



Forest Hill Church  
presbyterian

The Tower Newsletter  
March 2026



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

## PASTOR'S COLUMN



Just a few weeks ago, we were in the middle of winter. Now we're in the middle of Lent.

March arrives with the uneasy mixture that often marks the season of Lent:

the promise of spring light paired with the sobering work of truth-telling. The days are getting longer, the average temperatures are creeping upward, and the piles of far-from-pretty snow are gradually melting away. At the same time, we know from experience that an April Fools' ice storm can snap limbs, bury cars, and bring down power lines. The challenging season is not over yet.

In our social life, too, we feel that tension acutely as we hold in memory and prayer the deaths of Renee Good, Alex Pretti, and an unknown number of others — lives cut short while they tried to do what they considered the right thing. Their names now belong not only to their families and friends, but to the wider moral memory of our community.

The Christian faith does not ask us to rush past such losses. Scripture consistently resists the temptation to move too quickly to resolution. Before resurrection comes crucifixion; before alleluia, lament. Lent gives us permission — indeed, a calling — to pause, to grieve, to reflect, and to speak names aloud, trusting that God's love is not threatened by our sorrow or our questions.

When lives are taken violently or people are "disappeared," the damage extends far beyond the immediate tragedy. Families are shattered. Communities are shaken. Fear and anger

ripple outward, tempting us toward despair, hardened certainty, or violent reciprocity. In moments like these, the church's task is not to offer easy explanations or partisan scripts, but to bear faithful witness and discerning resistance: to testify to the sacred worth of every human life, to affirm God's nearness to the brokenhearted, and to persevere in the difficult work of returning "no one evil for evil" (Romans 12:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:15; 1 Peter 3:9).

Lent invites us into that work. It calls us to examine not only individual hearts but the wider patterns that shape our common life. It asks us to notice where violence has become normalized, where fear governs our decisions, where power is exercised without sufficient accountability, and where love of neighbor has been narrowed by ideology or indifference. These are not abstract concerns; they touch real bodies, real families, real names — like Renee Good and Alex Pretti.

At the same time, Lent guards us against despair or retaliation. The ashes on our foreheads are traced in the sign of the cross. Even as we acknowledge mortality and loss, we do so under the promise that death does not have the final word and that this momentary affliction, serious though it is, will not last forever. God's response to a violent world is not withdrawal or mirrored brutality, but incarnation — presence, solidarity, and costly love.

In the weeks ahead, I invite you, in your daily spiritual practice, to pray intentionally for all who grieve, for all who feel unsafe, for those entrusted with authority, and for our own hearts, that they may remain tender rather [cont'd on p. 4]

[cont'd from p. 3]

than brittle. I invite you to practice small, concrete acts of mercy and courage: listening deeply, refusing dehumanizing language, and choosing generosity where fear would be easier.

I also invite you to find ways to minimize cooperating with the forces of destruction and violence by remembering the advice attributed to John Wesley: “Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, for as long as you can.”

March will carry us closer to Holy Week, where we will once again commemorate Jesus’ short, dramatic, and traumatic journey from Jerusalem’s gate to Golgotha’s hill. We will mark Palm Sunday here in our sanctuary, with deeply complex symbolic pageantry, and we will gather in Fellowship Hall on Maundy Thursday to peel away another layer of the story and its meaning. And then, on Good Friday, I hope many of us will join our siblings

in Christ at the foot of the cross in St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, where we will solemnly observe the hours between Jesus’ crucifixion and his death and burial. The preaching and music at that service, by neighborhood clergy and St. Paul’s choir has, historically, been of the highest caliber.

As we journey through this month toward the site of redemptive self-sacrificial love, we will find with us and waiting for us a God who knows what it is to suffer unjustly, a God who receives the cries of the bereaved, and a God who continues — quietly, persistently — to make a way toward resurrection life.

May we walk this Lenten road honestly, prayerfully, hopefully, and together.

Faithfully,



Gene McAfee  
Transitional Pastor

## EXPLORING MEMBERSHIP AT FOREST HILL CHURCH



Are you interested in becoming a member of Forest Hill Church? Then check out our upcoming Exploring Membership Discussions! These discussions provide a pressure-free and engaging way to learn about the church’s vision and core values as well as the many opportunities the church offers for growing in spirit, in service and in connection to others. Participating in the discussions is also a great way to grow the network of

people whom you know within the church community.

The next discussions will be scheduled for after church in April (lunch provided and child care available). The exact dates will be based on the availability of those individuals who have expressed interest in the discussion. If you are interested in registering or finding out more, please complete the form found here (<https://fhc.breezechms.com/form/ExploringMembership2026>) or contact Mark Wedell ([markwedell1212@gmail.com](mailto:markwedell1212@gmail.com)).

## 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 of Forest Hill Church met on January 14, 2026, 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 December 31, 2025, was received.

The Finance Committee presented the 2026 budget which Session discussed and then approved.

The revised Operations Manual and Ecclesiastical Bylaws were presented. Session approved the Operations Manual and agreed that the Ecclesiastical Bylaws were ready to be presented at the upcoming Annual Meeting of the Congregation for approval.

Deacons recommended that the following people be removed from the membership rolls, having been inactive for at least two years and having not responded to communication attempts:

Margaret Brouwer  
Sue Yelanjian  
Paul Carey  
Iyabo Sampson  
Mercy Sampson  
Thomas Taylor

Jill White  
Lisa Alongi  
Patricia Dunbar  
Kerri McCauley  
Sue McCauley  
Karen Smith/Wong  
Audrey Himes  
Blake Himes  
Garrett Vandall  
Jordan Dahl  
Kathleen Molyneaux  
Neal Molyneaux  
David Schellenberg

Session approved the removal of these people from the membership rolls.

