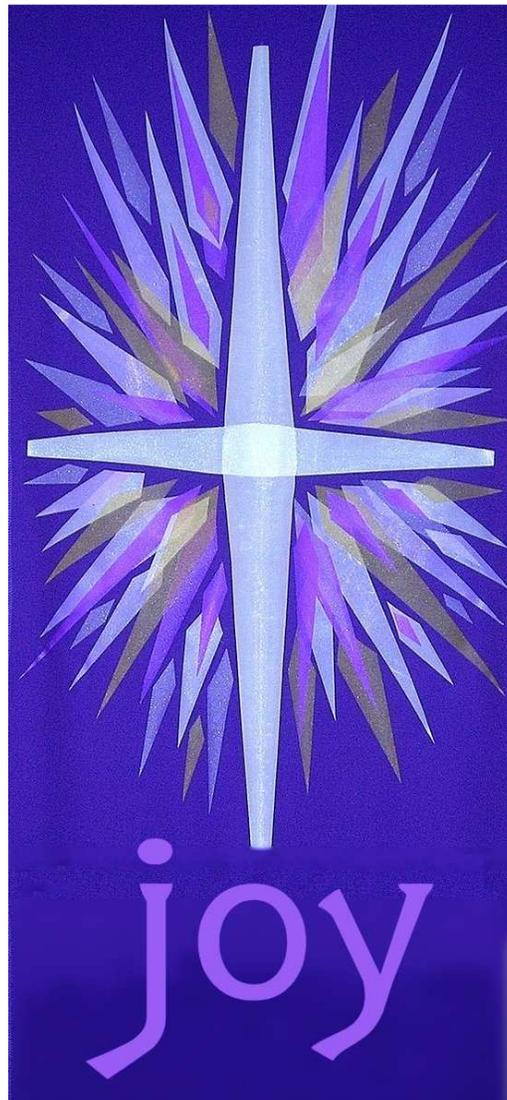


# Forest Hill Church

presbyterian



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Dr. John C. Lentz, Jr., Pastor  
Rev. Clover Reuter Beal, Assoc. Pastor  
Rev. Tricia Dykers-Koenig, Parish Assoc.

Anne Wilson, Ministry of Music  
Dacia Prins, Dir. of Children's Ministries  
Shannon Headen, Interim Dir. of Youth Education

## *Service of Worship*

*December 14, 2014 at 11:00 am*

### *The Third Sunday in the Season of Advent*

Welcome! Thank you for joining us today for worship.

If you are visiting, please join us in wearing a name tag so that we might greet you.

Our ushers have large print editions of the Bible and today's bulletin; hearing devices; activity bags with quiet activities for children staying in worship; and directions to our Monticello Wing nursery for babies and young children.

### *Prayer of Preparation*

Now the heavens start to whisper, as the veil is growing thin.  
Earth from slumber wakes to listen to the stirring, faint within;  
seed of promise, deeply planted, child to spring from Jesse's stem!  
Like the soil beneath the frost-line, hearts grow soft to welcome him.

*From Hymn #94, Now the Heavens Start to Whisper*

**What is stirring within you this day?**

### **Welcome**

### **Prelude**

James R. Murray

"Away in a Manger"

Cherub Choir; Lisa Koops, director

### *Greeting Our God with Joy*

### **Call to Worship**

Lia D. Clement and Leslie D. Clement

Reader One: When I look around, I see shadows of sadness, families in homeless shelters, people in prison, people who have become invisible and forgotten...

Reader Two: When I look around, I see shadows of grief and loss, people dreading the holidays because they've lost a loved one, because they're recently divorced, because they don't want to spend another Christmas alone...

*Light three candles in the Advent wreath*

Reader One: In the face of sadness, we light a candle of joy...

**People :** **In the face of grief and loss, we light a candle of joy...**

Reader Two: May the light from this candle overwhelm the world...

**People:** **May the light from this candle say to all that God's joy is coming on earth as it already is in heaven...**

Reader One: Brothers and sisters in Christ, be not afraid, God's joy is at hand...

**\* Processional Hymn No. 146**

"Gentle Mary Laid Her Child"

*\*please stand if able*

*Renewing Our Relationship with God*

**Prayer of Confession**

Rev. Clover Beal

**Almighty God, Light of the World, you caused light to shine out of the darkness in the advent of Jesus our Christ; you continually open to us the ways we are to prepare. We confess our unwillingness to see the light and to walk in your ways. We have not always opened our eyes to the needs of others, and our feet have wandered from the paths of justice and peace. We ask that the Spirit of Christ be born anew within us, that our hearts may be stirred to glorify the nativity with acts of compassion and service. Amen.**

**Time of Silent Confession**

**Kyrie eleison** (*Lord, have mercy*)

Craig Phillips

Lord, have mer - cy. Christ, have  
mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.

