

John C. Lentz, Pastor

Clover Reuter Beal, Associate Pastor

Discovering God's call, celebrating the Spirit's presence
Witnessing to Christ's transformative power

Forest Hill Church

The Tower

June 2009

Dear Friends,

As I am writing this there are still four days until the Big Give Festival and three weeks until Pentecost, which is the Sunday when your \$50 are to be returned along with **all the additional money** raised. Certainly the Big Give has created a buzz. We received very good press from the *Plain Dealer* and the *Sun* newspapers. Furthermore, it has been delightful to listen to the many great creative ideas AND to see the wonderful crafts that you made. The point of the Big Give was to remind us that even in a season of scarcity we live with abundance; we have more than enough to share and more than enough creativity.

Yet the Big Give created tension in many and agitated us all to think about what we were doing. I received several thoughtful comments that raised many good points. One member commented that I used the parable from Matthew 25 with great liberty. That is true. If we would have been more literal some of you would have received \$50, some \$20 and some \$10. That would have been interesting.

Other members felt paralyzed. Trying to do something with \$50 was just one more thing to do and it felt overwhelming. Some felt guilty that their crafting days were over and they simply weren't able to participate. My hope is that you gave yourself permission NOT to participate. I know that is a difficult thing to do when everyone else seems so caught up in the energy. However, please remember that no one is keeping score. Perhaps that should have been emphasized more.

One person noted that it would have been better to allow each person the creativity to give their money away to whatever charity, program, mission, or person was most in need. Not a bad idea, but the Ministry of Justice and Mission (who fronted the \$15,000) focuses the benevolence giving for the church. In order to meet budget we have actually cut our mission spending in the past few

years and we saw the Big Give as a way of celebrating and increasing our institutional mission.

Some noticed that the buying and selling happened mostly within the congregation between members and not enough energy was spent (pun intended) in getting the larger public to give of *their* “abundance.” Certainly some on the Stewardship ministry worried about this (although they were supportive of the Big Give!). While this was true, there were several examples of getting outside our four walls. The Big Give Festival held on Saturday, May 16 was a way to involve the greater community. One group sold concessions at local sporting events and another group raffled off a big screen television. As you saw in the PD article, Julie and Gary peddled their landscaping talents.

There is always a tension with money and faith. I feel it. The good news of Jesus Christ is not about how much money you can make, or raise, but what you can give and offer to the work of God in the world. It is your life that is important, not your wealth. However, the intent of the Big Give was to take a risk and let go of money (who even knows if we will recoup the original \$15,000?) and then to give all the money raised back to the Ministry of Justice and Mission to give away to programs and missions that help those whom the Gospel specifically names: the poor, the outcast, and those in need.

Who knows? The Big Give might have failed miserably. We might lose money. But then again, seeing Diana and Chessie selling Michigan and Ohio State blankets, watching folks line up for Barb’s ice cream sundaes, laying my eyes on some absolutely gorgeous scarves that Jane created, eating that unbelievable fudge sauce of Verna’s that Kris marketed, and clearing out my basement and attic so I could have something to sell at the Big Give Festival, was more than worth it – already we have been successful.

Thank you for continuing to support these risks. Thank you for your creativity and service to God’s kingdom. Thank you for being you. Whether or not we raise any money, we certainly can celebrate the abundance of love that is ours, by the grace of God, here at Forest Hill Church.

Faithfully yours,

John

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Dear friends,

On May 10, we wrapped up our adult education year with our final Sunday morning class. It has been a wonderful year, posing the question “Who are we?” We’ve taken 36 weeks to explore the biblical and historical roots of Christianity, the changing shape of the church over the centuries, the foundational tenets of Reformed tradition, and being Presbyterian today. During Advent, Barry Hartz led us in two dynamic sessions on Handel’s Messiah. During Lent, we turned to a more personal question, “Who am I?” We were led by Derry Stauffer, Peg Weissbrod, Tom Zych and myself as we looked at four manifestations of who we are called to be as Christians: gifted, evangelist, disciple and prophet. Those were powerfully loaded terms for many of us, but it was a stimulating challenge to unpack those words and get under their theological significance for believers.