Session also met in a Special Meeting on Saturday, January 31, 2026, to hear the report of the Mission Study Committee. After discussion, Session voted to approve the Mission Study Report.

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 Wednesday, Mar. 25, 2026, 7-9 p.m. in South Hall.

## FAMILY, YOUTH, AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

In February...



Children created beautiful Valentines to send to members of our congregation.



Brave members of our Sunday School class ate bugs and honey in a lesson about John the Baptist.



Little Crescendos sang in worship.



Carlos served communion with his grandmother.



Children made snacks and helped serve at Coffee Hour after worship.



## SINGING BOWLS: A LENTEN MEDITATION

In this spirit of sacred simplicity, the music ministry has placed several singing bowls in the chapel as companions for our Lenten journey.

Though often associated with Himalayan spiritual traditions, singing bowls need not carry theological meanings foreign to Christianity. At their most elemental, they are vessels of resonance — instruments that produce sustained tone through vibration. In the chapel, they deepen our attentiveness to our own.

### Sound and Silence in the Christian Tradition

Christian worship has long understood that sound shapes the soul. The tolling of a bell before prayer, the hush before confession, the fading cadence of a sung Amen — these are not incidental gestures. They teach us how to enter sacred time.

Lent, in particular, calls us into the wilderness. It echoes Christ's forty days of fasting and temptation. It strips away ornaments. In many churches, the Alleluia is silenced. Flowers disappear. Music becomes spare. The space itself feels more austere.

A singing bowl, gently struck, offers a single tone that blooms and gradually dissolves into silence. It does not entertain. It does not progress harmonically. It simply sounds — and then fades. In this way, it mirrors the Lenten invitation: attend, wait, release.

### Lenten Practice

Align your breathing with the resonance of the bowls, and increase your awareness of inhalation and exhalation with each strike and fading of the tone. The bowl's tone is



sustained not by mechanical complexity, but by vibration. That vibration can be heard and, often, felt. It reminds us that sound is physical — that prayer is embodied.

*Scripture speaks of breath as spirit: ruach in Hebrew, pneuma in Greek. When the bowl sounds, we naturally align our breathing with its resonance. We become aware of our inhalation and exhalation. We become present to the body God has given us.*

In Lent, this awareness can become prayer:

- The strike of the bowl as a call to confession.
- The fading tone as a meditation on mortality.
- The returning silence as a space for repentance.

“Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.” The sound decays; silence remains.

Lent is a season of returning — returning to God, to ourselves, to what is essential. May each fading vibration remind us that even in quietness, grace resounds.

## RESONANCE PROJECT CONCERT: PORTRAITS EN TRIO

**Saturday, March 14, 7:30 p.m.**  
**Forest Hill Church Sanctuary**

The Resonance Project, a passion initiative spearheaded by Ying and Irwin to make classical music more accessible to all, is making waves in the classical music community! We were recently featured again in *Cleveland Classical*, the region's leading classical music publication. We invite you to read the article (<https://clevelandclassical.com/resonance-project-rings-in-the-lunar-new-year-with-qin-and-strings-feb-7/>) and to check out our segment (<https://www.ideastream.org/arts-culture/2026-01-30/qin-and-strings-from-the-resonance-project>) on *Ideastream Public Radio*.

We are especially proud to have welcomed over one hundred guests to Forest Hill Church for our last concert, "Qin and Strings." Many music lovers praised the sanctuary's beautiful acoustics and the accessibility of the church building — affirming our commitment to creating spaces where everyone feels welcome.

Our next concert on March 14 features the award-winning Poeima Trio, led by native Clevelander Ann Yu. The ensemble presents an intimate evening of chamber music inspired by the legendary patron, Madame Singer, who championed many of the great French composers of the 20th century. The program also celebrates Women's History Month with works by French composers Mel Bonis and Lili Boulanger.

True to our mission, Resonance "projects" are designed to introduce music in engaging and meaningful ways, with Pay-What-You-Can pricing to ensure accessibility. As always, we conclude the evening with a light reception where audience members and artists can mingle and continue the conversation.

We would love for you to join us.

Tickets and information can be found at [RMseries.com](https://RMseries.com).

