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



The Tower

December 2018

Dear friends,

This morning (Wed., Nov. 14) the Bible and Bagels small group read and discussed three passages. Two were from the book of I Samuel, chapters 1 and 2). Hannah, an aged and barren woman, miraculously becomes pregnant and gives birth to the prophet Samuel, who will anoint King Saul and King David. In jubilation at her good fortune Hannah raises her voice in a psalm of praise — how good God is, how God raises up the lowly and sends the rich away empty. Hannah's experience and praise foreshadows Mary and the birth of Jesus and Mary's song of praise known as the "Magnificat." (Luke 1: 46-55) The third passage was from the gospel of Mark (13: 1-8). Jesus warns his disciples of the difficulties that will soon come: wars and rumors of wars, famine and earthquakes. Jesus ends with the words: "this is but the beginning of the birthpangs."

Barrenness, disappointment, even destruction – all conditions of radical change when it appears as if the foundations are being destroyed – are, in fact, not ends in themselves but rather the signs of new life, of creation.

It is good to remember this as we read the headlines of fires, and shootings, and hateful rhetoric from high office – are we facing an end time? Well, we might be! But there is Christmas, and Jesus, and Rev. Goines is on her way. In the midst of it all are the signs of new birth, hope, and love.

It is up to you and to me to be aware, not to be naïve, to act justly and with compassion, and keep our eyes open. You and I are the disciples of good news and witnesses to the justice and joy of Jesus Christ.

As we enter the Advent season keep your eyes, ears and hearts open for the sounds of a baby's cry – for nothing can separate us from the love of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. And in the words of the song by the musical group R.E.M. "It's the end of the world as we know it (and I feel fine!)."

Rev. John Lentz, Pastor



CHILDREN, YOUTH, FAMILY MINISTRIES

December Theme: Journey to Advent

The first week of Advent this year is Sunday, December 2. Each class will have its own take on Advent, but each will be exploring the journey.

Pathways

Laurie Logan and Kate Burleigh will be leading the Pathways class on a "Journey to Advent." They will pack their passports, and travel through the Christmas story.

Youth Education

The youth will be examining the Nativity Story with a special emphasis on Mary. We will be exploring Advent through her eyes and consider how her story relates to others in crisis.

Youth Group Events

Sun, Dec 2: Sine Nomine Choir Rehearsal

Sun, Dec 2: House Church @ the Burleigh House, 5-7:30pm

Sun, Dec 9: Sine Nomine Choir Rehearsal

Sun, Dec 16: Christmas Gift Exchange with Fairmount and

Church of the Covenant, 4-6pm

Sun, Dec 23: Christmas Pageant

Family Events

Christmas Cookie Carnival

Saturday, December 1 from 5-8pm

Christmas cookie decorating party. Come decorate cookies and enjoy some family fellowship. All ages welcome.

Christmas Pageant

Sunday, December 23

Worship on the fourth Sunday of Advent this year will be the annual Christmas Pageant. Please be sure to let Anne Wilson know if your family will be in town, and if your children are able to help perform this year.

Christian Ed Google Calendar

To stay up-to-date, check out the CE Calendar: bit.lv/ceCalendar

Rev. David Wigger

MUSIC NOIES

The four Sundays of Advent begin on December 2, and

the sum prepare ourselves for the coming of the Christ Child. Due to the commercial hubbub of this time in the secular world, we may sometimes wish to skip Advent all together and join our favorite radio programs by singing Christmas carols early in December. 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 the pastors choose 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!

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

Our traditional Lessons and Carols service will be held on December 16 at 11 am. Lessons and Carols was first sung in 1918 at King's College in Cambridge, England, and this annual service is now broadcast on Christmas Eve (morning in our time zone) to millions of listeners worldwide. The service begins with the singing of the carol Once in Royal David's City. A young boy singer (treble) is chosen to sing the solo first stanza just before the start of the service, and it is considered a great honor to be chosen.

On Sunday, December 23, the children and youth will present a Christmas pageant as part of the celebrative morning service at 11:00 am. At the Christmas Eve 11:00 pm Candlelight Service, the Sine Nomine and Chancel choirs will both sing, and a fifteen-minute musical prelude will precede the service, so come early!

