



Forest Hill Church
presbyterian

The Tower Newsletter

December 2025



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Cover photo by Mason Caminiti

PASTOR'S COLUMN: THERE'S A KIND OF HUSH

If you're now humming to yourself a pop song from 1967 by Herman's Hermits... well, let's just say that you're no longer young. And that's totally groovy.

Winter officially begins at 10:03am on Sunday, December 21, but creation's quiet season is already upon us. Around these parts, we had our first snowfall overnight between November 11 and 12, and some serious squalls popped up through midday. And that meant that things slowed down. And when things move slowly, they often move quietly (not always, but often). Once the high winds subsided, the world grew quiet. Most of us stepped gingerly at first, until we figured out what treachery, if any, might lie concealed beneath the fallen flakes; the snow had begun as rain, after all. Most of us pressed more gently on the accelerator. The dog and I took a late-night walk to enjoy the crispness and the quiet; most folks were tucked in by then. There was a kind of hush, and it was delicious.

December can be loud. The jingling of store music, the chatter of plans, the rush of end-of-year everything — it fills our ears and calendars until even joy starts to sound like noise. Business and busyness stomp the stuffing out of tranquility.

But when you look closely at the first Christmas story, there's a surprising amount of silence. Zechariah is struck speechless. Mary "ponders these things in her heart." Joseph listens to a dream. Shepherds watch the night sky before anything happens. Even heaven holds its breath before the angels sing.

Maybe silence isn't the absence of Christmas spirit. Maybe it's the doorway to it. That's the

kind of hush the world is perhaps looking for without knowing it. It's nothing to be afraid of, nothing ominous, nothing void of sound but filled instead with the still, small voice of holiness.

What if this December we didn't fill every gap with words or sound? What if we treated quiet as sacred space — a pause long enough to notice God slipping into the world again, softly, like breath on a cold night?

In that silence, we might finally hear what the carols are trying to tell us: that love has come, that hope is born again, that peace is possible. Not loud, not flashy — just quietly real. Definitely not the entrance runway at many of today's wedding receptions.

So this month, before you hit "play," "post," or "reply all," try stopping for a moment. Listen for the holy hush beneath the noise.

That might be where Christ is waiting for you. Thanks, once again, to the Rev. Liz Nau and her heroic efforts on our Celtic Spirituality Pilgrimage to help us recover the blessed presence of silence.

Faithfully,



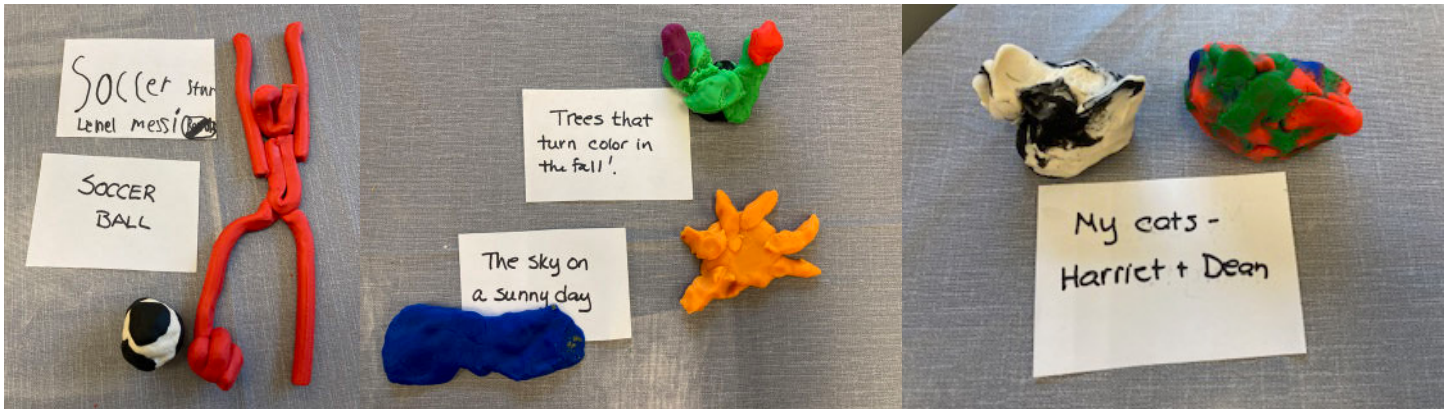
Gene McAfee
Transitional
Pastor



FAMILY, YOUTH, AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Last Month...

Children used clay to create WOW! prayers of praise, thanking God for...