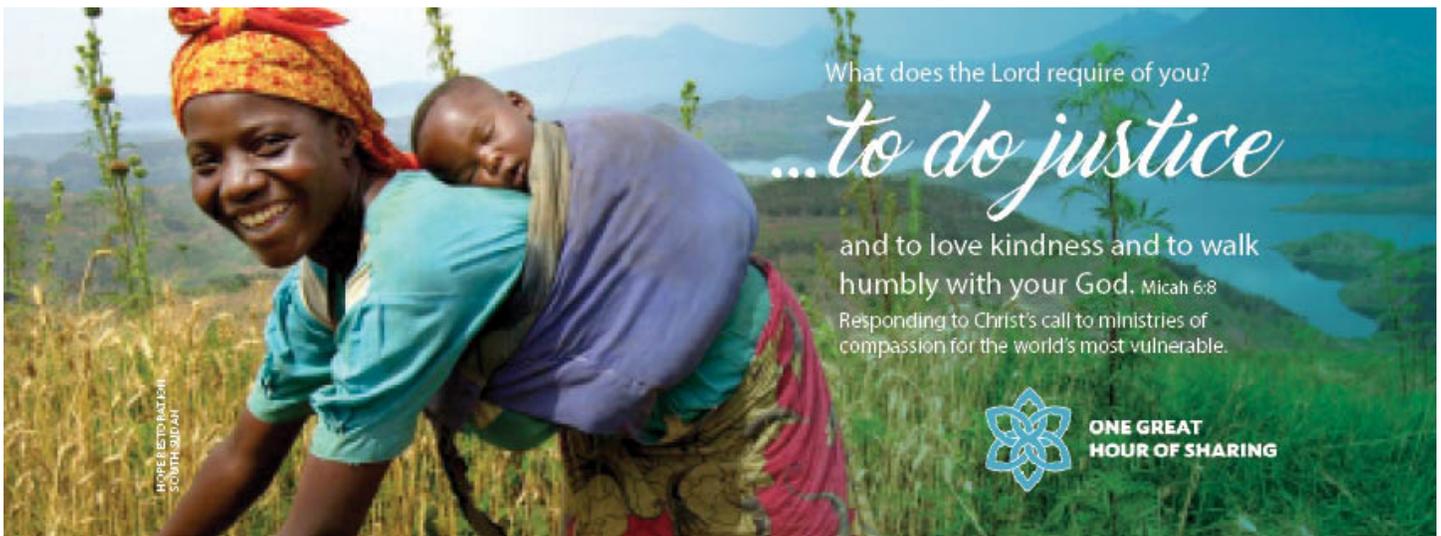
With gratitude,  
QinYing Tan



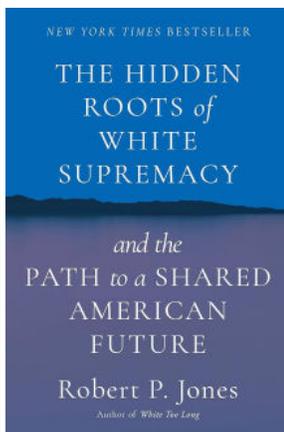
## ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

Around the world, millions of people lack access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation, education, and opportunity. The work done in support of the causes supported by One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) — disaster, hunger, poverty, climate change, and immigration/migration and refugees — serves individuals and communities in need. This work provides people with safety, sustenance, and hope.

Received during the season of Lent (Feb. 18–April 5), each gift to OGHS helps to improve the lives of people in these challenging situations. The offering provides us a way to share God’s love with our neighbors in need. In fact, OGHS is the single, largest way Presbyterians come together every year to work for a better world. Thank you for promoting and supporting One Great Hour of Sharing — an offering that responds directly to the call to do justice in Micah 6:8.



## RACIAL EQUITY BOOK CLUB



**Saturday,  
March 7,  
10:30 a.m. –  
12:00 p.m.  
via Zoom**

***The Hidden Roots of  
White Supremacy and  
the Path to a Shared  
American Future*  
by Robert P. Jones**

Persons interested in reading and discussing books that further individual and collective knowledge about racial equity issues are invited to join the discussions. For more information, or the Zoom links, email [racialequitybuddies@fhcpresb.org](mailto:racialequitybuddies@fhcpresb.org).

The First Congregational Church of Hudson (UCC) and the Ministry of Adult Spiritual Growth of Forest Hill Church, Presbyterian are sponsors of the Racial Equity Book Club and Racial Equity Buddies program.

## ADULT SPIRITUAL GROWTH (ASG)



### Meaningful Conversations: Listening with the Heart of Christ to Build and Restore Relationships

**Saturday, March 21, 9 a.m.–1 p.m. Meet in  
Bodwell Hall.**

Through an interactive workshop, the sessions will guide us in deepening our listening and communication skills to build relationships through safe and nourishing conversations with family, neighbors, and friends. To truly build or mend relationships, we must foster an environment where love, respect, and dignity can thrive.

Braver Angels introduces methods to improve conversations and rebuild trust with friends, family, and co-workers you disagree with politically.

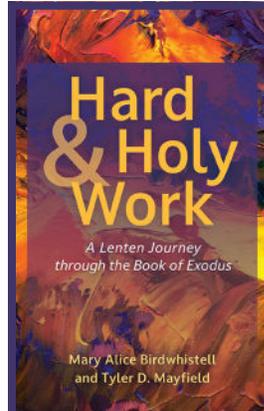
Also, InterPlay is an embodied, active, creative practice that helps to connect body and spirit, and is a light-hearted vehicle to build community across differences through simple, accessible story-telling forms.

In this workshop, you will

- Learn how to achieve reconciliation through the practice of understanding and forgiveness.
- Learn how to reflect love and grace in our dialogue with others.
- Learn how to listen to others as if God is speaking to us, through them.
- Experience getting to know other people through sharing stories.
- Discover accessible tools for getting a whole group to feel connected.

Come join us as we explore practices of active listening and respectful discussion that encourage mutual respect without expecting agreement. Light refreshments will be provided.

Register here: <https://fhc.breezechms.com/form/efa222>



***Hard & Holy Work: A  
Lenten Journey through  
the Book of Exodus***  
**Sundays, March 1–29,  
9:15–10:15 a.m.  
Meet in  
Fellowship Hall.**

Do you want to more fully understand how to integrate your personal spiritual life more actively with your engagement in working for justice and the liberation of the oppressed and marginalized? Would you like to become more spiritually awake?

*Hard & Holy Work* by Mary Alice Birdwhistell and Tyler Mayfield provides a space for just that. Lent is traditionally a time of self-reflection and action that prepares followers of Christ to walk more intentionally in the way of God. In this unique Lenten study, we explore and increase our understanding about how God sees those who are marginalized or suffering and how we can work with them as allies in solidarity. We are also called to contemplate how privilege, fear, risk, and feelings of uncertainty can cloud our attention. The book is available both in paperback and eBook format.