I wish you all a blessed Advent and Christmas season.

Soli Deo Gloria!

Anne Wilson Organist/Director of Music annew@fhcpresb.org 216-870-2729

Forest Hill Church's "New Thing"

The sign in front of Forest Hill Presbyterian Church that proclaims "See, I am doing a new thing!" refers to the hiring of the Rev. Veronica Goines as the church's first African-American co-pastor.

The story of this historic call started in 2010, when a horrifying racial incident threatened one of the church's young members. The young man, soliciting money for his football team, was searched at gunpoint by Pepper Pike police after a 911 caller reported a black youth trying to break into houses with a gun.

When church members demanded a public apology, the city of Pepper Pike refused, saying its response would have been the same if the call had been about a white youth with a gun.

The problem was, there wouldn't have been a 911 call if the boy had been white. Only through the lens of implicit bias does a well-dressed, respectful and respectable young man with a cell phone, going door-to-door to raise money for his school, become a criminal suspect wielding a gun.

We at Forest Hill have long protested structural racism and fought for fair housing, but this racial profiling of one of our own was a wake-up call to new action.

Educational initiatives and letter-writing campaigns were being discussed when longtime member Ron Register stood up and said, "Wait a minute. What about the log in our own eye?"

Ron, an African American and former president of the CH-UH school board, confessed he sometimes felt uncomfortable mingling with the predominantly white congregation after worship on Sundays. "Instead of marching on city hall, or writing letters to the newspapers, maybe we should work on relationships between blacks and whites here at Forest Hill Church," he said.

A long conversation about racial inclusivity within the more than 80-percent white congregation ensued. Members realized that our past efforts, including shared programs and activities with predominantly black churches, weren't enough. Finding ourselves a long way from the beloved community described by Christ, we resolved to change the congregation from within.

We looked at our goal of being a warm, diverse and inclusive church and recognized that not everyone perceived this warmth. We looked at their staff and realized that, despite the congregation's commitment to racial inclusion, the only African Americans were custodians. We looked at our pews and saw that, despite the growing numbers of African Americans in the congregation, the numbers didn't reflect the neighborhood around us. And we realized that Martin Luther King Jr.'s claim that the Sunday morning worship hour was the most segregated hour in America was still true.

In response, we began "Courageous Conversations on Race," teaching members to recognize subtle racial bias in ourselves and others. We fostered interracial relationships and educated members to recognize and confront both covert and subtle bias.

When then-associate pastor Clover Beal moved to Denver, we aspired to seek a wide diversity of candidates to fill the position. We also committed to replace the traditional church model of a senior pastor assisted by an associate, and instead voted to seek a co-pastor to share equally in leading the church further along the path of restorative justice.

After interviewing scores of applicants of all races and genders, Forest Hill Presbyterian Church found Rev. Goines to be by far the most outstanding candidate, and the best choice to join the Rev. John Lentz.

All are invited to join in celebrating Goines' arrival. You may learn more about her at www.fhcpresb.org

Peg Weissbrod
The original version of this article was written for,
and appeared in, the November **Heights Observer**



Update from the 2019 Stewardship Campaign: See, I Am Doing a New Thing

Thank you all for your participation in this year's Stewardship Campaign. We are nearing our aspirational goals of both pledges and congregational participation from last year. But we're not there yet! If you have yet to send in your pledge, please do so as soon as possible so we can finalize budgets and planning for 2019.

A few highlights from our campaign so far:

- We heard remarkable stories from our members during the church service – including Vikki Nowak and Todd Webster, Angela and Bader Boland, and Leslie Clement – on what Forest Hill Church means to them, and where they saw themselves or FHC "doing a new thing." The wide range of experiences and feelings always serves to amaze and inspire.
- Thank you also to Grace Uhle, Dorothy Herd, Charity and Ahren Stock, Adam Majot and Kylie Evans, and Sydney Gerteis for sharing their stories in the personal notes included in our Stewardship packets.
- To provide an opportunity for more to share their thoughts, "Where do you see New Things at FHC?" cards were distributed to the congregation during the campaign. Here's a sampling:

"Children visible & engaged in worship"

"PRISM Racial equity workshop"

"We're super enthusiastic about the Co-Pastor plan and Pastor Veronica"

"Anne Wilson keeps teaching us new music!"

