

John C. Lentz, Pastor
Lois Annich, Rachel McDonald, Interim Associate Pastors

*Discovering God's call, celebrating the Spirit's presence
Witnessing to Christ's transformative power!*



The Tower

December 2015

Dear Friends,
Happy Thanksgiving!

Deanne and I are thankful to be home from Haiti. What a marvelous trip! We are so grateful for the faithfulness of Jeff Smith, Steve Sedam, Barb Cloud, Dean and Judy Sieck, Carol and Mark Weddell and Kermit Lind – they are hardy travelers.



After flying into Port au Prince from Miami, we spent the night and then flew (VERY exciting in 5-seater planes!) over the mountains to Gabo, a town in the Central Plateau. There we teamed up with our Mission partners and hosts, Haiti Outreach, to celebrate the well that your generosity helped dig!

Remember those wonderful parties at SOHO, the delightful and delicious restaurant on W. 25th St. owned by Nolan Konkoski and Molly Smith (daughter of Jeff and Ann Smith!)? Well, the price of the tickets and the money raised during the auction amounted to \$15,000, which was the price to dig a fresh-water well in Gabo.

We take clean water for granted. In Haiti, this is not the case. In many places there is no clean water for miles, and people spend much of their day going to streams for water for drinking and washing. Fresh water changes everything!

Haiti Outreach is not a service organization. It partners with Haitians, equipping them to manage the well and organize the community. The FHC travel team went to join in the celebration and to dedicate the well. There is a plaque on the well with the words of Isaiah 55:1 “Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters!” Forest Hill Church is named as the well sponsor. It was very moving for me to see our name in the middle of nowhere in Haiti.

We are bound to folks that we don’t really know by the chords of love, concern, generosity and hope. We experienced again the mystery and joy of recognizing fellow children of God. We really are all one! We are reenergized for the kingdom work in our own neighborhoods.



Go visit Kermit’s Journal - Haiti Edition for further description. Go to the website for Haiti Outreach to learn more about their faithful work. No doubt photographs of our most recent trip will be posted and stories will abound.

This Thanksgiving I am grateful for safe travel, for new traveling friends, for the ability to go to Haiti and have my soul stretched, for the work of Haiti Outreach,

and especially for you – the members and friends of Forest Hill Church.

God bless you,

Rev. Dr. John C. Lentz, Jr.
Senior Pastor

I'm always surprised at how forgetful I am. It's like I have some kind of spiritual amnesia when it comes to my relationship with God. My relationship with God is cultivated through quiet spaces, journaling, and good music. But when I'm feeling adrift I end up binge-watching Netflix and playing too many video games. I quickly forget what really tends to my spiritual life.



Advent creates for us a safe, even cozy space to return to the joy of the Christian life. In the darkest of Cleveland winters we will light candles and gather together. We celebrate how God comes to us, even when we forget God. I always loved stories from my friend Caroline who is from Sweden. She shared how Advent was just as much a cultural event as Christmas, for it provided light and celebration for the long, dark winter days. Instead of dreading winter, people looked forward to this time of celebration and community. I try to keep this in mind as I lament how it gets dark at 5:00. Perhaps I would be better off to use this as an opportunity to light some candles, put on some beautiful music, and enjoy the warmth of big blankets.

Instead of hitting that “continue watching” button, let's remind one another to gather around the light of Christ. Invite a friend to share a cup of hot chocolate, or give a warm coat to someone who needs it. Remember your spiritual roots, whether in prayer, service, or scripture.

“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.”

Advent blessings!

Rachel McDonald
Interim Associate Pastor

Faithfully and fondly,



“In every pew there’s a broken heart.” That’s what my dad, a Presbyterian minister for many years, used to say as he made his rounds to call on congregants and lovingly support them in any number of situations. I believe he was right, and not in a morbid way. Because we are human we are subject to suffering and loss. It’s a fact of life we can’t deny.

I speak with people all day long in both my private counseling practice and here at Forest Hill about grief. If you are hurting because a relationship or life passage has changed or ended, mourning the death of a loved one, struggling with your own or a family member’s health issues, or aching over the great sorrows of the world, you are not alone. According to Luke’s Gospel, when the baby Jesus was presented in the temple a wise old man named Simeon blessed Mary, then prophesied that her heart would be pierced by a sword. That certainly came to pass as she stood at the foot of the cross. No one is immune from pain in this lifetime.

I frequently use the word “raggedy” to describe grief. It’s raggedy--not clear-cut or linear. At times it feels like we take one step forward and two steps back. Often there are multiple layers of feelings through which we need to move. All in all, it’s a process that takes time.

Why on earth am I writing this in Advent? Isn’t this a season of joyful preparation for Christ’s birth? It is indeed, and for me one of the great joys of Emanuel – God with us – is his comforting presence and much needed strength. I have every intention of celebrating Christ’s birth with gusto because he is the source of everything good, including help in time of need. No matter what we may be facing, we can depend on God to hold us and never let us go.