The image shows two staves of musical notation in 4/4 time. The first staff is in C major and contains the lyrics 'Lord, have mer - cy. Christ, have'. The second staff is in D major and contains the lyrics 'mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.'.

*Affirming the Good News in Our Lives*

**Assurance of Pardon**

\* **Response** (John Bell)

**Singing instructions**  
First: All sing  
Second: Men start, women and children start 1 measure later

5 Be still and know that I am God.  
Be still and know that I am God.

The image shows two staves of musical notation in 4/4 time with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The first staff starts at measure 5 and contains the lyrics 'Be still and know that I am God.'. The second staff continues the melody with the lyrics 'Be still and know that I am God.'.

**Anthem**

John Bell

“He Will Come When You Least Expect Him”

Sine Nomine Choir

## *Opening Our Hearts to God's Word*

**Scripture Lessons** (read by Elder Rosanna Sprague)

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

John 1:6-8, 19-28

*After the readings*

Leader: Hear what the Holy Spirit is telling God's people.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**\* Hymn No. 145**

"What Child Is This"

*Prayer requests may be passed to the ushers during this hymn*

**Sermon**

Rev. Dr. John C. Lentz, Jr.

"What's the Point?"

**Prayers of the People**

**Lord's Prayer**

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors; And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

**Ritual of Friendship**

all are asked to sign

**Offertory**

G. F Handel

"And the Glory of the Lord" from *Messiah*

**\* Doxology**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow,**

**Praise God all creatures here below,**

**Praise God above ye heavenly host, Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost.**

*Going Forth to Live as God's People*

\* **Closing Hymn No. 119**

“Hark, the Herald Angels Sing”

\* **Commission and Blessing**

\* **Choral Benediction**

\* **Passing of the Peace**

*Postlude*

Louis Daquin

“Noel #8”



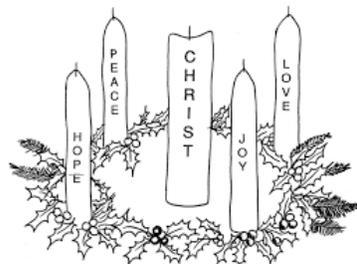
***Welcome Visitors!***

We look forward to greeting you and answering any questions you may have. Visitor welcome bags are available in the foyers and the narthex. Take one home with you! Be sure to visit our website, [www.fhcpresb.org](http://www.fhcpresb.org), to find a complete list of upcoming events, education programs for all ages, and texts and audio of past sermons.

*Congregational Notes*

**Lighting the Advent Candles**

Lia Clement and Leslie Clement are lighting today's Advent candles.



## **Music**

Today's carols are accompanied by the Youth Instrumental Ensemble under the direction of Ahren Stock. Ahren, an FHC member, is on the music faculty of Hawken School. Members of the Youth Ensemble are:

Violin – Edie Duncan, Lili Roosa, Garrett Vandall, Ian Zych

Cello – Audrey Himes, Hal Roosa

Bass – Blake Himes

Clarinet – Layla Joseph

Baritone Saxophone – Claire Jesberger

French Horn – Will Burleigh

Trumpet – Malik Joseph

Percussion – Nora Duncan, Drew Stadler

## **Chancel Flowers**

The flowers today are given by the Khoury family in memory of Brian; by Paula and Tom Harvey in loving memory of Paula's parents George and Ginny Bodwell, and Tom's parents Mary and Robert Harvey; and by Consuelo Heineman to celebrate Grant and Roger's birthdays.

## **Prayer Concerns this Week**

**Prayers are requested this week for the following:**

Jane Frederick, Mary Lewis, Arlene and Jack Quinn, Margaret and George Sentell, Debbie Ungemach, Ray and Pat Weissbrod.

**Please remember these homebound members in your prayers:**

Bill and Kay Currie, Flora Dannemiller, Pat Drake, Marge Drollinger, Betty Farnfield, Iris Gilbert, Ron and Florence Klein, Emelia McGuire, Joyce Peters, Elaine Tapié.

**We invite you to write prayer requests** on a slip of paper from the envelope rack and pass it to an usher during the singing of the middle hymn, to be included in the prayers later in the service. Lists of ongoing prayer concerns are in each month's **TOWER**.

### **This Month's Ushers**

Jim Roosa, Ayodele Solaru. Roger Heineman, Head Usher

**Nursery care** for babies and young children is available on the second floor of the Monticello Wing.

**Attendance last week (including Pathways children): 278**

### *Announcements*

#### **TODAY**

#### ***Living in the Spirit***

There will be an informational meeting in the Library today after worship for all who are interested in learning more about the ***Living in the Spirit*** course.

