



Forest Hill Church  
presbyterian

***Discovering God's call. . .  
Celebrating the Spirit's presence  
Witnessing to Christ's transformative power!***

**The TOWER**

**AUGUST 2023**



**Rev. Dr. John C. Lentz, Pastor**

Forest Hill Church: diverse, inclusive, welcoming

## WORDS FROM REV. DR. JOHN C. LENTZ, JR.

Praise the Lord!  
Praise the Lord from heaven!  
Praise God in the heights!  
Psalm 148:1

Dear Friends,

An issue that I have always struggled with in my ministry is the intersection of faith and politics. I am sure you have your opinions. From what I have received over the years, the range of responses include:



“Please, John, I come to worship on Sunday to praise God, to confess sin and to hear a message of love, peace, reconciliation and love. Sunday morning for me is a ‘charging station.’ When I hear a political sermon, it doesn’t bring me peace.”

“John, I clearly know where your vote goes and what political party you belong to. I don’t agree with you. I don’t come to church to be scolded.”

“John, preach more about Jesus. We need to hear more about the wages of sin and the message of Christ’s salvation.”

“John, God is neither a Democrat or a Republican. You should not take sides.”

“John, you missed an opportunity to preach on gun violence, abortion, LGBTQA+, racial equity.”

“John, I need direction about what is important. I like being stirred up.”

“John, thank you for encouraging me to get involved. This is why I am a Christian.”

I am sure there are other reactions.

Trust me, I feel the tension. I want the church to be a place where all God’s children are accepted for who they are and where they are on the journey. I am very aware that I don’t have all the answers; what I preach is usually what I am struggling with in my own life.

But the prophets and Jesus pull no punches when they are railing against the leaders of their time and how they mistreat the poor, the homeless, the widow, the orphan, and the stranger.

I find the words of Jesus to conflict often with capitalistic imperialism and the view of cultural exceptionalism.

I find the gospel message very clear:

All are welcome because we are made in the likeness and image of God.

In Jesus Christ there is no slave or free, Jew or Greek, male or female.

We confess our sins and commit to doing better.

Our individual choices are shaped by the common good.

Therefore, I am compelled to preach on issues of inclusion, racial equity, healthcare, environment, violence and how our choices reflect the way, the truth and the life of Jesus.

If the scripture is the living word, then it must speak to our time and age as well.

My preaching is shaped (and this is a bias) by my emphasis on the call to the community more so than to the individual. Of course, our individual relationship with Jesus Christ is vital. We need to cultivate our personal spiritual disciplines of prayer, study, and worship. But we are the "Body of Christ"- a collective. I think many Christians overemphasize personal, individual feeling at the expense of communal call and responsibility.

This is why, from the beginning of my call to FHC, I have emphasized BOTH the "journey inward" AND the "journey outward."

Being political means being alive. Politics comes from the Greek word "polis" which means "city." Being political means how we live together and order our lives. Jesus came with a political message: "The kingdom of God is here!" and it judges every other kingdom, particularly wealthy, imperialistic nations.

We can disagree about the partisan details, but I believe we need to be both agitated and comforted by the political words of Jesus that call us in a community of love, peace, justice and joy.

~Grace and peace to you, John

**WORDS FROM QIN YING TAN, MUSIC DIRECTOR**  
**Forest Hill's Got Talent Returned to FHC!**  
**Let's Recap!**

The music ministry hosted the return of the FHC Talent Show on Sunday, June 4th, 2023. It was a wonderful get-together of friends and church family to showcase their talents, share their jokes, and of course partake in delicious potluck dishes and pizza! Below are some pictures of the event.

And no... this year, we did not bring out The Men in Tutus!



**Little Crescendos never fail to amaze!**



**A self-acted, directed, produced and written skit by Derry Stauffer on creative ways to practice bells at home during the pandemic. Derry was assisted by Seth Ungemach.**



**Jessica Owusu shows off her dancing chops!**



**Amelia Dolan amazed us with her rendition of “Amazing Grace!”**



**Clayton and his team of pirates! Pastor John holds Baby Bobbi hostage!**



**We thank all for making this event such a huge success  
and we look forward to seeing everybody next year!**

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

Sixteen Elders currently serve on Session. They lead the following Ministries: Trustees, Justice and Mission, Adult Spiritual Growth, Family Youth and Children, Deacons, Worship, Stewardship, Nominating and Church Growth. Photos of these Elders are featured on one of the bulletin boards outside of Fellowship Hall. You may talk with any of the Elders if you want to learn more about the work of Session.