Register here: <https://fhc.breezechms.com/form/e241bf>

## THE POWER OF CHOICE AS WE AGE

The Deacons and the Adult Spiritual Growth Ministry are collaborating on a three-part series. Three professionals will help us understand the choices we have as we age. The workshops will be held on Sundays, March 1, 15, and 29, immediately following the worship service. A light lunch will be provided. The speakers we have lined up for this important topic are all from Forest Hill Church!

### March 1

#### **Senior care, senior communities and skilled care facilities**

A 50-year church member, Linn Obery, speaks on the topics of senior care, senior communities and skilled care facilities. In his 10-year career with A Place for Mom, a senior resource placement service, he has developed associations with ancillary services such as senior driving, downsizing, dementia assistance, and other local resources. He has helped over 9,000 families in the Northeast Ohio area. He explains what to look for in choosing a new living arrangement and how to determine the best fit at a new place.

Register here for March 1:

<https://fhc.breezechms.com/form/PowerOfChoiceMarch1>

### March 15

#### **End-of-life care organizing**

Bill Finn offers his expertise as the President and CEO of Hospice of the Western Reserve (now known as Reserve Care) since February 2011. Bill began his hospital and palliative care career in 1983 and has more than four decades of experience serving people with serious illness. He created Western Reserve Care Solutions (WRCS) and managed the integration of Hospice of Medina and Stein Hospice into WRCS. Bill also created Care Solutions Network, a 10-member organization supporting community-based, not-for-profit, hospice care across Ohio. He brings a wealth of knowledge about end-of-life care organizations. He will address how to talk with your loved ones about this difficult topic, how to organize important paperwork, how to make important decisions. He will bring packets of information on making decisions on end-of-life directives.

Register here for March 15:

<https://fhc.breezechms.com/form/PowerOfChoiceMarch15>

### March 29

#### **Interactive workshop on aging, faith, grief, vocation, and purpose**

Sally Wile presents an interactive, [cont'd on p. 13]



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faith-based workshop. We have been aging since birth and are loved by God at every stage of life. That includes the last stages! In our anti-aging society, the changes that old age brings can leave us feeling, at best, deficient and, at worst, alone. That isn't fair or accurate. Despite natural losses and diminishment, our lives continue to have purpose. We are never too old to grow out of what doesn't work for us anymore, or to grow into new understandings.

Drawing on the wisdom of Joan Chittister, Richard Rohr, and Mary Morrison, and sharing the collective wisdom of those attending the class, we will talk about aging and faith, grief, vocation, and purpose. Sally Wile (with her husband Ed Gernerchak) has been a part of the FHC community since 2007. She's a UCC minister who was called to hospice care, parish ministry, and hospital chaplaincy over the course of her career. Married at 37, and having birthed two sons as a "geriatric" patient at age 38 and 40, Sally seeks to embrace the challenges of "growing old" so as not to miss its blessings.

Register here for March 29:

<https://fhc.breezechms.com/form/PowerOfChoiceMarch29>

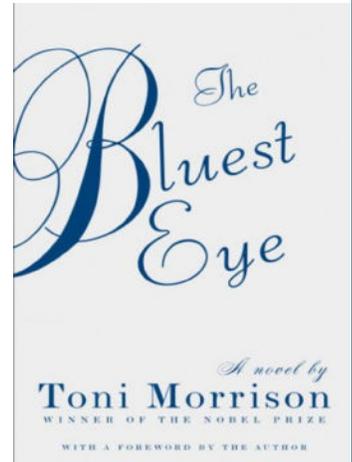
Please join us for any or all of these informative talks from experts in the field.

This is for people 45 years old and up to attend. The more you know, the more prepared you will be when it comes time for important decisions to be made either for yourself or for your loved ones. As Linn says, "The family is in a much better position being prepared... before a crisis."

## BOOK DISCUSSION

*The Bluest Eye* by  
Toni Morrison

Monday, March 2,  
6:00-8:00 p.m.  
Meet in the  
library.



Join Karen Long for a book discussion on Toni Morrison's classic, *The Bluest Eye*.

Set in Lorain, Ohio, Toni Morrison's first novel is still targeted by book bans. It tells the story of Pecola Breedlove, a little Black girl in crushing circumstances, who wants blue eyes. Several Ohio humanities nonprofits are launching a Year of Morrison this month.

The book is available from the public library and at a 10% discount from Mac's Backs-Books on Coventry Road.

Register here: <https://fhc.breezechms.com/form/TheBluestEyeDiscussion>

## THE HIDDEN LEGACY OF AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN REVEALED

**Past Brilliance, Present Power:  
Black Women Leading Through Time  
Saturday, March 21, 1–4 p.m.  
Forest Hill Church Fellowship Hall**

Join us for an afternoon of reflection you may never forget, as we shine a light on the women whose strength continues to shape our world. Discover how these legacies not only echo through history but also illuminate our path forward, inspiring us to lead, create, and transform our communities with the same power and vision.

To help us in this discovery process, we call upon two powerful local women with multiple talents and extensive knowledge:

**Robin Echols Cooper**, performing artist with “Women In History,” brings abolitionist and women’s rights pioneer Sojourner Truth to life with a powerful, immersive portrayal that echoes the fire of her 1851 Akron speech, in which she demanded that the world recognize both her womanhood and her freedom.



*Robin Echols Cooper portrays Sojourner Truth*

[cont’d on p. 15]

[cont'd from p. 14]

**Dr. Noël M. Voltz**, Assistant Professor of History at Case Western Reserve University, guides us through a sweeping historical panorama of African American women's powerful and wide-ranging contributions throughout American history, revealing how their legacies continue to shape our world today in the ongoing fight for justice.



*Dr. Noël M. Voltz*

While this event is free and open to the public, your donations go to the church's **Educational Equity Program** — the first of its kind in Ohio and possibly the nation.

