

Forest Hill Church *Service of Worship*

December 20, 2020 at 11:00 am

Gather around the computer to worship God!

Please join our YouTube Live Stream:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=50qzdGXV_Ww

Centering Words

*O my soul, magnify the Lord.
God is worthy to be praised.*

WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

Arr.

*In the Bleak Mid-Winter
OPUS 216*

CHORAL INTROIT

Mary Lu Walker

Light the Advent Candle
Madelaine Matej, soprano

Greeting Our God with Joy

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Ann Donkin, Kim Hill, Sophie Michalski

We have lit three candles – for hope, for peace, and for joy. Today we light the fourth candle – the candle of love. With this flame we signify the love of God that surrounds and fill us at all times, but that we recognize in a special way in the Christmas story. There is no greater power than love. It is stronger than rulers and empires, strong than grief or despair, strong even than death. We love, because God loves us.

Loving God, we open ourselves to you this Christmas season. As these candles are lit, light our lives with your imagination. Show us the creative power of hope. Teach us the peace that comes from justice. Fill us with the kind of joy that cannot be contained, but must be shared. Magnify your love within us. Prepare our hearts to be transformed by you that we may walk in the light of Christ. Amen.

OPENING HYMN NO. 143

Angels from the Realms of Glory

1. Angels, from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
you, who sang creation's story, now proclaim Messiah's birth:
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn king!
4. All creation join in praise God Creator, Spirit, Son,
evermore your voices raising to the eternal Three in One.
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ the newborn King!

Renewing Our Relationship with God

PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND YEARNING

Savior God, shine upon us with your grace. Forgive us, for we long to align ourselves with the proud and the mighty. Guide us to walk with those who are poor and weak. We yearn for privilege. Guide us back to your thirst for justice and righteousness. Remember us in your mercy. We desire to live as the beloved community. Help us to trust that all things are possible in your love and in Christ's saving grace. Amen.

Forest Hill Church: diverse, inclusive, welcoming

Affirming the Good News in Our Lives

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Rejoice! God has looked with favor upon the powerless and the lowly. Christ has come to redeem us from our sin. The Spirit has strengthened us with the power of grace and love. In the mercy of the triune God, we are forgiven.

ALLELUIA:

The image shows a musical score for a piano accompaniment of the Alleluia. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system is labeled 'Piano' and the second 'Pno.'. Both systems are in the key of D major (two sharps) and 4/4 time. The lyrics 'Al - le - lu - ia' are written below the notes. The score includes a variety of musical notations such as eighth, quarter, and half notes, as well as rests and a fermata. The lyrics are: 'Al - le - lu - ia Al - le - lu - ia Al - le - lu - ia Al - le - lu - ia Al - le - lu - ia Al - le - lu - ia A - men A - men'.

ANTHEM

Handel

Rejoice Greatly
Madelaine Matej, soprano

Opening Our Hearts to God’s Word

THE LIVING WORD (NRSV)

LUKE 1:26-38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. And he came to her and said, ‘Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.’ But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.’ Mary said to the angel, ‘How can this be, since I am a virgin?’ The angel said to her, ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.’ Then Mary said, ‘Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.’ Then the angel departed from her.

After the readings

Hear what the Holy Spirit is telling God’s people.
Thanks be to God.

HYMN NO. 114

Away in a Manger

1. Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay, the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.
2. The cattle are lowing; the poor baby wakes, but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.
I love thee, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky, and stay by my side until morning is nigh.
3. Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay close by me forever and love me, I pray. Bless all the
dear children in thy tender care, and fit us for heaven to live with thee there.

Sermon

Rev. Fran Lane-Lawrence

*Rev. Fran Lane-Lawrence, Transitional Co-Leader and Stated Clerk
of the Presbytery of Lake Michigan.*

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE 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.

FRIENDSHIP REGISTER

To participate in our online Friendship Register, please leave a comment in the Live Chat box listing the names of those participating in this morning's Live Worship or email the office.