We baked cookies for the Labre Ministry's monthly meal at North Church.



[Cont'd on p. 5]

[Cont'd from p. 4]

Children sang *Hallelujah Heart* and led the *Kyrie* prayer response in worship.



We welcomed James MacQueen who played his violin for us and brought several smaller violins for the children to play.



**HURRY! There's still room for you!
Gingerbread House Decorating
Sunday, December 7, at 6:00pm
FHC Fellowship Hall**

**There are a few houses left
for purchase — register today!**

Holiday magic and fun for all ages! 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 house here (subject to availability):

<https://fhc.breezechms.com/form/e62e92943945>

THANK YOU, GINGERBREAD BAKERS!

A group of cheerful, hard-working volunteers put on their aprons, grabbed their rolling pins, and spent a Saturday morning in the church kitchen a few weeks ago. We rolled, cut, baked, and wrapped over 600 pieces of gingerbread that will be transformed into wonderful creations at our Gingerbread House Decorating Event on December 7. Many thanks to Cynthia Burge, Kylie Evans, Susanna Gransee, Sharon Leary, Della Magee, Clementine and Violet Majot, Margaret Misch, Judy Sockman, and Charity Stock!



MUSIC MINISTRY

Upcoming Events in Our Music Ministry

As we journey toward Christmas, our Music Ministry is preparing a season filled with joyful song, community, and worship. We invite everyone — singers, families, friends, and neighbors — to take part in the musical life of our church throughout the month of December.

Community Caroling Saturday, December 6, 4:00pm

Join us for an afternoon of joyful caroling as we bring Christmas cheer to our community. All ages and voices are welcome! Whether you are a seasoned singer or simply love to spread holiday spirit, this is a wonderful opportunity to share warmth and fellowship as we sing beloved carols together. Sign up here: <https://fhc.breezechms.com/form/caroling2025>

Lessons and Carols Sunday, December 14, 11:00am

Our annual Lessons and Carols service returns — a beautiful tradition weaving together scripture readings and music. Choir, congregation, and instrumentalists will join

in proclaiming the story of Christ's coming through carols both familiar and new. Mark your calendars for this deeply meaningful service of reflection and celebration.

Join the Christmas Choir!

Throughout the month of December, we warmly invite new and returning singers to join our Christmas Choir. No audition or prior experience is required — just a willing heart and love for music.

The Christmas Choir will sing throughout the **season of Advent** and will offer special music for the **10:00pm Christmas Eve service**. Rehearsals are friendly, encouraging, and open to all who wish to participate in the music of the season. Join us on Thursday evenings at 7:30pm.



SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

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.*

The session met on October 29, 2025, in a Stated Meeting. Pastor Gene McAfee served as moderator. The following is a summary of the meeting.

The Financial Report for the period ending September 30, 2025, was received.

The contract with Pastor McAfee for the full-time position of Transitional Pastor was approved for a six-month extension with an effective period of January 1 through June 30, 2026. Annualized Terms of Call also were approved.

The Racial Repair Task Force, having completed its work of establishing and funding the FHC Education Relief Program, was retired. In its place the Education Debt

and Relief Committee was established under the Justice Ministry, to continue this important work.

Session approved a recommendation from the Deacons to remove Libby Dolan from the membership roll after receiving her request to do so.

Session also discussed several items, including the ongoing work of the Nominating Committee, a draft antiracism policy, support for two PC(USA) initiatives that focus on LGBTQIA+ matters and the need for leadership as well as volunteers for the Black History Education Committee.

The meeting closed with prayer by Pastor McAfee

Submitted by Elizabeth J. Shaw,
Clerk of Session

Congregants are invited to observe meetings of Session. While observers are not able to actively participate in discussions or decision-making, they can see firsthand how Session coordinates the work of the church. The next meeting will be Wed., Dec. 17, 2025, 7:00-9:00pm in South Hall.

ADULT SPIRITUAL GROWTH (ASG)



New and Continuing Opportunities to Build Faith and Community

Our Christian faith is a relationship with God that grows and changes over a lifetime. That growing spiritual maturity is built upon these foundational pillars — sermons, individual and devotional Bible study, prayer and community (small group fellowship). The Ministry of Adult Spiritual Growth seeks to provide the congregation with Sunday morning educational hour Bible study, and at other times, in various ways. Tom and Kathryn provide in-depth Bible study, and we have created other opportunities to use Bible-based studies in a variety of ways.