This unique program assumes the college loan debt of Black women — one at a time. The initial recipient, Natasha Lovelace — who was unconnected with the church — will have her undergraduate debt of \$70,000 paid in full by December of this year. For more information, go to this [Channel 5 segment](#) and this [national article](#).

**Reserve your spot** today and bring a friend, neighbor, or colleague to stand with us as we honor these remarkable women and their inspiring stories. A light lunch will be provided. RSVP to [racialequitybuddies@fhcpresb.org](mailto:racialequitybuddies@fhcpresb.org).



If all the above faces aren't familiar, this event is especially for you.

Sponsors: Racial Equity Buddies of Greater Cleveland; Lakewood Black Caucus; TheSpotYEO (Youth Empowerment Organization)

## THANK YOU FROM RACIAL EQUITY BUDDIES

Thank you all so much for supporting the Educational Equity Program initiated by Forest Hill Church. Recently, Racial Equity Buddies promoted a silent auction to raise funds for this unique program. We are pleased to report that we raised \$3,750.00!

In particular, we extend our heartfelt thanks to Claudia Zimmerman for generously donating her work to support this worthy

cause. Claudia donated three quilts and three tote bags for us to auction. Below are a few pictures of her work. If you have ideas about how we can raise funds for this effort, do not hesitate to let us know. The Educational Equity Program also accepts donations!

See page 15 for more information about the Educational Equity Program.



### IMMIGRATION TASK FORCE: DOCUMENTARY SCREENING

**Saturday, March 14, 2:30–4:30 p.m.**  
**Forest Hill Church Fellowship Hall**

The Immigration Task Force is hosting a screening of the documentary film *Si Pudiera Quedarme / If I Could Stay*. It is an intimate portrait of two undocumented Latinx mothers who go to dramatic lengths to fend off deportation and separation from their families in the United States. The film follows five years in the lives of two women who chose to enter sanctuary at local churches, rather than report to ICE to be deported. Once they enter sanctuary, they physically do not leave the church grounds until they attain legal status, a process that can take years. This film gives viewers a window into the determination of these two mothers to keep their families together



against one obstacle after another for an unknown amount of time. Months, years?

After the film we will be joined, via Zoom, by the film's director and one of the two women for a question-and-answer session.

Register here: <https://fhc.breezechms.com/form/SiPudieraQuedarme>

## DEACONS



The biblical role of a deacon is caretaking and facilitating unity among members. Our recent surveys from the Mission Study Committee have highlighted that the number one call from the congregation is for more contact. We are celebrating that role. In an effort to become more active caretakers, we are making some changes to the Deacon Ministry.

First of all, we have downsized from ten CARE groups to eight. This has allowed us to re-balance the groups. You should be hearing from your deacon soon!

Not sure what CARE group you are in? The lists of all CARE groups and their leaders are now on the Deacon bulletin board in the hallway by the kitchen. Check to see who has joined your group, and take the time to look for them and welcome them when you get a chance.

Connection and communication are key to our deacon roles here at FHC. We will be communicating regularly with you within our CARE groups, by email, text, phone, and card. Be sure to tell your CARE leader which method of communication you prefer.

We have formed a Hospitality Committee to coordinate our coffee hour hosts. You will be hearing from them as they begin to ask for volunteers to host coffee hour. This involves providing a few snacks (fruit, sweet breads, coffee cake, cookies, muffins, etc) and setting the table for after the service, and then staying for a bit to act as host. It's a great way to meet and greet other members of our church and guests that visit. Please say yes when you are called. Many hands make light work.

We also are assisting in updating Breeze information. Emergency contacts are needed for every member. This can be done by you in Breeze but it can also be done by your deacon. Help us to help you by keeping your information up to date in Breeze. If anyone would like a refresher course in Breeze navigation, we can arrange for that!

As the deacons move into this more defined role, you can be a part of it, too! Cards (available every Sunday morning — just look for Nathaniel Martin), calls and texts are just a few of the ways each one of us can reach out to members facing challenges, and to those who would love to know they are remembered. The Beloved Community needs all of us!

The Deacon Ministry reminds us that care is not an optional add-on to the church's mission; it is at the very heart of it. As deacons serve, they reflect the love of Christ and invite the whole congregation to join in a community shaped by mercy, dignity, and faithful presence.

# AMIS MULTICULTURAL CELEBRATION AND FUNDRAISER



*Cultural Connections 6.0*

A MULTICULTURAL CELEBRATION AND FUNDRAISER

**Saturday, April 25, 6–9 p.m.  
CentroVilla25 (3140 W. 25th Street)**

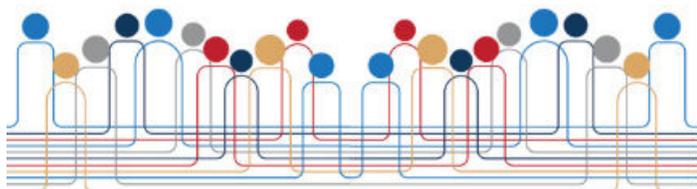
Join the FHC Immigration Task Force in supporting the vital work of caring for immigrants. In these troubling times, world music, food from different cultures, and compassionate friends, old and new, are good medicine.

Cultural Connections is AMIS's annual fundraiser to raise the bulk of the money needed to help asylum seekers, refugees and other immigrants with housing, utilities, food, healthcare, daily necessities, and legal fees. Requests for assistance are increasing, especially from desperate families whose breadwinners have been put in prison by ICE.

\$100 per ticket  
Sponsorship Opportunities: \$500 - \$10,000

You can learn more, buy your tickets, be a sponsor, or donate at [www.amisohio.org](http://www.amisohio.org).

