

Forest Hill Church

presbyterian



*Forest Hill Church seeks to be diverse, inclusive and welcoming.
All God's children have a place in this choir!*

Forest Hill Church, Presbyterian
3031 Monticello Blvd, Cleveland Hts., OH 44118
216-321-2660 office@fhcpresb.org www.fhcpresb.org

Forest Hill Church

Christmas Eve Service

December 24, 2021 ~ 5:00 pm

You may also join worship online using this link:

<https://youtu.be/MHhd7u16eQo>

Centering Words

*This is the irrational season when love blooms bright and wild.
Had Mary been filled with reason.
There'd have been no room for the child.*

PRELUDE

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

String Quartet

Alan Choo, violin I

Andrew Hatfield, violin II

James Macqueen, viola

Jane Leggiero, cello

WELCOME

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

CHORAL INTROIT

Adolphe Adams

"O Holy Night"

Chancel Choir

String Quartet

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

To the tune of Away in the Manger

A candle is burning, a flame warm and bright;

A candle of HOPE in December's dark night.

While angels sing blessings from heav'n's starry sky

Our hearts prepare now, for Jesus is nigh.

A candle is burning, a candle of PEACE;

A candle to signal that conflict must cease.

For Jesus is coming to show us the way;

A message of peace humbly lain in the hay.

A candle is burning, a candle of JOY;

A candle to welcome brave Mary's new boy.

Our hearts fill with wonder and eyes light and glow

As joy brightens winter like sunshine on snow.

A candle is burning, a candle of LOVE;
A candle to point us to heaven above.
A baby for Christmas, a wonderful birth;
For Jesus is bringing God's love to our earth.

PRAYER OF YEARNING

Rev. Dr. Veronica R. Goines, Co-Pastor

Source of joy, you are the author of life. Touch us with the wonder of that holy night when your Son came into the world. For we yearn to leave the shadows behind to walk in darkness no more. We long to behold your light shining in our lives, as it shined in the stars above on the night love came down at Christmas. Guide our steps to the manger, and make us instruments of your justice and peace, that the gifts of your salvation may reside in every corner of the globe. We ask this in the name of our Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Amen.

CAROL NO. 133

“O Come, All Ye Faithful”

1. O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant;

O come ye; O come ye to Bethlehem!

Come, and behold him, born the king of angels!

O come, let us adore him;

O come, let us adore him;

O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

2. True God from true God, Light from light eternal,

born of a virgin, a mortal comes; very God,

begotten, not created! O come, let us adore him;

O come, let us adore him; O come let us adore him, Christ is the Lord!

3. Sing, choir of angels; sing in exultation;

sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!

Glory to God, all glory in the highest!

O come, let us adore him; O come, let us adore him;

O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

Isaiah 9: 2-7

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. Thou hast multiplied the nation, and not increased the joy: they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil. For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian. For unto us a child is born, unto

us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

CHORAL RESPONSE:

Leonard Cohen

“Christmas Hallelujah”

Em Laudeman Ezell

Laura Minder

Jack Lentz

Seth Ungemach

Psalm 96

Oh, sing to the Lord a new song;

sing to the Lord, all the earth!

Sing to the Lord, bless his name;

tell of his salvation from day to day.

Declare his glory among the nations,

his marvelous works among all the peoples!

For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised;

he is to be feared above all gods.

For all the gods of the peoples are worthless idols,

but the Lord made the heavens.

Splendor and majesty are before him;

strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples,

ascribe to the Lord glory and strength!

Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name;

bring an offering, and come into his courts!

Worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness;

tremble before him, all the earth!

Say among the nations, “The Lord reigns!

Yes, the world is established; it shall never be moved;

he will judge the peoples with equity.”

CHORAL RESPONSE:

John Carter

"O Love So Small"

Chancel Choir

Isaiah 11:1-4a, 6-9

Seth Ungemach

A shoot shall come out from the stock of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

CHORAL RESPONSE:

Mark Hayes

"Promise of Peace"

Chancel Choir

Luke 2:1-8

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.

CHORAL RESPONSE: “Jesus, Jesus, O What a Wonderful Child”
Jesus, Jesus, oh, what a wonderful child.
Jesus, Jesus, so holy, meek, and mild;
new life, new hope, new joy he brings.
Listen to the angels sing.
“Glory, glory, glory,” to the new-born King!