Session met on May 24 and June 28. Pastor John Lentz was the Moderator for both meetings.

After opening with prayer in May, John led the Elders in a spiritual conversation about the calling of the church. *The Calling of the Church* as described in the Book of Order can be summarized in this manner:

*The Church is the body of Christ. Christ gives to the Church all the gifts necessary to be his body. The Church strives to demonstrate these gifts in its life as a community in the world. The Church is to be a community of faith, a community of hope, a community of love and a community of witness.*

The question for Elders was “How is Forest Hill Church living into this calling?”

Following this discussion, Session accomplished the following:

- Approved upcoming baptisms for Karter Addysen and Krew Ashton Seigneur, Michael William Banks and Casey Marshall Ball;
- Reviewed the latest financial report;
- Reviewed requests for Endowment Grants and approved the following, to be sent to the Endowment Committee for approval:

Endowment Grant Project Description	Amount
Exterior Maintenance Fund Allocation	\$18,430
Justice and Mission Allocation	\$18,340
Education Foyer Remodeling – Project Support	\$10,000
Expanded Intergenerational Programming and Physical Plant Enhancements	\$3,500
Church Consultant	\$25,000
Sanctuary Streaming Upgrade	\$2,000
Sanctuary Lighting Dimmers	\$5,000
Outdoor Streaming Audio Equipment	\$1,000
Guest Musician Supplement	\$4,000
Photo/Video Booth for Stewardship Campaign	\$2,579
TOTAL	\$89,939

- Learned about plans by Adult Spiritual Growth to host "Linger for a While" - small group conversations following morning worship that will explore topics of interest;
- Approved the recommendation of the Personnel Committee to rescind the requirement for proof of COVID vaccination and masks for staff.
- Pastor Lentz reported on the ongoing process of the Congregation Conversations with a debrief that was led by Equus Group on May 21 and attended by over 90 congregants. The discussion included markers of healing as well as good and positive parts of the journey, so far.

After opening with prayer at the June meeting, Elders discussed the plans to seek a consultant to help the church continue the process of discerning its call for the future.

Following this discussion, Session accomplished the following:

- Approved the upcoming baptism of Anderson Michael Robert Caminiti;
- Learned that the Endowment Committee approved the requested endowment grants;
- Approved the requests of Paula and Tom Harvey to be removed from the membership roll;
- Reviewed the latest financial report;
- Reviewed a forecast of income and expenses for the remainder of the year;
- Approved for the church to serve as fiscal sponsor for the Cooper Andrews Memorial Fund;
- Approved for the church to provide an organizational endorsement for the "Vote No on Issue 1" initiative;
- Approved the creation of the Kemp Jaycox Environmental Sustainability Fund, to be operated as an endowed fund and managed by the Endowment Committee;
- Pastor Lentz presented information on the Medical Debt Jubilee Program, an initiative that raises funds to buy out medical debt and then cancel the obligations of the debtors. Greater Cleveland Congregations is planning an interfaith program around this initiative with the goal to raise as much as \$40,000 and thereby cancel as much as \$4,000,000 in debt in Cuyahoga County. This will be discussed further at a future meeting before any decision is made about FHC participation.

~Elizabeth J. Shaw, Clerk of Session

# *Building*

**HOLD YOUR NEXT SPECIAL EVENT AT FHC!**

Did you know the church is available for your next baby shower, family celebration, concert or conference?

The fees are very reasonable. Fellowship Hall seats 200, but there are many smaller spaces available. There are 2 kitchens, custodial help and free parking! The possibilities for your party planning are endless. Fees adjust for members and non-members.

**Book your next event soon. For details contact Laura Schultz for more information or fill out a request here: <https://fhc.breezechms.com/form/9894b2>.**

FHC NEEDS YOU!

The Nominating Committee is casting its nets to find folks who would like to be a servant leader and get more involved at church.

