

Discovering God's call. . .

Celebrating the Spirit's presence. . .

Witnessing to Christ's transformative power!

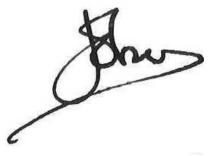
The TOWER JUNE 2022





Rev. Dr. Veronica R. Goines, Rev. Dr. John C. Lentz, Co-Pastors

WORDS FROM PASTOR JOHN



Dear Friends,

Do you know about Professor Amy-Jill Levine? She is a remarkable person. Amy-Jill grew up in Massachusetts. She tells stories of her friends who were all Portuguese immigrants. They were all Catholic. Amy-Jill is Jewish.

Amy-Jill tells of how she knew all the answers to the catechism, dreamed about taking her first communion in her first-communion white dress. She loved the stories that she heard about until one day when she heard something new. Her Catholic friends were in confirmation class. They were told, based on verses in the gospels, that the Jews were responsible for the murder of Jesus. Amy-Jill was heartbroken and couldn't believe that this was right. This heartbreak was the beginning of her deep dive into the New Testament; learning Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. She received a PhD. and is now a professor of New Testament and Jewish Studies at Vanderbilt Divinity School.

You usually don't think of a grounded, settled and secure Jewish person becoming a scholar of the New Testament and teaching students heading into ministry about Jesus and the Christian Bible. But she is and she does and is brilliant at it.

She has said that the New Testament has taught her a lot about first-century Judaism and Jesus' Jewishness. We forget that sometimes, that Jesus was Jewish. Professor Levine's work on the parables, **Short Stories by Jesus**, shed so much light on the first century Jewish context of Jesus' teaching and imagination. Her book, **The Misunderstood Jew: The Church and the Scandal of the Jewish Jesus** truly opened my eyes to how little Christians know about first-century Judaism. The Judaism of Jesus' day was not all rules and laws; it was a rich and vibrant faith tradition that was already old by the time of Jesus. Amy-

Jill challenges our facile and false theology that the New Testament solves all the "problems" of the Hebrew Scripture, revealing the "truth" that was hidden in the earlier texts.

The works of Amy-Jill Levine have become particularly important to me in these days of recurring antisemitism and anti-Jewishness. It is staggering that still, 65 years after the end of World War II, there are those who deny the holocaust and blame Jews for space lasers and for controlling the media and banks. It was only two summers ago that we heard the chilling words of the White Nationalists: "Jews will not replace us!"

As people of faith and as daughters and sons of Abraham, we share so much with our Jewish sisters and brothers. We claim their scripture as ours. Jesus was nurtured in the Hebrew Bible and was enflamed by the passion of the prophets. Our call is to stand by all marginalized people. We learned that from the Jews as well.

Do yourself a favor this summer. While you are enjoying your favorite "beach" read, slip into the queue one of Amy-Jill Levine's books. They are written for the intelligent seeker and are not written only for the advanced scholar. You will be glad you did! Happy Reading! Happy Summer!

~ John





Family, Youth, and Children Ministries

Celebrating Our Confirmands!



What a wonderful day in the life of our congregation! On Sunday, May 15, we celebrated the confirmation of five young people during worship. Cora Bissett, Sarah Dillenbeck, Henry Troyer Dyck, Madi Kelley Moore, and James Moyer Ryman affirmed their faith and their intention to be active participants in the life of our church.

Rev. Eric Dillenbeck was recognized for his leadership of the confirmation class and for his passion and commitment to mentoring our young people on their faith journeys. A lively reception was held following worship as the congregation greeted our confirmands and their families.

We look forward to fully welcoming these young people into the life and mission of FHC.



RECOGNIZING OUR GRADUATES

On Sunday, June 12, we will recognize and celebrate those in our FHC family who are graduating this year.



FAMILY YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRY PICNIC Sunday, June 5, 5– 7 PM On the Church Lawn

Children, youth, and their parents and grandparents are invited to our beginning-of-summer picnic! Pastor John will be grilling hamburgers and hot dogs (veggie options too!), and we'll also provide beverages and dessert.

