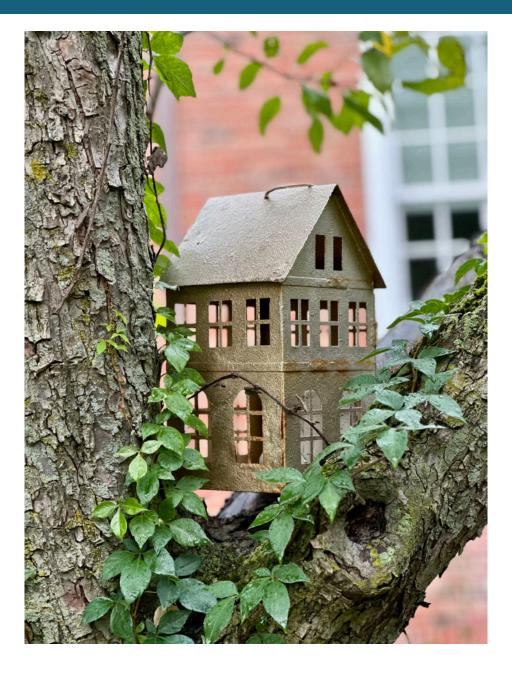


The Tower Newsletter October 2025



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Cover photo taken on church property by Laura Schultz Do you know where?

Please note:

Gene McAfee will be with the Celtic Pilgrimage to Ireland and Scotland from Monday, October 6, until Monday, October 20. For urgent pastoral needs during that time, please contact the Church Office, 216-321-2660 (M-F, 9:00am-3:00pm) or FHC's Parish Associate, the Rev. Carol Wedell, 216-470-0152.

PASTOR'S COLUMN: A PROFILE IN COURAGE, STRENGTH, AND GRACE

Through the graces of the Eastside Citizens Empowerment Foundation and FHC Deacon Nathaniel Martin, approximately two hundred of us crowded into FHC's Fellowship Hall on a hot August afternoon to hear Dr. Amy Acton explain why she is seeking to be Ohio's next governor.

Many of us remember the moment when Dr. Acton, then the Director of Ohio's Department of Health, went from being an important but largely behind-the-scenes state employee to being one of the most prominent health officials in the nation during the earliest efforts to keep people safe in the emerging COVID-19 pandemic.

What fewer of us knew at the time was the journey that brought Amy Stearns from a childhood of poverty, neglect, and abuse in Youngstown — during one winter, she and her brother slept in a tent after her family had become unhoused — to college, medical school, and her role as chief health scientist and guardian of the health of the people of Ohio.

Those of us who heard Dr. Acton speak in August learned of the importance of relationships, the theme in her talk that she returned to again and again. Even though Dr. Acton worked three jobs at one point to pay her way through medical school, she never succumbed to the myth of the selfmade person — that her life, career, and success were her doing. She knew better, remembering the neighbor who would call her and her brother up onto her porch to feed them breakfast on their way to school, the staff at her local public library who provided the first books to enlarge her world, and the

teachers in her public schools who saw her potential and supported her efforts to take a path of personal fulfillment through service to others. Her work on behalf of the residents of Ohio was recognized with, among other tributes, a John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award as a Citizen-Hero during the pandemic.

This column is not a political endorsement. It is the very brief telling and re-telling of a story of one person who chose to live her life, after a very inauspicious start, by loving God and God's world according to the values of Matthew 25: caring for the wounded, paying attention to the marginalized, and protecting the vulnerable.

"See something, say something" is the slogan encouraging people to report something suspicious. As Christians, we need to enlarge that fear-driven vision to include those rare public figures — as well as plain, ordinary citizens like us — who stand out conspicuously for their love of all of God's world, no exceptions. Dr. Acton is one such stand-out.

Her prominence provides Dr. Amy Acton with the opportunity to leverage her story into a call to others to public service. Those stories are always worth telling and hearing.

Thanks be to God.