Conversation in community opens us up to insights and connections that are not achieved within individual devotional study or even sermons. Bible and Bagels, which meets each early Wednesday morning online, provides such a community, as does Contemplative Scripture Study which meets at 4:00pm on Sunday afternoons twice a month. Feel free to join either or both.

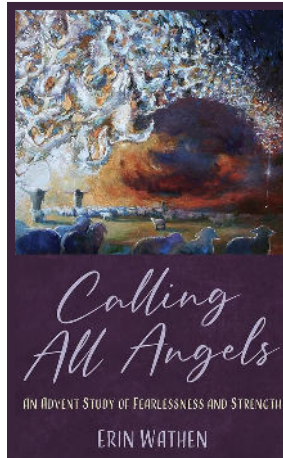
ASG is expanding our offerings to a series of four- to six-week studies that may be easier to fit into your busy schedule. As with all our offerings, we hope folks will come regularly to build relationships. But, these series will not build on subsequent material, so come as you can. In either case, you will find opportunities for growth in your faith journey.

Starting January 2026, the following classes will be provided.

1. Tom Zych and Kathryn Eloff will lead a 12-week Bible study in South Hall on Sundays at 9:15am. The topic will be Paul's first and second letters to the Thessalonians.
2. Bible and Bagels and Contemplative Scripture Study will continue. See AGS bulletin board for details.
3. Holy Conversation will be a four-week class built around the theme of HOPE. No preparation is needed. No lesson is built upon the other. The class will meet at 9:15am in Fellowship Hall.

Watch for more details on these upcoming classes in 2026!

- February: Women of the Bible
- March–April: Lent Bible study
- April–May: Book study, *The Reluctant Parting: How the New Testament's Jewish Writers Created a Christian Book*, led by Pastor Gene



**Reminder: Advent
class starting
November 30!**

**Sundays,
November 30–
December 21,
9:15–10:15am.
Meet in South Hall.**

See the church website (<https://fhcpresb.org/adults/class-sign-up/>) for more information about the Advent class studying the book *Calling All Angels: An Advent Study of Fearlessness and Strength* written by Erin Wathen.

NEWS FROM THE MEG CAMERON LIBRARY

We are pleased to announce that the library is continuing to undergo changes that will improve the ability to locate books within a section. The first three letters of the author's last name are located just above the section of the book. For example, it will read BRU/Theology for a book by Walter Bruggerman in the Theology section.

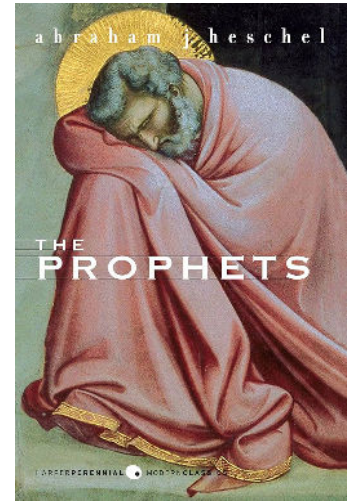
Please continue to peruse the book cart by the bulletin board area. Every couple of weeks we will be refreshing those titles. In the back of the book is a check-out card. When you want to check out a book, please write your name and the date on the card and drop it into the red box on the cart. When you return the book, please set it on the bottom shelf of the cart, face down so we know to check it in. (Or, it can be left in the library mailbox, or in the basket in the library.) It is awesome

to see the books being checked out in a more accessible way.

Also added this month is Rev. Dr. John Lentz's book, *What's Faith Got to Do with It?* The book is located on the New Books shelf in the library. If you would like to read it, we can

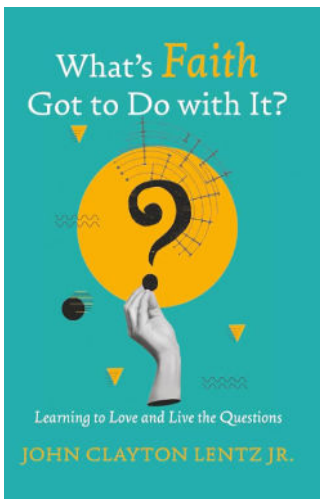
create a hold list. Put a note with your name, email address, and the name of the book in the red box on the cart, or in the check out box in the library.

Another book added to the Cameron Library this month is *The Prophets* by Abraham Heschel. The book was recommended during the class taught by Tom Zych and Kathryn Eloff.



We are happy to accommodate as many book suggestions as we can. We are also open to any donations, fiction or nonfiction, that fit the categories in the library (Bible Study, Religion, Theology, Church, Church History, Biography, Poetry, Fiction, Prayer and Meditation, Race and Social Issues, Spirituality, and Arts and Creativity).

