



Forest Hill Church
presbyterian

The Tower Newsletter

August 2024



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Cover photo by Ann Donkin

Would you like to see a picture you took on the cover of the Tower newsletter? Send it to Laura at churchadmin@fhcpresb.org! Pictures that were taken in or around the church would be best, but if you have something else that would be appropriate, send it along for review.



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

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

Well, this is it. My last Tower. I remember countless times when the Tower deadline was approaching and I felt I had nothing to say. But always something came. Often, I would find a poem that spoke to me, one that I wanted to share with you.

I have come upon a poem entitled “For the Interim Time” by John O’Donohue, the Irish poet and author. It seems apt to share.

A Blessing for all those going through a time of change at the moment.

*When near the end of day, life has drained
Out of light, and it is too soon
For the mind of night to have darkened things,*

*No place looks like itself, loss of outline
Makes everything look strangely in-between,
Unsure of what has been, or what might come.*

*In this wan light, even trees seem groundless.
In a while it will be night, but nothing
Here seems to believe the relief of darkness.*

*You are in this time of the interim
Where everything seems withheld.*

*The path you took to get here has washed out;
The way forward is still concealed from you.*

*“The old is not old enough to have died away;
The new is still too young to be born.”*

*You cannot lay claim to anything;
In this place of dusk,*



*Your eyes are blurred;
And there is no mirror.*

*Everyone else has lost sight of your heart
And you can see nowhere to put your trust;
You know you have to make your own way
through.*

*As far as you can, hold your confidence.
Do not allow confusion to squander
This call which is loosening
Your roots in false ground,
That you might come free
From all you have outgrown.*

*What is being transfigured here is your mind,
And it is difficult and slow to become new.
The more faithfully you can endure here,
The more refined your heart will become
For your arrival in the new dawn.*

Grace and peace to you all. Faith, hope and love abound.

Thank you! John

FAMILY, YOUTH, AND CHILDREN MINISTRY



Children of all ages enjoyed worship led by Rev. Sally Wile and Mary Ann Breisch on June 30. The intergenerational service included prayer, sharing, art making, singing, and even dancing by some of our little ones!



A BIG SCOOP of Thanks
to the Deacons' Jordan Care
Group, led by John Dugard!

They hosted an Ice Cream
Social for children and
families after worship on
June 30. Everyone enjoyed
cake and ice cream with all
the toppings!



MUSIC MINISTRY

Chancel Choir and Voices of Bronze Resume!

Dear Church Member,

Please answer the following questions! Do you...

- Enjoy good music?
- Enjoy singing or playing an instrument?
- Want to learn performance skills?
- Want to make new friends?
- Want to build relationships with people who have a common interest?



If so, come join the Chancel Choir and Voices of Bronze! We resume rehearsals on Thursday, September 5th and would love to see you!

If you have any questions, contact Ying at music@fhcpresb.org.

CONCERT BY POIEMA TRIO

Sunday, August 18 at 3:00pm

Poiema Trio, dedicated to sharing the joy of chamber music with audiences of all demographics, infuses their performances with spontaneity, imagination, and storytelling. Formed in the summer of 2023 at the Kneisel Hall Chamber Music Festival, they are the recipients of the 2024 Gold Medal Prize from the Ninth International Chamber Music Ensemble Competition. The members hold degrees from the Juilliard School and the Cleveland Institute of Music. Their name, "Poiema," means poetry at the intersection of beauty and brokenness, a poignant reminder of an artist's true calling.

SUN 8/18 3:00PM
FOREST HILLS CHURCH PRESBYTERIAN
3031 MONTICELLO BLVD, CLEVELAND
HEIGHTS, OH 44118
Free admission, donations welcome

Poiema Trio
Romantic Reverie

HAYDN
BRAHMS
C. SCHUMANN
SCHUBERT

WORSHIP

To contribute flowers for Sunday worship, use this form: <https://fhc.breezechms.com/form/641db7701127776329>

If you are interested in being a lay reader for worship, please contact Linda Martin at martin3386@ameritech.net or (216) 280-4049. If you wish to assist in serving communion, contact Jeanette Nemcek at jet0830@aol.com or (216) 789-6740.



