

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

March 2019

PASTOR'S POINT OF VIEW



Michael P. Rucker
Pastor

Hello members and friends of FPCE,

"O what tangled webs we weave..." sayeth the poet Sir Walter Scott. And here I thought it was Shakespeare. Regardless of the author, the poet speaks truth to the human condition.

When Heather and I moved into our home in Blackridge some of the house needed spruced up and up-dated. We decided that a light-switch dimmer in the dining room would be nice. I, much to Heather's surprise, had put in a dimmer switch before. Confidently, I said, *"Don't worry babe, I got this."* When I removed the light-switch cover from the wall, my heart sank. A mess of who knows how many wires sprang forth. After untangling the web, I thought I had figured it all out. I was wrong. Humbled, I invited an electrician to pay a

visit. I was relieved when he had a few choice words to mutter when he looked into the situation. After a long hour, he turned to us and said, *"Whatever you do, sir, leave the electricity to me. Somehow the wire connected to this light-switch is paired with another wire that is connected to the garbage disposal in your kitchen sink. The wiring in this house is a mess."* What a tangled web of wires the previous electrician had created!

We can do the same things with our lives, can't we? A decision we make about one relationship ends up injuring a person you did not even know was in the picture. A rash personal financial decision winds up affecting your spouse's savings plan. A sin committed in secret, or so we thought, hurts us and the people we love more deeply than we ever could have imagined. The Apostle Paul bemoans this all too human problem in Romans 7: 18-19: "For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing!" Or turn to the heart-broken, grief-saturated soul, Job: "human beings are born to trouble just as sparks fly upward" (Job 5:7)

(con't p. 2)

WORSHIP SCHEDULE FOR MARCH

MARCH 3

Three disciples of Jesus discover that there is a whole lot more to Jesus than meets the eye. That remains true. "Seek and you will find, knock and the door will be opened to you." It is the Transfiguration of the Lord Sunday, we will celebrate the Lord's Supper.

ASH WEDNESDAY

MARCH 6 – Wednesday evening at 7:00PM

We will enter the season of Lent with scripture, song, and prayer on the evening of Ash Wednesday. Pastor Rucker will impose ashes on the foreheads of all who desire to bear the mark "you are dust and to dust you shall return."

MARCH 10

Before Jesus healed or cast evil out of a single person, before he spoke his first parable or preached his first sermon, he had to pass a test. Three tests actually. He was on his own. In the wilderness. He was hungry. Tired, hungry, and alone, Jesus encountered three temptations to follow a different path than the one God called him to.

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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 Page (cont'd.)

LENT is the time of the year when we can untangle the messy web of confusion our lives have become. It is the time when we can step back from the wearying hustle and bustle of life. We can take time to simply "be still and know that I am God (Ps. 46:10). The season of Lent encourages us to pray, to meditate, to fast, to read scripture and the writings of spiritual guides, to confess, to open our lives to the Risen Lord who give us a "spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline." (II Timothy 1:7)

In a recent morning meditation reading, I read the earnest and faithful prayer of a wise person from long ago; *Source of Mercy! With loving strength untie our tangles!* Will anyone else join and say, "Amen"? It is Lent, let the untangling and decluttering begin.

Pastor Michael

Worship Schedule for March (cont'd.)

MARCH 17 – An Emerging Worship experience

What did Jesus do when he stood on a hillside looking over the disobedient, rebellious Holy City of Jerusalem; the city where he was destined to be rejected and killed. He did not vent God's anger against the city, he wept, he mourned that God's people had lost their way. Do you believe Jesus is mourning still?

MARCH 24

Contrary to God's nature, we find it all too easy to judge and condemn others. I believe we can be just as harsh toward ourselves. How many chances will we give others, or ourselves, to amend their ways? Two...three...four...more? How patient is Jesus with us?

MARCH 31

We will read the parable of the Prodigal Son. Again. It is the one parable that most people, in and out of the church, know. Do we really "get it" though? All of us can find our place in the story. Where do we find ourselves this year?



