Supper during this creative, meaningful, and spiritually powerful evening. Join us at 7:00PM.

### GOOD FRIDAY, MARCH 25

We will join Christians around the world as we worship on the darkest day of the Christian year...the darkest day in human history? At 7:00PM join us for a Tenebrae service. We will give thanks and honor the crucified God.

### EASTER SUNDAY, MARCH 27

CHRIST IS RISEN! Your life and all of history is redeemed. Rejoice with us at 11:00 a.m.—bring a friend.



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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

## THERAPY FOR ALL

Years ago I had the privilege of meeting a bright, engaging, and confused young man who was thinking about that perennial question of the college-aged: *What am I to do with my life?* The question was particularly vexing to this 21 year old because the door to the first choice for a career had been slammed in his face. He wanted to be a doctor. He was a good student of the sciences, but not an excellent one. When it came to chemistry, he struggled to get just an average grade. After applying to and visiting a half dozen medical schools he was kindly but firmly informed that he wouldn't be accepted.

After working his through the first feelings of rejection and getting back up on his feet, my young friend, prayerfully and thoughtfully, looked at other options. Someone suggested a career in physical therapy, a field that was becoming increasingly helpful for millions of Americans. But my friend said, "No." Why? Because doctors were the real heroes of healing in his mind. "They receive a patient, diagnose what is wrong with him or her, then they fix it. Some surgery, a medication—BINGO—a healing! Physical therapists lived a less exciting and rewarding life. They had to patiently, painstakingly work with a person as she or he recovered from surgery or an injury. It took too long to see results. Physical therapy? "Boring!" was the response.

I've begun to view my role as a pastor as something like a physical therapist. Everyone I have met, including the guy who looks back at me in the mirror every morning, is, at some level, damaged goods. All of us are broken in spirit at some level. All of us are yearning, aching for something to "fix us." All of us are looking for spiritual healing. All of us are looking for a deep, meaningful and lasting relationship with God.

For Christians, Jesus is the healer. Through Jesus, the Son of God and Son of Man, all who seek God find Him in the words, the parables, the presence, the miracles.... the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Jesus is the healer, the Great Physician.

But the healing relationship with Jesus is just the beginning. After our transformative encounter with Jesus, we are called to a life of discipleship. A life that is increasingly committed to and focused on what it means to be a healed, follower of Jesus. Discipleship is a life-long endeavor. It is slow work. We often take three steps forward then two steps back. We balk at some of the teachings. We rebel against the commitments. Sometimes, dare I say most of the time, the life of discipleship is slow, painstaking, not very exciting

way of life. Sometimes it is just plain boring. I think of discipleship as “spiritual therapy.” I am a spiritual therapist. And each one of you, after a solid beginning in spiritual therapy can become therapists to your friends, family, and co-workers. I can assure you, it does take time, a lifetime as a matter of fact. Yet it is a very rewarding way of life.

*Pastor Michael*

### **A Lesson from a Cow:**

#### **How to Study the Bible**

That is not a joke. It is not meant as an insult to students of scripture (or cows.) The word “ruminate” is derived from the Latin term meaning “to chew on”, as a cow chews on a cud. We learned in our Wednesday night Lenten study that “rumination” is an important step in the spiritual reading of scripture. To experience the full impact of a verse from the Bible is to read it, re-read it slowly, speak it silently within our spirits—and then to ruminate upon it. To think deeply and carefully about what a verse is saying to you—that is what the “spiritual reading” is all about.

PLEASE JOIN US EVERY WEDNESDAY AT 7:00PM in the lounge for an hour of spiritual therapy.



#### **Maundy Thursday: March 24 at 7:00PM**

“Maundy” comes from the Latin phrase meaning “new commandment.” It is based on the words spoken by Jesus on the night he celebrated the last supper with the disciples. The night he said, “**A new commandment I give you—to love one another as I have loved you.**” At 7:00PM on Maundy Thursday, we will remember the foot-washing, celebrate the Lord’s Supper, and remember Jesus—who gave himself for the sins of the world. (Watch for more announcements, we may begin at 6:30 with a simple meal of soup and bread).

#### **Good Friday: March 25 at 7:00PM**

Last year, Pastor Michael and Sunny led a quiet, reflective service of Tenebrae—a Service of Shadows and Darkness—remembering the crucifixion of Jesus. Scripture is read, the difficult story is told, prayers are raised, music is sung and silence is maintained for the one hour service of worship.

