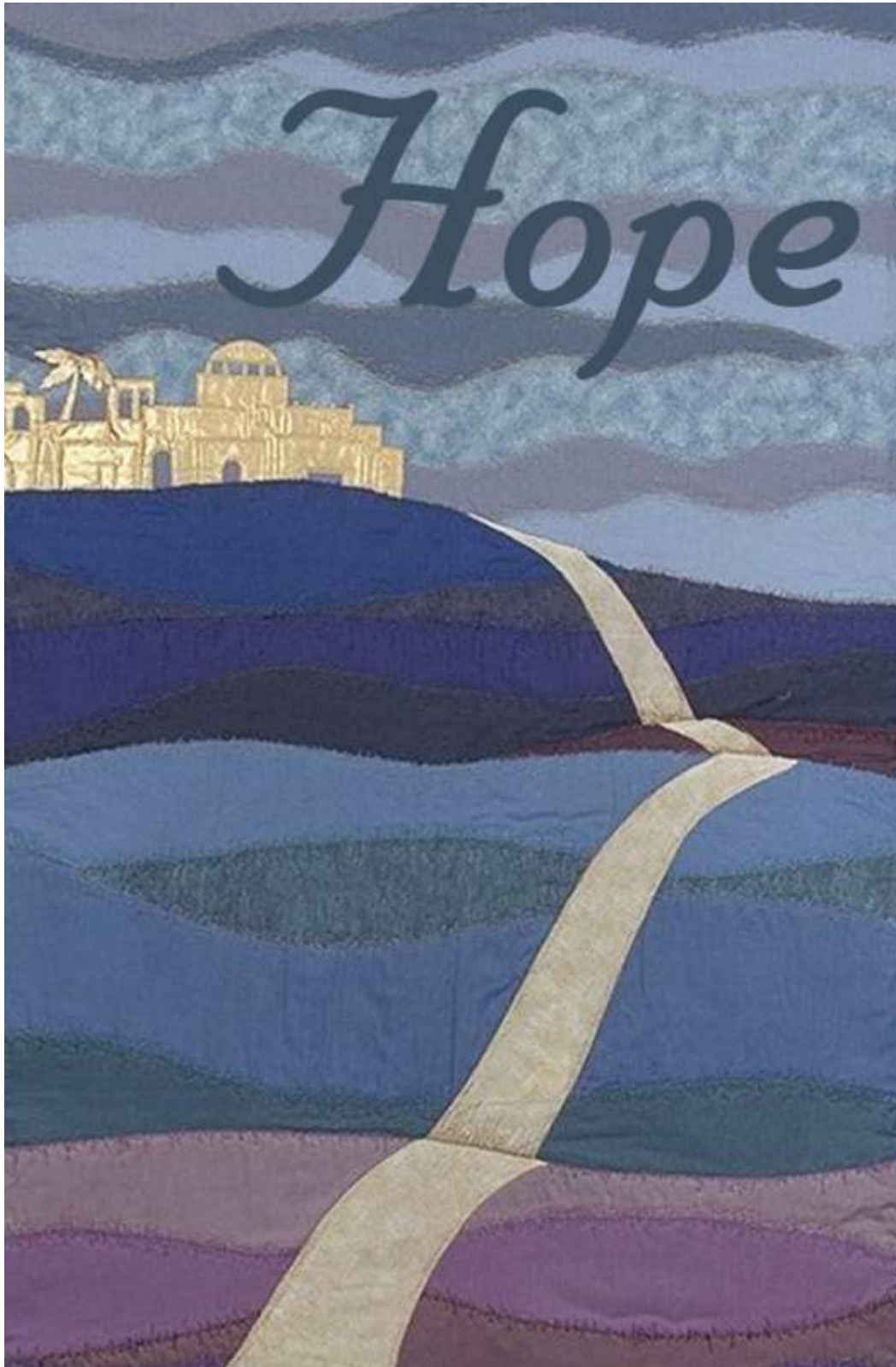


Forest Hill Church

presbyterian



Forest Hill Church: diverse, inclusive and welcoming

Service of Worship: The First Sunday in Advent
November 27, 2016 at 11:00 am
Celebration of Holy Communion

Welcome! Thank you for joining us today for worship.