"New spirit with the people of the church"

We have so much to be thankful for, and so much to look forward to. If you have any questions about the Stewardship campaign, how to pledge, or what your financial gift will support, please contact Stewardship Ministry elder Melanie Alban, or Delilah Dervic, financial administrator, in the church office.

Dave Burleigh, member, Ministry of Stewardship





As we enter the Christmas Season and celebrate the creation of life--the birth of Jesus – here is a wonderful prayer for Creation that reminds us that all the goodness and all life comes from Creator God. Thanks to Elspeth Peterjohn and an unknown author:

There is no plant in the ground
But tells of your beauty O Christ.
There is no creature on the earth
There is no Life in the sea
But proclaims your goodness.
There is no bird on the wing
There is no star in the sky
There is nothing beneath the sun
But is full of your blessing.
Lighten my understanding
of your presence all around O Christ
Kindle my will
to be caring for Creation.

Dave Neff, Earth Care Leader

Announcements! Announcements!

Pastor Goines arrives in January! Send her a welcome card or email: Rev. Dr. Veronica Goines 25 Terrace Dr. Marin City, CA 94965 pastorgoines@fhcpresb.org	Poinsettia orders are due December 10 (see p. 14)
TOWER deadlines: 7 am on Jan. 17, 2019; Feb. 14, March 14	The Annual Meeting is January 27

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

Emails for the staff are as follows:

Delilah DervicFinancefinance@fhcpresb.orgLynda BernaysAdministrationoffice@fhcpresb.orgAnn DonkinBuilding mgr.adonkin@fhcpresb.orgStavros GazisCustodialoffice@fhcpresb.org

Rev. Dr. John Lentz Jr. Pastor pastorlentz@fhcpresb.org

Peg Weissbrod Outreach pegw@fhcpresb.org
Rev. David Wigger CE@fhcpresb.org

Interim Coordinator of Family, Youth and Children's Ministries

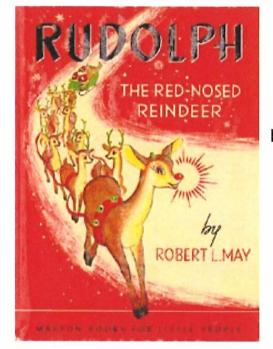
Anne Wilson Music annew@fhcpresb.org

Custodians' cell phone: 216-217-5257

CHRISTMAS

FOLKLORE FUN FACTS





RUDOLPH THE RED-NOSED REINDEER

Rudolph The Red-Nosed Reindeer was Santa's ninth reindeer and became the lead reindeer pulling Santa's sleigh on Christmas Eve. This honor happened after it was discovered that his nose glowed a bright red and after Rudolph had endured the hurt of being teased by all the other reindeer because of his glowing red nose. With this unique characteristic he was able to lead the reindeer team through the harsh winter weather that had developed so all the toys could be delivered to the children in time for Christmas.

The story of Rudolph was created in 1939 in a booklet written by Robert L. May that was published by Montgomery Ward, the department store. Since that time Rudolph has appeared in song, television, and a feature film with a sequel and has become a beloved Christmas folklore character. Rudolph even appeared on United States Postal stamps on November 6, 2014 celebrating his 75th birthday.

When Robert L. May created Rudolph it was an assignment for Chicago-based Montgomery Ward. The retailer had been buying and giving away coloring books every year for Christmas to all the children that came to the store. This became an expensive undertaking and it was decided that money could be saved if instead of buying coloring books they could print their own. Robert May considered naming the reindeer "Rollo" or "Reginald" before deciding upon using the name "Rudolph". One day while May was trying to come up with an idea for a story about a reindeer, he was staring out his office window in downtown Chicago and a thick fog from Lake Michigan blocked his view. He had a brainstorm and realized that if he gave Rudolph a bright shining red nose, it could light the way through the fog like a spotlight.

In the first year of publication, Montgomery Ward distributed 2.4 million copies of the story of Rudolph to children.

THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS A VISIT FROM ST. NICHOLAS

The Night Before Christmas or A Visit from St. Nicholas was written by Clement Clarke Moore for his family on Christmas Eve in 1822. Moore was a highly respected scholar and had published a wide variety of topics in such areas as religion, language, politics and poetry. When he wrote "A Visit from St. Nicholas," he was a Professor of Oriental and Greek Literature as well as Divinity and Biblical Learning, at the General Theological Seminary of the Protestant Episcopal Church. He never intended for it to be published, but a family friend, Miss Harriett Butler, learned of the poem sometime later from Moore's children. She copied it into her journal, and submitted it to the editor of the "New York Troy Sentinel" making its first appearance in print on December 23, 1823.



Soon the poem began to be reprinted in other newspapers, almanacs and magazines, with the first appearance in a book in "The New York Book of Poetry" in 1837.

It was not until 1844, however, that Moore himself acknowledged authorship in a volume of his poetry entitled "Poems", published at the request of his children. One hundred and ninety-six years after being written by Moore, it is the most-published, most-read, most memorized and most-collected book in all of Christmas literature.

THE REASON FOR THE SEASON

HAPPY
BIRTHDAY
JESUS





A Feast for the Soul and the Senses Adult Education in December

A special Advent series beginning December 2

- **Dec. 2** An introduction to Advent (Pastor Lentz)
- **Dec. 9** Combined class panel discussing different cultures and traditional foods of the holiday season.
- Dec.16 Dale Hilton, Director of Teaching and Learning at *The Cleveland Museum of Art, speaker*
- **Dec. 23** David Rothenberg, Associate Professor of Music at Case Western Reserve, *speaker*
- **Dec. 30** Advent Feast A chance to celebrate the tastes of the holiday season by preparing and sharing one of your favorite and/or traditional dishes with the congregation.

"Reconnecting to God's Creation" Returns in 2019

As part of Faith Leader's menu of "small plate" spiritual education opportunities, the course "Reconnecting to God's Creation in the 21stCentury" will be offered to FHC members and friends again in 2019.

Through the course you will explore the wonder of the natural world on a spiritual level, deepen your connection with nature, awaken to its power of healing, and act on your responsibility as a Christian for its stewardship.

Those who took the course in 2018 found a sense of vitality and community developed between classmates.

The course includes field trips, special readings and videos, shingrin yoku (forest bathing), adopting a special place for nature observation and the creation of your own personal plan for reconnection. Kemp Jaycox and Steve Sedam, who designed the course, will again be co-facilitators.

Classes will be held 4 - 6 p.m. every Sunday from March 17 -May 19 except for Easter Sunday and Mother's Day. Registration is open until the end of February or until the class is full at 12 people. If you're interested in signing up or if you have questions, please contact one of us.

Steve Sedam (<u>Goldens101@aol.com</u>) or Kemp Jaycox (<u>kempjaycox@yahoo.com</u>)

I am writing this on November 12, almost exactly 21 years after I started here as the office administrator. A lot of things were different at FHC in 1997: John Lentz and Beth Herrinton were the pastors; LeAnn West was the Clerk of Session; Pat Weissbrod taught kindergarten on Sundays; Ruth Jenks, Patricia Ludwig, Ginny Young and Margaret Sentell were office volunteers. Bob Young was the treasurer and George Sentell was always ready with a tool box to make the old boiler behave and do other building repairs. Joyce Senger showed me the ropes of the job and turned the December TOWER over to me a week later! The computer ran Windows 5 (or was it 3.1?) and only the library was connected to the internet. We mailed postcards and distributed printed copies of minutes. Sarah Lentz had just been baptized (she is now a college senior) and my daughter Sarah was in the 3rd grade (she is now married and finishing graduate school). Many of you had never set foot in Forest Hill Church.

Still, some things remain: John Lentz is still the pastor, there are still multigenerational families, teens still have to be coaxed out of bed on Sunday mornings, coffee hour still includes donuts, the choirs still make a joyful noise every Sunday.