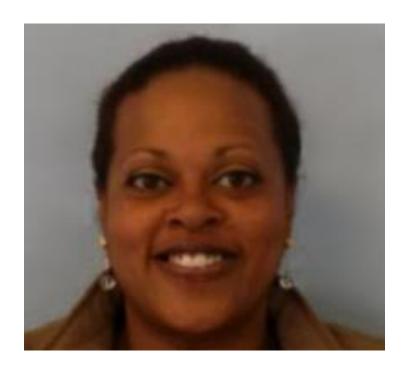
Please bring a salad or side dish to share.

RSVP by completing this online form: https://fhc.breezechms.com/form/cc2e09 or contacting Amy Wheatley at ce@fhcpresb.org.



WELCOME BACK, TRACY!

Tracy Long has returned to Forest Hill Church! Many of you know Tracy, who cared for children in the church nursery and preschool room for over a decade prior to the pandemic. We are delighted that she has returned and will be providing childcare on Sunday mornings during worship, from 10:45 AM - 12:15 PM. Tracy has missed "her" kids and looks forward to greeting old and new friends on Sundays. Welcome back, Tracy!



MAKING MUSIC WITHOUT SINGING?

The Bible contains hundreds of references to singing as a form of worship. However, these days, when singing can potentially transmit viruses, the church's music ministry had to find other ways to provide artistic expressions of art and sound. A review of this year's program reflected the tenacity and the diversity of FHC in its music offerings. In addition to the Chancel Choir, our music ministry now includes the FHC Percussion Ensemble, Voices in Bronze, and the Singing Bowls Group. These ensembles consistently contributed to the vibrancy and diversity of music during worship with musical offerings originating in South America, Africa, the Caribbean, Southeast Asia, China, Europe and other locations.



FHC Percussion Ensemble

The FHC Percussion Ensemble is a group that focuses on exploring beats and sounds from all over the world. We began the season with Brazilian samba rhythms, playing with surdo drums, shakers, snare drums etc. The ensemble later transitioned to steel drums with the group playing a 1960s popular song, "My Girl," during fellowship hour.

The percussion ensemble has plans to continue to explore rhythms with our sturdy Home Depot bucket drums and other DIY percussion instruments next season!



Voices in Bronze

Voices in Bronze, a group made up of energetic and goodhumored musicians, presented several times throughout these COVID times.

This included inspiring renditions of "Great Is Thy Faithfulness" on 'Confirmation Sunday' and Gaelic Blessing for Thanksgiving festivities in 2021.



Singing Bowls

FHC's singing bowls players utilize a set of seven frosted quartz crystal idiophones that produce almost human-like hums through scrapping, striking, or shaking. These bowls were played in times of meditation, poetry recitation, and improvisation.

Singing bowls were originally

created in ancient Mesopotamia and made their way to regions of Tibet, Nepal and India, all of which have singing bowls in their history and culture dating back some 2000 years.

To note...We are the first church in Northeast Ohio to creatively use singing bowls in our worship and services!

~Dr. Qin Ying Tan, Director of Music

Gospel Choir Workshops with Sandra Dixon



Please join us in gospel choir workshops this summer on **June 13 and June 14, 7-9 PM** in the fellowship hall at Forest Hill Church. We will celebrate the unique and inspirational power of African Gospel music through these sessions. The choir will present a couple pieces on Sunday, June 19 in commemoration of Juneteenth.

*Sandra Dixon is the gospel choir director at Heights High School. Please email Ying at music@fhcpres.org if you are interested to attend!

*Sandra Dixon is a life-long resident of Cleveland Heights (except for 4 years) and is proud to be a product of the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Schools. She was born into a musical family so music has always been a part of her life. As a child, she was a member of the Cleveland Orchestra Children's Chorus. She also played the piano and the violin, but regrettably stopped playing violin after high school. Although she loves all kinds of music, especially show tunes, gospel is arguably her favorite genre. She is a songwriter and a gospel playwright. She is a part of the National Convention of Gospel Choirs and Choruses. Sandra is a Family and Consumer Sciences Teacher at Cleveland Heights High. She has been the director of the Cleveland Heights High Gospel Choir since 2003. She is always happy to share her love of gospel music with others.



Please join our summer choir this season from June 11-July 17. The group will meet every Sunday in the sanctuary 10:15 AM-10:45 AM to rehearse and sing for 11AM worship. Please contact Ying at music@fhcpresb.org if you are interested to join us!