This morning we celebrate the Eucharist (the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, or Holy Communion) by intinction (dipping the bread into the cup).

We also provide a gluten-free alternative. After receiving the elements you may come to the railing to receive a blessing from the pastors.

Prayer of Preparation

In this season as the days grow shorter and the shadows lengthen, we gather in eager expectation for the Light of the World to dawn. Help us, God, to lay aside all the works of night and even our cynicism as we enter this sacred season. During this hour of worship, send your Spirit to empower us to live in the light with hope. Amen.

"Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord"

Descant Choir

Welcome

Greeting Our God with Joy

Lighting of the Advent Candle

Rachel McDonald and Josh Daum

Call to Worship

Leader: Let us pray.

Faithful God, out of war's chaos you bring the order of peace. Renew us in hope, that we may work toward Christ's advent of peace among all nations.

People: God of promise, God of hope, into our darkness, come.

*** Processional Hymn No. 97**

"Watchman, Tell Us of the Night"

**please stand if able*

Renewing Our Relationship with God

Prayer of Confession

Holy and Loving God, we give thanks for the promise of this sacred season and for the joy we find in the Christ Child. Yet even as we rejoice, we recognize that we often fail to live with the hope of redemption. In this season of anticipation, we know that we are easily distracted by our own projects and preparation. We lose focus on the one who is the Source of our joy. Forgive us, God, and restore our hope in you. Amen.

Time of Silent Confession

Kyrie eleison *(Lord, have mercy)*

John Merbecke

Affirming the Good News in Our Lives
Assurance of Pardon

* Gloria

First time: All sing
Second time: Sing in a round starting with men;
women begin two measures later;
youth and children two measures after that.

Taizé

Glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, in ex - cel - sis De - o!

Glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

Opening Our Hearts to God's Word
Family Meditation

Rev. Lois Annich

“Parable of the Ten Bridesmaids”

Scripture Lesson: Romans 13: 11-14

Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

After the reading

Leader: Hear what the Holy Spirit is telling God’s people.

People: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Rachel McDonald

“Keep Watch”

Ritual of Friendship

Offering

Offertory

Sally Ann Morris

“The People Who Walked in Darkness”

* Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise God all creatures here below,
Praise God above ye heavenly host, Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost.

* Prayer of Dedication

Eucharist

Invitation

Great Thanksgiving

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them up unto the Lord.

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Sanctus

John Merbecke

Prayers of the People

Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors; And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Communion of the People

Music during Communion

Marty Haugen

“For You, O Lord, My Soul in Stillness Waits”

Prayer after Communion

Thank you for sharing your life and love with us. Now strengthen us to be your lively and loving people. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit to bring good news to the poor and lift blind eyes to sight, to loose the chains that bind and claim your blessing for all people. In Jesus' name we pray. AMEN.

Going Forth to Live as God's People

* **Closing Hymn No. 536**

"Rise, O Church, like Christ Arisen"

* **Commission and Blessing**

* **Choral Benediction**

* **Passing of the Peace**

Postlude

J. S. Bach

"Sleepers, Awake"
Ahren Stock, trumpet



Welcome Visitors!

We look forward to greeting you and answering any questions you may have. Welcome bags are available in the foyers and the narthex. Take one home with you! Be sure to visit our website, **www.fhcbpresb.org**, for a list of upcoming events, education programs for all ages, and past sermon texts and audio.

Please join us in wearing a name tag so that we might greet you. Our ushers have hearing devices, large print editions of the bulletin, activity bags for children staying in worship, and directions to our nursery for babies and young children.

Thank you to Scott Lafferty and Ahren Stock, the Advent trumpeters

Notes & Announcements

Advent Family: Rachel McDonald and Josh Daum are this Sunday's Advent Family.

Chancel Flowers: Today's flowers are given by Betty Clark in honor of Ray and Irma Clark, Herbert and Betty Fritz, and Donald Clark; and by Barbara Hansen in loving memory of Lamont Hansen.

Prayers are requested this week for the following: Max Harmon, Patricia Jenkins, Robin Richards, Robert Ruggeri, Connie Sekerak-Hicks, George Sentell, Joy Stang, Rashida Tutashinda, and Debbie Ungemach.