We are looking for people who want to:

- Publicize and market the church
- Shape the programs for families, youth and children
- Organize adult education, spiritual growth and small groups
- Lead our justice and mission outreach
- Help get everything ready for worship on Sundays
- Prepare a meal and make friendly phone calls
- Watch over the building and grounds
- Join the Stream Team, sing in the choir, play softball, volunteer in the nursery, or create bulletin boards
- Join a book study with the Racial Equity Buddies
- Raise money and get people excited about the mission of the church
- Be a spiritual leader - become an Elder and help discern God's call for FHC.



Almost everything that happens at Forest Hill is led by members and friends of the church. Get involved. It is fun. You meet new people. You grow in faith, hope and love. You exercise your spiritual leadership muscles!

If you have questions, talk to Pastor John or to the members of the Nominating Committee: Sonji Kenyatta, Jeff Smith, Pat Jenkins and Chris Bell.

We would love to talk with you about getting more involved at Forest Hill.



FIBER AND FELLOWSHIP

We will be meeting from **10 AM -1 PM** (note time change).

**Upcoming Date:**  
**August 19**  
**September 9**

As a group, we are working on quilts for donation and a special project to provide quilts for children who have been admitted to the hospital. Knitters are going strong with car seat blankets and Prayer Shawls.

Personal projects are welcome as advice and tips are freely given. All are welcome- beginner to experienced. We are happy to teach. **Contact Carol Gifford for additional information.**  
**216-598-9730** [cmgiff79@aol.com](mailto:cmgiff79@aol.com).



COFFEE HOUR

Please join us every Sunday in Fellowship Hall after worship service for coffee and refreshments!

COMING  
*soon*

## Redesigned Website Soon to Launch Notice to Our Church Family about Website Photos

Our target launch date is planned for **August 15-24**. Many photographs of our adults have been gathered for use on the new site. No dates or names are used to identify any person (adult, youth, or child) shown in photographs. **If you do NOT wish your image to appear on the site, please send an email to: [kayhogg64@gmail.com](mailto:kayhogg64@gmail.com).**

Our Director of Family, Youth and Children, Amy Wheatley, has parental/guardian media release forms on file for most of our children and youth.

If you do not know whether you have completed such a form for your child/youth (under 18 yrs of age), please complete and submit it here <https://fhc.breezechms.com/form/a4cdb8>.

The form will then be accessible to Amy.

## MINISTRY OF ADULT SPIRITUAL GROWTH Linger for A While

For the summer months, the Ministry of Adult Spiritual Growth will provide programming after Worship until noon called Linger For A While. Linger For A While allows for conversation in an informal setting after Worship until noon each Sunday. There are no sign-ups. Come join in for community building!!!

Here are the opportunities for conversation:

- **August 6** - South Hall: Conversation with Pastor John
- **August 13**- Table conversation - Questions placed at tables in Fellowship Hall & South Hall: Topic -Stewardship
- **August 20**- Table conversation - Questions placed at tables in Fellowship Hall & South Hall: Topic -Justice
- **August 27**- Table conversation - Questions placed at tables in Fellowship Hall & South Hall: Topic -Reconciliation.

If you wish to join us via ZOOM, here is the information. Join Zoom Meeting  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89142331250?pwd=NXBpV295ZE5qbWlObG1qYlZCMjAxdz09>

Meeting ID: 891 4233 1250  
Passcode: 465888  
Call in: 646-558-8656

If a Ministry, group, or individual is interested in providing a topic or wants to sponsor a conversation, please email [dale.dannefer@case.edu](mailto:dale.dannefer@case.edu).

~Ron Zimmerman

*To help members within the congregation grow as followers of Jesus and develop as a beloved community, the Ministry of Adult Spiritual Growth needs your input to provide experiences to do so. Please guide us in your desires by filling out the following survey through the Breeze link <https://fhc.breezechms.com/form/8a3693>.*



## News From Greater Cleveland Congregations (GCC)

GCC has just launched a **Vote No on Issue 1** Campaign because “GCC's commitment to democracy is long-term and Issue 1 is a direct threat to our democracy.” The threat

is not only the change from a majority vote to the 60% requirement but also that this vote will be by special election, elections Ohio had previously stopped using because of cost (around \$20 million) and low voter turnout.