I pray that this Advent will be a rich opportunity for you to dive deeply into the mystery of God joining us in human flesh – with all its joys and sorrows!

Rev. Lois Annich
Interim Associate Pastor

Children's Ministries

December will soon arrive! This year Advent begins the last Sunday in November. So we continue through December, preparing for Christ's arrival.

Advent, translated from its original Latin, means arrival. And we all know just how excited children get about the arrival of Christmas - the food, the family, the PRESENTS! All the holiday cheer and goodwill are a boost to our spirits. What we sometimes fail to acknowledge is how hard it is (even for adults) to WAIT.

We live in a time when there is very little room for waiting. To quote Henry Nouwen, "For many people, waiting is an awful desert between where they are and where they want to go." And yet if we look at the figures who appear in early chapters of the gospel of Luke, everyone is waiting! They are waiting, actively, for good news!

Let us all be reminded that the secret of waiting is faith. We must have faith, just as Mary did, that good things are coming. Waiting is open-ended. This advent season, fill your family with hope by allowing space to live in the moment. Letting go creates room for God. Blessed Advent and Merry Christmas to all!

Children in Worship

Preschool and kindergarten

During the month of December, the Children in Worship Class will continue their Christmas preparations through play and hearing stories about Mary & Joseph, the Shepherds, and the Magi. What wonderful preparation for the "No Fuss" Christmas Pageant!

Pathways to the Promise Land

Grades 1-5

In December, the Pathways children will continue to prepare their hearts and minds for Christ's birth by participating in a two-part workshop entitled ***Why Do We Call It Christmas?*** Created by Phil Vischer, one of the Veggie Talks creators, this program is narrated by the lively and entertaining Buck Denver and explores the history and traditions of Christmas.

The children will be discovering answers to big questions of Christmas:

- Why do we call it Christmas?
- What do Christmas trees have to do with Jesus?
- Who is Emmanuel?

In addition to studying this video, the children will use games, crafts and a service project to better understand the big question of ***Why Do We Call It Christmas?*** If you are interested in having a deeper understanding of Phil Visher's series, or looking for a terrific Christmas gift, visit www.whatsinthebible.com to learn more about this series. There are so many incredible stories contained in the bible, including those the children have studied this fall (Noah, Abraham/Sarah, and the 10 Commandments). This DVD series, ***What's in the Bible***, will show you how they all fit together to tell one BIG redemptive story.

December Dates to Know

December 6 Second Sunday in Advent

Pathways children, grades 1-5, will begin in worship before being dismissed to Bodwell Hall for the first of a two-part workshop entitled: **Why Do We Call It Christmas?**

December 13 Third Sunday in Advent

Pathways children, grades 1-5, will begin in worship before being dismissed to Bodwell Hall for the second part of the workshop entitled: **Why Do We Call It Christmas?**

December 20 Fourth Sunday in Advent

Pathways children will be in the Sunday service to worship with their families and enjoy the performance of **Amahl & the Night Visitors**.

Dec. 24, 5 pm Family Worship and "No Fuss" Christmas Pageant

Hear and participate in the story of the birth of Jesus. This year we will continue our newly begun tradition of the "No Fuss" Christmas Pageant. No experience necessary. Just come and participate in the story of wonderfully good news!

One last thing: when you see them, please be sure to thank the wonderful teachers (Pat Seeders, Wendy Brock, Laurie Logan, Lara Troyer, Katie and Matt Russo) and shepherds (Jim Seeders, Sarah Winters, Joanne Shaner, and Jane Duncan) who heard the call and gave their time during the month of November. Our programs cannot run without these dedicated members of our community.

Peace & love to all,

Kate Burleigh
Director of Children's Ministries



A.M. Education & Spiritual Development

We are continuing to have great conversations on Sunday mornings. This month we will be adding an Advent workshop as we prepare for the coming of our Lord. This month Ekkelsia and Logos will meet together.

Attendance has been down in Sunday morning youth education. I know we all have busy lives, but please consider making space for spirituality, especially during Advent.

Fellowship

Youth Christmas Party - December 20, 5 pm

Thanks the Youth Core team, the Youth Christmas party will have an elegant flair. More details to come!



Praise & Thanksgiving

Blessings to our amazing youth leaders!

Thank you to the Crucifers and Youth Readers! You're awesome!

Contact Info

Shannon M. Headen, Director of Youth Ministries
Shannon@fhcpresb.org; 216-496-6462

Music



The four Sundays of **Advent** – the time we prepare ourselves for the coming of the Christ Child – begin on November 29. We may sometimes wish to skip Advent all together and join our favorite radio programs by singing Christmas carols early in December as the commercial hubbub in the secular world takes over. But if one honors faithfully the more meditative and preparation-minded spirit of the four Advent weeks, one may find that the actual Christmas holidays (all *twelve* days!) are all the more meaningful. As you sing the hymns and carols during Advent, watch the progression as we gradually move, with anticipation, toward the celebration of the birth of Christ. *O Come, O Come Emmanuel!*

I give thanks to our resident trumpeters, Scott Lafferty and Ahren Stock, who will add a festive touch to our Advent and Christmas services.

