



# FOREST HILL CHURCH, PRESBYTERIAN

## THE TOWER



September, 2022

Dear Friends,

In church and society, we are beset with disagreements. Issues of politics and faith divide us. Neighbors are wary of each other. Even in our own church family there are areas of tension.

The Presbyterian Peacemaking Program has published *Seeking to Be Faithful Together: Guidelines for Presbyterians in Times of Disagreement*, as part of the Matthew 25 initiative of which Forest Hill Church is a part.

The guidelines are shaped by scripture: "Give them a hearing...listen before we answer" (John 7:51 and Proverbs 18:13); "Speak the truth in love" (Ephesians 4:15); "Maintain the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:3).

This helpful guide suggests 10 steps to follow:

1. Treat each other respectfully so as to build trust, believing that we all desire to be faithful to Jesus the Christ.
2. Learn about various positions on the topic of disagreement, in an effort to be sure we understand each other.
3. State what we think we heard and ask for clarification before responding.
4. Share our concerns directly with individuals or groups with whom we have disagreements in a spirit of love and respect in keeping with Jesus' teachings.
5. Focus on ideas and suggestions instead of questioning people's motives, intelligence, or integrity.
6. Share our personal experiences about the subject of disagreement so that others may more fully understand our concerns.
7. Indicate where we agree with those of other viewpoints as well as where we disagree.
8. Seek to stay in community with each other, though the discussion may be vigorous and full of tension.
9. Urge people of various points of view to speak, and promise to listen to these positions seriously; seek conclusions informed by our points of agreement; be sensitive to the feeling and concerns of those who do not agree with the majority and respect their rights of conscience.
10. Include our disagreement in our prayers, not praying for the triumph of our viewpoints, but seeking God's grace to listen attentively, to speak clearly and to remain open to the vision God holds for us all.

In the days ahead practice these faithful guidelines and be at peace! We are all beloved children of God.

Faithfully yours,  
John



## Rev. Dr. Kenneth W. Chalker Guest Preacher Sunday, September 25



Prior to his retirement on January 31, 2018, Rev. Dr. Kenneth W. Chalker served as a pastor of a local United Methodist Church for 43 years; 32 of those years were as the Senior Pastor of what came to be known as University Circle United Methodist Church in Cleveland, Ohio.

Across those years of ministry, Dr. Chalker became active in a number of civic activities and ministry in the urban corp of Cleveland. Those activities and ministries brought him into contact with a number of clergy associations and important initiatives for the betterment of the city. Among those is a life membership and involvement in the Cleveland Branch of the NAACP, with additional memberships in The Diversity Center of Northeast Ohio, the former

Greater Cleveland Roundtable, and the Community Relations Committee. He was also a member of the annual MLK, Jr. Concert Committee of the Cleveland Orchestra, The Cleveland Metropolitan School System, University Circle, Inc., Children and Family Advocates of Cuyahoga County Board of Trustees, a graduate of Leadership Cleveland, and active in a host of projects supporting city and county government social service initiatives.

Dr. Chalker has been a long-time active member of the United Methodist Church denomination. He served as elected delegate multiple times to its General and Jurisdictional Conferences, and Chair of the General Conference Host Committee for the 2000 General Conference in Cleveland, Ohio. He has held a number of positions within the East Ohio Annual Conference including Annual Conference Secretary.

Dr. Chalker has written a number of op-ed pieces for *The Plain Dealer* and has been a commentator on TV 5 and various radio stations. He has

also written a book, *Dare to Defy: Challenging Stereotypes in a Christian Context*. Of his awards and recognitions, several of particular meaning to him include a Lifetime Achievement Award by the Cleveland Public Library, the Joseph D. Pigott University Circle Leadership Award, The Community Service Award by Ohio Guidestone, and receiving, in 2018, "The Five-Star Generals Award" in the Army of Believers by the Cleveland Metropolitan School District.