### How Can You Help?

As always, GCC's power comes from its member organizations and its people. **Here are two ways FHC's members and friends can participate in GCC's Vote No Campaign**—and, at the same time, show your support for GCC stepping up on this issue: [CLICK HERE TO READ MORE.](#)



### Want to vote in Ohio's August special election?

#### July 11

Early voting begins. The full early voting schedule for this election is as follows:

August 1: 7:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.

August 2-4: 7:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

August 5: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

August 6: 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

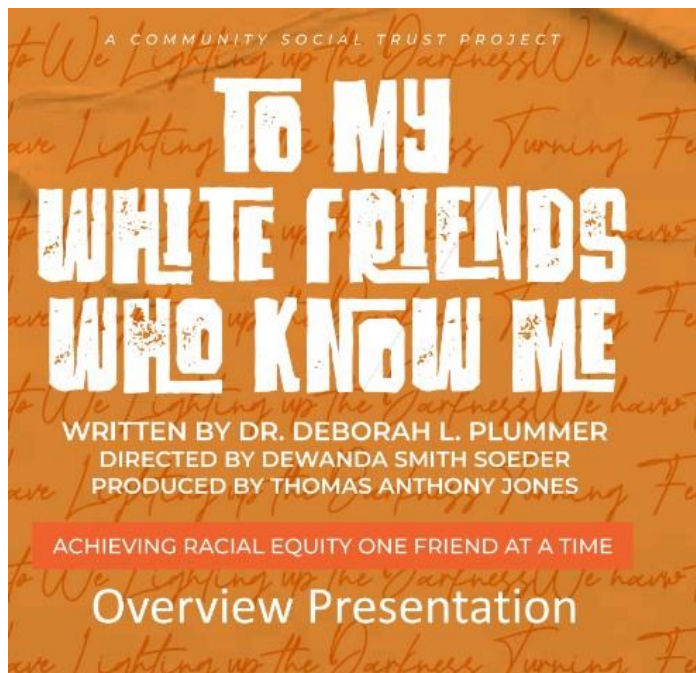
#### Aug. 7

Mail-in absentee ballots must be postmarked by then.

#### Aug. 8

Polls are open on Election Day from 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. If you haven't mailed your completed absentee ballot, you can return it to your board of elections by 7:30 p.m.

**If you need an application for the absentee ballot or fact sheet, feel free to stop by the church office.**



**Bring your family, friends, and co-workers to see “To My White Friends Who Know Me”** – this special presentation encourages audiences to make an effort to cross racial lines in friendship and collectively work toward racial equity.

Showtimes (The shows will be held at FHC):

Saturday, September 9, from 7- 10 PM

Sunday, September 10, from 2 - 5 PM

If you wish to purchase tickets online, please use this Breeze link: <https://fhc.breezechms.com/form/78a418>.



We've been focusing on various areas in the building and grounds where our financial commitments are used, and those certainly are important. This summer, though, will see the release of a series of videos that demonstrate even more personally the work of our church and ministries and their effects in individuals' and families' lives.

Watch the church web site and YouTube channel (linked below) for weekly launches of testimonial videos: interviews with your fellow congregants on what Forest Hill means to them. We'll let you know in weekly updates when each drop. Some will be entirely new interview material; some will be newly edited material from interviews of stewardship seasons past. All of them are sure to remind you of how important our congregation's work is in so many lives.

[YouTube Testimonial Playlist](#)

As always, we are honored to serve alongside you,  
~Stewardship ([stewardship@fhcpresb.org](mailto:stewardship@fhcpresb.org))



### Calling Volunteer Gardeners!!!

Have you always loved the Memorial Garden and Courtyard Garden? Do you like to play in the dirt? Now is a great time to volunteer to help us maintain these beautiful gardens.

Pat and Jim Seeders have been doing this work for a number of years now and would love to pass on their knowledge to some new volunteers. Contact the church office.

## The Equity Book Club 2023-24

All Book Discussions Are Via Zoom on Saturday Mornings!

For more information or the Zoom links email [racialequitybuddies@fhcpresb.org](mailto:racialequitybuddies@fhcpresb.org)

October 21, 2023, 10:30 am to noon

### An Indigenous Peoples' History Of The United States, Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz



Winston Churchill once said, "History is written by the victors," which is very much the case when one looks at most chronicles of the earliest days of the United States. It has only been in the latter years of the 20th century that a determination for transparency has grown among scholars who have been looking more closely at the accounts of past events that have long been buried in the accepted narrative of Anglo-Saxon-centric American history.