The library is more than a meeting room. Our goal is to make it a vibrant part of spiritual development for Forest Hill Church.



CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING

Each year, during the Advent and Christmas season, we lift up past, present, and future leaders of the church. God has blessed the church with incredible leadership in every time and place, but those leaders often need to be supported by their communities as well.

This season, Forest Hill Church will receive the [Christmas Joy Offering](#) from November 30 through December 21. This offering provides support for Presbyterian church workers and their families in their time of need. It also provides leadership development and education for communities of color at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.

Please consider supporting this offering and the critical financial assistance and education development it provides. Thank you!



MISSION STUDY COMMITTEE



The Mission Study Committee thanks all those who have participated in surveys and discussions of what God is calling Forest Hill Church to be as we prepare for a new pastor. You have shared so many things that make Forest Hill Church special that we look forward to highlighting in our Mission Study. At the same time, we have heard clearly your hopes and desires for our community. These include a stronger desire for community within our walls, (more!) music, spiritual richness, and developing small groups. As we interview staff and write our report this month, there is still time to speak up.

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PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE AFTER HURRICANE MELISSA



Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) is responding to Hurricane Melissa, which made landfall as a Category 5 hurricane in Jamaica, also striking Cuba and other island nations on its path through the Caribbean.

Initial assessments show catastrophic destruction around the core path of the storm, and throughout the impacted region, devastating flooding and debris are isolating communities in several of these island nations. Along with loss of life, livelihoods and shelter have been destroyed. It will take years to recover.

After initial needs are addressed, PDA

will remain — working alongside partners throughout the affected islands to support long-term recovery, resilience for leaders and communities, and addressing unmet needs.

Learn more about how PDA is helping: <https://pcusa.org/news-storytelling/news/2025/10/31/hurricane-melissa-prompts-appeal-pcusa>

[Click here](#) or scan the QR code to support disaster relief efforts with a donation.



POINSETTIA ORDERS

We will be decorating the sanctuary with poinsettias for the Advent Season. The cost per poinsettia is \$20. Please submit your order form with payment to the church office by December 15. The poinsettias will be available for you to take home on Christmas Eve after the 10:00pm service, or you may choose to donate them.

If you choose to donate them, they can either be delivered to our shut-ins by a Deacon, or they can be donated to the organization Extended Family for their Kwanzaa celebration in Fellowship Hall. Order poinsettias here: <https://fhc.breezechms.com/form/poinsettias2025>



TO BUILD OUR COURAGE: TRAINING TOUR

Sunday, December 7, 1:00–4:00pm
Lee Heights Community Church
(4612 Lee Rd.)

Mennonite Action is offering a training session for ongoing organizing against ICE and working for peace and justice in Palestine.

Join the training on Sunday, December 7, 1:00–4:00pm to develop tools and frameworks that will help us respond in courage during this historical moment, “discerning the times” as we are called to do (Matthew 16:3). The training will be led by Mennonite Action volunteers who are traveling across the US on a Build Our Courage tour. The event will include trainings on noncooperation, grassroots organizing, and mutual aid, in addition to spending time worshiping in prayer and song and of course a meal together somewhere in there, too.

The training will leave you with a better understanding of how we can work together to: organize against ICE, work for peace and justice in Palestine, and resist genocide and an authoritarian takeover.

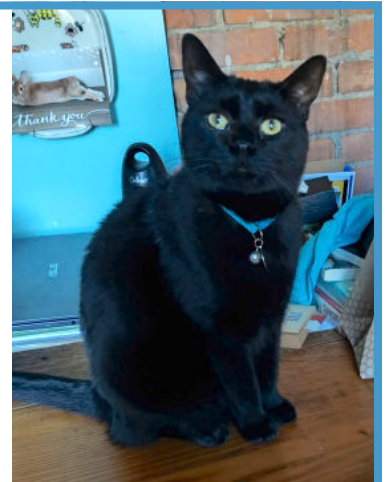
Learn more and sign up here: <https://www.mennoniteaction.org/tour>. You can also contact Sharon Shumaker with questions.