Please pray for Matt and Katie Russo and their families; Matt’s father Leo Russo died on November 10.

Please remember these homebound members in your prayers: Marge Drollinger, Emma Jane Gibbs, Iris and Al Gilbert, Ron Klein, Emelia McGuire, Joyce Peters, Jack Quinn, Margie Stauffer, Elaine Tapié, Lorian Thomas.

The Deacons encourage you to stop by the Greeting Card Table in Fellowship Hall before or after worship to sign a card for one or more of our homebound members. We will address and mail the card for you.

Care Group: The Jericho Care Group is responsible for assisting the pastors in meeting members’ needs during November. Please call the church office to report an illness, hospitalization, family emergency, birth or death. Information will then be passed on to the Care Group leaders. In December, the All-Church Care Group – YOU! – will take the stage.

Coming Up

TODAY

Community Relations Committee Update: The Cleveland Heights Police Community Relations Committee (an initiative of the Race Inclusion Committee) invites all interested parties to a meeting in South Hall at 12:30 pm today. Work groups have developed initial plans and will share them with the congregation. We have many opportunities for you to get involved. Please come to learn more, find out what's up and get involved in working together for justice in our community.

THIS WEEK

Bible Study: The lessons for this week are **Isaiah 11: 1-10; Psalm 72: 1-7, 18-19; Romans 15: 4-13; Matthew 3: 1-12.**

Bible and Bagels discusses next Sunday’s text(s) on Wednesday mornings from 7:30 to 8:30. All are welcome!

Women’s Advent Retreat, December 3: “Be Still and Know that I Am God.” Join us for a time to find peace and grounding through mindfulness practices. Continental breakfast at 8:30, program at 9:00, lunch at 12:30. (short and sweet...no overload...the power of baby steps). Cost for food and materials is \$10, with ample scholarships available. Dress comfortably. RSVP by November 28 to the church office: office@fhcpresb.org or 216-321-2660. Bring (and register) a friend!

NEXT SUNDAY

Adult Education, 9:30 in South Hall: During Advent we will offer a book discussion on *The Names for the Messiah* by Walter Brueggeman. The book is available in paperback and on Kindle. Small-group discussions begin December 4 and end on December 18.

Labre Project

Warm, gently-used clothing and accessories – coats, sweaters, hats, gloves, blankets for men, women and children – are appreciated for the Labre Project in East Cleveland. Please leave donations in the bin in Fellowship Hall. If you would like to help prepare or serve food for twice-monthly meals, contact Jack Breisch (jbrei@hawken.edu).

LOOKING AHEAD

December 10 Intergenerational Gathering: The newly-formed Young Family Get-Together Group invites you to join them for an intergenerational family gathering on Saturday, December 10 from 4-7 pm. Make a few ornaments, make new friends, share pizza and conversation. Contact Rachel McDonald (RachelM@fhcpresb.org) for more information.

Calling all lonely Legos! Do you have some tucked away in boxes or closets? The children’s education program can use them! Bring them to Kate Burleigh, Director of Children’s Ministries.

Christmas Parties: See the December TOWER for information about Christmas parties hosted by The Group and Pacesetters.

