



The TOWER

SEPTEMBER 2020

WORDS FROM PASTOR VERONICA

I am most grateful for my two weeks in the Bay Area with my daughters, sons-in-law, and my precious grandbabies. It was a much-needed time of reconnection, reinforced by Governor Newsom's order to close California down, again, less than a week into my visit. Thankfully, the simple pacing and activity of ordinary days lent itself to my rest and renewal as I spent my days enjoying the fresh breeze of the Bay on walks with my daughters and grandchildren.



Each day I marveled at how much Axel and Aylee (AJ) had grown, just since they left Cleveland on January 2. Axe could easily be mistaken for a four-year-old, with his height, impressive vocabulary, perfect pitch, and a strong inclination toward instruments: the harmonica, keyboard, guitar, and drums. And, he loves books and reading, especially Goodnight Moon and The Three Little Pigs. Aylee has to keep up with her big brother. She turned ten months old during my visit, and as I write today, she is now 11 months old—how'd that happen? AJ learned to navigate the stairs and took her first steps at eight months. She was walking quite well by nine months. However, because she has no sense of fear, she remains under close supervision because she is inclined to nose-dive from any height (just like her mom). Aylee is strong and imaginative. She can be found

rearranging toys and furniture. She's also curious and exceedingly joyful.

Before my leave, four months into the season of COVID-19, I felt the impact of cumulative fatigue from unrelenting stressors, such as managing anxiety—my own and that of others, and retooling for ministry in a new time and a new way. But I'm embracing God's inner wisdom through the sacred rhythm of rest. That is my prayer for each of us, particularly as we gear up for the fall season and reengage aspect of our mission that has been at rest throughout the summer months. Get prayed up because it's about to be off the chain.

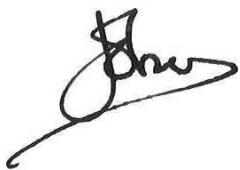
Grace and Peace,
Pastor Veronica

WORDS FROM PASTOR JOHN

We will not go back to normal. Normal never was. Our pre-corona existence was not normal... We should not long to return, my friends. We are being given an opportunity to stitch a new garment. One that fits all of humanity and nature.

~Sonya Renee Taylor

Dear Friends,



Well, this year's "kick-off Sunday" will not be normal. It will be like no other opening of the program year in the history of Forest Hill. Due to Covid-19, there will be no gathering in person for worship on Sunday, September 13. There will be no Fall Festival. There will be no robed choir processional. It is sad think about what won't happen. It won't be "normal."

Some things will be familiar. We WILL have Adult Ed! Ron and Kathryn and Tom will be teaching Zoom classes on 2nd Samuel! So, sign up. Dr. Qin Ying Tan has quite the lineup of gifted, faithful people

who will lead the singing this autumn. She is almost ready to unveil the “virtual choir!” Pastor Veronica and I will continue to preach and teach and do what we do day by day.

However, it is going to be very hard not to be together in person! While we name the sadness and describe what cannot be; as people of faith we also claim the gladness and imagine what we can become. Really, who wants to be normal? It is time, to use to words of Sonya Renee Taylor, “to stitch a new garment.”

We have become a live streaming church. We will continue this even after we come back together. Because of our YouTube services attendance has increased. We have visitors from all over the world. People who cannot come to service are now a part of things. We are experiencing a lot of interest in what it means to be a Christian.

We celebrate the arrival of Dr. Amy Wheatley as our new Director of Christian Education. See her bio more in in the Tower. Amy brings amazing credentials and experience to us. We have every confidence that she will build upon the foundations and grow the program.

This is the time to use our creativity to imagine new programs, new ways of gathering, and new ways of being faithful. No one knows what this “new garment” will look like but, I have a hunch it will be beautiful. For God is always creating!

God bless you. Stay safe and be well.
~John

MUSIC

Dear Forest Hill Family,



In this strange time of worship, we are trying creative and different ways to get together virtually to worship and sing "together". If you are interested in participating in our virtual choir projects, let me know! I also warmly invite anybody to come and sing with us on Sunday mornings during worship. We practice strict physical distancing. If you have *any* interest in joining us—or if you just have questions about the music program—please contact Ying (music@fhcpresb.org).