Our Church Community



SESSION NOTES

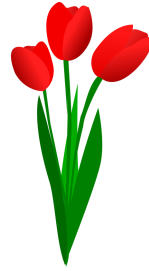
At their February 12 meeting, Session approved the following:

- ♦ On February 25, Breathe, a non-profit organization, focused on environmental issues gave a presentation for our community.
- ♦ The sanctuary will be used for a piano/cello recital on March 3, 1:30-4PM
- ♦ A homeschool group will use our building one Friday/month, starting March 22, 1:30-4:30
- ♦ Communion in June will be moved from June 2 to June 9.
- ♦ In response to Pastor Rucker's report in the annual report, a strategic planning committee is being formed. At this time, the committee consists of Lisa and Jim Segedy, Paul Ohori, and Tyler McGuigan.



During February, Bing (Chinese intern from PITT) and her son, Thomas, taught us about Chinese New Year, brought in books, special gifts for the FROGS, and we all made dumplings, using chopsticks for dinner. We played Bingo on 2/14, and the FROGS made Valentines for their own families. Mary Ann Hartman visited us on Feb. 21 to teach the FROGS about dental hygiene and provided them with a kit of toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, etc. They all learned a lot. On Feb. 26, Emily Pocratsky and an intern gave a presentation on protecting one's personal space. Food and drink donations appreciated.

Judy Mysels, Director



Diane Kemmerer would like to thank everyone for all the sympathy wishes, cards, etc.

SCHOLARSHIP AVAILABLE

THE ROTARY FOUNDATION is accepting applications for the fully-funded 2020 Rotary Peace Fellowship. Up to 100 peace and development leaders are selected every year to earn either a master's degree or a professional development certificate in peace and conflict studies. Contact www.rotarypeacecenters@rotary.org for more information. Registration deadline is May 31. Thanks to Brenda McCrady for alerting us to this scholarship opportunity.



LET'S GO LIVE!

AN OPPORTUNITY TO VIDEO TAPE OUR WORSHIP SERVICE

The Worship committee is developing a plan to video our Sunday morning worship services and stream the service on-line or through Facebook. We have one person willing to run the video. At least one more person – two more would be even better – to help us achieve this goal would be great. If interested, please call the church office (412-241-4613). Thank you!



TO LIVE A FRUITFUL LIFE 7:00PM WEDNESDAY EVENINGS DURING LENT MARCH 13-APRIL 17

For an hour Pastor Michael will turn to parables from the Bible, real-life stories from people like us, and life lessons learned by the so-called saints. By the way, saints *never* referred to themselves as saints! They struggled just like us. We are saints under construction. Let's build one another up as we struggle with real-life issues together. These evenings are enjoyable, non-threatening, enlightening, and encouraging. I hope you can join us once, twice, whenever you are able. No materials needed.

PROTECTING OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

Some things we just don't like to think about. Things that "surely don't happen around here." Well, these things do happen around here and are things we need to think about. I am referring to human trafficking and vulnerable teens being enticed into unhealthy relationships.

ON THURSDAY, MARCH 14 FROM 4:30 – 6:30 P.M. these 2 issues will be addressed by representatives from PAAR (Pittsburgh Action Against Rape) at the South Avenue United Methodist Church in Wilkinsburg. These two seminars will be offered:

More than "Taken" – Identifying Survivors of Trafficking in our Communities. The presentation will provide case studies for participants to learn about the methods of traffickers and their vulnerable victims. There is a \$5.00 registration fee for this seminar.

Healthy Relationships for Teens Ages 15 – 18. The session will encourage teens to spot warning signs of an unhealthy relationship and how to respond if they find themselves in one. This seminar is free.

IF INTERESTED YOU MUST RESPOND BY MARCH 12.

Registration forms are available at the church. .

WILKINSBURG COMMUNITY MINISTRY

Our Mission Partner

The First Presbyterian Church of Edgewood is a *community church that seeks to love God, to love each other, and love our neighbors.* The Wilkinsburg Community Ministry is enabled us to fulfill that mission. Here is an update on the mission agency's work:

Walk through clients and emergency food distributions doubled in recent weeks.

The number of SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) recipients also increased.

The Executive Director, Ruth Kittner, is exploring the possibility of expanding WCM's ministry area to include Swissvale, Braddock, Edgewood. Currently the ministry is limited to the borough of Wilkinsburg borough.

Continue to pray for and support our the ministry arm of our church. If you visit the Wilkinsburg Community Ministry website (www.wcm15221.org) you will find an opportunity to make a tax-free donation.

What Can I Do During Lent to Live My Faith Better?