Faithfully,

Gene McAfee Transitional Pastor



MUSIC MINISTRY

The music ministry continues to be a vital expression of our life together as a church family. Each week, through choir anthems, handbell ringing, and congregational hymns, we are reminded of how powerfully music can carry our prayers, deepen our worship, and bind us together as one community of faith. Music allows us to express what words alone cannot — joy, thanksgiving, comfort, and hope.

This month, we have been especially blessed by the many ways our members have shared their gifts. From our dedicated choir who lift their voices week after week, to the congregation who sing with such heart, each person contributes to creating something greater than themselves. Together, we make music that glorifies God and encourages one another in faith.

Music also continues to be a bridge between generations and cultures in our congregation. Whether through a familiar hymn, a new anthem, or a rhythm that invites us to move, we are reminded that the Spirit works through all styles and traditions to bring us closer to God and closer to each other. In this way, our music ministry is not only a form of worship, but also an act of community-building, helping us to listen, to share, and to celebrate our life together.

Looking ahead, we are excited for upcoming opportunities to make music in new and meaningful ways. We are preparing for World Communion Sunday, when we will share music from around the world in worship as a sign of unity with all Christians. These moments remind us that music is a universal language, connecting us with the global church and with the timeless

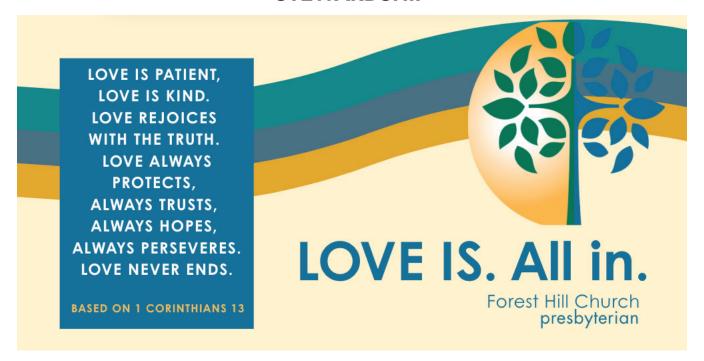
story of God's love. We will also host the Pickup Choir on October 5. We invite all who would like to come and sing to join us that Sunday for Pickup rehearsal at 10:15am.

We give thanks for every voice, every hand, and every heart that contributes to this ministry. May the music we share continue to lift our spirits, deepen our faith, and strengthen our life together as God's people.

QinYing Tan, Director of Music music@fhcpresb.org



STEWARDSHIP



We're moving toward 2026 with love and all it means. We're not talking about neat, tidy love, but big, powerful love. Of course, we'll be asking for your financial promises for next year. We're also planning a special service and our annual Stewardship Luncheon to share together on November 2.

Watch your mail for our Stewardship 2026 mailing, and please reserve your spot for sharing love and fun on November 2:



By popular demand, the menu includes Morag's Famous Chicken Marbella or a vegetarian option, roasted vegetables, salad and more. Children are welcome, and childcare will be provided.

We are, as always, honored to work alongside you,

Your Stewardship Team Keith Logan and Jean Reinhold, Elders Carol Gifford, Kim Hill, Jenny Himmelman, and Peter Williams stewardship@fhcpresb.org

Reservation for November 2 Stewardship Luncheon:

 $\underline{https://fhc.breezechms.com/form/53c9f80}$

PICTURES FROM KICK-OFF SUNDAY

On Sunday, September 14, we kicked off the program year with a worship service that included a drum circle. After worship, we went outside to dedicate three new trees — two white oaks and one native crabapple — in honor of 75 years since breaking ground at this location.

Then, we enjoyed an excellent fall festival picnic with great food and great fellowship! Thank you to the Deacons for hosting this event!















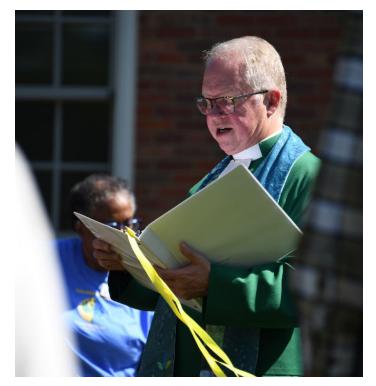


















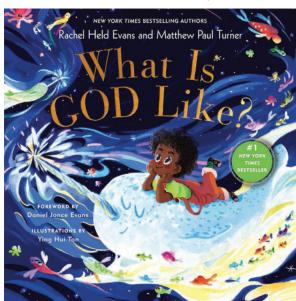


FAMILY, YOUTH, AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Children's Programming in October — Tell Me About God!