~Blessings, Ying



Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee would like you to be aware of a change at Forest Hill Church. At the end of last year, Session voted to consolidate the two existing personnel committees into one committee. Previously, the third-year elders and the Clerk of Session were responsible for the program staff. The Trustees, led by the third-year elder Trustee, were responsible for the support staff.

The purpose of the newly formed Personnel Committee is to ensure a healthy work environment at Forest Hill Church. The committee was appointed by and reports directly to Session. Annually, it will review the goals and accomplishments of the staff, make recommendations

to Session regarding salaries, and serve as a support group to staff on church issues and personnel matters.

The committee is composed of both Session elders and members of the congregation, including:

- Session Representatives
 - Kurt Haas, third-year Elder
 - Ann Williams, second-year Elder
 - Robin Mervine, first-year Elder
 - Melanie Alban, Clerk of Session and Chair, Personnel Committee
- Members of the Congregation
 - Lia Clement
 - Mary McMillan
 - Judy Sockman
- Co-Pastor Liaison
 - Rev. Veronica Goines

The Personnel Committee meets the first Wednesday evening of each month. In addition to conducting annual performance reviews, its primary focus during the remainder of 2020 is on reevaluating the performance appraisal process and completing an employee handbook of personnel policies.

In general, any issues arising from employment are directed first to the employee's immediate supervisor. If the employee's concern is not resolved or if the issue is with the supervisor, the employee may ask to meet with the Co-Pastors. If the matter is still unresolved, the individual may ask to speak with the Personnel Committee by directing a request to the Chair of the committee.

The Personnel Committee looks forward to working in a continued partnership with FHC's Staff, Co-Pastors, and Session.

~Melanie Alban

MESSAGE FROM THE DEACONS

Dear Forest Hill Family,

Typically, I write to you after our regular meeting as a body of Deacons because I like to create a piece that is a reflection of our common voice, and I discuss this with the rest. In the absence of those face-to-face meetings, I'm left to share my own voice with you.

I can tell you the Deacons are still at work caring for our congregation as we become aware of needs. Meals are being made and delivered and phone trees have been created for "check-ins" with others. I hope you get a call and pass greetings on to others.

We wonder how you are- spiritually, physically, and emotionally. If you feel anything that resembles being lost, disconnected, disoriented, saddened, or "limp," I know others can relate to that. You are not alone. That assurance is a rock of our faith.

So...let's talk quarantine. At first, to me personally, it was an introvert's nirvana. Permission to retreat from the world? I'll take it! In that first week, I texted to a friend a photo of the simple curtains I sewed for my parlor, captioned "My quarantine creation." I was quite self-satisfied with my time well spent. Sadly, cute as they are, the curtains no longer suffice as proof of a productive quarantine. Redecoration of the entire house might.

I suppose we've all learned to do more of certain things, and enjoy that- reading, exercising, and cooking, perhaps. We've had to do less of certain things, too - eating out, attending festivals, being with friends!!! For many of us, physical closeness and hugs and smooches with our grandchildren are among the things we have less of. Ouch. That really hurts. We all invest our deep love somewhere and for better or worse, I chose my grandchildren. That love is ready to rush

forth, but has no recipient now, so it is squandered, I must sadly confess. Though our coping strategies might be quite different, I'm guessing we are in agreement around the strong feeling of "enough already...let's get back together." Even we introverts.

Have you "watched" worship on YouTube? I did, then skipped a few weeks but became so saddened by the complete disconnection that I went back to tuning in. I learned I need it. It is what we have, and though awkward, there is something "there" worth seeing and hearing. I noticed that the technological experience improved in my short absence. John looks right into that camera now, and when the camera operator zooms in on him...well, it seems he's sitting across the table from me, and I, therefore, take him very seriously! Sometimes I wish I were in that comfortable pew a little further away, assured that "he's not talking to me." ☺

Come to worship. You don't have to dress up. John and Veronica will look at you. You can see your friends sign into the chat box, and feel your heart fill up at the sight of "friends old and new." You'll see names of people who live far away now, and are tuning in over many miles, but it's just like they're next door in this context.