MESSAGE FROM THE DEACONS

The good news is that our numbers are increasing in Fellowship Hall after Sunday services! The even better news is there are still too many donuts left over! Please do stop in after worship, enjoy refreshments, good company, and meeting new members and confirmands.



JUNETEENTH: 155 YEARS OF BLACK JOY AS AN ACT OF RESISTANCE

June 19, or Juneteenth originated in Galveston Texas in 1865. It is credited as being the true end of enslavement in America, although some Black Americans were still enslaved well into 1866.

While Juneteenth was not the end of enslavement, it is still a holiday with a rich and storied history that deserves to be celebrated. At the conclusion of the Civil War, Texan enslavers intentionally decided to withhold the fact that Black Americans were no longer enslaved until after the next harvest, so they could extract the most labor from their enslaved workforce, kind of like a kid frantically bubbling in 'C' until the teacher comes and takes their test away.

On June 19, 1865 when the Union soldiers reached Galveston and read the Emancipation proclamation in the town square, enslavers turned loose their former chattel with no severance package, no unemployment, no place to live, no way to eat, and virtually no chance for self-sufficiency.

Banned from using public parks, these newly freed Black American ancestors in Texas held huge block parties and church parking lot picnics where they ate the rich, sweet, and calorically dense food that used to be reserved 'for whites only.'

That is why Black Americans today celebrate Juneteenth with joyful celebrations, music, dancing, fatty foods, and red food and drinks that represent the blood our ancestors spilled for our freedom.

Although Juneteenth is now a federally recognized holiday, many Black Americans question if we are truly free in a country where inmates are charged up to \$142 a day for the privilege of

incarceration in exchange for forced labor at a rate of one dollar per hour or less, a country where Black Americans still live under constant threat of domestic terrorism, a country where white supremacists still boldly declare "they will not replace us."

Black Americans have always lived in the midst of troubling times. Food, fellowship and Black joy have sustained us through 402 years of chattel enslavement, debt peonage, racial terrorism, mass incarceration, legal lynching's, and second-class citizens.

Juneteenth is a manifestation of Black joy. And Black joy is an act of resistance.

~From: Ajah Hales



Everyday

Stewardship In Action

From your Stewardship Ministry



Time, Talents, Treasure

—by Kim Hill, Stewardship Ministry Member

The seasons of life sometimes bring unexpected challenges and rewards, or at least that's been so for me. I remember walking into a community college for the first time for what I intended to be a temporary stint as an adjunct professor as I emerged from stay-at-home parenting. I immediately knew that the college would be my place and that those colleagues would be my people. We share the same values, priorities and focus on social justice for the people of NE Ohio.

Not surprisingly, walking into Forest Hill Church was similar for me. Those of us who've grown accustomed to worshipping with such a dynamic congregation might take it for granted, but we are among so many caring, talented, giving people.

What I love about the Stewardship Ministry's video series is how each video brings this richness to light, and how I get to learn more about the folks and service that make FHC a place where I want to be.



Did you hear Diana Woodbridge and Scott Lafferty discuss the Greater Cleveland Congregations' accomplishments of which they're most proud? A mental health and addiction crisisdiversion center, voter turnout and antisuppression efforts involving hundreds of volunteers and thousands of voters, criminal justice reform – these are just a few of the impactful projects our fellow congregants are working on every day.

Ann Williams and Leslie Clement reviewed in another video the wide breadth of offerings in Adult Spiritual Growth. On any given Sunday – and many days in between – folks from our own community are leading one another in book groups, study sessions, and special-focus learning events. The depth of knowledge and spiritual development among FHC's members is extraordinary, and we're sharing it with each other in so many ways.

Most recently, I was moved by Seth Ungemach's description of how being part of the FHC community engages so many aspects of who he is and what he cares about. From the connection of youth groups, to his rich musical contributions, to nurturing him as a change agent in matters of church leadership – Seth's points of connection and contribution to FHC clearly span across all of who he is and the core values he holds.

"Every member of Forest Hill has something to contribute, and they do, in an authentic way," Seth said. As we roll into summer, that feels like the perfect idea to keep in mind. What time, talents, and treasures can I share? How do I develop them and share them in the context of my church community?