Luke 2: 9 – 20

Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.’ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!’ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, ‘Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.’ So, they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

CHORAL RESPONSE: Buddy Greene
“Mary Did You Know”
Em Emzell, voice
Dolly Sanicky, dancer

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.

CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING

OFFERTORY

“The First Noel”
String Quartet

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

We honor Messiah with the CHRIST CANDLE's flame;
Our Christmas Eve candles glad tidings proclaim.
O come, all ye faithful, rejoice on this night
As God comes among us, the Christian's true light.

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE: “When the Song of Angels Is Stilled”

**When the song of the angels is stilled,
when the star in the sky is gone,
when the kings and princes are home,
when the shepherds are back with their flocks,
the work of Christmas begins:
to find the lost, to heal the broken,
to feed the hungry, to release the prisoner, to rebuild the nations,
to bring peace among the people, to make music in the heart.**

~Howard Thurman

HYMN NO. 136

“Go Tell It On The Mountain”

Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere;
go, tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!
While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night, behold,
throughout the heavens there shone a holy light.

[refrain]

The shepherds feared and trembled when lo!
Above the earth rang out the angel chorus
that hailed our Savior's birth.

[refrain]

Down in a lowly manger the humble Christ was born,
and God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn.

[refrain]

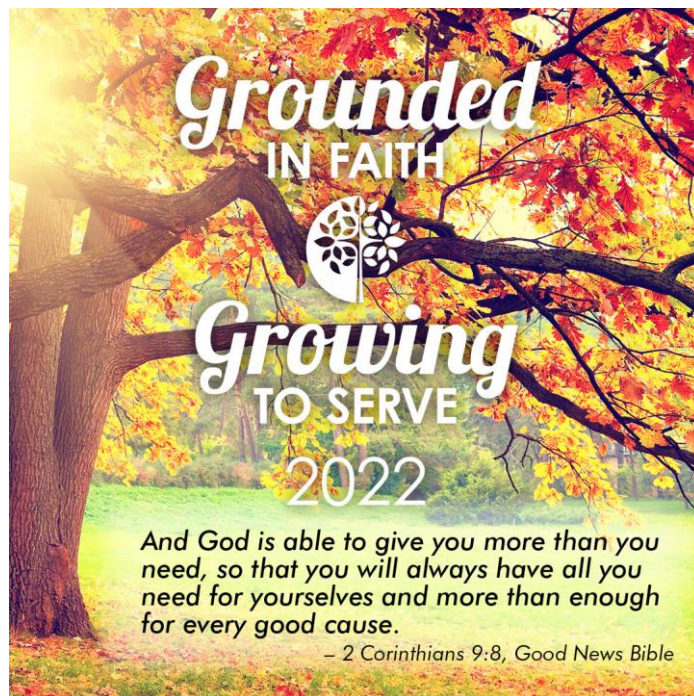
BENEDICTION

Rev. Dr. Veronica R. Goines, Co-Pastor

POSTLUDE

“Joy to the World”





As we say farewell to 2021 and welcome to 2022, the Forest Hill Stewardship Ministry Team thanks each of you who made a pledge to the 2022 Stewardship drive, Grounded in Faith and Growing to Serve. As of today, the New Year is still 11 days away and 89% of the annual 2022 goal has been met. The pledge total is at \$711,852 with 184 pledges received and more arriving every day. The Team is very hopeful that the goal of 200+ pledges will be met by the end of 2021.

It is interesting to note that of the people who pledged last year, we still have 22 who have not pledged this year. We look forward to receiving those soon.

Thank you to each of you who has helped this goal become a reality and thank you to those whose financial commitment will help us soon cross the finish line.

Every gift is important whether large or small!

If you have not yet pledged, you can do so immediately by:

- 1. Selecting and completing the online Electronic Pledge Form, OR**
- 2. Downloading and completing the 2022 Pledge Card. Then scan and email it, in confidence, to finance@fhcpresb.org or mail it to the church by regular mail.**

If you have any questions about your pledge or the giving process, please email stewardship@fhcpresb.org.

To watch Pastor Veronica Goines' impactful message on giving, [click here](#).

As we remember the birth of Jesus, let us be grateful for Him and all our blessings. Let us be led to support our church in its divinely-inspired missions and ministries.

~From your Stewardship Ministry

The poinsettias are given by

Dave and Chris Bell: In celebration of family and friends.

The Banks Family: In celebration of our Forest Hill Church family.

The Breisch Family: In memory of Benjamin Breisch and Shirley Breisch, Mother of Jack Breisch.