The Chancel Choir will present the Christmas opera ***Amahl and the Night Visitors*** on **Sunday, December 20** during morning worship and again at 7 pm; the second performance will be followed by a festive wassail reception. The main roles will be sung by Henry Dyck (Amahl), Lara Troyer (Amahl's mother), Mist'a Craig, Carl Jenks, Caleb Wright (the three kings), and Jack Lentz (the page). The story is about Amahl, a boy who can walk only with a crutch and who tends to tell tall tales. He and his mother are visited by the Three Kings, and a miracle occurs.

Please invite friends to join you at the morning service or in the evening at 7:00 pm. The rehearsals for this special event are going splendidly. All will be deeply moved by this poignant story and sublime music.

On **Christmas Eve**, December 24, there will be a 5:00 pm Family Service and an 11:00 pm Candlelight Service preceded by a fifteen-minute musical prelude.

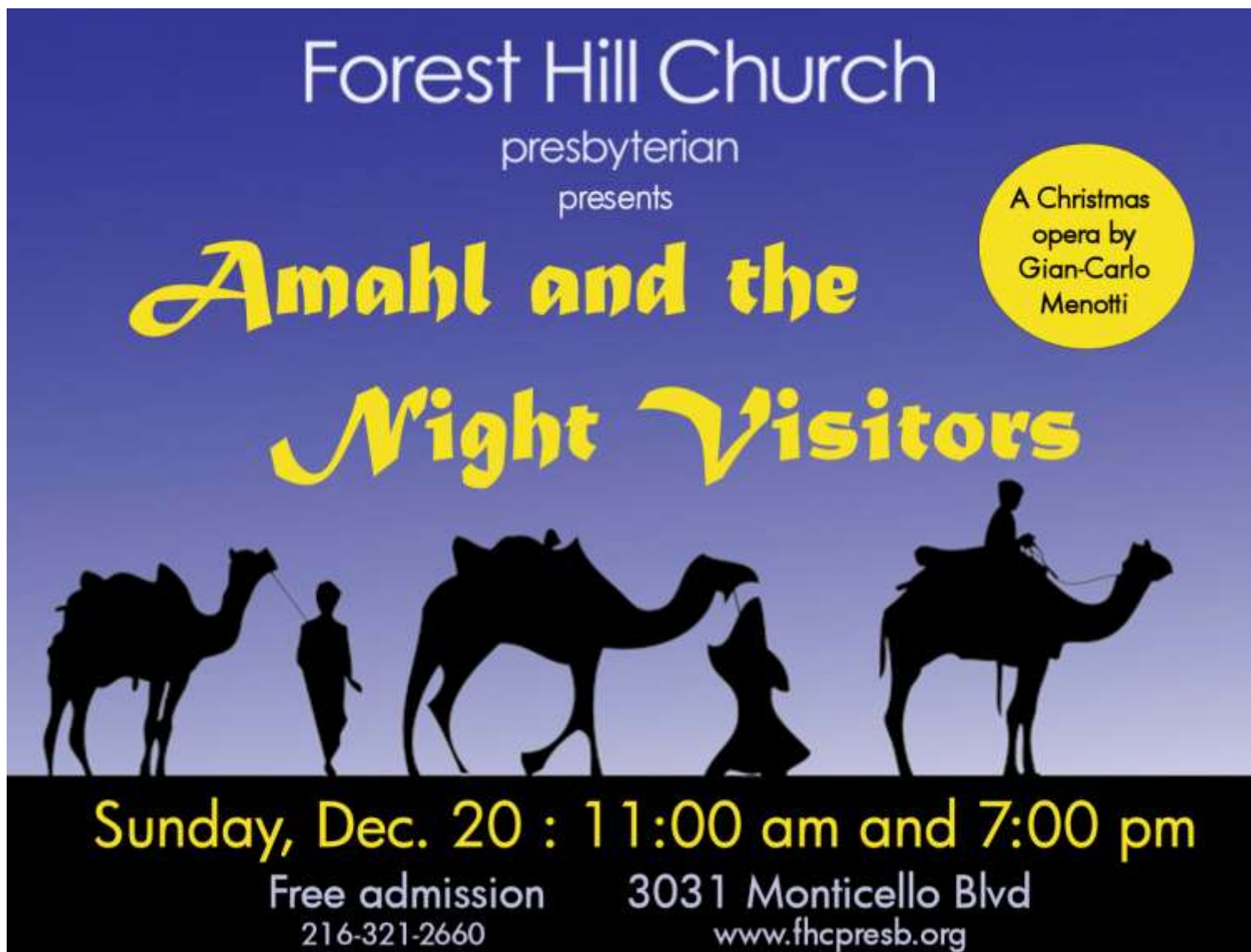
At 5 pm the Descant Choir and young instrumentalists (as well as any and all young attendees) will participate in a "No-Fuss Christmas Pageant."