If you haven't already, be sure to check out the videos posted on the church's YouTube channel. The ones above are grouped in a playlist called "Stewardship Summer 2022."

THE FHC LABRE MINISTRY



Dear Volunteers and Friends of Labre,

The FHC Labre ministry has a new mission partner in East Cleveland, The Empowerment Church, 15837 Euclid. Following the loss of Our Family Home Center in January 2020, ministry leaders spent months meeting online, working to discern our best path forward.

The Empowerment Church, led by Pastor Anthony Mattox, who also serves as a Cleveland Heights councilman, shares many of our mission values--supporting women, children and men in East Cleveland who are homeless or economically marginalized.

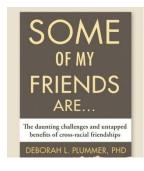
But the Empowerment church building, a structure listed on the National Register of Historic Places, needs extensive restoration before our shared outreach vision can be fully implemented. To achieve this, please consider supporting Empowerment's "1000 Strong" campaign, with the end goal to achieve a matching grant from the National Fund for Historic Places (https://fundforsacredplaces.org/).

The campaign objective is for a thousand people to contribute \$100 each toward Empowerment's restoration, work which is already well underway.

Donations can be made by check or online. For more details go to: https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0a4baaaa22a3fd0-the1000. And thank you for considering!

~Jeff Smith & Jack Breisch

BLACK CAUCUS BOOK CLUB DISCUSSION





Dr. Deborah Plummer's acclaimed book "Some of My Friends Are...The Daunting Challenges and Untapped Benefits of Cross-Racial Friendships."

Friends, our final book discussion before we break for summer will occur (via zoom) on Saturday morning, June 18, beginning at 10:30 am. We will be discussing Professor Deborah Plummer's book "Some of My Friends Are...The Daunting Challenges and Untapped Benefits of Cross-Racial Friendships."

Over the past two years, we have critically examined American history and policy related to race, racism, and inequality. We have read and discussed nine (9) books and have held many zoom forums that address those seemingly intractable problems.

One issue we haven't covered is friendships, or the lack thereof, among those of different backgrounds, cultures, and races. On June 18, we will broach that complex and sensitive topic. In April, we discussed The Whiteness of Wealth. That book touched upon segregated schools and neighborhoods. However, it did not address -- in detail -- why neighborhoods tend to be primarily of one race or why both Whites and Blacks generally only have superficial friendships with one another. This book delves into these questions.

Some of My Friends Are... forces introspection, regardless of one's race. This discussion promises to be lively, provocative, and informative.

If you wish to join, you may sign up here: https://fhc.breezechms.com/form/5d562f or email blackcaucus@fhcpresb.org.

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Check out the website

www.fhcpresb.org

Come and see!

LIBRARY CORNER



Now that the Church is open for in-person services, while you are in the Church, you may want to run down to check out the books in the library. You can borrow the library books by signing and dating the library card in the back of the book. You will find a box for the cards near the library door. (Don't forget to return the book(s) when you are finished reading.)

Looking for something to read this month? Since Co-Pastor Veronica Goines is leaving in July, this may be a good time to look up the books written by Anne Lamott. Her books are short, deceptively simple on the surface, but wise and inspirational. Anne Lamott often refers to her beloved Pastor Veronica Goines, who made such a big impact on her life!

Our selection of Anne Lamott's books are shelved under Spirituality (although you can also find some in the Women's Collection).



FROM THE MINISTRY OF ADULT SPIRITUAL GROWTH:

THANK YOU!

Please join us in saying a big "THANK YOU" to those who contributed their time, talent, and energy to teach in the classes and discussion groups that we have offered at Forest Hill Church this past year. A total of 22 people has taught or facilitated classes or groups this year!

From September 2021 through the end of May 2022, we have offered a total of 15 different classes. Our estimate is that about 100 people participated in total.

In addition, the teaching and book discussions sponsored by the Black Caucus drew participants from both inside and outside our church.

Summertime, and we're taking a break

Even though we have had a collective sense of coming back from the isolation and restrictions of COVID, it has still been a challenging year in many respects. Our teachers and facilitators have worked hard to keep our excellent programs going online, in person, and in a hybrid format. Now, we all need a break. Therefore, this summer, the Ministry of Adult Spiritual Growth will be taking a break from formal programming.