Part Cherokee, Dunbar-Ortiz grew up poor in Oklahoma and worked during the 1960s and '70s advocating for tribal issues while completing her graduate studies in Native American Studies.

[Book review: 'An Indigenous People's History of the U.S.' | SummitDaily.com](#)

**Jan. 6 and Jan. 27, 2024**

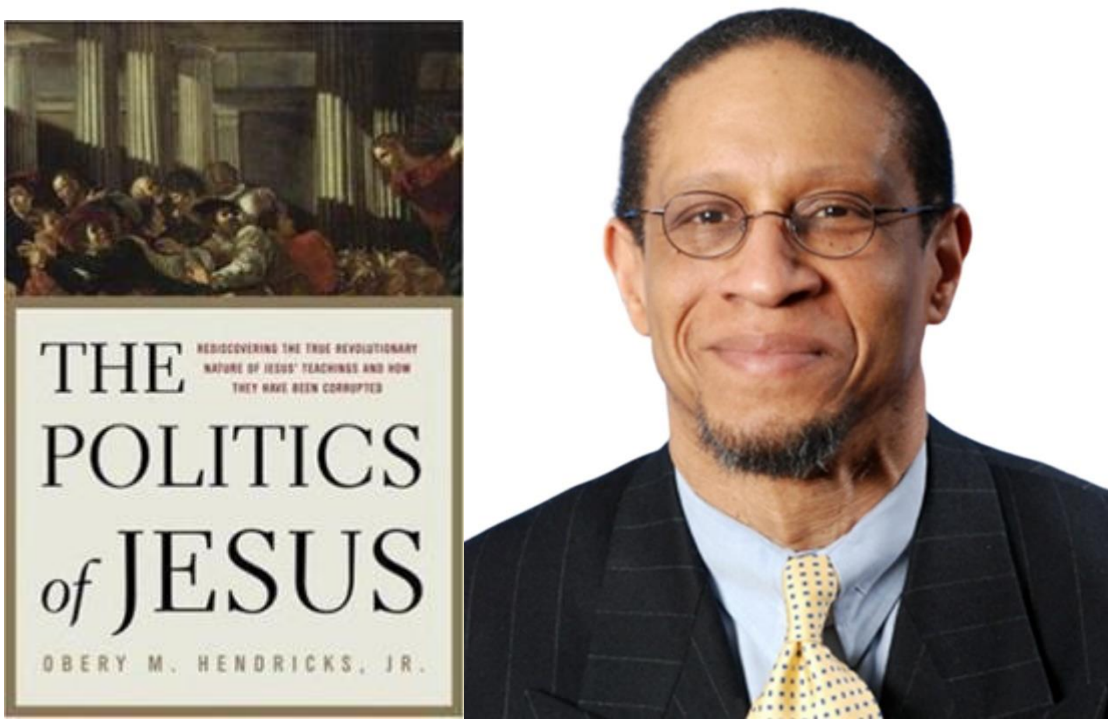
**The History Of White People**, Nell Irving Painter

**A New York Times bestseller: "This terrific new book.. [explores] the 'notion of whiteness,' an idea as dangerous as it is seductive."—Boston Globe**

[Review Overview: The History of White People - The Atlantic](#)



**March 9, 2024, The Politics Of Jesus, Rediscovering The True Revolutionary Nature Of What Jesus Believed And How It Was Corrupted, Obrey M. Hendricks, Jr.**  
*The Politics of Jesus.* Hendricks argues that Jesus was a political revolutionary whose teachings and actions were aimed at alleviating the suffering of his people at the hands of Roman occupiers. He doesn't simply portray Jesus in general political terms; he contends that Jesus was an adept political activist who utilized specific tactics and techniques that we can emulate today. [The Politics of Jesus by Obrey M. Hendricks Jr: 9780385516655 | PenguinRandomHouse.com: Books](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/9780385516655/the-politics-of-jesus-by-obrey-m-hendricks-jr/)



**April 27, 2024**  
**Poverty By America,** Matthew Desmond



#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER - The Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Evicted* reimagines the debate on poverty, making a "provocative and compelling" (NPR) argument about why it persists in America: because the rest of us benefit from it. "Urgent and accessible . . . Its moral force is a gut punch."