Twenty-one years ago there was a lot I didn't know about the job I had just accepted. I didn't know many of you; I didn't know who has been here since baptism and who had just joined; I didn't know who to call when we needed a reception planned or a Lenten dinner scheduled or flowers ordered. I wasn't sure what the difference was between being an Elder and being a deacon (even though my parents had been both). You were very patient with me and helped me learn SO MUCH in those first few months and beyond, and when January hit in all its glory you helped me through that too. I will always be grateful for your patience, your friendship, your wisdom, and your faith.

Twenty-one years ago I was not the office administrator I am today, six weeks from retirement. Please remember that when the new office administrator arrives! He or she will be a very competent person but will still have a lot to learn from the pastors, the staff, and from you. She or he will make changes — in the bulletin, in the TOWER, in the way the office

communicates. Please show her or him the same patience, friendship and wisdom you showed me. Introduce yourself, use your full name when calling, and offer a little background about whatever you are calling for.

Forest Hill Church has an exciting time ahead! I know you will thrive with the changes.



Lynda Bernays, FHC office administrator



Poinsettia order form – 2018

Name:
Phone or email:
Given by (if different from your name)
Number of poinsettias @ \$15 each
Donate or take?
Amount owed \$
Dedication: in memory of, in honor of, in thanksgiving for, to celebrate WHOM or WHAT

you may order poinsettias by email, by phone, by returning this form to the office, or by using the on-line form provided in the weekly email

News of Our Church Family

Baptisms

Riley Christine Hsu, daughter of Robert and Bethany Bell Hsu, was baptized on November 18, 2018. Riley is the granddaughter of attending Elder Dave and Chris Bell and the sister of Jordan.

Marriages

Emily Wollaeger and Forrest Ball were married on October 20, 2018. Pastor Lentz officiated.

In Memoriam We Remember

Thomas A. Keefe II, who died October 26, 2018 Lawrence Joel Dorod, who died October 27, 2018 Wafa Naoum Kuri, who died November 1, 2018

Care Group

The All-Church CARE Group will be responsible for assisting the pastors in meeting members' needs during December. Please contact the church office in case of illness, hospitalizations, births or deaths (or other family emergencies) in any FHC family.

Members of the All-Church CARE Group are: Everyone!

Please remember these homebound members in your prayers:

Marge Drollinger, Al and Iris Gilbert, Ron Klein, Emelia McGuire, Joyce Peters, Judy Sieck, Margie Stauffer, Elaine Tapié, Lorian Thomas, Beryl and Henrietta Williams

Ushers

Thanks to Deb Erwin and Robyn Hales, head ushers, and their teams of ushers for their work every Sunday.

Volunteer Hours in October

The office volunteers and TOWER assembly team— Nancy Grube, Ellen McChesney, Jane and Chuck Ishler, Cathy Ghiandoni, Anne Smith, Elspeth Peterjohn, Pat Jenkins, and Betty Clark -worked a total of 88 hours in October. Thank you all!

To the people of Forest Hill Church:

We would like to sincerely thank our Forest Hill Church family for the outpouring of love, support and shoulders to cry on following Tom's passing. The memorial service and the celebration of his life that followed were a warm moment of healing and remembrance that we will cherish during these difficult days. We are deeply grateful for the home and community that we have at Forest Hill.

With love, the Keefe Family

Social Groups and Circles

The Group (60s - 70s - 80s): Christmas party

We are having a Christmas party on Saturday December 8 at Diana Woodridge's home, 12620 Cedar Rd., Cleveland Hts.

Please bring appetizers and/or dessert and BYOB.

We will be shopping for a Boulevard family of a mother and her four children for Christmas.

RSVP to Cathy Ghiandoni (gmail.com or 216 691-1905) by Dec 5. Details regarding donations for the family, and other questions will be answered when you RSVP.

December 8, 6:30 pm, Diana Woodbridge's home

Pacesetters (40s – 60s+): Christmas party

We are having a Christmas party at the Bells' (3040 Scarborough Rd., CH) on December 15. All are welcome! Join with friends, old and new, including adult children, as we welcome the season, sharing food and fellowship. No gifts. Please bring an appetizer or dessert to share, and an item or two for the food pantry. Soft drinks and coffee will be provided – or bring your beverage of choice. RSVPs not necessary. Questions? Call Chris or Dave Bell at 216-932-6992.