In addition to worship, take some time to soothe yourself in the ways most powerful for you. You need to, for your health. I read that cardiac incidents as well as the need for professional mental health care have risen significantly during this pandemic. We can influence our body-mind-spiritual response profoundly with the practices we know to be effective already: enhancing connection to others (even if the "others" have dwindled in number), engaging in fun exercise, eating whole foods (not refined or packaged or mass-produced), eliminating sugar from our diets, and observing spiritual practices.

I recommend the following book as one that you might find helpful in centering yourself on God: "An Altar in the World: A Geography of

Faith,” by Barbara Brown Taylor. I will leave you with this quote from the chapter “The Practice of Waking up to God:”

Earth is so thick with divine possibility that it is a wonder we can walk anywhere without cracking our shins on altars.

With love from Elaine Turley,
On behalf of the Deacons

IMMIGRATION TASK FORCE

FHC Immigration Task Force to Host Live Educational Webinar on September 29.

In recent years, the immense struggles faced by immigrants seeking a safe and secure life in America has affected every corner of the country including Cleveland Heights.

To assist members and friends of Forest Hill Church and the general public in gaining a deeper understanding of the issues encountered by immigrants, the FHC Immigration Task Force is offering a live educational webinar, “Immigration: History and Current Issues” on Tuesday, September 29. 7-8:30 pm. This forum is intended primarily for those who are seeking a basic understanding of the root causes of immigration problems and the legal difficulties immigrants are currently facing. The forum is free but requires advanced registration.

Brian J. Hoffman, Esq., Executive Director of The Center for Strategic Immigration Litigation and Outreach will speak on current immigration issues, and John Flores, PhD. immigration historian and author of 'The Mexican Revolution in Chicago' University of Illinois Press, 2018, will join him, speaking on the history of immigration in the U.S. Both Hoffman and Flores have extensive experience in their respective areas and are known to be engaging speakers.

The forum will also highlight the journeys of grief and hope faced by immigrants from Burkina Faso and the Congo who now reside in Cleveland Heights. To register for this forum please do so here: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_0LBBV34IRnePCwaLEReLGw by Sunday, September 27. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the forum.

For more information about the speakers and for additional information resources on immigration issues, go to <https://www.fhcpresb.org/upcoming-events/2020/09/forum-on-immigration/>.

For information, contact Sharon Shumaker, Task Force Chair at sms2924gmail.com.

GENEROSITY IN HARDSHIP ~ STEWARDSHIP 2021

2020 has been quite a year. And yet you are all still going strong, making the sharing of your time, talents, and treasure a priority even in the hardship that the Covid-19 virus has caused. As we prepare to begin our 2021 Stewardship Campaign *Generosity in Hardship* in the coming weeks, we have the utmost faith that Forest Hill Church members and friends will continue to “do good and share what we have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.”



~ The Stewardship Ministry,
Consuelo Heineman, 3rd Year Elder

ADULT EDUCATION



Adult Education will begin two zoom classes starting Sunday, September 13, and ending November 22, at 9:30 am. One class will be led by Kathryn Eloff and Tom Zych, and the second class will be led by Ron Zimmerman and Dean Siek. If you are interested in joining, contact Kathryn at (Kathryneloff@gmail.com) and Ron at

(rzimmernsn2000@gmail.com). Get ready for the class by reading Second Samuel. A second resource is recommended but not required. - Walter Brueggeman's First and Second Samuel: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching.

~Pat Seeders

DOES EARTH CARE MATTER?

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times". This familiar phrase comes to mind in this most difficult time---which is somewhere in between. When the pandemic shut everything down, we lowered our carbon footprint (at least temporarily), air pollution was abated and the skies cleared. And we became more conscious of our humanity and shared existence.