Lay Readers for August

August 4: Derry Stauffer

August 11: Marina Grant

August 18: Diane Doyle

August 25: Valeria Stutz

DEACONS

Annual Congregational Fall Festival

September 8, 2024

Come and join us in the courtyard of Forest Hill Church following the service on Sunday, September 8th! The Deacons are planning a festive afternoon of fellowship for you to enjoy spending time with old friends and meeting newcomers! This will include a delicious picnic with fun and games for children of all ages.

Deacons and other volunteers will provide a sumptuous feast that will include a vegetarian option. 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!



SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

The Session of Forest Hill Church met on June 26, 2024. Pastor John Lentz was the moderator of the meeting. The meeting was called to order by Pastor Lentz and opened with prayer.

Pastor Lentz led all in reading the Vision Statement of Session:

By 2027, Session will courageously embrace the transition by:

*Being spiritually led, more diverse, and more fully prepared to serve
Living into individual gifts
Connecting with and across ministries, and
Communicating openly and actively with congregants, all as a Matthew 25 Church and Beloved Community.*

Following this, Pastor Lentz presented the third and final Boundaries Training class.

The pastor asked that Session approve the serving of champagne on July 24, 2024, at the meeting of Session, as part of a celebration and remembrance during this final meeting to be moderated by him. Session approved this request.

The Financial Report for the period ending May 31, 2024, was received.

The Endowment Committee recommended the following addition to our Endowment Policy: As payout amounts are based on a 12-quarter rolling average, newly established named endowed funds are to become active twelve quarters after their establishment. Named endowed funds are considered established once their balance reaches a minimum of \$10,000. Session approved this recommendation.

The Endowment Committee also recommended the creation of a named, endowed fund to honor John and Deanne Lentz. The Lentzes have been consulted and graciously accepted this proposal. They are considering the naming and purpose. The precise naming, purpose and announcement of the fund will occur later. Session approved this recommendation.

The Endowment Committee approved \$63,430 in grant requests submitted by Session. The \$16,000 difference between what was requested and what was approved by the committee represents support for operating expenses. The Committee asks Session to review this matter in the fourth quarter of the fiscal year and then request a grant based on an amount that reflects year-end conditions.

Melanie Alban reported that the FHC Policy Manual will undergo a comprehensive review and revision in the coming months. It was last updated in 2017, and policy changes since that time have been approved and implemented but not incorporated into the written document

Personnel Committee – Melanie Alban, who serves as one of the co-chairs, is stepping off the Personnel Committee at the end of June. She will continue in an advisory role for a short period of time. The remaining members have committed to continuing through the year's end. The committee has undertaken a significant recruiting effort in addition to its ongoing work. The Personnel Committee brought the motion to confirm the committee's decision to continue with the Co-Chair leadership model. For now, Lia Clement will lead as Co-Chair while the committee recruits and develops new members. Session approved this motion. Session expressed appreciation and gratitude for the work of the committee and the leadership of Melanie.

The Transitional Pastor Search Committee (TPSC) presented the Transitional Pastor Position Description and the Terms of Call (developed by the Personnel Committee). Elders thanked the committee for their faithful work and appreciated that the documents were thoughtful and reflected the vision, mission and aspirations of the church. Several suggestions for improvement to the position description were made. Session approved the Terms of Call, as written, and the Position Description, as revised.

During an open discussion some elders expressed concerns and reservations about the process for selecting people to serve on the TPSC as well as the future Pastor Nominating Committee. There were also concerns for the make-up of the committees as not being representative of the diversity of the congregation, both in terms of demographics and theological viewpoints. The Pastor and the Nominating Committee talked about the process and reiterated that Session elders as well as congregants have been and are always welcome to provide input and recommend people to consider. The Nominating Committee will report on their work at each future meeting of Session.

Trustees reported that the Immigration Task Force plan to continue to make the sanctuary apartment available for immigrants and refugees has been subjected to both legal and liability reviews. The church attorney sees no issue with continuing this practice. The church's insurance company does not see any need to make changes to the current policy.

Adult Spiritual Growth reported on the Listening Sessions and the thoughts and feelings offered by congregants around the retirement of the pastor and the transition. The results will be shared with congregants.

Each ministry was asked to consider how to address the concerns and comments that fall within their respective missions. Additional Listening Sessions will be planned for later in the year.

Pastor Lentz reported that he has been in conversation with Elizabeth Hamilton of Holy Cow! Consultants (HC!C) about the potential for additional work to support transition planning. HC!C is open to further discussions with Session to plan the work, if needed.