At 11 pm the Chancel and Sine Nomine Choirs will participate in a modified Lessons and Carols service with a sermon.

I wish you all a blessed Advent and Christmas season.

Soli Deo Gloria!

Anne Wilson
Organist/Director of Music
annew@fhcpresb.org



Forest Hill Church
presbyterian
presents

**Amahl and the
Night Visitors**

A Christmas
opera by
Gian-Carlo
Menotti



Sunday, Dec. 20 : 11:00 am and 7:00 pm
Free admission 3031 Monticello Blvd
216-321-2660 www.fhcpresb.org

Abundance Food Pantry - Progress Continues!

Every month now, volunteers from Forest Hill Church distribute over 13,000 pounds of food to more than 320 households in our area. This is equivalent to about 11,000 meals per month. By working with the Greater Cleveland Food Bank, we have been able to reduce our cost to 4 cents per pound, and select many healthy choices with over 40% of what we offer now being fresh produce. We provide a food safety net for our neighbors in Hough, Glenville, Collinwood, East Cleveland, Cleveland Hts, University Hts, Buckeye/Shaker Square, and South Euclid, and are now listed on the United Way 211 Help Line. We strive to make our pantry a welcoming experience by providing beverages and reading material while waiting, by raffling off large items like hams and turkeys, by allowing pantry guests to choose their own food items, and by encouraging guests who want to help us serve.



On the last Tuesday of each month, we also provide a hot meal and share both food and fellowship with our guests. The youth groups started this tradition, and they still provide the decorations for these events. We receive funding from United Way, Harvest for Hunger, FHC groups and individuals. We request the rest of our support from the FHC Justice and Mission Ministry.

Nine Ways to Empower the Pantry:

1. **Keep Us Supplied.** Add plastic, paper or reusable bags to the pantry cart in the hall. Share used magazines or books for our guests to read while waiting or to take home.
2. **Pick Up at the Food Bank.** A few volunteers bring their vehicles to the Food Bank each week to pick up our order and bring it to the church.
3. **Help Us Distribute Food.** Volunteers set up the food for distribution on Tuesday afternoons. They help our pantry guests “shop.” Then they clean up and put things away afterwards.
4. **Make a Donation.** Make out a check to Forest Hill Church with “Pantry” in the memo line. Every dollar buys approximately 25 pounds of food.

5. **Bring in Cans and Other Goods.** We can always use things such as tuna, canned meats, hearty soups, baked beans, macaroni & cheese, toilet tissue, toothpaste, tooth brushes, soap, etc. Hygiene items are good because they cannot be purchased with food stamps.
6. **Join Us at a Monthly Meal.** Bring in a casserole or other dish, or help set up and prepare hot food on the last Tuesday of the month.
7. **Be a Table Host.** Break bread with our pantry guests at our monthly meal and get to know them. Provide some of our FHC hospitality to make everyone feel at home.
8. **Gather Christmas Gifts.** Gather toys, games, books, stuffed animals, wrapping paper, etc. to enable our pantry guests to give gifts to children in their lives this Christmas.
9. **Lead a Nutrition Discussion.** Pantry guests have discussion groups three times each month to talk about healthy eating and cost efficient shopping ideas in the cookbook “Good and Cheap – Eat Well on \$4 per day.”

If you want to help, sign up to be on our email list or contact:

Paul Jennings 440-570-6736 jennings_paul@att.net

Beth Zych 216-371-3381 cubbyboz@gmail.com

From the Trustees

Thanks very much to all of you who continue to fulfill your 2015 pledges (or have already done so). As our fiscal year comes to a close, however, we find that a number of people are behind in their 2015 pledge payments. If you would like a current copy of your financial transactions with the church, please contact Becky Austin in the financial office (beckya@fhcpresb.org or 216-321-2660).

Please make every effort to fulfill your pledges by the end of 2015. Forest Hill Church needs everyone's support to enable us to provide an environment where everyone can celebrate God and continue to progress on their spiritual journey.

Eric Rich, Trustee

Deacons' Corner

Talk about a success! The energy surrounding the November 8 Mission Fair was amazing and wonderful.

Thanks to everyone who signed up to volunteer for any (or all) of the great ministries we have at Forest Hill Church! We are blessed with a vibrant, active community and so many opportunities to grow while serving others. If you were not able to attend this event and want to sign up for a ministry, please check the online "Week Ahead at Forest Hill". You will be able to access our new database and let us know where you would like to be connected.

Thanks for the recent donations of cards which are available in Fellowship Hall on Sunday mornings. With the holiday season fast approaching, Christmas and New Year cards will be welcome additions to our collection. These can be dropped off in the volunteer office or just bring them to Fellowship Hall when you come to church! We always want to think of those who need a thoughtful word, and this is especially true during the holiday season, which, while joyful, can also be quite difficult. A greeting card can bring some light into a person's life just at the right time, and we hope you will stop by the greeting card table with this in mind.