#### **JESUS CHRIST IS RISEN! Easter Sunday: March 27**

We celebrate the victory of God over sin, death and all that separates us from God’s love. Worship with us at 11:00AM.

## **BLOCKS**

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

After having to cancel January and February's sessions due to weather, BLOCKS plans to resume on Tuesday, March 15 at 6:30 in the nursery. BLOCKS is an "Intro to Sunday School" program geared for babies, toddlers, and preschoolers (and their caregivers).  
—Emily Lilly



## The Ministry of the Session

The session is the leadership body of FPCE. They gather on the second Tuesday of the month to pray and work together as they guide us into the future.

On Saturday, February 20, the session had a one-day retreat. The long-range planning portion of the meeting was led by Heather Wilson. Pastor Michael's wife. Heather has had much experience in this kind of leadership in her positions at college and college related organizations. Her leadership led the session into some creative thinking.

Heather helped us create an "energy field." She asked, "what the forces of life that drive the mission and ministry of FPCE. Then she asked, "what forces are working *against* us as we look to take the next steps into the future God has for us. That introduction led us into a drawing exercise. We were each given a large sheet of newsprint and crayons. On one side, we drew or designed or wrote about FPCE as we see it. On the other side, we did the same about the FPCE *of the future*. An energetic conversation ensued.

At its next monthly meeting (March 8), the session will clarify and "flesh out" the vision that emerged from this very productive day. More explanation and details will be a major subject covered in the April newsletter.



### P.W. Corner

These are the gatherings in the Pittsburgh Presbytery and Synod of the Trinity.

- Presbyterian Women of Pittsburgh Presbytery is April 16th. I will send you further information as I get it.
- Synod of the Trinity Presbyterian Women Gathering is June 14-17 in Altoona.
- If you are interested in either gathering, you can contact Luella Broe at 412-371-2699 or email me at [labroe1991@yahoo.com](mailto:labroe1991@yahoo.com)

*Luella Broe*



Every year, for the month of February, the Boy Scouts and the Sunday School children our are Deacons for Sunday worship. We welcome and encourage our children to get involved in this tradition. As a congregation, we need to work together to rebuild our membership; invite a neighbor, your friends and family member to worship, to get involved to become richer for our love in God.

Our Food Pantry has been in high demand. Weekly, we are helping many. I keep a list and since January 2016, between Judy and myself, we have given out food for at least a dozen calls; some single individuals, some families up to 4 members. Please keep us in mind when shopping; cereal, peanut butter, jelly, tuna helper and personal care items are always needed. Please NO BEANS...we have plenty of them!

For Easter, we will be making baskets on Palm Sunday and sending cards to "our friends of the church". We do this on Palm Sunday so that Palm crosses can be placed in the baskets or cards for them. Our FROGS will also have something special for the baskets. Please keep "our friends" in your hearts and prayers; for they are always thinking of us and miss not being able to be with us.

At the Congregational Luncheon, we had a robust variety of chilies with several kinds of corn breads, rolls and crackers and our sweet tooth was definitely happy. We are also happy to say we had six more people than last year; sorry if you missed out, but it was truly a delicious afternoon!

Happy Easter,  
*Mary Ann Hartman*, Moderator

Prayers:  
continued prayers for Diane Kemmerer, Sudsy (Don) Sudsina, Donna and Bill Stineman

Birthday wishes:  
Florence Pickels, Ruth McCormick, Esther Wark

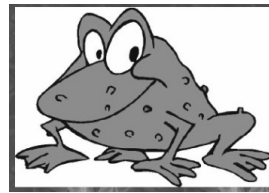


## Building Renovation Update

Pastor Michael and those most involved with the building renovation project encourage you to “hang in there.” This is an important decision facing us and it is important that we give it time. Time for thinking, talking, planning, and praying.

Most everyone who attended the annual congregational meeting and presentation on Sunday, January 31 left the meeting with more questions than answers. We hear you.

At this point we await the drawings and specs from the architect. Some of the fog will clear at that time. And please trust us on this—we will discuss, pray and seek God’s will *together*.