Dr. Chalker is a 1971 graduate of Mount Union College (now the University of Mount Union) where he currently serves on the Board of Trustees. He received his Masters Degree in 1974 at Duke University and a Doctorate of Ministry from Garrett-ETS in 1982. In May of 2018, Dr. Chalker received an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from his alma mater, The University of Mount Union.

Dr. Chalker has been married to the love of his life, Grace Elaine, for 51 years. They have two grown children, Laura (Annie) and Wayne (Jen) and are the very proud grandparents of Wayne, Phillip, Gabriella and Adeline Grace.

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## Fall Adult Spiritual Growth Classes Announced

—Ann Williams



With autumn just around the corner, the Forest Hill Ministry of Adult Spiritual Growth offers an intriguing mix of colorful and rewarding classes and group get-togethers worth investigating.

Discussion topics include

- Ways to more easily follow Jesus' teachings and deal with life's negative forces
- Discovering pre-Christian scriptures included in the *Book of Wisdom*
- How praying with others helps us meet life's daily and toughest challenges
- Probing the Parables Jesus told to help listeners better understand his messages
- Practicing ways to address racial equity in our daily lives

While most classes include the use of a book or text, i.e., the Follow Me series, others will focus on one-to-one relationships and group gatherings. Most classes "meet" (via Zoom and/or in person) Sunday mornings at 9:15am; others meet Saturday mornings or another day and time.

For more information about this fall's offerings, go to the church's website at [fhcpresb.org](http://fhcpresb.org) and look for the complete list of adult classes. Lists will also be mailed and made available at the church.



## Earth Care Again in Focus

—Dave Neff

It is time to reconsider the business of Earth Care after an unplanned hiatus....

Recall the four “R’s”:

**Refuse**  
**Reduce**  
**Re-use**  
**Recycle**

We’re all familiar with these simple, personal actions we can take to better protect our environment. We’re much more aware now of disastrous consequences of climate change, and, hopefully, we understand that carbon emission from a variety of human activities affects the environmental health of God’s planet earth.

Yet, here we are in modern urban life where we travel in emission-emitting vehicles for work and pleasure, with our automobiles, boats, and planes. In many instances, we light, heat, and cool our homes with technologies that are fueled by carbon-emitting energy sources.

So, how can each of us balance our carbon emission-generating lifestyle more prudently, reduce our own

personal carbon footprint, and reduce the effects of climate change which will improve the environment?

One way is to consider the purchase of carbon footprint “offsets.” Basically, carbon offsetting is any reduction of greenhouse gas emissions to make up for emissions that occur elsewhere. Carbon offset credits show that an organization or person has reduced its/their emissions. The term “carbon offset” is used to describe both the credit and the act of carbon offsetting.

In this way we offset the carbon emissions that we are in one way or another responsible for. Monies used to purchase personal credit “offsets” are used to plant trees, upgrade water sources and supplies, establish more sustainable agricultural methods, and more.

One such source for further information on purchasing carbon offsets credits to balance our lifestyle is found in the website [www.terrapass.com](http://www.terrapass.com). I have just started to explore this and other related carbon-offset internet addresses. Join me in examining these. They are worth a thoughtful look and consideration.

We Americans have a moral obligation to the rest of the world to significantly reduce our own carbon footprint – especially to the people who are not as fortunate as we. For more information: [https://gallery.yopriceville.com/var/albums/Free-Clipart-Pictures/Fall-PNG/Transparent\\_Fall\\_Leaves\\_Clipart.png?m=1434276787](https://gallery.yopriceville.com/var/albums/Free-Clipart-Pictures/Fall-PNG/Transparent_Fall_Leaves_Clipart.png?m=1434276787)



## Racial Equity Buddies An Essential Strategy for Personal Racial Equity Growth

—Quentin Smith

In 2019, Dr. Mark Joseph provided Forest Hill Church with guidance in establishing a racial equity buddies program. The suggestions he provided then are just as important for us today in working on our personal equity growth. It’s important to know that a “racial equity buddy” is a trusted companion – someone who, like you, is interested in becoming more aware of ways to create racial equity.