We've taken a closer look at the rich history our own congregation has had. In the first session, we had three beloved members share their experiences growing up in FHC during the '50-'60s; the second session three more members held our attention by sharing their experiences of the church's work during the '70s and '80s; and, the third session we heard from newer members reflecting on what drew them to FHC during the past 15 years. The fourth session, John and I shared our own experiences of the church we discovered when we were called to FHC (John in 1994 and me in 2004). We took the opportunity to engage the class in what vision we have for maintaining vitality and nurturing growth, both in numbers and depth of spiritual formation. The participants had insightful and challenging input for their own vision of our church in the next decade. It was a joyful conversation and a marvelous way to end our series.

I want to thank the whole adult education committee for their committed work this year in crafting an engaging and challenging year of classes. Tom Zych, chair; Tim Beal, Barry Hartz, Chris Henry, Derry Stauffer, and Kate Monaghan. I also want to thank Tim and John Lentz for teaching many, many times for us over the year. They respond to our invitations without hesitation and for them we are ever grateful!

Stay tuned for our plans for next year's program. If you have any special requests for programming, please just let us know! We are so excited.

Blessings,

Clover



Christian Education Children and Youth Ministries

Our Church School year has drawn to an end. I would like to thank all of our dedicated and energetic teachers, leaders, shepherds and helpers who have made this year so successful. These volunteers gave their time, energy, and love to nurture our children in our faith.

- In our nursery, thank you to Lara Troyer, Megan Tzefronis, Jen Fu, Christina Hidek, Diane Moyer, Alexis Smith, Amanda Mervine, Emily and Anna Brock, Jessica Klein and Sarah Lentz.
- In our Little Explorers class, thank you to Lauren Wyss, Julie Waring, Pat & Jim Seeders, Christina & Jason Hidek.
- In our Children in Worship class, thank you to Eric Muller-Girard, John Schellenberg, Alisha Trammell, Joanne & Dan Shaner.
- In our Pathways to the Promise Land program, thank you to Molly Bergman, Don Clark, Traci Ext, Jim Roosa, Carol Leslie, Jeannine Gury, Robin Mervine, and Anne Smith.
- During Descant Choir Activity time, thank you to Barry Hartz, Chantal Miller, Laurie & Eric Muller-Girard, Lora & Chuck Smith, Todd Webster and Jim Roosa
- In our Trailblazers class, thank you to Tori Weisberg and Mark Chupp.

Confirmation

On May 17 we celebrated Confirmation with seven youths joining our church. Thank you to the Covenant Partners and leaders who made this journey meaningful and transforming for our youth: Laurie & Keith Logan, Chris & Dave Bell, Tim Beal, Clyde Loughridge, Dick Peterjohn, Christina Hidek, Rev. John Lentz, Rev. Clover Beal, Rev. Tricia Dykers-Koenig, Deanne Lentz, Elspeth Peterjohn, Jean Reinhold and Tori Weisberg.

Children's Ministry Summer Programs

Through the summer months there will be child care for infants through five year olds. The nursery/crib room is a wonderful space that parents can leave there young children in confidence that they will be cared for and nurtured. If you would like to help out in our nursery please contact Marge Kaercher at the church.

Summer Pathways

June 7 & 21, July 5 & 19, August 2 & 16

Classes will meet in the Christian Education classrooms. Please check the bulletin for exact location on Summer Pathways Sundays. Our Summer Pathways program is offered for children entering first through sixth grade. This summer the children will learn about and focus on great people of faith who made a difference in the lives of others in our world. They will participate in six workshops that will explore this theme, art, cooking, large muscle games, storytelling, music and video.

We are also offering a summer story time program for 3 & 4 year olds. These children will meet in the Little Explorers room (206) for a story, a craft and a snack on the same Sundays as the Summer Pathways program. We encourage all families to visit our Children's Library located downstairs in the Monticello wing.