Questions? Contact Jeff Smith, 216-312-6989, [jeffsmith2756@gmail.com](mailto:jeffsmith2756@gmail.com)



## EM EZELL SINGING AT CAVS GAME



**Em Ezell National Anthem Performance!**  
at Rocket Arena  
Sunday April 5<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM vs Pacers



Come out and show your support for Em Ezell and Forest Hill Church on Sunday, April 5th at Rocket Arena! Em will proudly represent Forest Hill Church as she performs the National Anthem at center court before the Cavaliers take on the Indiana Pacers at 6:00 PM.

**Scan QR Code above to get your tickets now!**

To Order Tickets:

Scan the QR code above

Questions: Ryan Setlock at [rsetlock@cavs.com](mailto:rsetlock@cavs.com)  
PLEASE NOTE: ALL SEATS WILL BE DELIVERED VIA SEATGEEK\*  
\*SeatGeek mobile app will be needed for entry



## CARPETING FELLOWSHIP HALL

# WE CAN DO IT!

**Will YOU help to carpet Fellowship Hall by purchasing -  
1 square yard @ \$75?**

The congregational survey of Capital Improvement Priorities revealed the most urgent project on the list to be the flooring issues in Fellowship Hall. Nearing 25 years of constant use, the carpet is faded and stained. The dance floor cannot be repaired and is a liability. Several solutions were studied with the most practical solution being to eliminate the dance floor and carpet the full hall. The major challenge is fundraising the estimated \$35,000 needed for this project.

There are approx 433 square yards of carpet needed. A substantial gift to kick off the campaign has been received from Drs. Bruce and Beverly Cameron. With this gift there are only 270 yards of carpet remaining to be funded! The plan is to sell square yards of carpet for \$75 each to all of you!

A chart to be displayed in Fellowship Hall represents the square yards of carpet needed. The green area represents the Cameron's gift. When a yard is sold, the buyer will receive a colored paper square to physically adhere to the chart. When completely filled, we will proceed to order the new carpet!

Buyers are welcome to purchase 1 yard, multiples or maybe go 1/2 with a friend. No donor names will be displayed. A Trustee will be in the hall each Sunday to handle sales. We have set up a QR code for online and in-person purchases aside from the usual cash or check.



**We are very enthusiastic about this plan and hope you will support this fun campaign. Come on... let's get excited and see how quickly we can complete the goal!**

Make a donation online here:

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



## LABRE MINISTRY

Our Labre ministry at North Church, downtown, continues to thrive, buoyed up by dozens of FHC volunteers who are busy cooking, baking, and buying and serving food for both stomach and soul! As I told last Sunday's congregation at North, there is a whole village of people at FHC who are lifting you up all month long!

In addition to providing food and fellowship on fourth Sundays, individual volunteers, for example Carol Gifford, are engaged in their own North-related projects. Recently Carol collected a carful of winter coats, gloves and scarves for our friends downtown. Last fall, Melanie Alban organized a clothing and hygiene drive. Currently, a handful of FHC parishioners are helping to serve hot soup on Wednesdays outside the Norma Herr Women's Shelter. Once a month, Mary Ann Breisch is offering up one of her original songs during the worship service at North. Our faith is at work!



**Won't you join us?** We need more volunteers — cooks, food providers, and servers on site. Or if you have a special interest, like the project volunteers named above, please consider offering up your gift!

To volunteer, give me a call or a text: Jack Breisch, 440-241-5149.



## HOMELESS STAND DOWN

**Save the date!**  
**Saturday, April 18, 10 a.m.–2 p.m.**  
**Cleveland Public Auditorium**

of clothing (coats, sweaters, boots etc.). If you're interested in having a transformative personal experience, please email Jack Breisch at [jackbreisch@gmail.com](mailto:jackbreisch@gmail.com).

You are cordially invited to join FHC's Stand Down team! For many years FHC volunteers have served as "personal shoppers" at the event, individually assisting guests as they select donated items



**H**  **MELESS**  
**STAND DOWN**  
resources • respite • reconnection

## Saturday, April 11 • 6PM

### **Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?**

***Here's how it works...***

On this evening dinner parties will be held in the homes of church members. You may participate either by purchasing a guest ticket at \$10 per person to attend, or by volunteering to host a dinner as your donation. The day before the event

guests will receive a text revealing their secret destination. Likewise, hosts will not know who will be coming to dinner until the guests arrive!

All are invited- those who like to eat and those who love to cook!

A night of mystery and good fellowship for all!

To host contact Anne Smith at [anneandjeffsmith@gmail.com](mailto:anneandjeffsmith@gmail.com) or 216-287-8572.

For questions and assistance in purchasing a ticket contact

Sue Lafferty at 440-669-4885 or [salaff@sbcglobal.net](mailto:salaff@sbcglobal.net)

Tickets on sale each Sunday in Fellowship Hall.



## FHC — FOREST HILL CONNECTS!

Are you seeking opportunities to connect with other adults at Forest Hill Church? Are you looking for fun things to do with FHC friends to get to know them better or find new opportunities for service in our community? Here is a good place to start!

A group of FHC folks gathered together recently and felt it was time to retire the Pacesetters social group at Forest Hill. The group brainstormed monthly activities throughout 2026, and all members and

visitors to Forest Hill are invited to participate.

See the schedule below! Look for these and other fun pop-up events throughout the year!