What is God's name? What is God like? How close is God? Where does God live?

Children's classes (K-6th grade) will explore these questions through age-appropriate stories, games, art, video, and weatherpermitting, a nature walk! We'll think about who God is and how God is revealed to us in the Bible and in our lives today.





SAVE THE DATE! **Gingerbread House Event** Sunday, December 7, at 6:00pm

Our annual event is fun for all ages and a great way to begin the holiday season with family and friends. We supply everything you need – gingerbread, frosting and candy - to create your very own gingerbread house. Cost is \$15 per house, and proceeds benefit Family Promise of Greater Cleveland, an organization providing programs and services to local families facing homelessness.

Register and purchase your houses here: https://fhc.breezechms.com/form/ e62e92943945

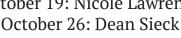
WORSHIP

If you are interested in being a co-leader 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.

To contribute flowers for Sunday worship, use this form: https:// fhc.breezechms.com/form/Flowers

Co-Leaders for October

October 5: Jessica Kelley October 12: Mark Chupp October 19: Nicole Lawrence





PALESTINE 101

On Sunday, October 5, FHC is excited to welcome the Rev. Addie Domske as our guest preacher. After worship, the Rev. Domske will lead a session, "Palestine 101," in South Hall. Together we'll explore themes of justice, peace, and liberation for Palestine, and learn more about the important advocacy work of the PC(USA). We invite you to join the conversation about how our faith calls us to act for peace and justice.

Rev. Domske currently serves as the National Field Organizer for <u>Friends of Sabeel North America</u>. She is an ordained Presbyterian minister, trained movement chaplain, and community organizer. She serves on the

board of the <u>Palestine Justice Network</u>, the board of <u>More Light Presbyterians</u>, and is the co-chair of the <u>Hosanna Preaching Project</u>.



PEACE AND GLOBAL WITNESS

Our denomination is lifting up A Season of Peace from **September 7 through October 5**, when we will celebrate World Communion Sunday. Throughout this season, the Peace and Global Witness Special Offering will be received. By participating in this offering, Forest Hill Church is extending Christ's peace throughout our community and our world. The pursuit of peace in the name of Christ is part of an active, engaged faith — a witness

to what it means for us to be the Church, together. Please consider participating in this offering with the envelopes in the pews or sending a designated contribution to the church. Forest Hill Church will keep 25% of the offering to support peacemaking, justice and reconciliation efforts in our local community. As we gather around God's global table of peace, let us remember that peace begins with each of us.



JUSTICE MINISTRY COMMUNITY GRANTS

The Justice Ministry works faithfully to steward the money the congregation provides to support community justice work. In the past three years, that work included a new process for the community grant cycle that required greater involvement by you all, the congregation. We requested that you

submit nominations of organizations you felt worthy of funding (May/June), and we also included members of the congregation who are not serving on our ministry to serve on the committee that discerns the allocation of those funds (June/July).

In 2025, the following organizations received Community Grants:

Organization	Amount Granted
Abundance Food Pantry	\$ 3,000.00
Cleveland Mediation Center	\$ 2,200.00
Eastside Citizens'	\$ 1,000.00
Empowerment Foundation	
Euclid Hope Task Force	\$ 1,200.00
The Extended Family	\$ 500.00
GCC Courtwatch Team	\$ 2,000.00
Homeless Stand Down	\$ 500.00
Honesty for Ohio Education	\$ 1,000.00
Home Repair Resource Center	\$ 1,000.00
(HRRC)	
International Ministries	\$ 2,200.00
(Christy Lafferty, Nicaragua)	
Black on Black Crime, Man to	\$ 1,000.00
Man Project	
North Presbyterian Church	\$ 3,000.00
Racial Equity Buddies	\$ 500.00
Showing Up for Racial Justice	\$ 1,000.00
UPCaM	\$ 1,000.00
Total	\$ 21,100.00