OFFERING

Giving and Offering is available by texting: 216-400-5300
Or you may give online: <https://fhc.breezechms.com/give/online/>
You may also mail a check to the church office.

OFFERTORY

Angels We Have Heard on High
Lauren Ravas

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Going Forth to Live as God's People

CLOSING HYMN NO. 110

Love Has Come

1. Love has come: a light in the darkness!
Love shines forth in the Bethlehem skies.
See, all heaven has come to proclaim it; hear how their song of joy arises:
Love! Love! Born unto you, a Savior! Love! Love! Glory to God on high.
3. Love has come and never will leave us! Love is love everlasting and free.
Love is Jesus within and among us. Love is the peace our hearts are seeking.
Love! Love! Love is the gift of Christmas. Love! Love! Praise to you God on high!

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Arr.

Go Tell it on the Mountain
OPUS 216



FHC NOTES

Prayer Requests:

To request prayers for a personal concern, please email Pastor Lentz (pastorlentz@fhcpresb.org) or Pastor Goines (pastorgoines@fhcpresb.org) no later than Thursday afternoon of each week for inclusion in next week’s congregational prayer. Please direct all prayer concerns that arise between Friday and Sunday morning to the Pastor’s on-call phone line (216-319-3596). The on-call phone is operational after office hours on weekdays and Saturday through Sunday morning.

Prayers are requested this week for:

Melanie Alban, Kiva Bohanon, Kathy Cameron, Graham Creasey, Mark Davidson, Marcie Denton, Rita Grube, Carol King-Himmelsteib, Lillian Houser, Deborah Howard, Joanna Klingenstein, Kitty McWilliams, Susan Way, the family of Doris Brandt (her daughter and grandson, Cindy and Jon Newton), and the family of Dick Peterjohn.

Please remember these homebound members in your prayers:

Marge Drollinger, Robert Kellermeyer, Florence and Ron Klein, Carol Hopkins-Lutz, Emelia McGuire, Margaret Sentell, Elaine Tapié, Beryl and Henrietta Williams.

Care Group:

The All Church Care Group will assist our pastors with members’ needs in **December**. Please call the church office to report an illness, hospitalization, family emergency, birth or death. Information will be passed on to the **Care Group leader, Elaine Turley** (deacons@fhcpresb.org).

Thank you, all office volunteers: Lynda Bernays, Cathy Ghiandoni, and Ellen McChesney.

The deadline for the bulletin and weekly email is Tuesday of each week at 5 pm. The next TOWER deadline is **January 14 (for the February TOWER) at 8:00 am**. Please submit your written requests to office@fhcpresb.org.

Bible and Bagels (Bible Study) discusses next Sunday’s texts on Wednesday mornings (virtually) from 7:30-8:30 am. The lessons for this week are: **Isa. 61:10-62:3; Ps. 148; Gal. 4:4-7; Luke 2:22-40.**

Poinsettias are given by:

- The Weissbrod Marunowski Family in Memory of our parents Pat & Ray Weissbrod and Kay & Stanley Marunowski.
- Eileen Vizcaino in celebration of the Sanctuary.
- Rob Reynolds in honor of his loving family.
- Rachel Martinez-Finn and Bill Finn in loving memory of their parents.
- Marina B. Grant in celebration of her family and PO6 sisters.
- Cliff and Jane Kowall in memory of parents Walter and Elaine Grasson and Paul and Dorothy Kowall.
- Nancy Burcham in memory of Dave Halkerston and Bill Burcham.
- Roberta Lentz in honor of Pop-Pop and Peter.
- Breisch Family in loving memory of Benjamin Carl Breisch, Ellarita Mary Wolfe and John Pershing Wolfe.
- Chris and Dave Bell in honor of our families, and thanksgiving for all healthcare personnel and support staff battling for other's lives.

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