Youth Ministries

From the family of Forest Hill Church, to this year's high school graduating seniors: *We wish you well as you move beyond high school and on to the next phase of your life. We watched you grow, be baptized, join Pathways, go in mission trips, be confirmed, sing in choirs and participate in the life of the church. We hope you take faith and wisdom and understanding as you move past your high school years. May God always be with you.*

Sophie Beal will be attending Mount Holyoke College

Eileen Dise will be attending Stern School of Business at New York University

Elena Eberhard will be attending Ohio University

Elena Juodisius will be attending Allegheny College

Maura Logan will be attending the Ohio State University

Amanda Mervine will be attending Mt. Union College

Dana Obery will be attending the College of Wooster

Joey Register will be attending Bowling Green State University

Emily Shumaker-Chupp is undecided

Alexis Smith will be attending Ohio University

Sarah Smith-Polderman will be attending the College of Wooster

Elizabeth Stiles will be attending Allegheny College

Caleb Wright will be attending Columbia College

We would also like to recognize our college graduates:

Daniel Eloff graduated from San Jose State

Laura Jenks graduated with a double major and B.A. in African and Afro-American Studies and Sociology from Brandeis University

Julie Lafferty graduated with a B.A. in Studio Arts from the College of Wooster.

Meryl McCumber graduated from Ohio Wesleyan with a B.A. in Politics and Government

Laura Minder received a Masters in Accounting from Miami University

Jessica Minder graduated from Kent State

Tim Richards graduated with B.S. in Business Administration from the Fisher College of Business at- OSU.

Marissa Williams graduated with a B.A. in Sociology from Willamette University

Faithfully,

Liz Wollaeger, Director of Christian Education

Adult Education

Believe it or not, another year of Adult Education is drawing to a close. This past Sunday we completed a four week examination of the past, present and future of the Forest Hill Church community, the capstone of our year-long series exploring our faith identities, which we called "Who Are We, and How Did We Get This Way?" The year allowed us to explore our faith roots as followers of God, as Christians, as Americans, as Presbyterians and as gifted and beloved children of God. In addition, this year saw the continuation of the Kerygma and Bibles & Bagels classes, the Men's and Women's Spirituality Groups, another fabulously successful Faith Leaders program and other opportunities for education and spiritual formation.

But we're already busy planning new programs. Watch for announcements of a new summer Adult Education series. And the Adult Ed planning team is already hard at work on next year's Sunday morning schedule, where we plan to explore how best we can live out our faith in our lives. More to come.

Tom Zych

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Faith Leader III 2008-09

When you sign up for the Faith Leader program you receive a book that says (what else) FAITH LEADER across the front. During the first of our 28 weeks together, my companions and I agreed that the reference to “leader” made us uneasy. And one member (Ed) sheepishly revealed that he had modified his book cover to read “Faith Baby.” If Ed, who has been through seminary, considers himself a baby in faith, what was I? Doomed, I thought.

But none of us was left to struggle alone. During the study, introspection and sharing, we all gained 11 deeper friendships. Is there anything more profoundly beautiful than that? I no longer feel as though I am traveling this journey alone. On a more personal level, I entered the group hoping to come out of it with greater conviction behind my beliefs – more trust in our God. That led me to more serious prayer. Before the Faith Leader program, I would pray a few times a week, quickly, and then move on to my own ideas for what would **really** have impact in my life. Prayer was a courtesy, of sorts, to let God know that I know he’s up there somewhere. Now, I pray daily, with intention, giving it all the time it takes to stir something in me. And most importantly, I listen. And I have been changed, on a cellular level. It didn’t happen with burning bushes or God calling me in my dreams. It has been slow and subtle, in nudges and whispers, but God has been there. And I have therefore wanted to be there too, for God.

Thanks to my companions on this journey, I understand that we are all called to be leaders, in our own unique way. And I also understand that as Christians we must relinquish our fears and lead. How blessed I am, to have 11 people to love and guide me, as I learn where my leadership will be expressed. Thank you, Forest Hill.

Peace,

Elaine Turley

FL3 participants: Todd Webster and Jeanine Gury, facilitators. Elaine Turley, Mary Hill, Ed Gemerchak, Chris Henry, Kevin Steiner, Daryl Musick, Joan Bacon, Sharon Shumaker, Beth Zych, and Clover Beal.