- Christmas Cookie Making and Assembly for Y-Haven – December 2026
- Ice Cream Social
- Sunday evening meal and worship with UPCAM
- Decorate FHC for Christmas

<b>2026 Schedule of Events</b>		
<b>Hosts will determine the date and publicize each monthly event.</b>		
<b>Watch the FHC weekly emails, The Tower and other communications for details!</b>		
<b>Month</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Hosts/Organizer</b>
March	Sharing our abundance - making soups for NEOCH and Transplant House of Cleveland	Deborah Erwin, Sue Lafferty, Elaine Turley
April 11, 2026	Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner	GWCTD Committee
April	Spring Cleanup at Forest Hill Park	Mark Chupp
May	Hike and Picnic	Laurie and Keith Logan
May 10, 2026	Trustees’ All Church Work Day	FHC Trustees
June	Picnic by the Lake	Derry Stauffer and Kathy Hanna-Stauffer
July	Pool Party	Jeanette Nemcek
August	Wade Oval Wednesday!	Gary and Julie Lustic
September	Game Night	Mark and Carol Wedell
October	Square Dancing at FHC	Jane Weiner and Chiq Montgomery
November	Cooking for the Labre Thanksgiving Meal at North Church	Sue Lafferty and Carol Gifford
December	Christmas Party	Chris and David Bell
January 2027	Planning Party	Anne and Jeff Smith

## SHARING OUR ABUNDANCE

**Cooking for NEOCH and  
Transplant House of Cleveland  
Sunday, March 22,  
after the worship service**

*“For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat... I was sick and you looked after me....”*

Don your apron, bring your carrot peeler, can opener, and favorite chopping tool, and join other FHC cooks in the kitchen after worship until about 1:30 p.m. (or until our prep is completed), and then stay for a light lunch afterwards. No cooking experience necessary!

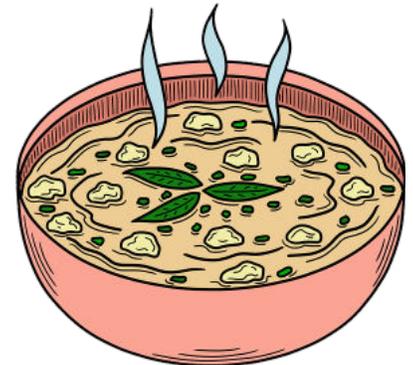
We will gather to make scrumptious batches of chili and soup to share with others in our community who may not have enough to eat or are going through a challenging time in their lives.

NEOCH (Northeast Ohio Coalition for the Homeless) is providing about 40 daily meals

at a seasonal shelter in Cleveland during the winter months and assistance with food is needed.

Guests at Transplant House of Cleveland often arrive from out of town after a long day of travel and are lifted in body and spirit when given a container of soup to enjoy upon their arrival or a bowl of comfort food after a long day spent at the hospital.

Watch The Week Ahead emails in March for further details. Volunteers are needed to cook, but if you aren't able to come that day, you can still participate! Donations to help purchase the ingredients for chili and soup will also be appreciated.



### **EASTSIDE CITIZENS' EMPOWERMENT FOUNDATION**

**Wednesday, March 11, 5:00-6:30pm  
FHC Fellowship Hall**

#### **Celebrating Women's History Month**

Bring your friends and neighbors! We will have food and refreshments.

If you have any questions, contact Nathaniel Martin at 216-469-9581.



## EARTH CARE CONGREGATIONS



### Food, Waste, and the Environment

Nearly 40% of all food produced on the planet is wasted yearly. In the U.S. alone, roughly ten million tons of crops don't even make it off the farm because of labor shortages, extreme weather, low market prices, overproduction, or simply because it doesn't meet the cosmetic standards of America's grocery stores. Food that does make it from farm to table includes that going to schools, one of the largest food service systems in the U.S. However, that also makes schools one of the largest sources of food waste. A 2019 study by World Wildlife Fund (WWF) across 46 schools, found that each student does not eat or wastes an average of 39.2 pounds of food per year. Some of this waste is salvaged or donated, but much also ends up in landfills.

Food waste — fruit, vegetables, milk, animal proteins — is the tip of the iceberg. Embedded resources that go into food production — energy, water, land utilization, labor and nature, and their environmental detrimental effects — are often not realized. And, agricultural production is among the largest drivers of biodiversity loss globally. Monoculture land usage for agriculture

reduces suitable habitat for survival of many animal and plant species worldwide. Agriculture and forestry harvesting for growing food for human consumption and animal food also accounts for 22% of global greenhouse gas emissions and sucks up 70% of the world's dwindling freshwater sources. Pesticide usage to “optimize” food growth is another detriment to the environment.

What to do about food waste? At Forest Hill, in addition to responsible food utilization, many of our member families compost their plant-matter food refuse at home, or use Rust Belt Riders at church.

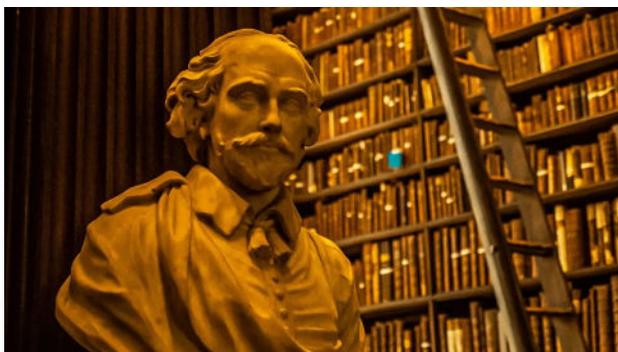
WWF has a program which establishes responsible food utilization, minimizes food waste in schools, generates environmental awareness, and it is growing nationwide. Begun in Florida at the Orange County public schools, “Food Waste Warriors” is an initiative promoted by WWF to encourage and support school food programs learning about nutritional food utilization, minimizing food waste, and the effects of food generation on the environment. The program is now practiced in nearly 1,000 schools across 31 states, with an estimated 14.5% reduction in food waste and 12% reduction in milk waste.