Some of Dr. Joseph’s tips:

- Find someone who is on his/her own racial equity journey. He or she does not have to be of the same, or different racial/ethnic background. Try to select someone who is a good listener, a lifelong learner with high integrity and discretion, and a willingness to change their opinions.
- Focus on building trust and a safe space to be honest with each other. The way you and your buddy connect can and should work for you both (reading books, taking walks together, meeting for coffee, discussing films, etc.).
- Be vigilant during your conversations: share, but don’t lecture; listen with empathy not skepticism; be curious not challenging.
- Be flexible and accommodating; like all journeys, yours may take unexpected twists and turns.
- Savor the journey. Don’t rush, keep steady momentum, have fun even as you delve into painful and difficult topics.

—Prepared by Mark Joseph, Ph.D. for Forest Hill Church, July 2019  
Adapted for broader sharing in Shaker Heights, June 2020

(continued on Page 5)



# PER CAPITA = PER MEMBER

## BATTLE FOR DEMOCRACY

GCC continues to actively recruit up to 150 neighborhood captains to lead GCC's expanded and re-imagined voter canvassing work. This year Forest Hill is leading a team of Neighborhood Captains of FHC members and members from other Heights churches in this critical work to re-engage infrequent and depressed voters in the Noble Neighborhood of Cleveland Heights, just contiguous to our church. We still need additional volunteers to join our team. If you are interested, please contact Diana Woodbridge at [diana@ninthrung.com](mailto:diana@ninthrung.com) or Scott Lafferty at [swlaff@sbcglobal.net](mailto:swlaff@sbcglobal.net).

In an environment where our democratic fabric is eroding and voters are sinking further into depression, the neighborhood captain strategy is the backbone of our campaign and essential to re-engaging voters. According to our partner, the Union of Concerned Scientists, our 2021 neighborhood captain program had a 2% increase in turnout of our targeted voters compared to 2020. In addition to engaging with the Noble neighborhood in Cleveland Heights, the larger campaign will again engage with the five key neighborhoods we engaged in 2021 for the Cleveland Mayoral campaign and four other inner-ring suburban neighborhoods where GCC has member organizations: South Euclid, Euclid, Parma Heights and Warrensville Heights. **WE NEED YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS!** We will have an organizational and planning meeting for our Noble neighborhood Neighborhood Captains team on **Tuesday, September 6, at 7 p.m. in South Hall.**

## SAVE THE DATE

- 1) The Criminal Justice team of GCC will conduct an important action to bring attention to the ongoing problem of Cuyahoga County's excessive use of discretionary bindovers of youth to adult courts. The event takes place at Olivet Institutional Baptist Church, 8712 Quincy Ave on Thursday, October 13 at 7 p.m.
- 2) GCC's Executive Director and Lead Organizer, Keisha Krumm, will preach at Forest Hill Church on Sunday, October 16, and following worship that day, will conduct a learning session about GCC, faith-based organizing and the current initiatives of GCC.

Please join us for these important events in support of our commitment to GCC. Thank you.

– Scott Lafferty & Diana Woodbridge

Each year, Forest Hill Church contributes to the greater Presbyterian Church through its annual per-capita assessment. Per-capita is an opportunity for all Presbyterians to share in the organizational costs of the larger church. It is a set amount of money per member that is paid to the Presbytery of the Western Reserve, the Synod of the Covenant, and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA). Per-capita covers the ecclesiastical expenses of the denomination and makes it possible for the following:

- Presbyterians to discern and live out God's call in their lives
- Churches to connect with individuals seeking a call to ministry
- Staff support for General Assembly committees and commissions
- Management and coordination of General Assembly gatherings
- Presbytery and synod leaders to gather for training and discernment
- Counsel and support for churches in crisis (misconduct, legal matters)
- Presbyteries to address matters of inclusion, participation, and representation at all levels of church leadership and decision-making
- The denomination to build connections with ecumenical partners around the world
- Presbyteries and pastors to receive support on immigration issues
- Presbyterian history to be cataloged, preserved, and utilized by future generations

The apportionment for this year is based upon the membership of Forest Hill Church reported as of December 31, 2020, which was 382 active members. The **2022 per-capita is \$34.91** broken out as follows: General Assembly \$8.95; Synod of the Covenant \$3.25; and Presbytery of the Western Reserve \$22.71. The total FHC contributed in 2022 is \$13,336.

