

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

November 2016

PASTOR'S

POINT OF VIEW



Michael P. Rucker
Pastor

My fifteen year old son Desmond is not impressed; in fact he is sadly cynical about the political process in the United States of America, the nation his adoptive parents brought him to from his native nation, South Africa, back in 2002. I believe that frustration and cynicism oppress a lot of Americans.

The other morning I asked myself, when I was fifteen years old, what was the political tenor of our country? I thought about it for a moment and mumbled, "Oh my goodness!" I entered my fifteenth year on June 9, 1968. As in 1968! America was teetering on the edge of chaos. Sixty-six days before I blew out my birthday candles,

Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated by James Earl Ray in Memphis, Tennessee. Four days prior to my birthday, a 24 year old Palestinian/Jordanian immigrant named Sirhan Sirhan gunned down the charismatic US Senator and candidate for President Robert "Bobbie" Kennedy. Rioting rocked over 150 cities across America. The Democratic Convention teetered on the edge of collapse. Wow.

Our contemporary political climate is poisonous. Anger and stress seethe. Things are not as violent as they were in 1968, but it is a scary time. I recommend a three-point plan for the month of November:

PRAY. VOTE. PRAY.

PRAY WITH US on the evening of November 7 at 7:00 p.m. in the lounge. That is the night before the election. I will lead a service of worship, song, and prayer for our country on Election Day and beyond. This will be a *non-partisan* service. When it comes to my political predilections as a pastor, I follow in the footsteps of one of my mentors who served my hometown church in the '70's. When asked for whom he would vote, Dr. George Parkinson smiled mischievously and said, "I am voting for the best candidate....and I'm sure you are, too." (cont. on p.2)

NOVEMBER 2016 WORSHIP SCHEDULE

November Is Full of Meaningful Worship Services

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 6

All Saint's Sunday. In every age God has raised up men and women to live and die in faith. On this Sunday, we will remember and give thanks for the "saints" in our lives who ran the race of faith until their days in this world came to an end. *A Celebration of the Lord's Supper.* "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if those who hear my voice open the door, I will come into them and eat with them and they with me." Let us respond to that invitation from Jesus. **[Don't forget to set your clock back!!!]**

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 7, at 7:00 p.m.

Pastor Michael, Shaun, and Sunny will lead a *non-partisan* worship service where we may share our faith, fears, prayers, songs, and scripture on the evening before the election.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 8, from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm

The sanctuary will be open to anyone who wishes to sit in the peace, quiet, and beauty of that place of worship. Perhaps you will need a time to reflect either before or after you cast your vote.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 13

God has given each one of us unique gifts and talents. God has given this congregation a call to ministry in this community at this time. How then should we respond? That goes to the heart of stewardship. Let us reflect on how we are doing. We will celebrate *the Sacrament of Baptism* as well.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 20

Celebrate the 125th Anniversary of the First Presbyterian Church of Edgewood. (see article in this newsletter.)

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 23, at 7:00 pm

"Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good. God's steadfast love endures forever." On the evening before our national day of Thanksgiving, we will meet in the Gathering Place to give that thanks to a God whose love never ends

(cont. p.2)



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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 (cont’d.)

CAST YOUR VOTE on Tuesday, November 8. I believe that the disciples of Jesus are called to take part in the political process by voting, at the very least. True, Jesus did not aspire to political office. He ran away when people wanted to make him king (John 6:15): **Perceiving that (the crowds) were about to come and take him by force to make him king, Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by himself.** Jesus had no desire for political leadership. **My kingship is not of this world.** He said to Pontus Pilate before he was condemned to crucifixion. (John 18:36.)

Yet, did not say to become a political drop-out. Jesus publicly affirmed, (Matthew 22:21:) **Give therefore to the Emperor the things that are Emperor’s, and to God the things that are God’s.**

And the Apostle Paul commanded the first Christians, **Let every person be subject to the governing authorities....they are instituted by God...respect to whom respect is due, and honor to whom honor is due.** (from Romans 13.)