In 2024, we provided grants to the following organizations:

Organization	Amount Granted
Abundance Food Pantry	\$ 1,065.00
Alliance Against Human Trafficking	\$ 750.00
Americans Making Immigrants Safe (AMIS)	\$ 3,000.00
Black on Black Crime, Man to Man Project	\$ 2,800.00
Cleveland Mediation Center	\$ 2,800.00
Eastside Citizens'	\$ 1,000.00
Empowerment Foundation	
Homeless Stand Down	\$ 2,800.00
Honesty for Ohio Education	\$ 2,800.00
International Ministries (Christy Lafferty)	\$ 2,000.00
North Presbyterian Church	\$ 500.00
Racial Equity Buddies	\$ 1,000.00
Showing Up for Racial Justice	\$ 500.00
University Settlement	\$ 500.00
Total	\$ 21,515.00

[cont'd on p. 13]

[cont'd from p. 12]

There is some continuity over the years for grants we have provided, but we have also awarded grants to new groups depending on the need and the work the group has been doing.

Community Grants 2023

Organization	Amount Granted
Alliance Against Human	\$ 1,000.00
Trafficking	
AMIS - Event	\$ 3,000.00
AMIS - Immigration Task	\$ 3,000.00
Force	
Black on Black Crime	\$ 3,000.00
Eastside Citizens	\$ 1,000.00
Empowerment Foundation	
Greater Cleveland	\$ 1,000.00
Congregations- Medical Debt	
Home Repair Resource Center	\$ 3,000.00
North Presbyterian Church	\$ 3,000.00
Showing Up for Racial Justice	\$ 1,132.92
- community engagement	
Showing Up for Racial Justice	\$ 900.00
- materials	
Total	\$ 20,032.92

There were additional monies in the budget from past years that we provided to: Garden Valley Neighborhood House's sewing classes for sewing materials, support for PCUSA mission workers (Chenoa Stock), Faiths Alive (CH-UH school district) dues, Kwanzaa event hosted by The Extended Family (Keesha McMillian), and anti-gun violence work - M-PAC (Michelle Bell).

We share our deep gratitude with you, the FHC Congregation, for your support and accompaniment of this important justice outreach. Thank you!

FAIR HOUSING WORKSHOP

NEW DATE! Saturday, October 18, 8:30am-12:30pm at North Church 4515 Superior Ave., Cleveland



Fair Housing Center for Rights & Research

Join others from around the Presbytery to learn about issues in housing in the greater Cleveland area and how your congregation can engage. Tanesha Seaborn and Frank Ford, from the Fair Housing Center, will present, answer questions, and provide opportunities for action. Tanesha will be talking about how well (or not) your community supports affordable housing and what you can do about that, and Frank will be sharing his research on banking and lending policies and how that could be affecting people in your community.

Registration and refreshments will be available beginning at 8:30; the program will begin at 9:00 with a mid-morning snack and bio break, and we will wrap up by 12:30. Grab a few folks from your church or your neighborhood and spend the morning at North Church, learning how your engagement could make a difference!

Details and registration is available at preswesres.org/fairhousing.

RESONANCE PROJECT CONCERT: A CIRCLE OF HER OWN

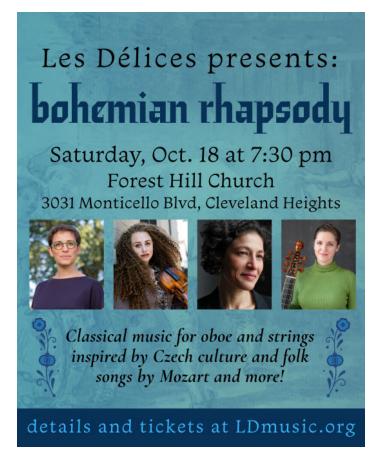
Friday, October 3, 7:30pm Forest Hill Church Sanctuary

Step into the vibrant world of 18th-century Vienna through the music of a contemporary of Haydn and Mozart, Marianne Martinez, a celebrated composer, keyboardist, and salonnière. At the center of this program is a modern premiere of the newly discovered "Keyboard Concerto in E major" and the vivid "La Tempesta," works that reflect her command of both elegance and drama.