But on the flip side, people have become sick, many died, and have lost their jobs (and maybe not just temporarily). Flavored into those very bad circumstances have been severe unrest over racial justice, economic inequity, financial hardship and deranged civil discourse in politics. It's very hard to focus on the broader issue of earth care and environment when other very weighty concerns take precedence. But in the middle of all this, a new national conservation law was passed, and our every vigilant NGO's such as Natural Resource

Defense Council (NRDC), Wilderness Society, Center for Biological Diversity, Earth Justice, National Wildlife Federation, Sierra Club, World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and countless others continue to work through these difficult times to protect the environment, and the earth from continuing degradation from negative policies.

It is often only these organizations and their court actions which thwart ill-conceived governmental policies and programs—such as dismantling EPA and ESA which would severely damage our environment—land, air and water-- and earth's flor and fauna abundance.

Consequently, in this pending stretch of political awareness as we lead up to our national election, it is definitely worth re-visiting just how the respective candidates---at the top and also down ballot, view not only racial and economic justice, but also Earth Justice and how we need to response to climate change.

As members of a faith community which believes very much in 'Earth Justice', we would do well to investigate the position of candidates, and in our conversational discourse with friends and neighbors in the coming weeks we should be a strong advocates for candidates and issues which reflect our Earth Care values.

Dave Neff
Earth Care Leader



A native of Lakewood Ohio, Amy Wheatley earned her undergraduate degree from Kenyon College, where she majored in Psychology and developed a love of young children as a volunteer at the Head Start program in rural Knox County.

Following graduation, Amy was a teacher at Case Western Reserve University's lab school for children with disabilities. Amy attended graduate school at the University of Michigan, where she received my Ph.D. in Education. Her early career included research, teaching, and staff development in the field of early childhood/special

education. As the director of several grants from the U.S. Department of Education, she worked at the University of Connecticut, the High Scope Foundation, and Akron Children's Hospital.



Amy and her husband Karl met while they were early childhood education consultants, traveling around the country conducting

workshops with educators, parents, and administrators. They left life on the road when we settled in Lakewood to raise two terrific kids, David and Katherine, who are now young college-age adults. Karl begins his 27th year on the faculty of the College of Education at Cleveland State University this fall.

Amy grew up in the United Methodist Church and have terrific memories of faith-filled mentors, Sunday night youth group meetings, Easter sunrise services, and mission trips to Appalachia. From the time their children were small, their family has been blessed by the beautiful relationships and many spirit-filled moments they experienced as members of First Church Cleveland / University Circle United Methodist Church. For 12 years, Amy was privileged to serve such a diverse, inclusive, and loving congregation as Director of Education. During the past year, as Director of Faith Formation at Old Stone Church Cleveland, she has led an initiative to grow children's programming in a congregation in the heart of the city, and she has grown to love Presbyterians!

Creating safe and welcoming environments, helping young people build authentic relationships, and providing fun and engaging opportunities for learning and growth are Amy's passions. She believes that faith develops over a lifetime through a variety of experiences in which we recognize the presence of God in our lives and seek to live in the way of Jesus. "Faith Forming" moments can happen for young people in many ways - in worship, in nature, during shared meals and conversation, in service to others, and through play, storytelling, games, music, and art. One of Amy's greatest joys is seeing the wonder, curiosity, energy, and enthusiasm that young people bring to a congregation!

I am very grateful for the opportunity to lead family, youth, and children's ministry at Forest Hill. I look forward to getting to know you and becoming part of your family of faith. Peace, Amy



What Is a Parish Associate?

A Parish Associate is a pastor who serves in a validated ministry other than ours, or is a member-at-large, or is retired, but who wishes to maintain a relationship with our church in keeping with ordination to the ministry. Upon nomination by the Co-Pastors, a relationship may be established between the Parish Associate, the Session, and the Presbytery of the Western Reserve.

The Parish Associate is responsible to the Co-Pastors, on an “as needed, as available” basis. Additional responsibilities under the direction of the Co-Pastors, such as pastoral care, may be assigned. An established honorarium is offered for services provided. The term of service is for twelve months and can be renewed. The agreement between the Session, Parish Associate, and Presbytery terminates when the call to an installed pastor is dissolved. The Parish Associate may not be called to be the next installed Co-Pastor of Forest Hill Church. The Presbytery may dissolve the relationship upon the recommendation of its Committee on Ministry.