LIFT UP PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING. On the evening before Thanksgiving, Wednesday evening at 7:00 p.m. in the Gathering Place, we will have an of giving thanks. Again, it will be a casual, not-very-long service of scripture reading, prayer, and music. The election will be over, the nation will begin to hesitantly move forward, but I expect the anxiety of the election process to linger. We will remember the urgings of the Apostle Paul: **Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication – WITH THANKSGIVING – let your requests be known to God.** (Philippians 4:4).

I believe there is one thing we can all agree on. These are unsettling and unsettled days. Lean on that most lovely of all Psalms (Psalm 23): **let the Lord be our Shepherd and we will not want. We will be made to lie down in green pastures and led beside still waters. Our souls will be restored.**

May the peace of Christ rule in your hearts.
Pastor Michael

November Worship Services (cont’d.)

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 27

A new church year. On this 1st Sunday of Advent we will begin to make room in our hearts for the birth of Jesus, God’s Word made flesh. Following the worship service we will have our traditional “Hanging of the Greens” as we visually prepare our sanctuary for this holy season.

December Upcoming Events

Saturday, Dec. 3 - ESO Holiday Concert
Sunday, Dec. 18 - Advent Taize Worship, Congregational Meeting (election of officers, receive budget)
Saturday, Dec. 24 - Christmas Eve Worship at 8:00PM

Women’s Choral Festival Returns to FPCE

Sunday, November 13
3:00PM, Sanctuary

This year features the Duquesne University Pappert Women’s Chorale, University of Pittsburgh Women’s Choral Ensemble, and Belle Voci Community Women’s Choir. And new this year is Fox Chapel Area High School’s Vulpes Cantantes (“Singing Foxes”) and a yet -to-be-confirmed second high school ensemble. This is sure to be another wonderful afternoon of music. Please join us!

**AN ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 20
THE MINISTRY OF FPCE ENTERS ITS 125TH YEAR**

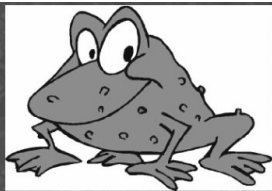
We are planning a big celebration and would like you to be part of it! On Sunday, November 20, we will honor the 125th Anniversary of this church of Jesus Christ.

In 1891, Benjamin Harrison was in the second year of his first and only term as President of the United States, trouble was brewing between Carnegie Steel and the Amalgamated Iron and Steel Workers Union in Homestead, PA, the spelling of Pittsburgh was changed to Pittsburg, the legendary Connie Mack was behind the plate for the Pirates; the borough of Edgewood was three years old, and the First Presbyterian Church of Edgewood held its first worship service on Sunday, December 20 in a frame structure on Edgewood Avenue between Elm and Maple Streets.

Much has changed since 1891. Years of happiness and sorrow, tragedy and celebration, good times and bad unfolded beneath the gaze of an Almighty and Merciful God. Yet through it all, Jesus Christ, the Alpha and Omega, who is the same yesterday, today, and forever, held his church in his heart. That heart continues to pound with love for the Edgewood community, this congregation, and the church universal. In that love is our hope.

On Sunday November 20, we will give thanks and praise to God for the 125th Anniversary Celebration of the ministry and mission of the First Presbyterian Church of Edgewood. The worship service will be filled with lovely music, at least one pastor who served FPCE in the past, and a Celebration of Holy Communion. During the catered luncheon, we will hear from other previous pastors, listen to some of the fascinating stories from our past (Rhonda Apossos has become the church historian), and have an opportunity to take a couple of tours of the church building.

We very much hope that you will be able to join us for worship and the luncheon to follow. PLEASE RSVP BY CALLING THE CHURCH OFFICE AT 412-241-4613.



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

November is a short month for FROGS because of school days off and holidays, but we are still "hopping".

In mid October, we took a field trip to the library, so they could learn about it and take out a book. We learned about Columbus and did Halloween/fall crafts/activities. Officer Fred Livingston of the Edgewood Police presented a Halloween safety program and were given glow sticks, reflective bands and candy to start the holiday.

Also many thanks to the wonderful volunteers who help make this program so successful, especially during homework time.

Huge thanks for the donations of snacks and drinks from the wonderful FPCE family.

Snacks are still needed: fruit snacks, crackers, chips, cookies, and/or drinks: Capri Sun, juice, etc.