The Library

This does not mean that learning needs to stop! We want to remind everyone that we have an excellent small library on the ground floor of the education wing. Please feel free to stop in and see the many excellent books and DVDs that our library contains. We hope that you enjoy exploring all that is there and that you find something that excites you to learn more about your faith, the scriptures, the church, or your spiritual life.

Over the next several months, our Ministry will create a series of articles to help all of us learn more about just what our gem of a church library contains.

Have a wonderful and restful summer!

~From Ann Williams and the Ministry of Adult Spiritual Growth

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

To the members and friends of Forest Hill Church:

On May 15, the Session voted to call a special congregational meeting for **Sunday**, **June 12**, immediately following worship. All members are urged to attend. The purpose of the meeting will be to dissolve the pastoral relationship between FHC and the Rev. Veronica R. Goines—effective July 15 and to change the title of Rev. John C. Lentz from Co-Pastor to Pastor.

Please mark your calendars and let us remain ever prayerful.

~Your Co-Pastors, Veronica and John

SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT WORKSHOP Sunday, June 19 and 26, 9:15 a.m.

In my April 28 letter to the congregation announcing my retirement, I noted that discernment played a vital role in my decision-making. This sparked the interest of members who expressed interest in learning more about this spiritual practice. Still, how do we attune our hearts and minds to discern/discover God's will amid the many voices, opinions, and opportunities surrounding us? This two-week introduction will guide participants as they explore discernment through the lens of Scripture and as they learn definitions, proven principles, and signals of discernment. The course will culminate with a simple discernment process.

The course is limited to the first 15 who register. You may register here: https://fhc.breezechms.com/form/1254fe.

~Pastor Goines

FIBER AND FELLOWSHIP



We welcome everyone interested in quilting, knitting, and crocheting (both beginners and experienced are welcome). This group will work on quilting projects together. Feel free to bring your own projects or work on ours. Please bring supplies to start new projects. Fiber and Fellowship will meet on June 18 and July 9, from 9 AM-Noon in Fellowship Hall. For more information or questions, please get in touch with Carol Gifford at 216-598-9730.



Forest Hill Church is invited to Join Presbyterians and others on the east side of Cleveland in mobilizing with the Poor People's Campaign. The plan is to go to Washington DC, leaving early Saturday

morning, **June 18**, at 1:00 AM, to be part of a mass assembly of poor and low-wage workers marching in Washington for a moral revival. We will return the same day, arriving in Cleveland around 11:30 PM. Cost will be approximately \$100, with a reduction for early sign-up. For questions or to say you are interested, contact Peter Horth from Fairmount Presbyterian Church at 773-407-6327 or email peterchorth@gmail.com.



Nicole	Lawrence	June 02
Scott	Lafferty	June 03
Jocelyn	Stang	June 03
Richard	Secor	June 04
Megan	Tzefronis	June 04
Kiva	Bohanon	June 06
Jeremy	Hexe	June 06
Lucinda	Newton	June 06
Lara	Troyer	June 06
Jonathan	Adams	June 07
Gary	Lustic	June 07
Karen	Parker	June 07
Marius	Juodisius	June 08
Nancy	Lyon-Stadler	June 08
J. Linn	Obery	June 09
Beverly	Thomas	June 13
Paula	Harvey	June 16
Vikki	Nowak	June 16
Kathleen	Cameron	June 17
Nancy	Jamieson	June 17
Thomas	Taylor	June 18
Jacob	Ezell	June 19
Carrie	Fister	June 20
Virginia	Weiss	June 20
Lane	Baldwin	June 22
Chris	Chapman	June 22
David	Schellenberg	June 22
Ann	Donkin	June 23
Doris	Bartlett	June 24
Marjorie	Thomas	June 24
LaDon	Headen	June 25
Rachel	Martinez-Finn	June 28
Jane	Frederick	June 29
Kerri	McCauley	June 30