MEET OUR NEW PARISH ASSOCIATE

Carol Wedell was born and raised in the Seattle area, earning a BA in Music from Whitworth College in Spokane before making one of many cross-country drives to attend Princeton Theological Seminary. Following her graduation in 1982 and a year of hospital chaplaincy training (CPE), Carol was called the first clergywoman to join the five pastors at First Presbyterian Church in Fort Wayne, IN (a church of 1800 members).

During seven years of enormous transition at the church, Carol had the opportunity to lead and learn in many ways. She also gave birth to her first son, was divorced, and was later married to Mark Wedell. Carol then joined Mark in the Cleveland area and enjoyed being a stay at home mom with their children while also preaching in area churches and occasionally serving in short-term, part-time interim positions. In 2000, Carol assumed a half time role at Fairmount Presbyterian, and in 2005 she was called as pastor of Church of the Western Reserve, where she served until 2011. She is now officially retired and is glad to formalize her role as Parish Associate at Forest Hill Church, where Carol and Mark have attended since 2013. Carol and Mark live in Willoughby and have three adult children.





MENTORS WANTED!!

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, many schools, including schools in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD), have decided to begin the school year completely remote. This poses a challenge to many families, especially refugee and immigrant families. US Together is organizing a Remote Learning Mentoring program to alleviate some of these challenges by pairing volunteer mentors with students to:

1. Help students and families plan and coordinate remote learning schedules (many families may only have 1 Chromebook for multiple children in school)
2. Facilitate communication between teachers and families
3. Help students with their homework and classroom assignments
4. Teach students basic study skills and how to use chromebooks/internet, help with English, and be creative with educational activities that can support our students!

This is a 4.5-month commitment (from the second or third week of September up until December break), and while education experience is always a plus, it is not a requirement. This opportunity can be completely remote or with some in-person mentoring however that is completely up to the comfort level of the mentor! Interested mentors will have a brief interview to go over mentoring interests and commitment, attend a mentor orientation, and complete a background check. We will also provide a mentoring handbook which will have education resources to help mentors learn more about best ways to facilitate remote learning. If you are interested in participating in this program please fill out [this online form](#) or contact Melissa Mattwig (mmattwig@ustogether.us) or if you have any questions.



FHC MUTUAL AID NETWORK

Mutual aid is rooted in the concept that every individual has needs and every individual has resources. Because we all have something to offer and we all need something, mutual aid networks are civic safety nets that allow us to make sure our community's needs are met, using as many of the in-network resources available to us as possible. Mutual Aid is mutual. To become a part of the Greater Forest Hill Mutual Aid network, you must offer a need AND supply a resource. This model of community reciprocity brings us all closer to becoming the beloved community.