Judy Mysels, Director

News of Our Members and Friends

- ◆ On Saturday, October 15, Pastor Michael and Shaun led a funeral service for **Dr. Keith Hal Coats**. Dr. Coats loved this church and community deeply. Dr. Keith Coat's father, Hal Coats, donated the funds for the red carpet in the sanctuary.
- ◆ Welcome to our new section leaders **Erin McShane & Josh Mann**. We're happy to have your voices with us joining the Sanctuary Choir!
- ◆ **Shaun Cloonan** recently co-hosted the PMEA District 1 Honors Choir festival at Westminster Presbyterian Church on October 28-29. The Men's and Women's Choirs were made up of 150 singers from 38 schools. **Sunny Sakai** served as accompanist for the women, and special thanks to **Tina Nine** who jumped in at the last minute as on-site nurse when plans fell through!
- ◆ You won't want to miss catching **Bill Crean** in the Prime Stage Theater's production of "To Kill a Mockingbird" at the Hazlett Theater from November 4-13. He plays the roles of Mr. Cunningham and the Judge.
- ◆ Traveling mercies and well wishes to our brother **Will Butler** as he begins the next chapter of his career in a new position with the airlines in Chicago.
- ◆ Thanks to all who supported our **CROP Walkers Judy Mysels, Jeff & Tina Nine**. You can still donate! Check with Judy in the office to find out how.
- ◆ We rejoiced with the family of **Winter Rae Somma**, grand-niece to Mary Hartman and Diane Kemmerer, who was baptized during worship on October 9.
- ◆ **Deb Harris** reports that **Cassidy and Haley** are both honor roll students, and Cassidy will serve as drum major for the McKeesport Tiger Marching Band for 2016-2017!!

Music Ministry Article – November 2016

by Shaun Cloonan, Minister of Music

“To Everything, turn, turn, turn...there is a season, turn, turn, turn...”

Sure as the leaves change colors and the temperatures drop, time marches on, and with it we experience the winds of change.

October marked a season of change, a time of goodbyes and hellos for us in the music ministry. Our long-time section leader and son of the congregation, Tyler McGuigan, began a new job that (at least for now) has him working Sunday mornings. It's not as much of a goodbye as it is a “see you later,” as we fully expect he'll be back with us as soon as it becomes a possibility! But for now, we'll miss his voice and presence in weekly worship. And a few short weeks later, we got the quick and unexpected news that another of Edgewood's own, Will Butler, received a job opportunity that necessitated a move to Chicago. But, if we know Will, somehow, some way, we'll end up with him back in our folds sooner than we can expect! Until then, we wish him and Tyler well and look forward to seeing them both soon.

So, while our Sanctuary Choir family has (at least temporarily) lost a member or two, we're “keeping it in the family” (literally) and welcomed 2 new faces to our music ministry. Erin McShane, Tyler's sister, who is a junior at Woodland Hills, is our newest female section leader. We're thrilled to be able to offer her the opportunity to gain more experience musically while she continues her studies in school. And, I extended the invitation to a member of my North Hills family to join us as well. Josh Mann is a senior at North Hills High School, hoping to study music education in college next year, and is stepping into the section leader role opened with Tyler's absence. We've already put both of these young singers to work, as they joined Mandy for the anthem on October 16, each singing a solo verse. Welcome to both Erin and Josh!

The Women's Choral Festival in our sanctuary on Sunday, November 13 at 3:00PM is free and open to the public. Please join us!

Just for Fun!

Don't let your worries get the best of you. Remember, Moses started out as a basket case!

Many folks want to serve God....but only as advisors.

When you get to your wits' end, you'll find God lives there.

God promises a safe landing, not a calm passage.

Forbidden fruits create many jams.

We were called to be witnesses, not lawyers or judges.

Coincidence is when God chooses to remain anonymous.

If God is your copilot, swap seats.

Sunday Mornings

- Children's Sunday School meets during worship.
- The Adult Class is studying the "Tour of the Bible" with Song of Solomon at 9:45 in the Lounge.