Staff Emails

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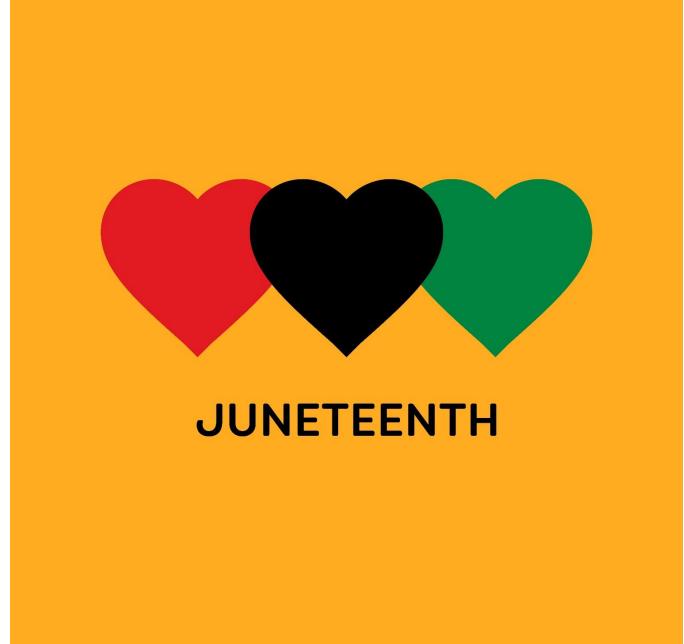
3031 Monticello Blvd, Cleveland Hts. OH 44118 216-321-2660 Fax: 216-320-1214 Pastoral Care Emergencies: 216-319-3596 Custodians' cell phone: 216-217-5257

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

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

July/August TOWER issue deadline: 8 am on June 16

Giving/donation options- Friends of FHC, during this time, you may give monetary gifts/donations by texting 216-400-5300 or give online using either <u>our BREEZE Giving Page</u> or <u>PayPal</u>. You may also mail in a check to the church bookkeeper (3031 Monticello Blvd. Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44118).



On June 20, 2022, in honor of Juneteenth, the church office will be closed.

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 -AI Anon: Now There's Hope 7:30 pm -AA: Borton Group	10:30 am -Abundance Pantry -Bulletin and Weekly email Deadline	7:30 am –Bible & Bagels (virtual) 12:00 pm -Staff Meeting (virtual) -AA: Wed. Women's Group	1:30 pm -English Dance 6:00 pm -Bell Choir 7:30 pm -Chancel Choir	9:30 am -Al Anon: Hand in Hand	
May 29	May 30 OFFICE CLOSED	May 31	June 1 7:00 pm: Personnel Committee	June 2 7:30 pm: Potluck for the choir	June 3 4:00 pm: Meeting with caterer	June 4 8:00 am: Men's Group. Women's Walk 11:00 am: Steve's Memorial
June 5 Communion and Pentecost 12:30 pm: Listening Session 5:00 pm: Family Picnic	June 6	June 7 5:00 pm: Custodial Meeting	June 8	June 9	June 10 Amira's Closet	June 11 8:00 am: Women's Walk 10:15 am: Summer Choir Starts 2:00 pm: Amira's Closet
June 12 Graduation Acknowledgment 12:00 pm: Congregational Meeting Black Caucus FHC Percussion 1:30 pm: Amira's Closet	June 13 7:00 pm: Gospel Choir Workshop	June 14 7:00 pm: Gospel Choir Workshop	June 15	June 16 TOWER DEADLINE	June 17 John out of the office	June 18 8:00 am: Women's Walk Culture Camp 9:00 am: Fiber and Fellowship 10:30 am: Black Caucus 2:00 pm Black Caucus John out of the office
June 19 Juneteenth Culture Camp 12:00 pm: Ushers Luncheon John out of the office	June 20 OFFICE CLOSED John out of the office Culture Camp	June 21 John out of the office Culture Camp	June 22 7:00 pm: Session Meeting John out of the office Culture Camp	June 23 John out of the office Culture Camp Happy Birthday Ann Donkin	June 24 John out of the office Culture Camp	June 25 8:00 am: Men's Group. Women's Walk 3:00 pm: Black Caucus Dinner John out of the office Culture Camp Poor People's
June 26 John out of the office	June 27 John out of the office	June 28 John out of the office 7:00 pm: Crowdsourced Conversations	June 29 John out of the office	June 30 John out of the office	July 1 John out of the office	Campaign July 2 8:00 am: Men's Group. Women's Walk John out of the office

June 2022



Forest Hill Church

presbyterian