Session includes the total amount of our per-capita contribution in the annual expense budget. We ask that you prayerfully consider contributing the per-capita amount for your family members in addition to your pledge and other gifts. By contributing your portion of per-capita now, you free up dollars in our regular budget for the work of Forest Hill Church in our local community. If you pay by check, please note "Per -Capita" on the memo line. You may also contribute through our online giving option. Thank you for your support.

Melanie Alban, Clerk of Session  
Mary McMillan and Marina Grant,  
Co-Treasurers

**AS OF THE END OF JULY,  
ACTUAL GIVING WAS \$80,476 BEHIND  
OUR ANTICIPATED BUDGET! YOU CAN HELP BY  
MAKING SURE YOUR PLEDGE IS CURRENT.**

# SERMON ON THE AMOUNTS

As of July 31, 2022

Congregation Support:	\$483,361
Budget for period ending:	\$563,837
Annual budget:	\$903,657

In laymen's terms, the above means we are \$80,476 behind the amount that was expected in giving through the first seven months of this year (\$563,837 minus \$483,361). We have \$420,296 left to received between August 1 and December 31 in order to reach our pledged goal for the year (\$903,657 minus \$483,361).

In most churches, the anticipation is that giving slows down during the summer months. It is an anticipated yet worrisome fact. Unfortunately, the utility and security companies and all other vendors don't slow down their invoicing, nor do staff reject the responsibilities they are expected to fulfill on a daily basis.

We are thankful for all of you and hope you will faithfully consider bringing your pledge up to date as soon as possible. Certainly, it is in the minds of some that we just lost one of our pastors, so there will be a savings there. But some of those funds will need to be re-allocated for guest preachers, fellowship programs (a return after COVID), music, education, and a few unforeseen repairs.

Forest Hill Church, Presbyterian is not the building. It is ALL OF US!

Sincerely,  
Marina Grant and Mary McMillan  
Co-Treasurers

## DEACONS

The Forest Hill Deacons are pleased to announce our **Fall Fellowship Celebration Sunday, September 18.**

Come and join us on the front lawn of Forest Hill Church following the service!

The Deacons are planning a festive fellowship for you to enjoy spending time with friends you have not seen for a while and new-comers you have yet to meet. Festivities include a sumptuous, picnic-style feast, with a vegetarian option, and lots of fun and games for children of all ages. Tables and chairs will be set up, but feel free to bring your own chairs and blankets to enjoy the picnic.

**We hope you can join us!**

## Racial Equity Buddies, continued from page 3

Dr. Mark Joseph, the parent of two Shaker alums and a current high schooler, as well as a long-time advocate for equity in Shaker and across the nation, is the Leona Bevis and Marguerite Haynam Associate Professor of Community Development at the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences at Case Western Reserve University.

He is the Founding Director of the National Initiative on Mixed-Income Communities. His research focus is mixed-income development as a strategy for promoting urban equity and inclusion. He and his colleagues conduct research and lead consulting projects in Cleveland, as well as cities like Chicago, Memphis, Minneapolis, Pittsburgh, San Francisco, Seattle, and Washington, D.C.