Pastor Lentz also reported on the plans for worship through August 25, 2024. Guest preachers have been confirmed. A guest preacher is being sought for September 1. The Worship Ministry will continue to recruit communion servers and lay leaders for worship.

He also proposed a plan for continuity beyond his retirement, until a pastor (Gap or Transitional) is in place. He recommended that church issues be managed by:

- Melanie Alban/Lia Clement – issues related to staff; Melanie will chair the weekly staff meeting;
- Jeff Smith – issues related to Trustees, legal issues;
- Elizabeth Shaw – issues related to Session.

All three people will answer to Session. Session approved this plan.

The meeting of Session closed at 9:30 PM with prayer by Pastor Lentz.

Submitted by Elizabeth J Shaw, Clerk of Session

JUSTICE MINISTRY

The Justice Ministry is pleased to announce the organizations who will receive Community Grants for the year 2024-25. We received 15 requests for a total of \$ 36,500.00. Since our total budget was \$21,515.00 and all of the requests were deserving, we had to make difficult decisions.

Grants were awarded to the Alliance Against Human Trafficking, Americans Making Immigrants Safe (AMIS), University Settlement, North Presbyterian Church, Eastside Citizens Empowerment Foundation, Honesty for Ohio Education, Cleveland Mediation Center, Abundance Food Pantry, Showing up for Racial Justice, Homeless Stand Down, Racial Equity Buddies, International Ministries (to support Christy Lafferty's work in Nicaragua), and Black on Black Crime's Man to Man Project.

These projects reflect our commitment to Matthew 25 principles in that they are focused on strengthening congregational vitality through ties to community justice work, dismantling structural racism, and eradicating systemic poverty. If you want to learn more about any of these organizations, please contact Cynthia Lehman or Chenoa Stock.

Many thanks to all who thoughtfully read and carefully discerned how to use our funds well and support those who are doing Jesus' work in the world.

Members of the Justice Ministry: Cynthia Lehman, Chenoa Stock, Lisa Vahey, Charity Stock, Em Ezell. **Members of the congregation:** Barbara Cloud, Marvin Burge.



THANK
YOU!

**The Justice Ministry
sends a huge and heartfelt
THANK YOU
to the
DEACONS**

Your work to ensure that all of our members are connected to the congregation, bring care to those in need, organize fun events, greet us, and offer hospitality on Sunday mornings is deeply appreciated.

Many, many thanks for your caring service.

“... so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.” 1 Corinthians 12:25-27

ADULT SPIRITUAL GROWTH (ASG)

Bible Fellowship Beyond Sunday Morning

We grow as followers of Jesus by studying the Scriptures. Group study allows God to speak to us in a different way than individual study of the Scripture can do. Come join us this Fall in Bible study beyond Sunday morning.

If you are interested, click on this link (<https://fhc.breezechms.com/form/5bcb7d>) to state the day of week, time of day, and in person or online, that you would prefer.



Adult Spiritual Growth will attempt to organize classes around the most desirable selections.

STEWARDSHIP



Leaning Into Challenges Together

In his recent letter to congregants, Pastor Lentz reminds us that “stepping back from involvement” during our congregation’s time of pastoral transition is exactly what we shouldn’t do. Instead, he urges us to do what we do so well – “lean into challenges by overcoming obstacles and taking holy risks.”

Some of these challenges, as they always are, are and will be financial ones. The ability to keep the program operations maintained, the supplies purchased, the projects going will always be an important part of our organization. We are so fortunate to have a long tradition of generosity among congregants in time, talents, and treasure.

As we walk together through this season of change and toward the beginning of a new program year, let’s remember to include thinking and planning about our upcoming yearly stewardship campaign. And, of course, don’t forget to keep up with financial contributions over the summer. Your gifts are so important to what we do together!

We are, as always, honored to work alongside you,
Keith Logan, Elder
(stewardship@fhcpresb.org)
Kim Hill, Jenny Himmelman, Jean Reinhold,
and Peter Williams, Elected Leaders

EARTH CARE CONGREGATIONS

Why Biodiversity Matters

Another word that has entered into our routine vocabulary in the past two decades is “biodiversity,” concurrent with global warming/climate change. We all recognize the poster child, the polar bear, whose life is threatened with the thinning and melting of sea ice. Another is the decline of monarch butterflies due to the scarcity of milkweed, their preferred feed on their migrations to/from the north down to Mexico to winter over.