Do a little bit of good where you are; it's those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world. (Desmond Tutu)

Thank you all!

Kathy Carr, *on behalf of*
The Forest Hill Deacons

Forest Hill Church Endowment Fund

In May of each year, the Endowment Committee recommends an allocation of the annual distribution from the Endowment Fund based on proposals from the ministries of Forest Hill Church. This year, the total amount available was \$53,535 – the highest amount ever. Over the summer, Session approved the following allocation.

Mission:

Our Family Home Center Debt Relief	1,500
OFHC, Kitchen Appliance Upgrade	1,000
East Cleveland Summer Youth Program	5,000
Greater Cleveland Congregations Data Support	1,768
Home Repair Resource Center	1,000
Presbyterians for Earth Care	<u>1,000</u>
	\$11,268

Church Programs:

Long Range Planning Facilitator	4,000
Catering Grill	600
Repair and Refurbish Hand Bells	2,810
LED Book Lights for Chancel Choir	250
Fellowship Hall Welcome Center	400
Foyer Renovation	3,000
Speaker Fund	1,100
Stewardship Kaleidoscope 2016 Conference	1,500
Children's Ministry Curriculum	<u>350</u>
	\$14,010

Capital Improvements:

Kitchen Remodeling	4,800
Building Security System	3,500
CE Wing Door Upgrades	4,157
Sacred Space Lighting Designer	4,800
Exterior Renovations Study Loan	<u>11,000</u>
	\$28,257

Between generous gifts from church members and appreciation of fund investments, the value of the fund was more than \$1.4 million at the end of May. Thank you to all members who have remembered the Church in their will or in their estate plans.

The Endowment Committee is also grateful to the work of the Ministries and Session who prepare the requests for allocation of these funds and oversee spending throughout the year.

David Olson,
Endowment Committee Chairman

Stewardship Update...



“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” – Matthew 6:21

Food and fellowship were in abundance as we celebrated God’s blessings and the wrap-up of the annual campaign at the Cornucopia Lunch on November 1! Thank you to all who were able to attend and to those who assisted in decorating, serving, or cleaning at last month’s event. We would especially like to thank Morag Keefe for once again preparing a delicious meal!

Our sincerest thanks also go to Ann Williams, Robyn Hales, Marcie Denton and Chris Vandall for their heartfelt (and sometimes comical!) remarks during Stewardship Moments in Sunday worship.

The Stewardship Ministry would also like to offer our gratitude to all who submitted pledge cards during the shortened campaign period. We are closing in on our total (93% as of the writing of this article) and, while the official campaign has ended, it is never too late to make your pledge! However, Session is scheduled to approve the 2016 budget during their December 16 meeting, so pledges before that day are greatly appreciated.

If you have any questions, please ask a member of the Forest Hill Church Stewardship Ministry.

Scott Peters, Steve Sedam, Ahren Stock, Melanie Alban, Jessica Kelley-Moore, Joy Stang, Peter Williams

Earth Care—Mission and Ministry

On Sunday, November 8, Interim Pastor Rachel McDonald and the Ministry of Justice and Mission invited all Forest Hill ministry groups to provide a representative to an Involvement Fair to share what they're doing and offer ways for people to participate. It was quite a showing, with many participants signing up to be part of Forest Hill Church's ministries.

The Fair showed the breadth—and depth—of the activities and functions of our congregation. From the six main Session ministries to the Deacons, the Food Pantry, Greater Cleveland Congregations, Race Core and Labre, our congregation's commitment, friendship, and fellowship shine brightly.



Earth Care was also represented, and gave me a chance to think about what the Earth Care mission and ministry is all about.

Our **mission** is simple:

- to illuminate the environmental and Earth Care issues before us
- to educate ourselves on those issues
- to act individually as best we can, and
- to advocate Earth Care locally, nationally, and globally as best we can

But the Earth Care **ministry**? As a ministry, we rarely meet and have few scheduled activities: Recycling Events, Forest Hill Park cleanup, and Earth Day Sunday Adult Ed program. And that's okay, because we're all part of the Earth Care Ministry. We all know--in our hearts, minds, and consciences—that we need to do all we can to protect and sustain the earth as God intends. We're all aware of the need for clean energy, water and air, for energy efficiency, sustainable environmental agricultural practices, and maintaining biodiversity.

But should the Earth Care ministry be doing more? What ideas do you have for what our ministry should be? Are there issues you'd like to learn more about in order to become more well-informed and be part of our ministry? Let us know!

Dave Neff, Earth Care Team

Save the dates now!
Living Prayer is coming in February
6 Sundays, February 7 - March 20, 2016; 5-7 pm
Forest Hill Church, Presbyterian

Rejoice always, never cease praying, render constant thanks; such is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 5: 16 – 18

Paul's exhortation is meant for us today! But how does one "pray without ceasing"? Forest Hill Church, in partnership with the Jesuit Retreat House, Parma, will offer a unique experience of learning anew how to live in the presence of God through the practice of prayer. This 6-week Lenten series is designed to be a spiritual retreat which takes place within the context of your ordinary busy life. We will meet at Forest Hill Church once a week to learn a new prayer practice and then pray with it during the week, returning to share our experiences.