#### **THIS WEEK**

#### ***Bible and Bagels***

Bible and Bagels meets Wednesdays from 7:30 to 8:30 am in the Jin Room. All are welcome! The lessons this week are from **2 Samuel 7: 1-11, 16; Psalm 89: 1-4, 19-26; Romans 16: 25-27; Luke 1: 26-38.**

## **NEXT SUNDAY**

### ***Adult Education, 9:30 in South Hall***

Rabbi Melinda Mersack will speak about Rabbi Israel ben Eliezer (1698-1760), the Rabbi Ba'al Shem Tov (“master of the good name”), considered to be the founder of Chasidic Judaism.

### ***Festival of Lessons and Carols***

Next Sunday we will celebrate ***A Festival of Lessons and Carols***. The service, which opens with the traditional carol “Once in Royal David’s City,” includes seven lessons interspersed with seasonal music. The Descant, Sine Nomine, Chancel and Voices in Bronze choirs will all participate. Invite friends!

### ***Labre Project***

Warm, gently-used clothing and accessories – coats, sweaters, hats, gloves, blankets for men, women and children – are appreciated for the Labre Project in East Cleveland. Please leave donations in the bin in Fellowship Hall.

## **ADDITIONAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### ***From the Financial Office***

Are you considering making a gift of stock to Forest Hill Church before year’s end? Please start the process immediately to receive credit on your 2014 statement. Remember, giving appreciated stock is a win-win situation – you skip tax on any capital gain, and the church receives the full amount of your gift. Please contact Becky Austin for the Fidelity account information: [beckya@fhcpresb.org](mailto:beckya@fhcpresb.org) or 216-321-2660.

## ***Black History Month – February 2015***

For Black History Month we will be reading *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*. Robyn Hales will be have copies of the book for sale in Fellowship Hall during December coffee hours. Books are \$10 for paperback, can be purchased as a Kindle or audio book at Amazon.com. For more information, call Robyn ([216-659-9566](tel:216-659-9566)). We would like to have 60 participants! There will be an in-depth book review in March as well.

### ***Care Group***

The All-Church Care Group is responsible for meeting members' needs during December. Please call the church office to report an illness, hospitalization, family emergency, birth or death. Information will then be passed on to the Care Group leaders.

### ***Social Groups and Circles***

#### ***Iris Circle (all women of the church)***

Iris Circle will look back a few years to elementary "school daze" on December 16 at noon in Bodwell Hall. Bring your lunch packed like Mother did. Show-and-tell your treasures and fond memories from the 40's. Dessert and beverage will be provided. RSVP to Pat Jeffreys ([bobpatj@aol.com](mailto:bobpatj@aol.com) or 216-381-2120) or Nancy Burcham ([Burcham@roadrunner.com](mailto:Burcham@roadrunner.com) or 440-446-0832).

#### ***Young Adults (20s-30s)***

The Young Adults will meet the second Sunday of every month for brunch (that's today!). This month we will go to Tommy's on Coventry. After worship, join us for conversation, camaraderie and coffee. Please meet in the transept in the front right of the sanctuary.

## ***Holiday Concert***

FHC choir member Caleb A. Wright will present a holiday concert on Wednesday, December 17 at 7:00 pm at Church of The Master in Cleveland Heights (4050 Monticello Blvd.). This concert will feature a few of his musical friends and colleagues, and will feature Anne Wilson as his accompanist. Caleb would like everyone to bring a canned good or non-perishable food item to donate to FHC's Abundance Pantry.

## ***Youth News***

### ***Every Sunday***

- Mid and Sr High classes meet from 9:30 – 10:30 am.

### ***Today***

- **Sine Nomine Choir** will rehearse in the chapel immediately after worship.

## ***FHC Staff Emails and Phone Extensions***

### ***Program Staff***

**Rev. Dr. John Lentz Jr.** / [pastorlentz@fhcpresb.org](mailto:pastorlentz@fhcpresb.org) ext. 200

**Rev. Clover Beal** / [pastorbeal@fhcpresb.org](mailto:pastorbeal@fhcpresb.org) ext 201

**Dacia Prins** / [dacia@fhcpresb.org](mailto:dacia@fhcpresb.org) ext. 206

**Anne Wilson** / [annew@fhcpresb.org](mailto:annew@fhcpresb.org) ext. 208

**Shannon Headen** / [Shannon@fhcpresb.org](mailto:Shannon@fhcpresb.org) ext. 207

### ***Office Staff***

**Becky Austin** / [beckya@fhcpresb.org](mailto:beckya@fhcpresb.org) ext 203

**Lynda Bernays** / [office@fhcpresb.org](mailto:office@fhcpresb.org) ext 202

**Stavros Gazis** / [office@fhcpresb.org](mailto:office@fhcpresb.org) ext 202



## ***Wondering about the Advent Decorations?***

A year ago, Eric Muller-Girard designed and installed the current Advent decorations for the first time. He wanted new decorations that would symbolize not only the festive nature of the season, but which, by the use of specific colors and materials, would also refer directly and symbolically to the essential elements of the historic God-becoming-flesh-event that we ***as a church*** celebrate .