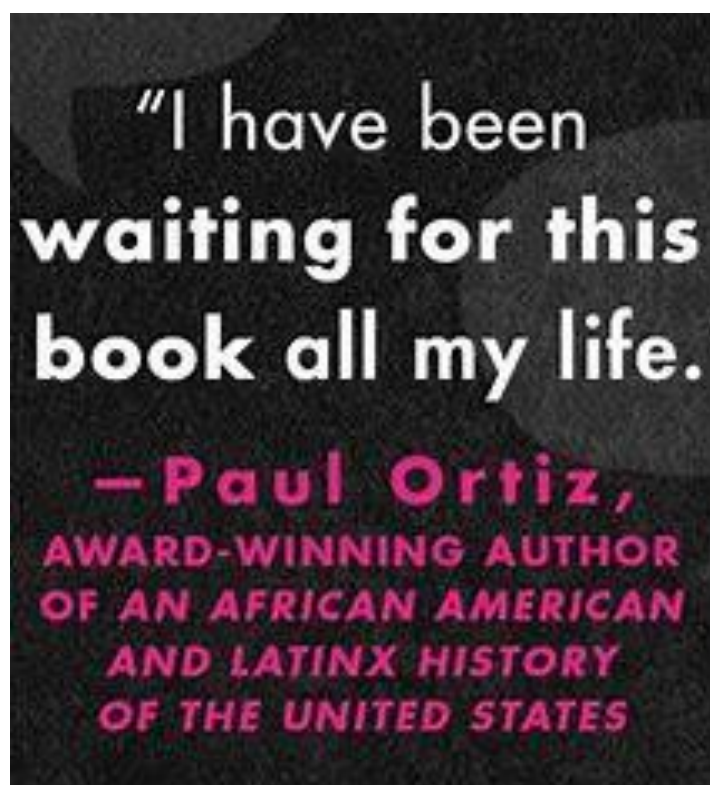
June 8

You Sound Like A White Girl: The Case For Rejecting Assimilation, Julissa Arce



This is an important book that challenges the idea of American exceptionalism with equal parts passion, fury, intimacy, and ignored history. Arce celebrates the Mexican American immigrant experience in all its vibrancy and nuance while fearlessly naming the pain inflicted by American racism, ethnocentrism, and xenophobia.

[www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/julissa-arce/you-sound-like-a-white-g](http://www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/julissa-arce/you-sound-like-a-white-g)



August 2023 BIRTHDAYS

First Name	Last Name	Birthdate Month/Day
Kathy	Carr	August 01
Rev. Dr. John	Lentz Jr.	August 01
Mollie	Secor	August 01
Robyn	Hales	August 03
Megan	Ullom	August 05
Morag	Keefe	August 07
Leslie	Pendleton	August 07
Nora	Duncan	August 08
Scott	Duncan	August 08
Anne	Hunter	August 08
Betsy	Wolf	August 11
Laury	Larson	August 12
Valeria	Stutz	August 12
Sheryl	Dugard	August 14
Barbara	Lind	August 14
Keith	Logan	August 19
Jessica	Kelley	August 20
Andrew	Schellenberg	August 20
Caty	Himmelman	August 21
Megan	Muller-Girard	August 22
Brooke	Marcy	August 23
Antoinette	Franklin	August 24
Catherine	Monaghan	August 25
Joanne	Shaner	August 25
Peg	Weissbrod	August 27
Mèlani	Joseph	August 28
Jeanette	Nemcek	August 31