Climate change and global warming threatens the mass extinction of many species of plants and animals, especially ocean life. There are those who would scoff at the idea that we cause extinction threat, pointing out the end of the dinosaur era as the best example, which science has mainly shown to be a natural (i.e. God-made?) example. But in millennia since, it is not God, but man who has been chiefly responsible for species extinction, through habitat destruction and overuse of resources. The elimination of the iconic marsupial carnivore, the thylacine in Tasmania, eradicated by the sheep herder homesteaders in the last century, is a good example. We in America did in the passenger pigeon, and almost put an end to our national bird, the bald eagle, and the American bison (buffalo) in the guise of eliminating the indigenous peoples who relied on the buffalo for all their needs.

Maintaining biodiversity is important throughout the world. Birds, insects, and butterflies pollinate our fruits and vegetables. Fish and animals feed the world’s peoples. Scientists are discovering new secrets to health in animals that exist in their DNA—peculiar



resistance to viruses and diseases whose analysis may identify remedies to diseases in human life. Even the most “marginal” creatures may harbor useful information to better life in planet earth. And we can say, as Christians, that it is in God’s plan for us to continue to make these discoveries.

The bottom line of conservation and maintaining biodiversity is: all living beings are God’s creation, which we need to maintain.

Dave Neff, Earth Care Leader

BUILDING RENTAL

The church is available for your next baby shower, family celebration, concert or conference! Fellowship Hall seats 200, and there are smaller spaces available as well. There are two kitchens, custodial help and free parking! The possibilities for your event are endless. Fees adjust for members and non-members.

Contact Laura Schultz for more information, or fill out the request form here: <https://fhc.breezechms.com/form/9894b2>.

MEALS ON WHEELS FOR CLEVELAND HEIGHTS SENIOR CITIZENS

Would you or a loved one like an affordable meal delivered to your home?

The Cleveland Heights Meals on Wheels program delivers a hot and cold meal four times a week to Cleveland Heights senior citizens who would benefit from meal deliveries.

The organization is run by volunteers who deliver the meals on weekdays (except Tuesday) between 11:30am and 12:30pm and provide a friendly greeting.

The cost is \$7.25 per day, and clients have the option of receiving a frozen meal on Monday that can be eaten on Tuesday.

The hot meal includes a meat, vegetable, and side dish, and the cold meal includes a sandwich, salad, fruit, and dessert.

To request service or for more information, call the Cleveland Heights Office on Aging/ Senior Activity Center (216) 691-7377.



MEALS on WHEELS
AMERICA

TOGETHER, WE CAN DELIVER.

NAME TAG REPLACEMENT



During July and early August, the Church Growth Ministry is laying the foundation for a Revitalized Name Tag Program to take place in October. Part of this program will include an accessible space at church for storage of tags. Individuals who have lost or misplaced their FHC name tags, or would simply like to order a name tag, can request one at no charge in one of two ways:

1. Notify the elder in charge of your Deacon Care Group who will pass the request along to Church Growth, OR
2. Send an email to kayhogg64@gmail.com with "Name Tag" in the subject line and include your name as you wish it to appear on the tag as follows: First name or nickname you use followed by your full last name

Don't miss out on opportunities this fall to receive fun gifts and prizes for wearing your name tag in church! Watch for more information.

WORSHIP IN AUGUST



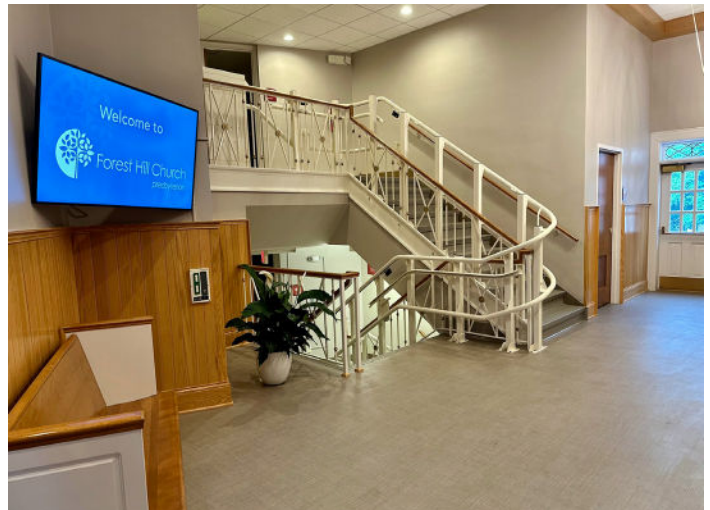
August 4 – Worship led by Rev. Dr. John C. Lentz, Jr. Please join us for John’s final worship service as pastor of Forest Hill Church!