So by definition, these decorations look different from those you might find in a store. He used royal tones of purple and gold but also emphasized the impoverished, rough, rural texture of unruly straw – the straw that cradled our Most Blessed Savior. Because, you see, we are that straw... as the Advent prophecy goes: "All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever." (Isaiah 40: 6b–8)

If you look very carefully, you might find the hint of a six-pointed "Star of David" in two of our new wreaths. Meanwhile, the red ribbons, circular wreaths, candles, straw and evergreens are "traditional" at Advent and are still present in our new decorations ...though perhaps they are now seen in unexpected proportions. But whether "unexpected" or "long-expected," Christmas means a surprise for everyone!

We hope these visual elements speak symbolically to remind us of Jesus and of that to which he invites us. Contemplate the story of Christ's humble and impoverished entry into this world, the red blood shed by mother and son, the royalty and kingdom that he both left and brought to us. May you be blessed this Christmas!

## FHC Christmas Schedule

### **Christmas Eve, December 24**

5:00 pm Family Worship

11:00 pm Candlelight Worship

12:15 am Milk and Cookies reception

*We need donations of Christmas cookies for the reception.*

*Please bring labeled boxes or plates of cookies on Christmas Eve.*

**December 25-26: Office closed**

### **December 28: Christmas 1**

Classes and choirs will not meet

11:00 am Worship in Fellowship Hall

Abundance Food Pantry is collecting donations of turkeys, preferably frozen, any size, to be given to food pantry guests

Please contact Paul Jennings or the church office if you have a donation

## Poinsettias for Christmas

Once again we are ordering poinsettias for the sanctuary. If you would like to order one or more (they are \$8 each), please complete this form and put it in the offering, or contact the church office by December 15:



**Your name**

**In whose honor or memory are you donating the flowers?**

**In honor of**

**In memory of**

**Number of plants**

**Do you want to take your poinsettia home, or donate it?**

Poinsettias will be in the sanctuary on December 21 and on Christmas Eve. They may be taken after the candlelight service on Christmas Eve or on December 28.



## *Calendar: December 14 - 21, 2014*

### **Sunday, December 14: 3 Advent**

9:00 Child care begins  
9:30 Adult and Youth Education  
Descant Choir  
10:00 Young Instrumentalists  
rehearsal  
10:15 Descant Choir activity  
10:30 Continental Breakfast  
Chancel Choir  
Cherub Choir  
11:00 WORSHIP  
Children in Worship  
Pathways to the Promise Land  
12:15 Coffee hour  
Sine Nomine Choir  
Living in the Spirit meeting  
Young Adults' brunch (Tommy's)  
4:40 Labre Project  
5:00 The Group (at Andrews')

### **Monday, December 15**

8:45 am Tai Chi  
6:00 pm Progress not Perfection (AA)  
7:00 pm Al Anon  
7:30 pm AA: Borton Group  
Boy Scout Troop #403

### **Tuesday, December 16**

12:00 pm Iris Circle  
1:00 pm Abundance Pantry opens  
5:00 pm Fitness Fusion exercise class

### **Wednesday, December 17**

7:30 am Bible and Bagels  
10:00 am **TOWER** collators  
12:30 pm Wednesday Women's AA  
7:00 pm Session meeting

### **Thursday, December 18**

1:00 pm Abundance Pantry opens  
5:00 pm Fitness Fusion exercise class  
6:20 pm Voices in Bronze Bell Choir  
6:30 pm Cub Scout Pack meeting  
7:30 pm Chancel Choir rehearsal

### **Friday, December 19**

10:00 am Al Anon meeting

### **Saturday, December 20**

8:00 am Men's Group  
9:30 am Turkey cooks

### **Sunday, December 21: 4 Advent**

9:00 Child care begins  
9:30 Adult and Youth Education  
Descant Choir  
10:15 Descant Choir activity  
10:30 Continental Breakfast  
Chancel Choir  
11:00 WORSHIP:  
Festival of Lessons and Carols  
Children in Worship  
12:15 Coffee hour  
Youth Christmas Party

## *The Lessons*

### **Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11**

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion— to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.

They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations. For I the LORD love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed.

I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

## **John 1:6-8, 19-28**

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,'" as the prophet Isaiah said. Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

***Next Sunday:* 2 Samuel 7: 1-11, 16; Psalm 89: 1-4, 19-26; Romans 16: 25-27; Luke 1: 26-38.** As part of your daily devotions, read the lessons. What image or word catches your attention? How do they settle or challenge you?