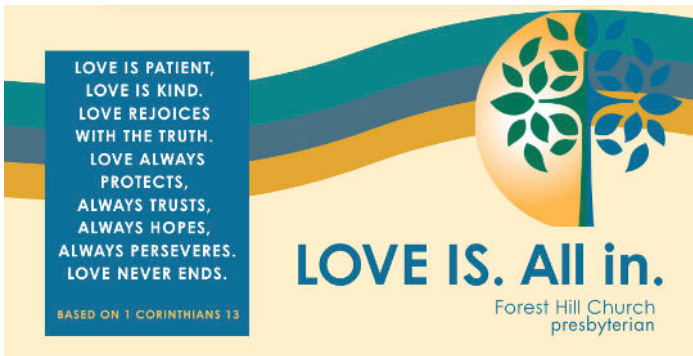
Mennonite Action is a movement of Mennonites, Christians, and friends following in the example of Jesus Christ, who called us to live as active peacemakers, standing firmly on the side of the downtrodden and the oppressed. Mennonite Action formed in November 2023 and since then has organized and led public action against the occupation of Palestine. Activities they have organized include a 135-mile “All God’s Children March for a Ceasefire” to DC, “Send Aid, Not Bombs” campaign, and virtual meetings of people across the country to educate, strategize, and pray. To learn more, go to the Mennonite Action website: <https://www.mennoniteaction.org/about>.

UPDATE ON COLE THE CAT

You may remember a tiny stray kitten that hung around the church last year. Kris Fay found him a home with Ed and Connie Cumberworth, who live not far from the church. He has bonded with their older cat and the brothers love each other. He has been named “Cole” as a tribute to Nat King Cole.



STEWARDSHIP



So much love flowing around FHC this season! No one keeps tabs on love, but we can put some numbers to our congregation's tangible demonstrations of it.

After a moving Stewardship Sunday worship service, nearly 100 of us had lunch together and made our love visible in fellowship and celebration. The free-will donations covered nearly the whole cost of the luncheon. Over 150 mugs and water bottles have been distributed. If you haven't picked yours up yet, contact the church office to make plans to do so!

Since then, the 2026 pledges have been coming in. As of this writing, just over 30%

of households have submitted a commitment. Our goal this year is to have all active households pledge an amount, any amount, to support our faithful work, and play, and love together.

If you have pledged in the past, thank you. If you have not yet pledged to Forest Hill Church, consider promising an amount you can afford. Commit what you can; plant your stake in the ground. It matters.

This year LOVE IS. All in.

Submit your pledge here:

<https://fhc.breezechms.com/form/7c646691>

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

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 December

December 7: Peg Weissbrod

December 14: Pat Seeders

December 21: Katherine Bissett and Family

December 28: Peter Williams



SUPPORT FOR NORTH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Churches in the Presbytery of the Western Reserve partner with North Presbyterian Church, 4515 Superior Avenue, in Cleveland, to serve the needs of inner-city Cleveland. As a partner in 2025, Forest Hill Church provided a community grant, and our Labre volunteers prepared and served meals to North congregants on the fourth Sunday of each month.

Many of North's congregants are temporarily homeless, in transitional housing, or are housing insecure. They attend from two of the neighborhood's largest homeless shelters: 2100 Lakeside of Lutheran Metropolitan Ministries and Norma Herr Shelter of the YWCA. Many lack basic personal hygiene and clothing items such as those listed here.

Please consider making a donation from the list during the next month. Beginning Sunday, November 2, there will be a container in the Joyce Hunter Foyer (near the information table) to receive your donations. The last day to receive your contributions will be Friday, December 5.

On December 6, volunteers from the partner churches will gather at North to put together care packages for distribution in December and to learn more about homelessness in Cleveland.

If you have questions or would like to help on December 6, please contact Jack Breisch (jackbreisch@gmail.com) or Melanie Alban (melaniealban828@gmail.com). Thank you for your support of this vital urban ministry.

Jack Breisch, Labre Coordinator
Melanie Alban, North Church Board



REMINDER!

Donations are due by
Friday, December 5!

Personal Hygiene and Clothing Items for North Church

- Body soap
- Shampoo
- Deodorant
- Toothbrush
- Toothpaste
- Toothbrush holder
- Razor
- Feminine napkins
- Tampons
- Small mirror
- Dental floss
- Skin lotion
- Hair conditioner
- Nail clipper
- Wet wipes
- Disposable washcloth
- Men's/Women's underwear (new)
- Men's T Shirts - large and extra large sizes (new or gently used)
- Men's/Women's warm socks (new or gently used)
- Winter clothing such as mittens and caps (new or gently used)

EARTH CARE CONGREGATIONS



Appreciating Wetlands

Oceans and seas, lakes, rivers, and streams are well-known to us. Less known are “wetlands.”