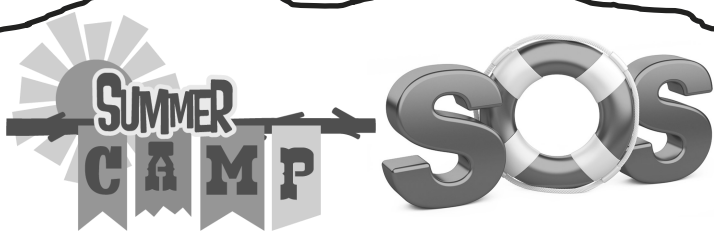


**F.R.O.G.S.**  
**AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM**  
(FRIENDS, READING, & OTHER GREAT STUFF)

FROGS have been hopping during the month of February only missing one day of school; being cancelled because of ice/snow. The kids made Valentines for their own family members and decorated Valentine cupcakes. Thanks to Rick Masten who brought in goody bags for the kids and also for the baby donuts the kids love so much!

A huge thank you to Mary Ann Hartman, who visited on Feb. 23 to teach dental hygiene, giving individual bags with toothbrushes, toothpaste, floss, etc. The kids learned a lot and had fun doing so.

FROGS are in need of drinks such as: individual juice boxes/bags or big jugs of juice/drinks. Thank you!



### Camp SOS: Summer of Service

A few months ago after a planning meeting, several members got together and started brainstorming...what if we did something completely new that would bring in kids from the community, their parents, high school students, and got us working together with local mission agencies? How cool would it be to have 50 kids all over the church, on the lawn, and out in the community doing service projects? And then had all of their families back on the lawn for dinner together every day for a week? What if we offered them a chance to stay for a brief prayer time?

These questions were the beginning of what has become our big summer project: “Camp SOS.” The goal is to bring service and mission to the forefront while connecting with our community’s youth and their families. We’ll need all hands on deck for this exciting adventure. If this sounds like something you might be interested in helping with, please stay after worship on **Sunday, March 6** at 12:15 in the Gathering Place for our first planning team meeting. This has the potential to be a very large project for us that encompasses many ministries: mission, evangelism, Christian Education, youth ministry, and even worship.

If you’re unable to attend but are interested in helping or learning more, contact Shaun Cloonan.



- **OBITUARY** for long-time FPCE member/ Edgewood resident: Edgar L. Wareham, born 6/24/42 in Pittsburgh, died 2/1/16 after a long illness. Preceded in death by his father, Edgar L. Wareham, Sr. Survived by his sister, Deane Wareham Hawkins and brother-in-law.

- Special thanks to the Scouts for their participation in Scout Sunday, February 7.
- Sadly we also learned recently that former Associate Pastor of FPCE in the 80s, Rev. Scott Strohm, passed away after a battle with cancer back in late October. He had been the pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Marysville since 2006. Our prayers go to the Strohm family and the Marysville congregation.

# Symbolism in the Sanctuary

The sanctuary and exterior stonework of First Presbyterian Church of Edgewood are rich in symbolism. You should pay particular attention to the wood carvings and colored windows.

Your eye may be immediately attracted to the intricate carvings of the oak in the pulpit rails and in the walnut panels that tower to the ceiling behind the organ. Some of the patterns you will see are symbolic of the following:

- *Grapes* – Communion; Christ the true vine.
- *Christmas rose* – Christ's birth; faith; hope.
- *Fleur de lis* – The Trinity.
- *Eagle* – Soaring words of Christ.
- *Acorn* – Christian strength and endurance.
- *Pineapple* – Ongoing life within the church; welcome.
- *Pomegranate* – Resurrection; spread of Christ's word; Many faithful members of the church.

In front of the pulpit is the unique communion table. All four sides of it have representations of objects of the Crucifixion including nails, a rooster, cross, bread, grapes, and sponge.

The baptismal fonts in front of the chancel represent the two congregations. The marble font comes from the Wilkinsburg church, and was given in memory of Levi Ludden, Superintendent of Sunday School, and father of Mrs. Joseph Armstrong. The carvings in this marble include (from top of the font to the bottom):

- *Egg and dart* – Life; male and female
- *Dental* – regularity of life; birth and death
- *Acanthus leaf* – healthy and flourishing life
- *Bay leaf and interlacing* – victory and continuity
- *Heads/Faces* – John the Baptist
- *Shields* – Holy Spirit, Divine power (dove); Victory of life over death (palm); Day and night, creation (sun and moon); regeneration, new birth (maltese cross); and a Greek cross

The wooden Oak baptismal font is from the Edgewood congregation, and was given by Edith and Harry Chapman in honor of their parents. The significance of this font is as follows:

- *Oak wood* – strength and endurance of Christ
- *Medallions* – Nativity of Jesus, hope, love (rose); Jesus, the true vine (grapes); Trinity (Fleur de lis)

The light, the brilliance, and the vivid color of the sanctuary windows convey the unmistakable designation of Christ as the Light of the World. The colors are symbolic:

- *Red* for love and valor;
- *Blue* for truth and wisdom;
- *Green* for hope;
- *Yellow or Gold* for salvation;
- *Purple* for royalty.