Music

As the choir season draws to a close, I would like to take this moment to thank all the dedicated, creative and loving people who have faithfully attended rehearsals each week in order to praise God in song (or bells) every Sunday morning. It is a joy for me to work with all the choirs, and I'm grateful to my special helpers: Nancy Grube, the choir librarian; Jaired Birks, Chancel Choir Chancellor; Shelly Jesberger, vice-president; Joy Stang, choir secretary; Bob Jeffreys, choir treasurer; Mary Ball, mascot ☺, Ginie Mast and Gene Roy, assistant conductors; Mary McPheeters, Descant Choir president and Molly Webster, vice-president; Sarah Smith-Polderman and Maura Logan, Sine Nomine Choir co-presidents and Jessica Klein, vice president; Sue Conant, Voices in Bronze president; Lisa Koops, Cherub Choir Director, and Lena Console, Cherub Choir assistant.

On May 31st, we'll celebrate Pentecost, Communion, and the culmination of the Big Give – what a morning that will be! Expect lots of jazzy, improvisational music. Reed Simon, jazz violinist will be our special guest this morning.

Summer Choir begins Sunday, June 7th with rehearsals held at 9:30 a.m. every Sunday before the 10:00 a.m. worship service. The music will be easy to learn, and singers of all ages (even babes in arms) are most welcome to participate. No hot choir robes – just come as you are. I strongly encourage everyone in the congregation to sing in the Summer Choir at least once. Bring the whole family and experience the worship service from “the other side.” The Summer Choir sings every Sunday during June and July.

I wish you good health and safety during your summer travels. My own summer plans include teaching and performing at two Presbyterian Association of Musicians Conferences on Worship and Music (held at the Montreat Conference Center in North Carolina, and Westminster College in New Wilmington, PA), and spending a few days chilling with my brother Mark in Chicago. I expect to soak in some of the great Chicago blues and jazz, as well as all the great art and architecture Chicago has to offer. Wish me luck at Montreat – I'll be directing a choir of 200 middle-schoolers!

Soli Deo Gloria

Anne Wilson, Organist/Director of Music annew@fhcpresb.org

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10 – 11: calendar

Sundays in June	
9:30	Summer Choir Continental Breakfast Child care begins
10:00	Worship Summer Pathways and Children's Story Time (June 7, 21)
11:15	Coffee Hour

Sunday, June 7 Trinity Sunday Summer Schedule begins 10:00 Worship (in Fellowship Hall)	Isaiah 6: 1-8 Psalm 29 Romans 8: 12-17 John 3: 1-17
Sunday, June 14 10:00 Worship: Baptism of Alexander Bell	1 Samuel 15:34 – 16:13 Psalm 20 2 Corinthians 5: 6-10, 14-17 Mark 4: 26-34
Sunday, June 21 9:15 MOB: Car Wash 10:00 Worship: Baptism of Alec and Maya Miller 11:15 Blood Pressure check	1 Samuel 17: 32-49 Psalm 9: 9-20 2 Corinthians 6: 1-13 Mark 4: 35-41
Sunday, June 28 10:00 Worship: Kevin Steiner, lay preacher 7:00 MOB: Sr High Mission Trip meeting	2 Samuel 1:1, 17-27 Psalm 130 2 Corinthians 8: 7-15 Mark 5: 21-43

**Keep your eyes on the FHC garden.
 "Abundance Acres" is planted
 and tended by a crew of FHC members
 led by Laura Steiner**

Growing Churches: Top 10 strengths

In an article by Evan Silverstein in the October 2004 *Presbyterians Today* entitled "Ready, Set, Grow!" these 10 characteristics of growing churches were listed:

1. **Growing spiritually** - worshipers grow in their faith.
2. **Meaningful worship** - worship services meet the needs of worshipers.
3. **Participating in the congregation** - worshipers are involved in many of the activities of the congregation.
4. **Having a sense of belonging** - people have a sense of fellowship with others.
5. **Caring for young people** - children and youth are nurtured in the faith.
6. **Focusing on the community** - congregations reach out to and serve those outside their doors.
7. **Sharing faith** - members feel comfortable sharing their faith with others.
8. **Welcoming new people** - congregations assist new people to become part of their faith community.
9. **Empowering leadership** - members share in the leadership of the congregation.
10. **Looking to the future** - congregations focus on a positive future.