Program Leaders: Martha Campbell and Amy McKenna, Jesuit Retreat House Staff Members

Cost for the series: \$40.00 per person (this includes all materials) and is payable **at registration**. All participants are subsidized by a generous grant from The Presbytery of the Western Reserve.

Informational events: Full particulars about this retreat will be presented at after-worship events at FHC on Jan. 3 and 17. (Attendance at these events is optional/voluntary.)

Interested?

Email Eric Muller-Girard or Rev. Lois Annich to ask your questions or to place yourself on the pre-registration list (to hold your seat until **registration opens on January 17.**)

Registration is limited to 35, and closes on January 31, 2016

Rev. Lois Annich 216.321.2660 pastorannich@fhcpresb.org
Eric Muller-Girard 216.752.7006 or multimg@wowway.com

What to Say in Fellowship Hall (or anywhere) this Christmas... to Someone Who's Hurting

A core value of Forest Hill is being hospitable and inclusive, but sometimes it's hard making conversation in Fellowship Hall. Here are some tips on what to say—and not to say—to someone facing a less than merry Christmas.

As Lois Annich said earlier in this TOWER, it may be Christmas, but for some people, all is not “merry and bright.” We expect the holidays to be fun and festive, but when you're distracted by pain or grief, Christmas can be a horrible, desperate time.

With all the hustle and bustle of the season, it's easy to forget how many people are struggling: people who are facing cancer, mental illness, or chronic pain; people who've lost their job, their child, or their spouse; people spending Christmas alone for the first time this year. These situations are bad enough the rest of the year, but they're intensified at Christmas.

As unlikely as it seems, though, Fellowship Hall can be a place to witness to people in pain that Christ is not just the “reason for the season,” but a sign of hope in the face of despair. By letting the wounded among us know they're not alone we can demonstrate that their words will be heard and their feelings honored.

Here are some tips for drawing alongside someone to share God's presence and love, not just in Fellowship Hall but anywhere this Christmas:

- If you haven't experienced a similar situation, resist the temptation to say something profound. Telling someone everything will be all right when you've never known the depth of their hardship will just ring hollow.
- On the other hand, if you have faced a similar difficulty, your words and listening ear can offer comfort even if you don't know the person all that well. You don't have to be close to someone to offer comfort.

- Sitting silently with someone, offering time and space for grief to express itself, can be more valuable than anything you can say. And a silent comforting hug or touch on the shoulder can heal more than anything you might say. Resist the urge to dispense advice and wisdom.
- Not every hurting person wants company. Before offering to visit them at home ask, *“Be honest: Would you like a visitor this week?”*
- If you want to do more, be specific in your offer to help. Saying “If there is anything I can do, let me know” just burdens them with the responsibility to find a way for you to help. Instead, try something like:

“When can I come and take your children to the library?”

“Is tomorrow a good day to come over and clean your house?”

“May I bring you dinner this week?”

- Avoid telling someone “I can’t imagine what you’re going through.” Although some may receive this as a heartfelt expression of sympathy, others may find it just adds to their sense of isolation and loneliness.

Finally, remember that while we may not be able to fix another’s pain with our words in Fellowship Hall, reassuring someone that they have the loving support of friends is always the right thing to say.

Peg Weissbrod

Author of the series *What to Say in Fellowship Hall*

News of Our Church Family

In Memoriam We Remember

Arlene Quinn, who died October 31, 2015

New Contact Information

Ron Register

14148 Cedar Rd #201

University Hts. OH 44121

Thank you to everyone who has supplied the church office with current contact information! This is helping us update our new database, which we hope to make available to the congregation soon after the first of the year. If you have not yet replied, this is what we need to know (even if you think we have EVERYTHING there is to know about you, send this along by email, US mail or by hand):

Your address

Names and dates of birth of all household members (including year)

For adults: **best phone number(s)** (specify cell or land) and **email address** (if you wish to share phone and email for teens, send it along)

And again, thank you for taking the time to do this.

Care Group

The All-Church CARE Group will be responsible for meeting members' needs during December. Please let Barb Hansen know what you're willing to do to help! You have probably already seen the email with specific information.

Please contact the church office in case of illness, hospitalizations, births or deaths (or other family emergencies) in any FHC family.

Please remember these homebound members in your prayers:

Bill Currie, Marge Drollinger, Betty Farnfield, Iris Gilbert, Ron Klein, Emelia McGuire, Joyce Peters, George Sentell, Margie and Dwight Stauffer, Elaine Tapié, Lorian Thomas

Please pray for those with ongoing prayer concerns:

Jack Quinn, Dennis Wedding (Jeannine Gury's brother).