Among other appointments and honors, Joseph is a member of the Board of Trustees of the George Gund Foundation and an External Advisor to the Chicago Commitment at the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. He has advocated for those working on racial equity to work with an equity buddy, and shares this guidance with those interested in this growth/

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Learn more about Mark Joseph and his call for us to consider the *Everyday Vigilance Required to Make Real Progress Toward Racial Equity & Inclusion*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n21ingDQoYg>

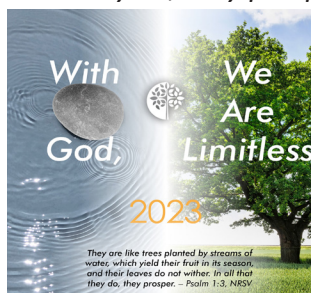
*Finding Your Person: Why We Need Buddies in Embracing Equity* – a blog post by Malaika Hankins  
<https://embracingequity.org/blog/2019/6/1/finding-your-person-why-we-need-buddies-in-embracing-equity>

Everyday  
**stewardship**  
from your Stewardship Ministry

We hope you enjoyed our summer video series. The videos are such a great way to meet members, hear their testimonials and learn about the many programs and ministries of Forest Hill Church.

Next month our 2023 Stewardship Campaign officially begins. You'll be introduced to more new videos and some may even have a touch of humor!

Below is the new logo which will be used in the 2023 Campaign. Our theme, *With God, We Are Limitless*, is based on Psalm 1:3: *[We] are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season and their leaves do not wither. In all that they do, they prosper.* (NRSV)



The Stewardship Ministry is exceedingly grateful for your continued generosity and support of Forest Hill Church.



# Moments from the Farewell Gathering for Pastor Veronica



Following  
worship  
on Sunday,  
July 10,  
2022



## Programming for Family, Youth & Children



—Amy Wheelley, Director of Family, Youth & Children

Fall programming for families, youth and children will bring new opportunities for:

- Worship participation
- Music
- Intergenerational gatherings
- Service

**STAY TUNED FOR  
A CALENDAR OF  
PROGRAM EVENTS  
COMING SOON!**



### Blessing of the Backpacks

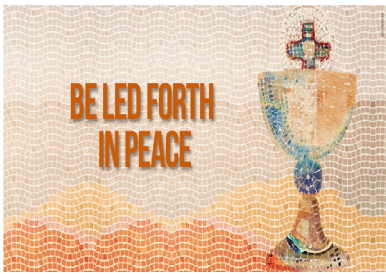
Children and youth are invited to bring their backpacks to church on Sunday, September 11 for a “blessing of the backpacks.” During the 11am worship service, the congregation will offer a blessing to all of our young people who are beginning a new school year!

Forty families were surprised and delighted to find yard signs that had been “planted” in their lawns during the first week of school. Whether starting preschool or kindergarten; returning to elementary school; moving up to middle school; or finishing high school, children and youth were reminded that their church family is thinking of them and wishing them well as a new academic year begins.



# GOD'S PRESENCE EMPOWERS US TO LIVE JOYFULLY WITHIN OUR COMMUNITIES AND TO BRING PEACE TO ALL AROUND US

–Joan Bacon



The Peace & Global Witness Offering enables the church to promote the peace of Christ by addressing systems of injustice in our own communities and around the world. Together we are building God's household of peace where everyone is

welcome – where all can find compassion, peace and justice.

Many congregations receive this offering throughout A Season of Peace — beginning on September 4, and culminating on World Communion Sunday, October 2.



## THE FOREST HILL CHURCH MUSIC MINISTRY. . .

believes that musical gifts from God are to be celebrated in a joyful and compassionate community. This season will see a variety of musical gifts in our worship services, from classical hymns and choral selections to gospel pieces, from jazz to Taizé musical meditations. Please contact Ying at [music@fhcpresb.org](mailto:music@fhcpresb.org) if you are interested in joining any of the musical ensembles or if you would like to offer your musical talent in worship.

–QinYing Tan, Music Director

### ***Chancel Choir***

The Chancel Choir sings a wide variety of music throughout the year, ranging from the standard liturgical music of Handel and Bach to spirituals to modern choir arrangements and compositions. Most music is four-part (soprano, alto, tenor, bass). Rehearsals are on Thursday evenings at 7:30pm, beginning September 1.