Also featured are works by Mozart and CPE Bach, music that captures the intimate musical culture that flourished in Martinez' salon—where Haydn, Metastasio, and even Mozart were regular guests.



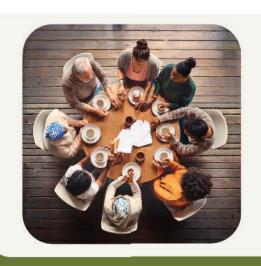
Tickets are \$15-20 each, and Pay-What-You-Can tickets are always available! More information is available at <u>RMSeries.com</u>.





See more information about these concerts on the church website: https://fhcpresb.org/calendar/

At a Teatime for Peace event you will seek to **build** bridges across different religions and cultures to find **commonality** and a shared humanity.



Teatime for Peace

Sunday, October 5 2025
—— 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. ——

Lyndhurst Community of Faith Church
Bloomfield Hall
5312 Mayfield Road, Lyndhurst OH 44124
440.442.2331 lyndhurstfaith.org





A unique opportunity to get to know your Muslim neighbor and engage in honest conversation. Enjoy a cup of tea and light refreshments.

EARTH CARE CONGREGATIONS



Earth Care and You

Since Forest Hill Church earned the distiction of becoming an Earth Care Congregation almost fifteen years

ago, an Earth Care message has been created most months during the year for the *Tower* newsletter. Abiding by the mantra of "agitation, education, and advocation," these articles have focused on many aspects of caring for God's Creation. Issues such as recycling, prudent energy consumption, conservation of natural resources, water and land usage, and species conservation have been discussed. In addition, opportunities for cooperation and advocation with many national and international non-governmental organizations which actively work toward environmental justice have been introduced.

The so-called FHC Earth Care "ministry" has

a nominal "membership" of around eleven members, mainly for reporting purposes to PCUSA for maintaining our Earth Care congregation designation. This group exists primarily on paper, but unlike other ministries, we do not meet. Realistically, it is the responsibility of each and every individual Forest Hill member — adult and younger — to be an Earth Care Steward!

It is hoped that these monthly *Tower* articles have encouraged all members to do their part regarding care for the environment. To this end, I invite each and every one of you to consider writing me a one-sentence environmental action you have conscientiously undertaken recently for Earth Care.

I will publicize several of the replies in the next *Tower* as an encouragement to all to continue to actively participate in easy personal ways to care for the environment.

Dave Neff, Earth Care Leader theneffers2@outlook.com



Saturday, November 1st 9am to 12pm

FALL is in the air and it's time to get the church ready for WINTER!

We need people of all ages for many tasks including: switching storms & screens, washing glass, gardening, and getting organized. There's plenty to do inside if it rains – outside tasks will be rescheduled.

BREAKFAST Pastries and drinks will be available to start the work day.



Boulevard Elementary PTA CH-UH City School District

CALLING ALL + TRUNKS! +

WE NEED TRUNK-OR-TREAT VOLUNTEERS FOR BOULEVARD'S SPOOKTACULAR FALL FEST!



4:00 PM SET UP 5:00-6:30 PM EVENT







https://tinyurl.com/BLVDtrunk

Or Contact: Boulevardpta44118@gmail.com



PICTURES REQUESTED

We are building a digital library of church photos. If you take a few pictures at an event, please send them to Laura at churchadmin@



fhcpresb.org. If you take a lot of pictures at an event and would like to upload them to Google Drive yourself, contact Laura for access.

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 information, or fill out the request form here: https://fhc.breezechms.com/form/9894b2.



A HUGE thank you to those who have been sending pictures in!

The wonderful event pictures that you may have seen around were taken by: Jean Reinhold, Dick Obermanns, Chenoa Stock, Jim Hogg, Joe Frolik, Kermit Lind, Peggy Yeager, Nancy Jamieson, Laurie Logan, Dean Sieck, Charity Stock, Marina Grant, Deedee Pim, Carol Gifford, Amy Wheatley, Kitty McWilliams, and Jeff Smith.