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><b>Regularly scheduled events: meet every week unless noted</b></p>	<p><b>6:00 pm</b> -AA: Progress not Perfection <b>7:00 pm</b> -AI Anon: Now There's Hope <b>7:30 pm</b> -AA: Borton Group</p>	<p><b>10:30 am</b> -Abundance Pantry <b>-Bulletin and Weekly email Deadline</b></p>	<p><b>7:30 am</b> –Bible &amp; Bagels (virtual) <b>12:00 pm</b> -Staff Meeting (virtual) -AA: Wed. Women's Group</p>	<p><b>1:00 pm:</b> English Country Dance <b>1:30 pm</b> -English Dance <b>6:00 pm</b> -Bell Choir <b>7:30 pm</b> -Chancel Choir</p>	<p><b>9:30 am</b> -AI Anon: Hand in Hand  <b>6:30 pm:</b> Scottish Country Dance</p>	
<p><b>July 30</b></p> <p>John out of the office Linger A While</p>	<p><b>July 31</b></p> <p>John out of the office</p>	<p><b>August 1</b></p> <p>John out of the office</p> <p><b>Happy Birthday, John!</b></p>	<p><b>August 2</b></p> <p>Amy out of the office</p> <p>7:00 PM: Personnel</p>	<p><b>August 3</b></p> <p>Amy out of the office</p>	<p><b>August 4</b></p> <p>Amy out of the office</p> <p>5:00 PM: Praying with others meeting</p>	<p><b>August 5</b></p> <p>8:00 AM: Men's Group</p>
<p><b>August 6</b></p> <p>Amy out of the office</p> <p>Linger A While</p>	<p><b>August 7</b></p> <p>Antoinette is out of the office</p> <p>Ann out of the office</p>	<p><b>August 8</b></p> <p><b>ELECTION DAY</b></p> <p>Antoinette is out of the office</p> <p>Ann out of the office</p> <p>7:00 PM: Creating Racial Equity</p>	<p><b>August 9</b></p> <p>Antoinette is out of the office</p> <p>Ann out of the office</p> <p>7:00 PM: Ministry Meetings</p>	<p><b>August 10</b></p> <p>Antoinette is out of the office</p> <p>Ann out of the office</p> <p>7:00 PM: FHHO Meeting</p>	<p><b>August 11</b></p> <p>Antoinette is out of the office</p> <p>Ann out of the office</p> <p>7:00 PM: Creating Racial Equity</p>	<p><b>August 12</b></p> <p>10:00 AM: Funeral Service for Henrietta Williams</p>
<p><b>August 13</b></p> <p>Linger A While</p>	<p><b>August 14</b></p> <p>Ying out of the office</p> <p>Amy out of the office</p>	<p><b>August 15</b></p> <p>Amy out of the office</p>	<p><b>August 16</b></p> <p>Amy out of the office</p> <p>9:00 AM: Friends of Heights Park Meeting</p>	<p><b>August 17</b></p> <p>Amy out of the office</p> <p><b>TOWER DEADLINE</b></p>	<p><b>August 18</b></p> <p>Amy out of the office</p> <p>5:00 PM: Praying with others</p>	<p><b>August 19</b></p> <p>10:00 AM: Fiber and fellowship</p>
<p><b>August 20</b></p> <p>Linger A While</p>	<p><b>August 21</b></p>	<p><b>August 22</b></p> <p>7:00 PM: Creating Racial Equity</p>	<p><b>August 23</b></p> <p>7:00 PM: Session Meeting</p>	<p><b>August 24</b></p>	<p><b>August 25</b></p>	<p><b>August 26</b></p> <p>6:00 PM: Difficult Conversations</p>
<p><b>August 27</b></p> <p>Linger A While</p>	<p><b>August 28</b></p>	<p><b>August 29</b></p>	<p><b>August 30</b></p>	<p><b>August 31</b></p>	<p><b>September 1</b></p> <p>5:00 PM: Praying with others</p> <p>6:00 PM: Bishop Jones Celebration</p>	<p><b>September 2</b></p>

August 2023



**Vote NO on Issue 1 on August 8th  
so politicians can't change the  
rules mid-game.**

CONTACT INFORMATION

Staff Emails

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Dr. Qin Ying Tan	Music	<a href="mailto:music@fhcpresb.org">music@fhcpresb.org</a>
Rev. Carol Wedell	Parish Associate	

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Rev. Dr. John C. Lentz, Jr., Pastor  
Dr. Amy Wheatley, Dir. of Family, Youth & Children's Ministry  
Dr. Qin Ying Tan, Director of Music  
Rev. Carol Wedell, Parish Associate

September TOWER issue deadline: 8 am on August 17

**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 [our BREEZE Giving Page](#) or [PayPal](#). You may also mail in a check to the church bookkeeper (3031 Monticello Blvd. Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44118).