Several styles of the cross are included:



*Cross Potent* –  
a symbol of Christ's power to heal



*Cross Pateé* –  
birth and regeneration



*Jerusalem Cross* –  
the spread of God's word  
to the four corners of the earth

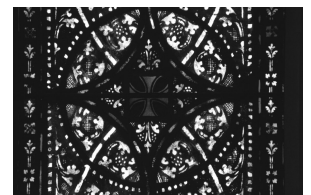


*Patriarchal Cross* –  
Christ's saving grace.

Circles are included in the windows because a circle is the age-old symbol of eternity. Each window has distinctive panels meaningful to Christians. These include a harp, an anchor, a ship, a crown, the star of creation, and many more.

Although there is much left unsaid in this brief description, you are encouraged to see it all for yourself. When you mount the outside steps to enter the church, be sure to note the beautiful stone carvings above the doors. The figures represent Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John in the symbolic forms of a winged man, a winged lion, an ox, and an eagle.

In 1987, this church was designated as a Pittsburgh History and Landmarks structure.



# MARCH 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 10:00 Book Club (L)  3:45 FROGS  7:00 Deacons (L) 7:00 AA (SR) 7:00 ESO	2   7:00 Lenten Study	3  3:45 FROGS	4   8:00 AA (SR)	5   8:30 AA (SR)
6  9:30 Choir (C) 9:45 Adult Class (L) 11:00 Worship (S) 12:15 Fellowship (L) 12:15 Camp SOS Planning Mtg (GP)	7	8 10:00 Book Club (L)  3:45 FROGS  7:00 Session (GP) 7:00 AA (SR)	9   7:00 Bible Study (L)	10  NO FROGS	11   8:00 AA (SR)	12   8:30 AA (SR)
13 <i>Daylight Saving Time Begins</i>  9:30 Choir (C) 9:45 Adult Class (L) 11:00 Worship (S) 12:15 Fellowship (L)	14  7:00 Men's Group	15 10:00 Book Club (L)  3:45 FROGS  6:30 BLOCKS (GP) 7:00 Worship Ens(S) 7:00 AA (SR)	16   7:00 Bible Study (L)	17  3:45 FROGS	18   8:00 AA (SR)	19   8:30 AA (SR)
20 <b>PALM SUNDAY</b>  9:30 Worship Ens 9:45 Adult Class (L) 11:00 Emerging Worship (S) 12:15 Fellowship (L)	21	22 10:00 Book Club (L)  3:45 FROGS  7:00 AA (SR)	23   7:00 Bible Study (L)	24 <b>MAUNDY THURSDAY</b>  3:45 FROGS  7:00 Service (GP)	25 <b>GOOD FRIDAY</b>  7:00 Tenebrae Service (S) 8:00 AA (SR)	26   8:30 AA (SR)
27 <b>EASTER</b>  9:30 Choir (C) 9:45 Adult Class (L) 11:00 Worship (S) 12:15 Fellowship (L)	28  7:00 Men's Group	29 10:00 Book Club (L)  3:45 FROGS  7:00 AA (SR)	30   7:00 Bible Study (L)	31  3:45 FROGS		



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

120 E. Swissvale Avenue • Pittsburgh, PA 15218

## ***EASTER FLOWERS***

We seek your help in making our sanctuary a place of graceful beauty and meaning on Easter morning. Through your donation, we can accomplish this:

I wish to contribute an Easter plant:

\_\_\_\_\_ Daffodil      \_\_\_\_\_ Hyacinth      \_\_\_\_\_ Lily      \_\_\_\_\_ Tulip

The wording for the bulletin is:

\_\_\_\_\_ In honor of \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ In memory of \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Order placed by \_\_\_\_\_

Please check:      \_\_\_\_\_ I would like to take the plant after the Easter service.

The cost of each plant is **\$8.00**. Please attach your check (payable to First Presbyterian Church of Edgewood) to this order form and return it to the Church Office. **Deadline is March 21, 2016.**