You all are doing a great job! Keep them coming!

BIRTHDAYS

October 1 – Becky Stawovy	October 12 – Tish Van	October 20 – Sally Wile
October 5 – Katie Hall	Beers-Klein	October 22 – Marcie Denton
October 5 – Brittany Seigneur	October 14 – Mary Ann	October 22 – Deedee Pim
October 5 – Eileen Vizcaino	Breisch	October 22 – Chenoa Stock
October 6 – Katie Russo	October 14 – Karen	October 23 – Nathan Baldwin
October 7 – Deb Chapman	Loughridge	October 23 – Robin Nau
October 7 – Cynthia Lehman	October 14 – Claudia	October 23 – Sharon Wiggins
October 8 – Rayba Johnson	Zimmerman	October 24 – Sandy Schultz
October 9 – Reni Solaru	October 16 – Jack Breisch	October 25 – Dave Bell
October 9 – Nonie Stack	October 16 – Henry Troyer	October 26 – Julie Minder
October 12 – Janet Dauer	Dyck	October 28 – Sara Baumgartner
October 12 – Joe Dauer	October 17 – Wendy Brock	October 28 – Kathryn Eloff
October 12 – Ellie Linden	October 19 – Kurt Haas	October 30 – Melanie Alban
	October 19 – Jack Lentz	October 31 – Katherine Bissett

CALENDAR

October 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 7:00pm - Personnel Committee	2	3 5:00pm - Praying with Others 7:00pm - Resonance Project Concert	4 10:30am - Men's Group
5 World Communion Sunday 12:30pm - Palestine 101 Session 4:00pm - Contemplative Scripture Study	6	7	8 5:00pm - Eastside Citizens' Empowerment Foundation 7:00pm - Ministry Meetings	9 7:00pm - Forest Hills Homeowners Association Meeting	10	11
12	13	14 7:00pm - Church Growth Meeting (virtual)	15	16 Deadline for the November Tower 1:00pm - Communications Committee Meeting (virtual) 5:30pm - Finance Committee Meeting	17 5:00pm - Praying with Others	18 7:30pm - Les Délices Concert
19	20	21 7:00pm - Mostly Bones Jazz Concert	22 11:00am - Stewardship in Library	23	24 12:00pm - Pacesetters Cooking	25
26 - Labre Ministry at North Church 4:00pm - Contemplative Scripture Study	27	28	29 7:00pm - Session Meeting	30	31 5:00pm - Praying with Others	
Regularly scheduled events meet every week unless noted 9:15am - The "Other Prophets" Class 11:00am - Worship service	9:00am - Bulletin and email deadline 6:00pm - AA: Progress Not Perfection 7:00pm - Al- Anon: Now There's Hope 7:30pm - AA: Borton Group		7:30am - Bible & Bagels (virtual) e 12:00pm - Staff Meeting 12:30pm - AA: Wed. Women's Group 6:00pm - AA: Four Absolutes	1:00pm - English Country Dance Starting September 11: 6:15pm - Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:30pm - Chancel Choir Rehearsal	10:00am - Al-Anon: Hand in Hand 6:30pm - Scottish Country Dance	

CONTACT INFORMATION

Rev. Dr. Gene McAfee	Transitional Pastor	pastormcafee@fhcpresb.org	x201
Dr. QinYing Tan	Director of Music/Organist	music@fhcpresb.org	x208
Dr. Amy Wheatley	Director of Family, Youth, and Children	CE@fhcpresb.org	x206
Antoinette Richardson	Community Engagement Manager	office@fhcpresb.org	x202
Laura Schultz	Digital Communications Manager	churchadmin@fhcpresb.org	x200
Darlene Holt	Bookkeeper	finance@fhcpresb.org	x203
Ann Donkin	Building Manager	adonkin@fhcpresb.org	x214
Rev. Carol Wedell	Parish Associate	carolwedell@gmail.com	

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 November Tower: 9:00am on October 16, 2025 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).