Men's Group

The Men's Group will meet at its usual day and time, which is 2nd and 4th Mondays at 7:00 PM at Foli's Place, 1050 Brinton Rd, (next to the CoGo's).

Tuesday Morning Book Club

The Jesus I Never Knew by renowned author Philip Yancey lives up to its title. This book opens our eyes up to the world in which Jesus lived and moved and had his being. We will uncover new insights in the life and death of the Risen Lord. This group meets Tuesday mornings at 10:00AM at Rhonda Apeossos' home (361 Maple Ave.)

Wednesday Night Bible Study

Pastor Michael will be in touch. Classes will resume during the season of Advent.

CHRISTIAN
EDUCATION



"How does our renewal in God change the way we listen to God's words? How do we respond? We close our worship service with the words *Sending God's Word into the World*. That is a quite a commitment! During the rest of the week, do we reflect on His words and act accordingly? Do we make positive changes in our relationships with others? In Reinhold Niebuhr's Serenity Prayer, we ask God to give us serenity to accept what cannot be changed, the courage to change what can be changed and the wisdom to know one from the other. In this season, let us pray for wisdom to better understand the needs of our church and others and make positive changes in our stewardship - the act of responsibly overseeing, protecting, and preserving what we value. Paul Ohori.

Note: there will not be a luncheon after the stewardship worship service this year.



Deacons' Doings

Lots of projects are coming up for the deacons:

The **Manger Tree** will be here before you know it! Please choose a tag or tags from the tree and bring an UNWRAPPED gift, gift card, or money (which will be used to purchase gifts) to the Sanctuary by **DECEMBER 5TH**. You have always been so very generous in giving to "the least of these."

Shady Side Academy will again be donating items to our food pantry the week of Nov. 21st. They are only 7-9 years old, but last year those kids hauled in over 2500 items !! They are truly a blessing to us. Thanks also go out to members of our congregation and of the Edgewood community who also support the food pantry.

On Nov. 13, the deacons will be making Harvest Baskets for our friends of the church. FROGS will be making cards and mats for our baskets.



FPCE has an active PRAYER CHAIN with 16 Prayer Warriors. You're welcome to join us. If you have a prayer request(s) contact: Pastor Michael at 412-241-4613 or mprucker@fpcedgewood.org; Judy Mysels at 412-241-4613 or office@fpcedgewood.org; Sallie Monk at 412-371-4344; Patti Mielke at 412-350-8442 or pgmielke@hotmail.com

You are welcome to send your requests for prayer. We phone or e-mail current requests as we receive them. If you have any questions, please contact one of us (see above).

Join us as a Prayer Warrior. We send out a prayer list quarterly and meet twice a year to review our prayer list. **Our next meeting is Sunday, November 6, following morning worship.**



HANGING OF THE GREENS Sunday, November 27 following worship

Advent, our journey to Christmas, begins in just a few weeks! We'll begin our visible preparations with the Hanging of the Greens after church on **Nov. 27**. We'll meet in the Lounge for fellowship, then, we'll begin decorating. For those who have never participated, we put up the Christmas tree, decorate the sanctuary, lounge, entrance ways, etc. Join us for this time of celebration and anticipation.

The Book Corner

Many of you indicated on the church interest survey conducted earlier this year that you like reading as part of your spiritual growth. Each month, we'll feature one or two books that people recommend with a brief synopsis. If you would like to share something you have read, please give or email Judy Mysels (office@fpcedgewood.org) your synopsis by the 25th of any month for inclusion in this newsletter. Happy Reading!!!

THE SHACK

How would you like to spend a weekend with God? This summer the Tuesday morning book group read The Shack by William P. Young. The Shack is a work of fiction in which Mackenzie Allen Phillips gets to meet God and explore many theological questions, both big and small. The cast of the book consists only of Mack, his family, a few friends, and God the Trinity incarnate. While several members of the groups had previously read the book and did not particularly care for it, we found that reading and discussing the book as a group gave new meaning to the story. God was not the God that Mack expected but was the God he needed. In The Shack, God explains, "To reveal myself to you as a very large, white grandfather figure with flowing beard, like Gandalf, would simply reinforce your stereotypes, and this weekend is not about reinforcing your religious stereotypes."