Nancy Burcham: In memory of all those who have lost their lives due to COVID-19.

Marina Grant: In celebration of her family.

Kurt Haas & Deedee Pim: In memory of Pamela Pim and Carl Haas.

Barbara Hansen: In memory of Lamont Hansen and Ethel Van Fleet.

Cliff and Jane Kowall: In memory of parents Walter and Elaine Grasson and Paul and Dorothy Kowall.

Deanne and John Lentz: John and Deanne give in honor of adored members we lost this year: Doris Brandt, Penny Chapman, Marge Drollinger, Bill Fay, Steve Marunowski, and Leann West.

Karen Loughridge: In memory of Clyde Loughridge. True shining star.

Jeanette Nemcek: In thanksgiving for family I.

Margie Ravas: In honor of all those who have worked tirelessly to help others during the COVID pandemic.

Carolyn Smith: In memory of my husband, Rev. Andrew Smith, his parents, Dr. Dwight and Josephine Smith, and my parents, Robert and Grace Sloan.

Jocelyn Stang: In memory of loved ones and in honor of my 4 children, 10 grandchildren, and 1 great-grandchild.

Hanna/Stauffer Family: Celebrating choir's return to church!

Elaine Turley: In memory and celebration of Molly Banville and in thanksgiving for Veronica and John.

The wreaths on the front doors are a gift from the Hilltop Garden Club



God, seeing that we had no hope
in ourselves of moving past
what separates us,
offered us a gift in Jesus Christ
who opens a door — a door
we could not open ourselves.



CHRISTMAS JOY
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
LEADERSHIP: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

The Christmas Joy Offering celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ, the truly “indescribable gift,” as well as the gifts of church leaders—past, present, and future.

A Gift Opens Doors — Proverbs 18:16

The Perfect Gift

In the story of God, as we tell it, there is a barrier that exists between the Created world and its Creator. A wall. Sin, we say, separates us from God, and separation from God is unbearable.

And our story goes on to say that God, seeing that we had no hope in ourselves of getting over, or through or around what separates us, offered us a gift in Jesus Christ who opens a door — a door we could not open ourselves.

What a gift!

But the story goes on to say that Jesus is the *perfect* gift, not only opening a door but coming through it. Our story says God is with us.

In Jesus, God joined with humanity, pointing the way to the end of our separation. And in his life, death and resurrection, so our story of God goes, Jesus *is* the door, now standing open. The giving continues because God is with us, still — and always.

Because being with us is part of God’s story, being with others is part of our call.

The Christmas Joy Offering opens doors of opportunity for the leaders who are shaped and supported through our gifts — doors that lead to hopeful futures for young people at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. Our gifts open doors that lead to relief for church workers and their families when emergency needs arise.

Proverbs, a book of wisdom sayings, states that a person's gift opens doors. As we give generously to the Christmas Joy Offering, we seek to not only meet needs, but to meet people, to come through the door that generosity opens. We open the door to celebrate "God with us!" We open the door with each and every student who will soon inspire and lead the world. We open the door with each and every church worker who helps us share God's story with the world.

The story of God, as we tell it, is not about a barrier, but about a gift. It's not about the separation, but about the gift of "being with." Please give generously to the Christmas Joy Offering, in celebration of God's perfect gift to us. Give because it brings us together, to open doors of relief and opportunity and to relationships that are part of God's story, a part of God's perfect gift to us.

Let us pray:

God, with us, we are grateful for your perfect gift, Jesus Christ. May we learn, through your open door to us, to be open to others and offer ourselves to those in need. Amen.



God saw
the great
needs of
the world
and offered
a perfect
gift.





Prayer Request:

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:

Barb Cloud, Mark Davidson, Mark Hansen, Deborah Howard, Joanna Klingenstein, Ginie Mast, Elspeth Peterjohn, Rob Reynolds, Austin Schwaderer, Sherry Thomson, Grace Uhle, and Susan Way.

Please remember these homebound members in your prayers:

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

Care Group: *The All Church 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: Joan Bacon, Lynda Bernays, Nancy Grube and Cathy Ghiandoni.

The deadline for the bulletin and weekly email is Tuesday of each week at 5 pm. The next TOWER deadline is **January 20 (for the February TOWER) at 8:00 am**. Please submit your written requests to office@fhcpresb.org.

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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, Director of Music
Rev. Carol Wedell, Parish Associate