Staff Emails

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

Calendar: Nov. 27 – Dec. 4, 2016

<p>Sunday, November 27: 1 Advent</p> <p>9:30 New Members class Descant Choir followed by Descant Choir Activity Childcare for children thru Kdg</p> <p>10:30 Continental Breakfast Chancel Choir</p> <p>11:00 WORSHIP: Communion Pathways children will worship with their families Children’s Worship Class (preK-K)</p> <p>12:15 Coffee and Fellowship</p> <p>12:30 Community Relations Committee report to congregation</p> <p>Monday, November 28</p> <p>4:00 pm Pre-meeting PWR Programs</p> <p>5:00 pm PWR Dinner</p> <p>6:00 pm PWR Meeting and worship Progress not Perfection (AA)</p> <p>7:00 pm Al Anon</p> <p>7:30 pm Boy Scout Troop #403 Borton Group (AA)</p> <p>Tuesday, November 29</p> <p>1:00 pm Abundance Pantry</p> <p>5:00 pm Fitness Fusion exercise class</p> <p>Wednesday, November 30</p> <p>7:30 am Bible and Bagels</p> <p>12:30 pm Wed. Women’s AA</p>	<p>Thursday, December 1</p> <p>5:00 pm Fitness Fusion exercise class</p> <p>6:20 pm Voices in Bronze</p> <p>7:30 pm Chancel Choir</p> <p>Friday, December 2</p> <p>10:00 am Al Anon</p> <p>Saturday, December 3</p> <p>8:00 am Men’s Group</p> <p>9:00 am Women’s retreat</p> <p>2:00 pm Memorial Service for William Currie (at Breckenridge Village)</p> <p>Sunday, December 4</p> <p>8:30 Nominating Committee</p> <p>9:30 Adult and Youth Education Descant Choir followed by Descant Choir Activity Childcare for children thru Kdg</p> <p>10:30 Continental Breakfast Chancel Choir</p> <p>11:00 WORSHIP Children’s Worship Class (preK-K)</p> <p>11:15 Pathways to the Promise Land (gr. 1-5)</p> <p>12:15 Coffee and Fellowship Sine Nomine Choir (gr. 6-12)</p> <p>12:15 Coffee and Fellowship</p>
---	---

Christmas Angels

Each year, our congregation comes together to provide Christmas gifts for children within our community. Please consider becoming a Christmas Angel. It is so easy to participate! Iris Circle has made beautiful Christmas ornaments and they are on the Christmas tree in Fellowship Hall. Starting November 27, all you need to do to help is take an ornament, read the directions, and return the gift (either wrapped or unwrapped according to the directions on your ornament) to Fellowship Hall by **December 11**. The Ministry of Justice and Mission has chosen to support three ministries dear to FHC.

- We will once again be providing gifts for children who attend Boulevard Elementary School. We typically provide one toy and one article of clothing for each child. This year we are supporting 7 families. The families are determined by Boulevard and the specific requests are given to FHC. Each gift is noted on an individual ornament. **All these gifts should be WRAPPED and returned by December 11 to the stage in Fellowship Hall.**
- In continued support of the Labre Ministry, we will be providing gifts for children who attend after-school programming at the Family Home Center. You will find ornaments on the tree requesting the donation of items by different ages. **These gifts should be WRAPPED and returned by December 11 to the stage in Fellowship Hall.**
- Forest Hill Church's Abundance Food Pantry serves approximately 350 visitors each month. Between now and Christmas, we would like to provide small gifts to the parents for them to wrap for their children. The ornaments on the tree contain suggested items with the words "as many as you like". Feel free to bring in any small toy for donation to the pantry. We would rather have a lot of small gifts than a few larger ones. **Please place the UNWRAPPED gifts in the box marked *Food Pantry Christmas Angels* on the stage in Fellowship Hall.** You can bring them at any time between now and Christmas.

Please attach the ornament and instructions to the outside of each wrapped gift

After all the ornaments are gone, it's time to decorate the Christmas tree with HATS, GLOVES, and SCARVES. We will make sure these items get to children at Boulevard or to the families who use the Abundance Food Pantry.

Thank you for your generosity and Merry Christmas!

Junior Santa (the Chief Christmas Elf)

Advent at Forest Hill Church

Every Tuesday, 1 pm	Abundance Pantry food distribution
December 3, 9 am	Women's Retreat
December 4, 9:30 am	Adult Education begins: Small group discussions of Walter Brueggemann's book <i>Names for the Messiah</i>
December 4, 11 am	One scene of <i>Amahl and the Night Visitors</i> will be presented during worship
December 10, 4 pm	Intergenerational Gathering: Crafts, conversation and pizza for families and friends of all ages, hosted by the FHC Young Parents Group
December 11	Christmas Angel Gifts for Boulevard School and Labre are due
December 18, 11 am	Service of Lessons & Carols
December 20, 12 pm	Abundance Pantry Lunch

Christmas at Forest Hill Church

December 24, 5 pm	Family Christmas Eve service and the "No-Fuss" Christmas Pageant: all children who wish to participate will be included
December 24, 11 pm	Candlelight worship
December 25, 11 am	Worship
December 27, 1 pm	Abundance Pantry food distribution

Come, Lord Jesus

"The Editor's Outlook,"
written by Jill Duffield, editor
of *The Presbyterian Outlook*

I am tired of waiting for Jesus. The wrangling of a national election that had the tenor of a raunchy reality show, the endless violence of war, the blatant racism of our country, the tsunami of mistrust that swamps us, the vitriolic hate ubiquitous on the web. Enough already.