Wetlands can often be considered as quiescent “still waters,” a singular combination of water and vegetation adjacent to larger water sources, as well as to smaller lakes, ponds, streams and reservoirs.

There are several different kinds of wetlands that have developed and exist in Ohio. They include palustrine wetlands such as swamps (forested wetlands), wet prairies (emergent wetlands), coastal and embayment marshes (emergent wetlands), peatlands (wetlands that have organic soils), and wetlands along stream margins and backwaters.

Why are wetlands environmentally important? Wetlands are crucial for the environment because they provide clean water, protect against floods, and are essential habitats for biodiversity. They act as natural filters, removing pollutants and improving

water quality. They also protect against floods by absorbing excess water and buffering against storms and erosion. Furthermore, wetlands support a vast number of flora and fauna species and play a role in combating climate change by storing large amounts of carbon.

There are several important wetlands right here in northeast Ohio. Cuyahoga Valley National Park has over 1500 wetlands, and many wetlands exist within the Lake Metroparks. There is also Mentor Marsh in Lake County, and in Geauga County, there are the Grand River Lowlands, including Morgan Swamp, and Burton Wetlands Nature Preserve. Many of these locations are available to the public for visitation to learn about and appreciate their role and value in the environment.

In many instances, land development by industrial or even residential concerns often intentionally obliterates these natural watershed wetlands to achieve “progress.” For environmentalists and conscientious earth-caring individuals, however, such “draining the swamp” is most often not a good idea!

David Neff, Elder
Earth Care Leader



THANK YOU TO WORK DAY VOLUNTEERS

Thank you to everyone who helped in and around the church on the Fall Church Work Day!
Your efforts are much appreciated!

Sue Lafferty
Scott Lafferty
Sharon Leary
Gary Lustic
Julie Lustic
Ann Donkin
Tim Gifford

Carol Gifford
Bill Hoose
Mark Wedell
Jeff Smith
Roger Heineman
Gene McAfee
Jane Duncan

Mike Glaros
Adam Majot
Clemmie Evans-Majot
Kylie Evans
Jim Hogg
Susanna Gransee
and Henry



RACIAL REPAIR AND RESTORATION TASK FORCE UPDATE

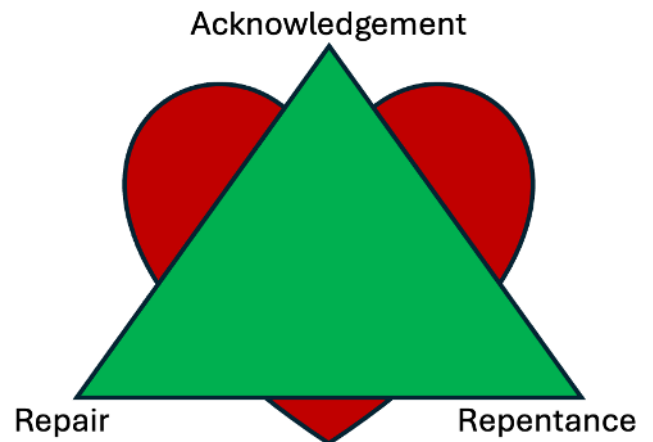
At its October 29th meeting, Session approved the recommendation of the Racial Repair and Restoration Task Force to formally retire the Task Force and, in its place, establish a new committee: Education Debt Relief, which will now operate under the umbrella of the Justice Ministry.

The Education Debt Relief Committee will:

1. Continue to educate the Forest Hill Church congregation about the program
2. Publicize the program and seek new recipients as each loan is paid off
3. Select future recipients
4. Submit annual funding requests to the Finance Committee
5. Ensure that the designated endowment funds approved by Session are contributed annually to the program

We are deeply grateful to all who supported the Racial Repair initiative over the past year. Your generosity has made a meaningful impact, and we hope you will continue to support this important work moving forward.

In 2026, we will issue the second and final installment of the grant to Natasha Lovelace, which will nearly exhaust our current funds.



Our goal is to continue raising donations with the hope of selecting and supporting a second recipient by no later than 2027.

As we move into this next chapter, please note: on the memo line of your check, kindly write “Education Debt Relief” instead of “Racial Repair.”

Thank you for your continued commitment to justice and restoration.

With gratitude,
Mark Chupp
Danielle Cosgrove
Jeannine Gury
Quentin Smith
Marina Grant, Chair

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS PICTURES REQUESTED

Church pictures are always appreciated, and we would especially love to have pictures from this beautiful season — church holiday events, Advent Sunday worship services, and both Christmas Eve services.