Do we have any FHC members who can connect with and champion Cleveland Heights-University Heights schools' board members to establish participation in this program? Let me know!

(Essence of this article is extracted from the WWF magazine Spring 2026.)

David Neff,  
Earth Care Leader

## CHORAL ARTS CLEVELAND CONCERT: THE FOOD OF LOVE



The Food of Love: Music from the Plays of William Shakespeare in collaboration with Theatro  
Sunday, March 29, 4 p.m.  
The Cultural Arts Center at Disciples Christian Church  
(3663 Mayfield Rd.)

See our own Ann Donkin perform with Choral Arts Cleveland! Join Choral Arts Cleveland and guest artists from Theatro to explore and enjoy a Shakespeare-themed concert.

## CINEMATIC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA CONCERT: HOLLYWOOD BLOCKBUSTERS

See FHC staff member Laura Schultz at  
Playhouse Square!  
Friday, March 6, 7:30 p.m.  
KeyBank State Theatre

Step into the heart-pounding worlds of heroes, legends, and unforgettable adventures as the Cinematic Symphony Orchestra makes its sensational debut at Playhouse Square. This powerhouse ensemble will ignite the stage with HOLLYWOOD BLOCKBUSTERS — an electrifying celebration of cinema's most iconic soundtracks.

We hope to see you there for this extraordinary event! Tickets are available at [cinematicsymphony.org](http://cinematicsymphony.org).



## CECILIAN MUSICAL ART SOCIETY CONCERT

Friday, March 20, 1 p.m.  
The Music Settlement  
(11125 Magnolia Dr.)

See the trio of Laura Otis (voice), Anne Hunter (viola), and Clayton Heydorn (piano) as they perform "Let Evening Come" by William Bolcom.

The authors of the poems are Maya Angelou, Emily Dickinson, and Jane Kenyon.

The poems are centered around the phenomenon of death and describe with ever greater acceptance the elegant beauty in the resolution of death.

## EASTER LILIES

Celebrate your loved ones by ordering an Easter lily. Lilies will be available for pick up on Easter Sunday, April 5, following the worship service. All orders must be submitted by March 30.

Order lilies here: <https://fhc.breezechms.com/form/Easter2026>



## SOCIAL MEDIA

Did you know that Forest Hill Church is on social media? If you are also on social media, please follow us! We post on Facebook and Instagram, and our livestreamed worship services are on YouTube.

We would love for you to like, comment on, and share our posts to further the reach and mission of FHC! Find FHC at the links below.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ForestHillChurch>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/fhcpres/>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC6KcSBcCKdHobprimEdzICA>



## BIRTHDAYS

March 2 – Robert Brock  
March 3 – Ellen McChesney  
March 6 – Danielle Cosgrove  
March 7 – Laura Minder  
March 7 – Dave Peterjohn  
March 9 – Emily Klein  
March 10 – Annette Himes  
March 11 – Doris Allen

March 11 – Cameron Peters  
March 12 – Grace Uhle  
March 13 – Jim Hogg  
March 13 – Ahren Stock  
March 13 – Carol Wedell  
March 15 – Deanne Lentz  
March 21 – Ralph Thomas  
March 22 – Dale Dannefer

March 22 – Jane Duncan  
March 22 – Dr. Carolyn  
Vrtunski  
March 23 – Derek Duncan  
March 28 – Roz Peters  
March 30 – Mary McMillan  
March 31 – Chuck Ishler

# CALENDAR

## March 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 12:30pm - Discussions on Aging	2 6:00pm - Book Discussion	3	4 7:00pm - Personnel Committee	5	6 5:00pm - Praying with Others	7 10:30am - Men's Group
8 <b>Daylight Savings Time Starts</b> 9:00am - Family Faith Parent Group	9	10 7:00pm - Church Growth Meeting 7:00pm - Trustees Meeting	11 5:00pm - Eastside Citizens' Empowerment Foundation 7:00pm - Ministry Meetings	12 9:30am - GCC Meeting 1:00pm - Communications Committee Meeting 7:00pm - Forest Hills Homeowners Association Meeting	13	14 10:00am - Fiber Fellowship 2:30pm - ITF Documentary Screening 7:30pm - Resonance Project Concert
15 12:15pm - Family Faith Parent Group 12:30pm - Discussions on Aging	16	17	18 6:00pm - Adult Spiritual Growth Lent Activity	19 <b>Deadline for the April Tower</b>	20 5:00pm - Praying with Others	21 9:00am - Meaningful Conversations 1:00pm - Legacy of African American Women Event
22 - Labre Ministry at North Church	23	24	25 7:00pm - Session Meeting	26 6:00pm - Family Faith Parent Group	27	28
29 12:30pm - Discussions on Aging	30	31				
<b>Regularly scheduled events meet every week unless noted</b>  9:15am - Rereading Paul Class 9:15am - Hard & Holy Work Class 11:00am - Worship service	<b>9:00am - Bulletin and email deadline</b> 6:00pm - AA: Progress Not Perfection 7:00pm - Al- Anon: Now There's Hope 7:00pm - Pastor Nominating Committee Meeting 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	9:00am - VITA Tax Service

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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

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

Church Office: 216-321-2660

Custodians' cell phone: 216-217-5257

Email: [churchadmin@fhcpresb.org](mailto:churchadmin@fhcpresb.org)

Website: [www.fhcpresb.org](http://www.fhcpresb.org)

**Deadline for the April Tower: 9:00 a.m. on March 19, 2026**  
**Deadline for The Week Ahead email: 9:00 a.m. 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](http://fhcpresb.org/give). You may also mail a check to the church bookkeeper (3031 Monticello Blvd., Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44118).