1. Make a commitment to read Sunday scriptures *before* you come to church. In the same way that reading up on football players, opposing teams, and coaching strategies will help you experience a game more fully, familiarizing yourself with the readings ahead of time will help you experience them in a deeper way on Sunday
2. Try a new spiritual practice. Sign up for a silent retreat or spend at least one hour in silent meditation each weekend.
3. Think about what you usually spend your money on. Do you buy too many clothes? Spend too much on dinner out? Pick one type of expenditure that you'll "fast" from during Lent, and then give the money you would usually spend to a local charity.
4. Take something on-40 days of letter writing, 40 acts of kindness, 40 phone calls to the important people in your life.
5. When you first sit down in front of your computer at work, or at the very end of your workday, try a 10-minute guided prayer from Sacred Space based on the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius.
6. Read the entire Gospel of Mark in one sitting. As the shortest Gospel, it is the most concise story of Jesus' life, and the cross, a central Lenten symbol, plays an even more prominent role than in the other Gospels.
7. Unplug from your iPhone or turn off your car radio on your commute. The silence may be jarring at first, but you may find that you are able to concentrate better and will be more observant of your surroundings.
8. Buy a book of daily reflections and keep it by your bed. Local parishes often offer these for purchase during Lent, and there are some good ones available online. Try the **Upper Room** or a book by Edward Hays.
9. Think about a habit that has kept you from being whom God is calling you to be. Consciously give up that habit for Lent.
10. Spend at least one weekend or evening volunteering during Lent. Serve a meal at your local soup kitchen. Visit the elderly. Stock shelves at a food pantry.
11. Make a commitment to fast from insensitive, cruel comments about others. So, no gossiping or going down the Twitter rabbit hole.
12. Participate in a spiritual book club or small community of faith. Check out what's already going on at your parish or pick a book and start your own.
13. As a part of your Lenten almsgiving, make a point to learn more about a particular social issue (immigration, human trafficking, racism, the environment, public education, child poverty). Give money to an organization related to your chosen issue that supports the dignity of the human person.
14. Pray for somebody. As you're walking the streets, driving the highways, or sitting in your cubicle at work, pick out a person who appears to be in need and pray for that person. Be mindful of the words of philosopher Philo of Alexandria, who said, "Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a great battle."
15. Read the Works of Mercy as Jesus describes them in Matthew 25:31-46. Then put this teaching into practice and choose an act of service you can perform throughout Lent.



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March



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
					8:00 AA	8:30 AA
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
9:30 Choir Reh. 9:45 Adult Class 11:00 Worship 12:15 Fellowship Deacon Mtg. 2-4PM Piano Recital	7:00 Scouts (SC)	10:00 Book Club 3:45 FROGS 6:30 Strategic Planning Mtg. 7:00 AA	ASH WEDNESDAY 7:00 Service (GP)	3:45 FROGS	8:00 AA	8:30 AA
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
DAYLIGHT SAVINGS 9:30 Choir Reh. 9:45 Adult Class 11:00 Worship 12:15 Fellowship	7:00 Scouts (SC)	10:00 Book Club 3:45 FROGS 7:00 Session 7:00 AA	7:00 Lenten Bible Study	3:45 FROGS	8:00 AA	8:30 AA
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
9:30 Choir Reh. 9:45 Adult Class 11:00 Worship 12:15 Fellowship	7:00 Scouts (SC)	10:00 Book Club 3:45 FROGS 7:00 AA	7:00 Lenten Bible Study	3:45 FROGS	1:30-4:30 Home School Co-op 8:00 AA	8:30 AA
24/31	25	26	27	28	29	30
9:30 Choir Reh. 9:45 Adult Class 11:00 Worship 12:15 Fellowship	7:00 Scouts (SC)	10:00 Book Club 3:45 FROGS 7:00 AA	7:00 Lenten Bible Study	3:45 FROGS	8:00 AA	8:30 AA



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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. Lily ___ Tulip ___ Daffodil ___ Hyacinth ___

The wording for the bulletin is:

___ In honor of _____

___ In memory of _____

Order placed by _____

Please check: ___ I would like to take the plant.

___ I would like it to be planted in the Prayer Garden

The cost of each plant is \$8.00 Please attach your check (payable to the First Presbyterian Church of Edgewood) to this order form and return it to the Church Office. Deadline is April 7, 2019.