Please send any pictures that you take to Laura at churchadmin@fhcpresb.org. If

you take a lot of pictures and would like to upload them to Google Drive yourself, contact Laura for access.



NEW YEAR'S EVE AT FHC!

Wednesday, December 31,
7:00pm-Midnight

On New Year's Eve, do you ever find yourself kind of tired from all the busy-ness of the holidays, but still wanting to do something to ring in the New Year?

Then bring your favorite party game, and your favorite dish to share for a Multi-Generational Potluck Game Night here at Forest Hill!

We will gather around 7:00, and starting at 9:00 we will ring in the New Year each hour as it comes to different time zones. This way, if you don't want to stay until midnight, you can still take part in a little bit of Happy New Year Hoopla before you go home to get to bed at a decent hour.

RSVPs are not necessary, but it would be helpful, to get a rough headcount. Please email Marcie Denton at marciedenton70@gmail.com if you plan to attend.

Whether there are five of us or 50 of us, we will definitely have a fun time. Hope you can join us!



PACESETTERS CHRISTMAS PARTY

Saturday, December 13, 6:00pm
Anne and Jeff Smith's House
(RSVP for address)

Come for fun, food, and fellowship! Please bring an appetizer or dessert to share. BYOB. Water, soft drinks and mixes will be provided.

RSVP by emailing Anne and Jeff at anneandjeffsmith@gmail.com.

If you would like to participate in the white elephant gift exchange, bring a wrapped gift.

**The McMillian Family and the Extended Family
Invite You to the**

2025

KWANZAA CELEBRATION

**Follow us on
Facebook**



**Follow us on
Instagram**



Day 1 - UMOJA (Unity)

**A SEAT AT THE TABLE ON
DECEMBER 26 • 5:00P - 8:00P
3031 MONTICELLO BLVD • CLEVELAND HEIGHTS, 44118**

Dinner, Entertainment Zwadi (gift) Principles, Libation Ceremony, Storytelling, and More.

CHORAL ARTS CLEVELAND CONCERT: REQUIEM FOR THE LIVING

See Ann Donkin perform with Choral Arts Cleveland!

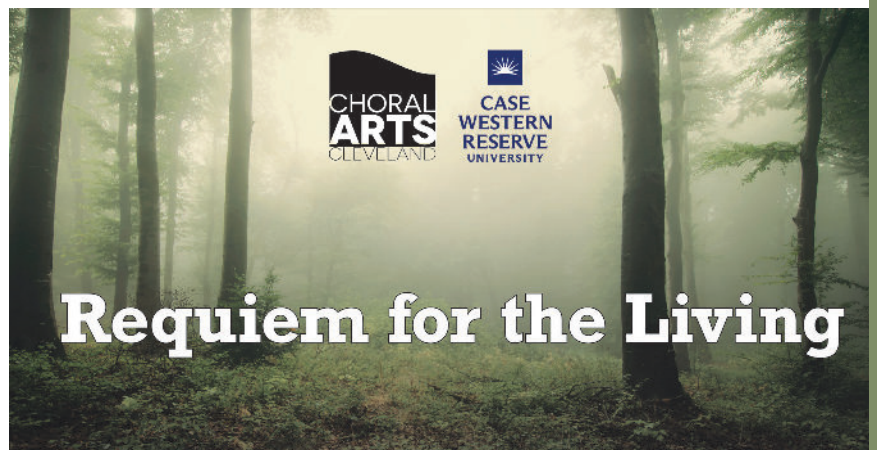
Wednesday, December 3, 7:30pm

Maltz Performing Arts Center (1855 Ansel Road)

Join Choral Arts Cleveland in collaboration with Case Concert Choir and the Case/University Circle Symphony Orchestra Directed by Dr. Kathleen Horvath and Dr. Christopher L. Clark as we perform Dan Forrest's *Requiem for the Living*.

Peter Wright, Tenor
Val Sibila, Soprano

Please visit the Maltz Performing Arts Center's [event page](#) for additional details on navigation, parking, and this partnership with Case Western Reserve University.



HOLIDAY HOMESTAY PROGRAM

United Protestant Campus Ministries (UPCaM), a partner of FHC's Justice Ministry, has reached out to us to help them in their search for families and individuals to host one or two international students from around December 18, 2025 – January 8, 2026. Hosts provide a place to stay, shared meals as able, and the opportunity for students to experience community and belonging during the holiday season. Please read below to learn more and sign up to support our partner and international student community!