Come, Lord Jesus.

I don't know what the Parousia will entail, but some days I think it can only be better than what we're living. I looked back at pastoral prayers I'd written not years ago but over a decade ago, and I realized that I could have written them last week, or yesterday. Change the name of the country devastated by war or natural disaster, insert a different person in need of healing, replace one grieving family with another, and there you have it: the prayer for the day that was the prayer for yesterday and for the day before that. And for tomorrow, too. Liturgical Madlibs that make you cry instead of laugh.

Come, Lord Jesus.

I am weary of waiting for reconciliation, for redemption, for the peace that passes understanding, for light and life and the end of crying and mourning. I want it now. I want the meek to have their turn with the earth. I want the last to be first, even if it means I get moved to the back of the line. I promise I will cheer for the underdog and gladly give up my seat if it means we all get to rest and rejoice.

Come, Lord Jesus.

As the days get shorter and the nights get deeper, I long for the angels to announce to the shepherds that Jesus has finally arrived. I hope I will be close enough to overhear their chorus, the good news of great joy for all of us. I hope I can peek out my window and see that glowing star. Too often I forget to look up because I am concentrating so hard on the ground, trying not to stumble in the dark.

Come, Lord Jesus.

The twinkling lights of the Advent season get my attention, though. At dusk, when the sun has all but set and I round the corner of the country road near my house, they start to glow, faint at first, but increasingly bright as I get closer to home. There are angels, snowmen, candles in windows, colorful strings on trees and mailboxes. The later it gets, the more vivid the characters become. Finally, there is the Holy Family, all lit up in a neighbor's front yard. The darkness hasn't overcome them. Instead, it casts them in brilliant relief.

Jesus is here.

The pastoral prayers of years gone by and the ones lifted up today have not gone unheard or unheeded. The pleas of the last and the least haven't been in vain. Right there, in the dark, is Lord Jesus. In the outposts of our lives and the world, new life is born, and the ones working the night shift are the first to hear its cry.

Jesus is here.

Emperors make decrees and governors rule, and all the while shepherds go to work, and prayers are mumbled, shouted and pondered in people's hearts. The great world spins, wars rage, cancer spreads, death visits with relentless certainty. Petitions are repeated again and again and again.

Come, Lord Jesus.

And then, in the midst of it all, he does. Heaven and earth kiss with Mary's lips on her baby's brow.

Peace becomes not possible, but promised. Healing and wholeness, now remote in a stable, will soon come to find us. The light of the star points to the light of the world, and the twinkling lights reveal angels among us. The mix and match of names and places and pleas of pastoral prayers aren't a never-ending rotation of random tragedies. Each place and person is known by God, so beloved that Jesus is coming, not to condemn, but to save them.

Come, Lord Jesus. Please, Lord, Jesus. Now, Lord, Jesus.

It is getting dark. Dark enough to be afraid. Dark enough to see the baby Jesus cast in high relief, illumining the night as I round the corner to home.

Forest Hill Church, Presbyterian

3031 Monticello Blvd, Cleveland Hts OH 44118

216-321-2660 Fax: 216-320-1214

Email: office@fhcpresb.org

Website: www.fhcpresb.org

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

Rev. Lois Annich, Interim Assoc. Pastor

Rachel McDonald, Interim Assoc. Pastor

Rev. Tricia Dykers-Koenig, Parish Assoc.

Anne Wilson, Director of Music

Kate Burleigh, Dir. of Children's Ministries

Shannon Headen, Dir. of Youth Ministries

*Cover art: from Brenda Grauer's Advent Banner, used courtesy of
In Stitches: Center for Liturgical Art*