

*Forest Hill Church:
Outdoor Worship Service*

September 4, 2022 ~ 11:00 am

You may also join worship online using this link:

<https://youtu.be/sN9s9Ba1qRQ>

Centering Words

Every movement we make in response to God has a ripple effect, touching family, neighbors, friends, community. Belief in God alters our language. Love of God affects our daily relationships. Hope in God enters into our work. Also, their opposites—unbelief, indifference, and despair. None of these movements and responses, beliefs and prayers, gestures and searches, can be confined to the soul. They spill out and make history. ~ Eugene Peterson

PRELUDE

George Gershwin

“Love is Here to Stay”

WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS

GREETING OUR LORD WITH JOY

Greeting Our God with Joy

CALL TO WORSHIP (from Psalm 148)

Praise the Lord! **Praise the Lord from the heavens; Praise God in the heights!**

Praise God all the angels and all hosts! **Praise God sun and moon.** Praise God all you shining stars. **Let everyone praise the name of the Lord!** Let us worship God.

OPENING PRAYER

You have searched us, Lord, and you know us. You perceive our thoughts from afar, you are familiar with all our ways. Before a word is on our tongues, you know it completely. You hem us in behind and before. Where can we go from your Spirit? Where can we flee from your presence? Nowhere. Nowhere, dear God. We welcome, praise and thank you, Lord, as we sit - right now - in your loving embrace.

OPENING HYMN NO. 29

“O God you search me”

1. O God, you search me and you know me.
All my thoughts lie open to your gaze.
When I walk or lie down you are before me:
ever the maker and keeper of my days.
2. You know my resting and my rising.
You discern my purpose from afar,
and with love everlasting you besiege me:
in every moment of life or death, you are.

Renewing Our Relationship with God

PRAYER OF CONFESSION:

Merciful and loving God, you have called us to be your people and claimed us for the service of Jesus Christ. We confess that we have not lived up to our calling to proclaim the good news in word and deed. We are quick to speak when we ought to listen and remain silent when it is time to speak. We put too much faith in our own actions and fail to trust the strength of your

Spirit. O God, forgive our foolish and sinful ways. Strengthen us anew to follow Christ's way in the world. By your Holy Spirit, give us the grace we need to be faithful disciples and fulfill our common calling; through Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior.

SILENCE

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Turn to one another and say:

"You are forgiven. May the peace of the Lord be with you!"

THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

Affirming the Good News in Our Lives

ANTHEM

Mary Ann Breisch

"We All Need a Lullaby"

Opening Our Hearts to God's Word

THE LIVING WORD (NRSV)

Philomen verses 4-20

This is a letter from Paul to Philomen

4-7 Every time your name comes up in my prayers, I say, "Oh, thank you, God!" I keep hearing of the love and faith you have for the Master Jesus, which brims over to other believers. And I keep praying that this faith we hold in common keeps showing up in the good things we do, and that people recognize Christ in all of it. Friend, you have no idea how good your love makes me feel, doubly so when I see your hospitality to fellow believers.

To Call the Slave Your Friend

8-9 In line with all this I have a favor to ask of you. As Christ's ambassador and now a prisoner for him, I wouldn't hesitate to command this if I thought it necessary, but I'd rather make it a personal request.

10-14 While here in jail, I've fathered a child, so to speak. And here he is, hand-carrying this letter—Onesimus! He was useless to you before; now he's useful to both of us. I'm sending him back to you, but it feels like I'm cutting off my right arm in doing so. I wanted in the worst way to keep him here as your stand-in to help out while I'm in jail for the Message. But I didn't want to do anything behind your back, make you do a good deed that you hadn't willingly agreed to.

15-16 Maybe it's all for the best that you lost him for a while. You're getting him back now for good—and no mere slave this time, but a true Christian brother! That's what he was to me—he'll be even more than that to you.

17-20 So if you still consider me a comrade-in-arms, welcome him back as you would me. If he damaged anything or owes you anything, chalk it up to my account. This is my personal signature—Paul—and I stand behind it. (I don't need to remind you, do I, that you owe your very life to me?) Do me this big favor, friend. You'll be doing it for Christ, but it will also do my heart good.

After the readings

Hear what the Holy Spirit is telling God's people.

Thanks be to God.

HYMN NO. 171

“A Sower Came from Ancient Hills”

- 1.** A Sower came from ancient hills and cast good seed abroad:
his field, ten thousand human hearts; his seed the word of God.
And some who listened would not hear, and some who heard forgot.
But some received in fertile soil the truth the Sower taught.
- 2.** A Sower walked throughout the land and, everywhere he trod,
He sowed his life because he was himself the Seed of God.
But then, a top a barren hill beneath a darkening sky,
they threw God’s Seed on stony ground and left it there to die.
- 3.** The Seed was buried deep in death beneath a blood red sky,
And deeper still was buried hope for those who watched him die.
But then, in Joseph’s garden fair, as dawn brok o’er the land,
The Seed, from three days’ silent sleep, awoke at God’s command!
- 4.** O Christ, you come among us still, the Sower and the Seed.
As once, you sowed the truth od God in glowing word and deed,
Implant your Word in waiting hearts, and let it there take hold,
Until it bears in fruitful lives and harvest hundred-fold.

SERMON

Jean Reinhold

“Onesimus, who?”

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

Andraé Crouch

“My Tribute”

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

CLOSING HYMN NO. 542

“God Be with you Till We Meet Again (revised)”

1. Strength be with you till we meet again
Keep love’s banner floating o’er you
(We) put unfailing arms around you
Strength be with you till we meet again
2. Hope be with you till we meet again
Keep love’s banner floating o’er you
(We) put unfailing arms around you
Hope be with you till we meet again
3. Peace be with you till we meet again
Keep love’s banner floating o’er you
(We) put unfailing arms around you
Peace be with you till we meet again

Going Forth to Live as God’s People

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

George Gershwin

“I’ve Got Rhythm”



Prayer Request:

To request prayers for a personal concern, please email Pastor Lentz (pastorlentz@fhcpresb.org) no later than Thursday afternoon of each week for inclusion in next week’s congregational prayer.

Prayers are requested this week for:

Kiva Bohanon, Mark Davidson, Muriel Dean, Betsy Hammet (sister of Carolyn Vrtunski), Deborah Howard, Joanna Klingenstein, Keith Logan, Dave Neff, Rob Reynolds, Beverly Thomas, Grace Uhle, Susan Way, Peter Williams and Caleb Wright (grandmother Wright passed away).

Please remember these homebound members in your prayers:

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

Care Group: *The Eden Group* will assist our pastors with members’ needs in **September**. 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, Deanne Lentz (deacons@fhcpresb.org)**.

Thank you, all office volunteers: Joan Bacon, Lynda Bernays, and Cathy Ghiandoni.

The deadline for the bulletin and weekly email is Tuesday of each week at 5 pm. The next TOWER deadline is **September 15 (for the October TOWER) at 8:00 am**. Please submit your written requests to office@fhcpresb.org.