Ushers

Ongoing thanks to Roger Heineman, head usher, and his weekly usher crews. Talk to Roger if you are interested in joining the team.

Volunteer Hours in September

The office volunteers – Nancy Grube, Pat Jenkins, Beth Zych, Jane Ishler, Cathy Ghiandoni, Anne Smith, Elspeth Peterjohn and the TOWER assembly crew – worked a total of 47 hours in October. Thank you all!

Social Groups and Circles

The Group (60s – 70s): Christmas Party

The Group will again be providing Christmas gifts for a family from Boulevard School – a family of two parents, a grandmother and six children. We will gather for a potluck dinner and to prepare the gifts at the home of Betsy and Joe Andrews (2740 Fairmount Blvd, Cleveland Hts) on Friday, December 11 at 6:30 pm. The main dish will be provided; please bring an appetizer, salad, vegetable or dessert; BYOB.

For food assignments and gift details, RSVP by December 6 to Cathy Ghiandoni (216-691-1905 or ghiandoni.c@gmail.com).

December 11, Andrews' home, 6:30 pm

Pacesetters (40s – 60s): Christmas Party

Welcome Pacesetters and New Friends.....Join the Pacesetters' Christmas party on **Sunday, December 6** from 7 – 10 pm at the home of Chris and Dave Bell (3040 Scarborough Road, Cleveland Heights). Bring appetizers or desserts, and we will graze our way through the evening. Wine and soft drinks will be available, but feel free to bring your favorite (alcoholic or non-alcoholic) beverage.

Instead of the hallowed white elephant gifts, we are collecting the following items for the food pantry:

Children's Christmas gifts – toys, games, books, and stuffed animals, as well as wrapping paper. Please be sure used items are in good condition and complete.

Grocery items, especially tuna, canned meats, hearty soups, peanut butter, baked beans, macaroni & cheese, toilet tissue, toothpaste, tooth brushes, soap

RSVP: 216-932-6992 or Chris3040@aol.com **(this is important!)**
December 6, Bells' home, 7 pm

Iris Circle (all women of the church): **Violins of Hope**

Iris Circle will be attending the Violins of Hope exhibit at the Maltz Museum (2929 Richmond Rd, Beachwood) on Tuesday, December 15, from 11:00-12:00. We will then go to Valenti's Italian Restaurant (3365 Richmond Rd, #130) for lunch. Make a reservation by calling Karen Loughridge ([216-831-1759](tel:216-831-1759)) by December 12. Come join us! All are welcome.

December 15, Maltz Museum, 11 am



Believe it or not, it's almost time to order poinsettias for Christmas!

You may call or email the office with this information, or put this in the offering:

Name (as you would like it in the bulletin):

Please print

Total # of poinsettias @ \$7.50 each:_____

you will take_____ # to be donated_____

Total cost: \$_____



Dedication:

In honor of_____

In memory of_____

In thanksgiving for_____

Please make checks payable to Forest Hill Church, memo: POINSETTIAS

Your name_____

Phone or email _____

Thank you!

22

Check out the website

www.fhcpresb.org

Come and see!

Sundays in December

9:00 Child care begins

9:30 Adult education

Youth education

Descant Choir

10:15 Descant Choir activity

10:30 Continental Breakfast

Chancel Choir

11:00 WORSHIP

Children in Worship class

11:15 Pathways to the Promise Land (gr. 1-5) Dec. 6, 13

12:15 Fellowship Hour

Sine Nomine Choir (Gr. 6-12) Dec. 13, 20

5:00 Faith Leader

5:00 Labre Project (2nd, 4th)

No classes or choirs on
December 27. Worship
will be in Fellowship Hall.

<p>December 6 2 Advent 12:30 Interreligious Studies class 7:00 Pacesetters' Christmas Party (Bells')</p>	<p>Malachi 3: 1-4 Luke 1: 68-79 Philippians 1: 3-11 Luke 3: 1-6</p>
<p>December 13 3 Advent Holiday Angel gifts due 10:30 Cherub Choir 12:30 Organizational meeting for Memphis pilgrimage</p>	<p>Zephaniah 3: 14-20 Isaiah 12: 2-6 Philippians 4: 4-7 Luke 3: 7-18</p>
<p>December 20 4 Advent 11:00 Worship: <i>Amahl and the Night Visitors</i> 12:15 Blood Pressure check 5:00 Youth Christmas Party 7:00 <i>Amahl and the Night Visitors</i> performance and reception</p>	<p>Micah 5: 2-5a Luke 1: 46b-55 Hebrews 10: 5-10 Luke 1: 39-45</p>
<p>December 27: no classes or choirs 1 Christmas 11:00 Worship in Fellowship Hall</p>	<p>1 Samuel 2: 18-20, 26 Psalms 148 Colossians 3: 12-17 Luke 2: 41-52</p>

The Revised Common Lectionary readings are listed here.

Announcements! Announcements!