The Shack is filled with humor, pathos, and theological discussions. One critic calls it "a guy-meets-God novel that has literary integrity and spiritual daring."

Rhonda Apessos

Surprised by Hope

N. T. Wright is most prolific biblical scholar in a generation. Some say he is the most important apologist for the Christian faith since C. S. Lewis. He has written the most extensive series of popular commentaries on the New Testament since William Barclay. But perhaps the most significant praise of all: When Wright speaks, preaches, or writes, folks say they see Jesus, and lives are transformed. A pastor friend of mine describes a church member walking into his office, hands trembling as he held a copy of Wright's Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church. "If this book is true," he said, "then my whole life has to change."

Michael Rucker

(You've often heard Pastor Michael refer to Tom Wright in his sermons!)

Being of Service

On that same survey, many of you said that you like to volunteer, and isn't that in the spirit of FPCE?! For those of you who may still be looking for opportunities to be the heart, the hands, the feet of Jesus we're going to feature one or two opportunities each month to feed, the hungry, clothe the naked or free the captives.

THE PITTSBURGH FOOD BANK

Located at 1 N. Linden St., Duquesne, PA 15110, the food bank offers a number of different kinds of volunteer work.

You may:

- Offer clerical or administrative help
- Pack or repack nonperishable items at the food bank itself (for example, Mondays are supplies for seniors)
- Distribute fresh produce during the growing season at various locations
- Pack "backpacks for kids" so they'll have food for the weekend
- Step in whenever fill-ins are needed
- And if your farmer gene is gung ho, you can glean crops in nearby farms!

The opportunities allow you to accommodate to both your schedule and your interests. Michael and I have done the backpacks and also helped with about a million eggplants and apples in Homewood one day!

For more information or to sign up, contact Beci Russell or Barb Boje at VolOpps@pittsburghfoodbank.org.

Heather Wilson

FREE STORE WILKINSBURG

The Free Store Wilkinsburg is located at 619 Penn Avenue. Their mailing address is P.O. Box 8849 Wilkinsburg, PA 15221. Modeled after the Braddock free store, it was started by four young women who can only be described as "go getters!" They can always use both donations and volunteers. Right now, they are accepting winter clothing, shoes, children's toys and books, and small household items. They are usually in particular need of men's clothing. They will pick up donations if you can't get them there. They are also usually in need of bags (larger plastic bags or paper grocery bags are good).

To contact them, use their website

www.freestorewilkinsburg.org or their facebook page, www.facebook.com/FreeStoreWilkinsburg.

Heather Wilson

Where do you volunteer? Would you like to see it featured here? If so, please give or email Judy Mysels with the scoop.

November

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
		10:00 Book Club 3:45 FROGS 7:00 Deacons 7:00 AA		3:45 FROGS 6:00 125th Ann. Plan. Mtg.	8:00 AA	8:30 AA
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
9:30 Choir Reh. 11:00 Worship 12:15 Fellowship Prayer Chain Mtg.	7:00 Evening Service 7:00 Scouts	Sanctuary open 9AM-4PM 3:45 FROGS 7:00 AA		1:00 Daytime Circle NO FROGS	8:00 AA	8:30 AA
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
9:30 Choir Reh. 11:00 Worship 12:15 Fellowship 3:00 Women's Choral Festival	7:00 Men's Group (Foli's) 7:00 Scouts	10:00 Book Club 3:45 FROGS 7:00 Session 7:00 AA		3:45 FROGS	8:00 AA	8:30 AA
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
9:30 Choir Reh. 11:00 Worship 12:15 Fellowship 125th Ann. Plan. Mtg.	7:00 Scouts	10:00 Book Club 3:45 FROGS 7:00 AA	7:00 Thanksgiv- ing Service	THANKSGIVING DAY OFFICE CLOSED	OFFICE CLOSED 8:00 AA	8:30 AA
27	28	29	30			
9:30 Choir Reh. 11:00 Worship 12:15 Fellowship Hanging of the Greens	7:00 Men's Group (Foli's) 7:00 Scouts	3:45 FROGS 7:00 ESO reh. 7:00 AA				



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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 11, 2016.**



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: _____