I think Forest Hill stacks up pretty well using this list as a guide. Some things we do better than others. I believe these provide a good measuring stick for our life and work together. What do you think?

John Lentz



Continuing Earth Stewardship — the Animal Kingdom

.....ask the animals, and they will teach you; the birds of the air, and they will tell you; and the fish of the see will declare to you. Who among all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this? In God's hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of every human being. Job 12: 7-19

The past few months we've talked about several aspects of Earth Stewardship – the environment, ecology, energy conservation, and 'going green,' for example. But there is another aspect to be considered – respecting the lives of all living creatures over which we have been given dominion. Genesis 9:2 tells us that “the fear and dread of you (man) will fall upon all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air, upon every creature that moves along the ground, and upon all the fish of the sea; they are given into your hands.....” Yet with this power comes the *responsibility* to sustain the living creatures of the earth to the greatest extent possible. This has become extremely difficult today in our crowded and energy-thirsty planet with all its negative environmental consequences. The animal world — from polar bears in the arctic, to wolves in our West, and to the wildlife in Africa, India, the Amazon, and China – is faced with increasing conflict and fight for survival due to the needs of man. Increasing human population, our need for food and water, and loss of habitat all make for an often-gloomy picture of wildlife conservation.

But who has not seen and appreciated the wonder, innocence, and the blessings of God in the eyes of a child who experiences the joy and fascination of a butterfly, a rabbit in the yard, a pet, a deer in the forest, an animal at the zoo?.....While it is true that God has given us animals for food (Genesis 9:3), it is the *living* animals that give us a quality of life which God intends for us to enjoy, share, and learn from. Should we not, therefore, do all that is within our power to protect, ensure, and sustain animal life for generations to come?

Dave Neff
Elder, Stewardship Ministry



MOB Report

Thank you to all parents and youth for another year filled with laughter and memorable experiences, and for continuing to show your love to our church and each other. I look forward to seeing you all this summer and on our mission trips!

Save these dates

Thursday June 18

Movie Night! 7:00pm. Look for your postcard to find out which house we will be taking over...

Sunday June 21

Mid and Senior High car wash at FHC- 9:15am- 12:30pm.

Car wash! Sunday June 21

Support our youth mission trips!
Let us get your car ready for summer
while you are in church!



Sunday June 28

Sr. High Mission trip meeting at FHC – 7:00pm. *Mandatory for Senior High and parents who have youth going on the trip!*

Monday June 29

Mid and Senior High Local gas station car wash – place TBA, afternoon.

Lindsey Burdette, Youth Director

News of Our Church Family

Births

Liam Cameron Hunter, son of Colleen and Christian Hunter and grandson of Kathy and Jeff Cameron, was born May 1, 2009. He joins sister Ashlyn Eileen.

Baptisms

Confirmands Catherine Mae Himmelman (Caty), John Preston Reese (Jack) and Trent Holden Taylor were baptized May 17, 2009. Liz Wollaeger was the attending Elder.

New emails only

Donna Frey windmill36@windstream.net

Ann Williams asw1217@gmail.com

New members who joined FHC on May 17, 2009

The Confirmation Class

Seth Beal

Emily Klein

Emily Brock

Jack Reese

John Cary

Trent Taylor

Caty Himmelman

The TOWER can be sent to any college student who would like to receive it and who gives us an up-to-date mailing address. Please contact Lynda in the church office and you'll be added to the mailing list.

Ushers for June

Scott Peters, Lead Usher; Amy Davis, Chris Davis, George Dean, Muriel Dean, Scott Duncan, Jean Duncan, Tish Van Beers-Klein, Brian Klein. Roger Heineman, Head Usher

We bid farewell to Sam Manu, retiring at the end of June as Head Usher, and to Audrey Kellermeyer, Nancy Crawford and Johanna Wilcott who are also stepping down from usher duties. Thank you for all your many Sundays on duty!

The Bethlehem CARE Group will be responsible for meeting members' needs during June. Please contact the church office in case of illness, hospitalizations, births or deaths (or other family emergencies) in any FHC family.