**To Apply for Mutual Aid, visit:
https://bit.ly/FHC_MA**

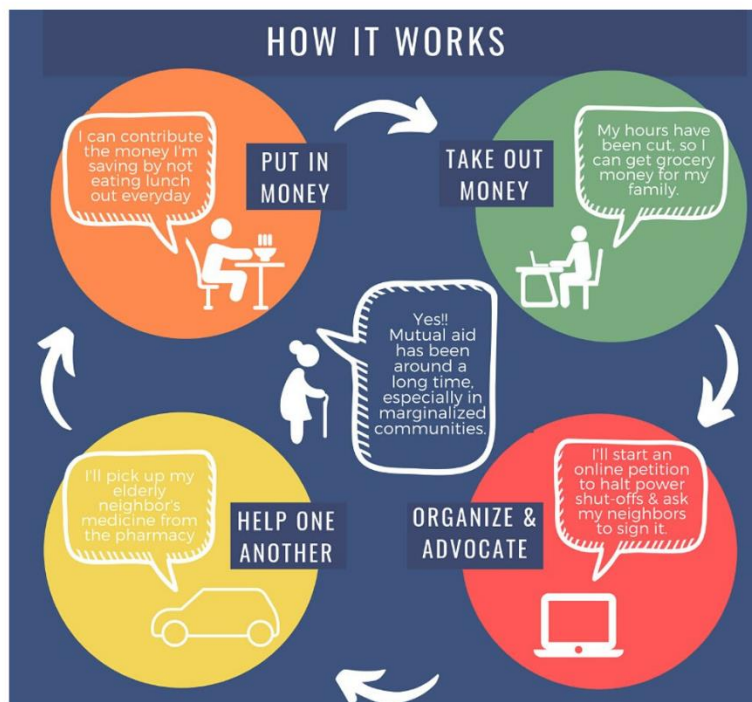


Image courtesy of Non-Profit Quarterly Magazine

**For questions or more information please email:
COVID.Grants@fhcpresb.org.**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Regularly scheduled events: meet every week unless noted	6:00 pm -AA: Progress not Perfection 7:00 pm -Al Anon: Now There's Hope -Book Group 7:30 pm -AA: Borton Group -Boy Scout Trp. #403 -OA Big Book	11:00 am -Abundance Pantry 5:00 pm -Fitness Fusion exercise class -Bulletin and Weekly email Deadline	7:30 am -Bible & Bagels (virtual) 12:00 pm -Staff Meeting (virtual) -AA: Wednesday -Women's Group 7:00 pm -Guest Group: Speak Life Bible Study	1:30 pm -English Dance 5:00 pm -Fitness Fusion exercise class 6:20 pm -Voices in Bronze 7:30 pm -Chancel Choir	9:30 am -Al Anon: Hand in Hand	
August 30	August 31	September 1	September 2	September 3	September 4	September 5
September 6 COMMUNION SUNDAY	September 7 OFFICE CLOSED	September 8	September 9 7:00 pm MINISTRY MEETINGS	September 10	September 11	September 12
September 13 -KICK OFF SUNDAY 9:30 am ADULT ED. BEGINS	September 14	September 15	September 16	September 17 8:00 am TOWER DEADLINE	September 18	September 19
September 20	September 21	September 22	September 23 7:00 pm SESSION MEETING	September 24	September 25	September 26
September 27	September 28	September 29 7:00 pm IMMIGRATION TASK FORCE LIVE STREAM	September 30	October 1 STAVROS' BIRTHDAY	October 2	October 3

September 2020

Staff Emails

Antoinette Richardson	Administration	office@fhcpresb.org
Genetha (Nita) Clark	Finance	finance@fhcpresb.org
Ann Donkin	Building Mgr.	adonkin@fhcpresb.org
Stavros Gazis	Head Custodian	custodian@fhcpresb.org
Rev. Dr. Veronica Goines	Co-Pastor	pastorgoines@fhcpresb.org
Rev. Dr. John Lentz Jr.	Co-Pastor	pastorlentz@fhcpresb.org
Peg Weissbrod	Outreach/Breeze	pegw@fhcpresb.org
Amy Wheatley	Family, Youth, Children	CE@fhcpresb.org
Qin Ying Tan	Music	music@fhcpresb.org
Carol Wedell	Parish Associate	youthleader@fhcpresb.org

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Pastoral Care Emergencies: 216-319-3596

Email: office@fhcpresb.org Website: www.fhcpresb.org

Rev. Dr. Veronica R. Goines, Rev. Dr. John C. Lentz, Jr., Co-Pastors
Amy Wheatley, Dir. of Family, Youth & Children's Ministries
Dr. Qin Ying Tan, Interim Director of Music
Carol Wedell, Parish Associate

Next TOWER deadline: 8 am on September 17
Custodians' cell phone: 216-217-5257

Giving/donation options- Friends and family of FHC, during this time, you can give monetary gifts/donations using our website (www.fhcpresb.org) and clicking the PayPal link. You may also mail in a check to the church bookkeeper (3031 Monticello Blvd. Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44118).

Sunday Worship-If you have been attending our YouTube live stream each Sunday and have not been able to sign in, please email the church office and let Antoinette or Peg know you want to be added to the attendance list.

Sundays in September (events are pending)

11:00 am: Worship

(Please join our YouTube channel for worship)