### ***Little Crescendos***

This choir comprises children aged 3-8 years of age led by Julie Minder. Rehearsals are on Sunday mornings and Little Crescendos will be featured in worship once a month.



### ***J.A.M. (Joy And Music!)***

Older students are welcome to join this choir, directed by Seth Ungemach. J.A.M. will rehearse on Sunday mornings and be featured in worship once a month.



### ***FHC Percussion Ensemble***

This group explores percussion rhythms from South America to Africa, and occasionally takes up repurposed items to bang on! We meet on Sunday afternoons after worship at 12:30pm.



### ***Voices in Bronze***

Our beloved bell choir meets on Thursday evenings at 6:15PM in the bell choir room. We present arrangements of cherished hymns and classical pieces in worship services. A sense of humor is recommended as you join this group!

# September Birthdays



DAY	LAST NAME	FIRST NAME
01	Miller	Sam
02	Cameron	Jeffery
03	Doyle	Robert
04	Kellermeyer	Robert
05	Ghiandoni	Catherine
05	Molyneaux	Kathleen
05	Olson	David
05	Turley	Elaine
06	Kellermeyer	Audrey
06	Sieck	Dean
08	Doyle	Diane
08	Klein	Brian
09	Fuller	Daniel
09	Smith-Polderman	Sarah
10	Yelanjian	Sue
12	Baumgartner	Melissa
12	Roosa	Halling
12	Sedam	Stephen
12	Yeager	Margaret
13	Seeders	Jim
16	Lafferty	Joann
16	Ungemach	Donald

DAY	LAST NAME	FIRST NAME
17	Miah	Edith
17	Shaw	Elizabeth
18	Schellenberg	Kara
19	Clement	Leslie
19	Clement	Lia
19	Jamieson	Alexander
19	Lafferty	Peter
20	Jenkins	Patricia
20	Khoury	Allan
21	Huynh	Phuong
21	Young	Virginia
22	Dail	Jordan
22	Sharpe	Richard
22	Stawovy	Michael
23	Bland	Anthony
23	Rose	Laurie
23	Zito	Katie
24	Alongi	Lisa
24	Himmelsteib	Kathryn
24	Klein	Ronald
28	Klein	Jessica



# September 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				<b>September 1</b> John is out of the office 7:30pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	<b>September 2</b> John is out of the office Repast for Mother Wright	<b>September 3</b> 8:00 am: Men's Group. Women's Walk
<b>September 4</b> <b>Outdoor Worship</b>	<b>September 5</b> <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	<b>September 6</b> 7:00 pm: GCC Meeting	<b>September 7</b>	<b>September 8</b> 7:30pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	<b>September 9</b>	<b>September 10</b>
<b>September 11</b> <b>KICKOFF SUNDAY</b> 9 am: FYC Meeting 9:30 am: Adult Ed. 12:00 pm: ZOOM Conversations	<b>September 12</b>	<b>September 13</b> 6:30 pm: Creating Racial Equity Meeting	<b>September 14</b>	<b>September 15</b> <b>TOWER DEADLINE</b> 7:30pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	<b>September 16</b>	<b>September 17</b> 8:00 am: Women's Walk with Julie Lusic
<b>September 18</b> 9:30 am: Adult Ed.	<b>September 19</b>	<b>September 20</b>	<b>September 21</b>	<b>September 22</b> 7 pm: AGAPE	<b>September 23</b>	<b>September 24</b> 8:00 am: Men's Group. Women's Walk 10 am: Plant Sale
<b>September 25</b> 9:30 am: Adult Ed.	<b>September 26</b>	<b>September 27</b> 6:30 pm: Creating Racial Equity Meeting	<b>September 28</b> 7:00 pm: Session	<b>September 29</b> 7:30pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	<b>September 30</b>	<b>October 1</b> 8:00 am: Men's Group. Women's Walk