Did you know that your monthly
or weekly donation to FHC
can be paid on-line
with your other regular payments?
It's free, easy, and convenient!

The Annual Meeting will
be held on January 31,
2016

TOWER deadlines: **7 am** on
Dec 11; Jan 15, 2016; Feb 12



The church phone number is 216-321-2660. Our website is
www.fhcpresb.org

Emails and extensions for the staff are as follows:

Rev. Dr. John Lentz Jr.	<i>Pastor</i>	pastorlentz@fhcpresb.org
Rev. Lois Annich	<i>Interim Assoc. Pastor</i>	pastorannich@fhcpresb.org
Rachel McDonald	<i>Interim Assoc. Pastor</i>	RachelM@fhcpresb.org
Anne Wilson	<i>Music</i>	annew@fhcpresb.org
Shannon Headen	<i>Youth</i>	shannon@fhcpresb.org
Kate Burleigh	<i>Children</i>	kateb@fhcpresb.org
Lynda Bernays	<i>Administration</i>	office@fhcpresb.org
Becky Austin	<i>Finance</i>	beckya@fhcpresb.org
Peg Weissbrod	<i>Outreach</i>	webeditor@fhcpresb.org
Stavros Gazis	<i>Custodial</i>	office@fhcpresb.org

Custodians' cell phone: 216-217-5257

ADVENT ART



for artistic and creativity-challenged young adults

Drop in for one of three sessions to listen to some Christmas music and for some low stress craft time.

- Week one: Beginner's card making, just in time to send one to Grandma.
- Week two: Painting. Canvas and extensive instruction provided. White clothes not suggested.
- Week three: Ornament creation. Finally, a use for all those popsicle sticks you've been saving since 3rd grade.

December 1st, 8th, and 15th
7pm

Forest Hill Church, Presbyterian
Art Room (follow signs to the lower wing)
Cleveland Hts, 3031 Monticello Blvd

For more information,
email Rachel at rachelm@fhcpresb.org
or Sarah at sarahk@fairmountchurch.org



Greater Cleveland Congregations

GCC has been busy recently! Here's a summary of their recent activity.

Organizer Training

Kathy Hanna Stauffer and Quentin Smith attended the GCC training held November 8-10. Kathy commented "The training was very eye-opening, and I would recommend it for anyone who wants to do something that makes a difference in this world." You may want to consider training next time. In the meantime, ask Kathy, Quentin and the members of the Core Team about making a difference in the world, GCC style.

New Staff

James Pearlstein, GCC's first full time Lead Organizer, is on-board as of November 1st. He will be spending the first few months listening to GCC leaders, learning about the community, connecting with community leaders and funders.

Internal Campaign

- Core Team training with other congregations has taken place this fall. The FHC Core Team is building relationships with St Paul's Episcopal Church, another Cleveland Heights congregation, and will be having their first meeting in November. We will get to know each other and consider projects or actions we might do together.
Your Core Team is seeking one or two new folks to join this work.
- A Communications Committee has been formed. Its first step will be to initiate a newsletter to share GCC and congregation news with each other.

Gun Violence (GV)

- GCC is hosting a meeting to bring together youth leaders, hoping for one from each congregation, for a conversation about gun violence – to listen to how they have been shaped by gun violence, affected by it, and want to act on it.
- GCC has begun a power analysis of the 4th District (the largest residential district in Cleveland, encompassing the southeast Buckeye-Kinsman area, and the one with the most gun violence in the recent months.) Leaders from GCC congregations in the area are doing one-

on-one house meetings, reaching out to key institutions to consider possible actions.

The GV Team will be stepping up research efforts, so if gun violence is an issue that keeps you up at night and you would like to be more involved, let us know, and we will pass your name along.

Criminal Justice

- The team had a first meeting with the Monitor who will be overseeing implementation of the Consent Decree. The goal is to meet monthly and to be a strategic partner in the implementation process.
- Dr. Yvonne Conners, a GCC member from Trinity Church, was appointed a member of the Community Council for the Consent Decree. (*The Consent Decree is a legally binding agreement, established this summer, between the Dept. of Justice and the City of Cleveland to address the police excessive use of force*).

For more information, contact any member of FHC's Core Team:

Jennifer Blakeney, Barb Cloud, Ed Gemerchak, Charity McDonald (representing the Ministry of Justice & Mission), Gretchen Reynolds, Ron Register and Diana Woodbridge



Table of Contents

From the Pastor	1
Rachel's Page	3
Lois' Page	4
Children's Ministries	5
Youth Ministries	7
Music Notes	8
Abundance Food Pantry	10
From the Trustees	11
Deacons' Corner	12
Endowment Fund Report	13
Stewardship Report	14
Earth Care	15
Living Prayer	16
What to Say in Fellowship Hall...	17
News of Our Church Family	19
Social Groups and Circles	20
Poinsettia Order Form	22
Sundays in December	23
Announcements	24
Advent Art	25
Greater Cleveland Congregations Report	26
December Calendar	cover