United Protestant Campus Ministries (UPCaM) Holiday Homestay Program 2025-2026 (Dec. 18th - Jan. 8th)

This is the second year of UPCA's Holiday Homestay Program, which connects international students who remain in Cleveland over the winter break with local families who can offer hospitality, connection, and care. Due to the current political climate, many international students have been told not to leave the U.S. during the break, yet don't have enough campus work or income to afford housing and food while school is closed. The UPCA Holiday Homestay Program responds to this need by matching students with families willing to share a safe, welcoming home during this time.

We're seeking families to host one or two students from around December 18th, 2025 to January 8th, 2026. Hosts provide a place to stay, shared meals as able, and the opportunity for students to experience community and belonging during the holiday season.

It's simply about sharing everyday life—a meal, a walk, a family tradition, or quiet rest in a caring home. UPCA supports hosts and students throughout the process to ensure a positive and meaningful experience for everyone. Thank you for your consideration!

For more information or questions about the Holiday Homestay Program, please contact Campus Minister, Amanda Powell at amanda@upcam.org/413-949-3366. If you are interested in hosting a student(s), [please fill out the Homestay Support Form](#). We will reach out with more information once we receive your form.

If you are unable to host but wish to support international students, please consider a gift to the International Student Fund or the UPCA General Fund at upcam.org.

Thank you for your support this Holiday season!

United Protestant Campus Ministries
11459 Mayfield Rd, Suite 555
Cleveland, OH 44106

T: 413-949-3366
amanda@upcam.org
upcam.org
[@upcamcle](https://www.instagram.com/upcamcle)

CHRISTMAS AND DEADLINES

Please note that the church office will be closed at noon on December 24 and all day on December 25. Due to the holiday, the deadline for the January *Tower* is **Thursday, December 11, at 9:00am.**

Merry Christmas!



Forest Hill Church
presbyterian

3031 Monticello Blvd.
Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44118

216-321-2660
www.FHCPresb.org

JOIN US THIS ADVENT

Sunday Services 11am

November 30,
December 7, 14, 21

Lessons & Carols

Sunday, December 14
11am

Christmas Eve

Worship

Services

5pm and
10pm



BIRTHDAYS

December 2 – Ginie Mast

December 3 – Emily Ball

December 3 – Kitty

McWilliams

December 5 – Paul Jennings

December 8 – Dick

Obermanns

December 9 – Grant

Heineman

December 11 – Roger

Heineman

December 11 – Kim Hill

December 11 – Kay Hogg

December 11 – Madeline

Kelley-Moore

December 12 – Adam Majot

December 12 – James Moyer

Ryman

December 12 – Mark Wedell

December 15 – Em Laudeman

Ezell

December 15 – Judy Sockman

December 16 – Carol Scott

December 17 – Ann Williams

December 18 – Ed Gernerchak

December 19 – Quentin Smith

December 20 – Cliff Kowall

December 27 – Carol

Hopkins-Lutz

December 28 – Regina Stemley

CALENDAR

December 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3 7:00pm - Personnel Committee	4	5	6 10:30am - Men's Group 4:00pm - Christmas Caroling
7 9:15am - Advent Class 6:00pm - Gingerbread House Event	8	9 7:00pm - Church Growth Meeting	10 5:00pm - Eastside Citizens' Empowerment Foundation 7:00pm - Ministry Meetings	11 Deadline for the January Tower 7:00pm - Forest Hills Homeowners Association Meeting 6:30pm - Budget Committee Meeting 8:30pm - Finance Committee Meeting	12 5:00pm - Praying with Others	13 10:00am - Fiber Fellowship 2:00pm - AMIS Immigration Trauma Workshop 6:00pm - Pacesetters Christmas Party
14 9:15am - Advent Class 9:15am - ITF Meeting 4:00pm - Contemplative Scripture Study	15 Deadline for poinsettia orders	16 6:00pm - Endowment Committee Meeting	17 7:00pm - Session Meeting	18	19	20
21 9:15am - Advent Class	22	23	24 Christmas Eve - CHURCH CLOSSES AT NOON 5:00pm - Worship service 10:00pm - Worship service	25 Christmas Day - CHURCH CLOSED	26 5:00pm - Praying with Others 6:00pm - Kwanzaa Celebration	27
28 - Labre Ministry at North Church	29	30	31 7:00pm - New Year's Eve Party			
Regularly scheduled events meet every week unless noted 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	10:30am - 1:00pm Abundance Food Pantry	7:30am - Bible & Bagels (virtual) 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 January Tower: 9:00am on December 11, 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).