August 11 – Worship led by Rev. Sharon Core, General Presbyterian of the Presbytery of the Western Reserve

August 18 – Worship led by Rev. Sally Wile

August 25 – Worship led by Rev. Carol Wedell

FOYER DEDICATION



The newly renovated J. David Hunter Christian Education Foyer was dedicated after the worship service on July 21. Thank you to all who had a part in the planning and fulfillment of this project!



BIRTHDAYS

August 1 – Kathy Carr

August 1 – John Lentz, Jr.

August 5 – Megan Alban

August 7 – Morag Keefe

August 7 – Leslie Pendleton

August 8 – Nora Duncan

August 8 – Scott Duncan

August 8 – Anne Hunter

August 10 – Joe Frolik

August 11 – Betsy Wolf

August 12 – Valeria Stutz

August 14 – Sheryl Dugard

August 14 – Barb Lind

August 14 – James Matej

MacQueen

August 19 – Keith Logan

August 20 – Tony Boyd

August 20 – Jessica Kelley

August 21 – Caty Himmelman

August 23 – Brooke Marcy

August 24 – Antoinette Franklin

August 25 – Cate Monaghan

August 25 – Joanne Shaner

August 27 – Peg Weissbrod

August 28 – Mèlani Joseph

August 30 – Jeanette Nemcek

CALENDAR

August 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3 6:30 pm - John's Retirement Party
4 11:30 am - Reception for John and Deanne after worship	5	6	7 7:00 pm - Personnel Committee	8 7:00 pm - Forest Hills Homeowners Association Meeting	9	10 10:00 am - Fiber and Fellowship 2:00 pm - Jemison Birthday Party
11	12	13 7:00 pm - Church Growth Meeting	14 5:00 pm - Eastside Citizens Empowerment Foundation 7:00 pm - Ministry Meetings	15 5:30 pm - Finance Committee	16	17 3:00 pm - Racial Equity Buddies
18 2:00 pm - Ann Yu and Musicians	19	20	21	22	23	24 3:00 - Ungemach- Boley Wedding
25 - Labre Ministry at North Church	26	27	28 7:00 pm - Session Meeting	29 5:45 pm - Excell Parents Meeting	30	31
Regularly scheduled events meet every week unless noted	8:00 am - Bulletin and email deadline 6:00 pm - AA: Progress Not Perfection 7:00 pm - Al- Anon: Now There's Hope 7:30 pm - AA: Borton Group	10:30 am - Abundance Food Pantry 6:30 pm - Transitional Pastor Search Committee	7:30 am - Bible & Bagels (virtual) 12:00 pm - Staff Meeting - AA: Wed. Women's Group 6:00 pm - AA: Four Absolutes	1:00 pm - English Country Dance 7:30 pm - Boy Scouts	9:30 am - Al- Anon: Hand in Hand 5:00 pm - Praying with Others 6:30 pm - Scottish Country Dance	

CONTACT INFORMATION

Rev. Dr. John Lentz, Jr.	Pastor	pastorlentz@fhcpresb.org
Dr. QinYing Tan	Music Director	music@fhcpresb.org
Dr. Amy Wheatley	Director of Family, Youth, and Children	CE@fhcpresb.org
Antoinette Richardson	Community Engagement Manager	office@fhcpresb.org
Laura Schultz	Digital Communications Manager	churchadmin@fhcpresb.org
Jace Holmes	Bookkeeper	finance@fhcpresb.org
Ann Donkin	Building Manager	adonkin@fhcpresb.org
Custodians		custodian@fhcpresb.org
Rev. Carol Wedell	Parish Associate	

**3031 Monticello Blvd.
Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44118**

Church Office: 216-321-2660

Custodians' cell phone: 216-217-5257

Email: churchadmin@fhcpresb.org

Website: www.fhcpresb.org

**Deadline for the September Tower: 9:00am on August 15, 2024
Deadline for The Week Ahead email: 9:00am every Monday**

Giving Options

Friends of FHC, you may give monetary gifts or donations by texting 216-400-5300, or see the online giving options at fhcpresb.org/give. You may also mail a check to the church bookkeeper (3031 Monticello Blvd., Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44118).