December 15, 7 pm, Chris and Dave Bell's home

from Greater Cleveland Congregations on Gun Violence Reduction Efforts

As we know, GCC is a key participant in the national *Do Not Stand Idly By* Campaign (DNSIB). The Campaign has developed *Principles for Engagement with the Gun Industry*. The exciting, just released, news is that these Principles have been adopted by institutional investors representing almost \$5 trillion in assets. These entities are using their power as investors to pressure the manufacturers to adopt safe gun technology and clean up their distribution practices.

The weekly email has the link to a press release.



	Sundays in Dec	cember
9:15 9:30	Child care begins Adult education Descant Choir (gr. 1-5) Youth Donut time	P E A C H C D D
10:10	Youth education (gr. 6-12) Pathways (gr. 1-5)	C H S T
10:30	Continental Breakfast Chancel Choir	
11:00	WORSHIP Children's Worship class (preK, K)	
12:15	Coffee & conversation	

December 2 1 Advent 9:30 Fair Trade & cottage industry sale 11:00 Worship: Communion 12:00 Special Session meeting	Jeremiah 33: 14-16 Psalm 25: 1-10 1 Thessalonians 3: 9-13 Luke 21: 35-36
December 9 2 Advent 11:00 Worship: Baptism	Malachi 3: 1-4 Luke 1: 68-79 Philippians 1: 3-11 Luke 3: 1-6
December 16 3 Advent 11:00 Festival of Lessons and Carols 12:15 Blood Pressure check 2:00 Camp Lilac staff party	Zephaniah 3: 14-20 Isaiah 12: 2-6 Philippians 4: 4-7 Luke 3: 7-18
December 23 4 Advent 11:00 Christmas Pageant	Micah 5: 2-5a Luke 1: 47-55 Hebrews 10: 5-10 Luke 1: 39-45
December 30 1 Christmas	1 Samuel 2: 18-20, 26 Psalm 148; Colossians 3: 12-17 Luke 2: 41-52

FAIR TRADE AND COTTAGE INDUSTRY SALE December 2, 2018 - 9-1:30

gift prices begin at \$4

Free and Open to the public

Forest Hill Church, Presbyterian
3031 Monticello Blvd (at Lee), Cleveland Hts
216-321-2660 www.fhcpresb.org

Fair trade vendors including

- One World Shop and Interreligious Task Force (IRTF)
 with gifts from around the world including jewelry,
 winter weather accessories, and home goods
- Local cottage industries including Golden Goddess organic skin care, hand knitted items, jewelry, and dolls

Support the community and the artisans by purchasing beautiful gifts from your neighborhood and around the world.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Regularly scheduled events: meet every week unless noted	6:00 AA: Progress not Perfection 7:00 Al Anon: Now There's Hope 7:30 AA: Borton Group Boy Scout Trp #403	1:00 Abundance Pantry 5:00 Fitness Fusion exercise class	7:30am Bible & Bagels 12:30 AA: Wednesday Women's Group	5:00 Fitness Fusion exercise class 6:20 Voices in Bronze 7:30 Chancel Choir	9:30am Al Anon: Hand in Hand	
December 2018	er 2018	See	I am doing			8:00 Men's Group 10:00 Memorial Service for Wafa Kuri 5:00 Christmas
2 See "Sundays in December"	8	4 12:00 Abundance Pantry Lunch 7:00 Friends of HOLA	5 7:00 Jung Center program	9	7	8 9:00 Prism 2:00 AA anniversary party 6:30 The Group – Christmas party
Ō	10	11 6:30 FH Homeowners' Assoc. annual meeting	12 7:00 Ministries worship 7:15 Ministries meet	13 7:00am TOWER deadline 7:30 FH Swim Club	14	15 7:00 Pacesetters – Christmas party
16	17	18	19 10:00 TOWER collators 12:00 Bullshevicks 7:00 TransFamily East Session meeting	20	21	22
23 11:00 am Christmas Pageant	24 Christmas Eve 11:00 pm Candlelight Worship 31	25 Christmas Day	26	27 Choirs will not meet	28	29

December 2018

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