Members of the Bethlehem CARE Group are:

Mark Waring, Deacon	Elizabeth Kosnik
Jon Adams and Pam	Karen and Clyde Loughridge
Conover and family	Dorothy Menn
Katie & Chris Batcheller	Bethany and Joe Pinzone and family
Dick Bloomquist	Ron Register and family
Clarence and Eloise Boyd	Jean Reinhold
Kay and Bill Currie	Baldwin Sawyer
Carolyn Doggett	Rosaneil Schenk
Peter and Kathryn Eloff	Mollie and Dick Secor
Louise Fuller	Millie Skeivis
Sharon Hansen	Carolyn Vrtunski
Jenny Himmelman and family	Mark and Julie Waring and family
Joan Kandare	Blanche Winston
Morag and Tom Keefe	Beth and Tom Zych and family

A Word of Thanks

We would like to thank the members of Forest Hill Church and especially the Mt. Sinai CARE Group for the loving care that was showered on us in March. Cards, flowers, telephone calls, food and transportation were all offered with thoughtful kindness. It is much appreciated. We do feel blessed!

Sincerely,

Verna and Bill Bidelman

April, 2009

Office News and Reminders

The deadline for the weekly bulletin is every Wednesday morning. The deadline for the Tower is usually the second Monday of every month. The **TOWER** schedule is as follows: June 8, August 10, September 14, October 12.

Emails and extensions for the staff are as follows:

- ❖ John Lentz, pastorlentz@fhcpresb.org, ext. 200
- ❖ Clover Beal, pastorbeal@fhcpresb.org, ext 201
- ❖ Anne Wilson (music), annew@fhcpresb.org, ext 208
- ❖ CE Office: Liz Wollaeger, lizw@fhcpresb.org, ext. 206
- ❖ Marge Kaercher, margek@fhcpresb.org, ext. 204
- ❖ Lindsey Burdette (youth): lindseyb@fhcpresb.org, ext 207
- ❖ Becky Austin (financial office): beckya@fhcpresb.org, ext. 203
- ❖ Lynda Bernays (office administrator), and all other email: office@fhcpresb.org, ext. 202

Our website is www.fhcpresb.org

CDs of the worship service are available each week. Often they are available soon after worship. If you miss that, call or email the church office, or leave a note, and the CD will be in the volunteer office the following Sunday. The cost is \$1 per CD.

Would you like a large-print edition of the **TOWER**? Or a bulletin sent to you if you are ill or away? Please contact the church office with your request.

Sunday flower donations are coordinated by the church office. Please call or email Lynda for information about donating an arrangement. The cost is \$20 per arrangement.

From the Financial office: Pledge contributions and other income

	April 09	YTD
Actual	\$ 69,391	\$ 230,734
Budget	50,244	239,776

Source: April 09 Activity Statements and 09 Budget

**Did you know that your monthly or weekly donation to FHC can be paid on-line with your other regular payments?
It's free, easy, and convenient!**

BIG GIVE NEWS FLASH!!!!

After writes up in the Plain Dealer, The Sun Press, the Heights Observer and mention made on television news programs in Columbus, Cleveland and Ft. Wayne Indiana (!) The Big Give Festival was held on Saturday, May 16. There were over 40 tables of crafts, food, white elephants. The big screen t.v. raffle was a big hit.

Even though the threat of rain caused the festival to be held inside, it didn't dampen the enthusiasm of the vendors and the guests who streamed in from 8:45 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Once Bill Eberhard turned on the hits from the 1970's the spirit was on and the energy thriving. Morag's brats and burgers filled the shoppers with good cheer. Barb Cloud was back at it with her ice cream wonders. What a day. Several visitors were so impressed with the program that even though they didn't buy anything they made a contribution to the church. One guest said she paid double for every item she bought just because she wanted to be generous.

On Sunday, May 31 (Pentecost) everyone should turn in their original \$50 + whatever they collected above and beyond that. All monies shall be returned to the Ministry of Justice and Mission for our work in the community and the world.

Thanks to all who made this possible.

John Lentz

