



Forest Hill Church
presbyterian

The TOWER

APRIL 2020

WORDS FROM PASTOR VERONICA

As a very young girl, I remember well the 1962 Cuban missile crisis. Although I was too young to understand the implications of the crisis, that historic event was indelibly etched in memory as I witnessed people of all races and classes packing out churches of every denomination. Now, it is unheard of that our places of worship would close during a world crisis, when historically houses of worship have been the sanctuaries to which people flocked during crises.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'V. Goines', is located to the right of the first paragraph.

Nevertheless, on Friday, March 13, in agreement, the Co-Pastors disseminated an all-church email announcing the suspension of worship services and programs for three weeks (now eight weeks). In so doing, we prioritized the health and safety of the congregation during the current coronavirus pandemic.

Still, it is difficult to imagine Sundays without communal worship: gathering, music, singing, prayer, and the Word of God proclaimed in real time and space. It was especially difficult to imagine my timely sermon on "Creative Chaos" going unheard. In prayer I felt compelled to post the message on our website. Then, like casting bread upon the waters, I emailed staff my desire to post my sermon online. David Wigger responded, offering to record the message. We agreed to meet at 11 am on Sunday.

But, pulling into the church parking lot to three (3) lonely cars was visually stunning, even though I knew to expect it. I proceeded to the sanctuary not knowing exactly how much we could accomplish.

Before I could ask David to read the Scripture, he and Tara Beverly volunteered to serve as liturgists—the Spirit of the Lord was at work. Without coordination, we showed up and the Spirit showed out. Michael Broadwater joined us in worship. I had imagined it would be odd to preach in an empty sanctuary, but it wasn't empty at all. Rather, it was filled with the spirit of the congregation, with David, Tara, and Michael, a welcomed “amen corner,” and with the abiding Holy Spirit. Hence, we worshiped in the splendor of God's house, in the presence of the Lord through liturgy and prayers, and in the power of God's Word, a word that had been gestating in me long before the Coronavirus made its debut. God ministered to us, encouraged and strengthened our hearts, and made it possible for us to encourage, strengthen, and fill the hearts of the congregation via technology.

Jesus said “Where two or more are gathered in my name, touching and agreeing, I'm in the midst.” For me, this experience demonstrates what God can and will do under extraordinary circumstances. It is an example of our Beloved Community working complementarily.

Again, we are in uncharted waters, but by faith we are being guided by the Holy Spirit and informed by the gifts of one another. Ajah texted me to share that after she and her Aunt Robyn worshiped via our podcast, they called another member to pass the peace of Christ. We may be physically separated, but we are one in the Spirit, and the Spirit has no bounds. So, at 11 am on Sunday mornings, access your electronic bulletins, sing aloud, and say amen to God's Word as we livestream worship, and you all participate in the intimacy of your homes.

Another important reality to remember is that both locally and around the world, businesses and places of worship are increasingly vulnerable to lost revenues. Presently, Forest Hill Church is viable, but

we must also ensure the viability of our mission and ministries as well as our staff and programs. **During this suspension, we encourage members and friends to continue to give—via U.S Mail, online banking, and of course, feel free to drop off your gift at the church office.**

Ever prayerful, ever connected.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Veronica

WORDS FROM PASTOR JOHN

Dear Friends,



It is almost certain that we will not be holding services in our chapel and sanctuary on Easter Sunday. The Center for Disease Control has recommended that no gathering over 10 should take place for the next eight weeks. It is unbelievable to consider this reality.

However, this doesn't mean that we will not celebrate Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday and Easter. We will be streaming the services on various platforms that you can link into on your computer. We will send you ways to link in with us from home. So, bring your coffee and wear your pajamas to worship. Nobody is looking!

Consider, the first Easter was not at a church filled with people. It was only three women who came to the tomb to anoint Jesus' dead body. Then they got the surprise of their lives.

Jesus appeared to just a few disciples. On the road to Emmaus the two travelers didn't even recognize Jesus until he broke bread with them.

So, Easter will happen regardless of an empty sanctuary. Perhaps this year you will experience Easter in a whole new transformative way. Be ready for a surprise!

Staff News

During 2019 it was important for Pastors Goines to learn about the work of all the ministries of the church. Therefore, while moderating the Session on alternate months, they “floated” in their responsibilities to the session ministries. For example. Pastor Goines would staff the Trustees one month, and the next month Pastor Lentz would do it.

For the year 2020 Pastors Goines and Lentz will be staffing particular ministries.

Pastor Goines will staff: **Trustees, Deacons, Stewardship, and Personnel.**

Pastor Lentz will staff: **Justice and Mission, Church Growth, Adult Education and Nominating.**

They will both be part of the Worship ministry and support other committees and initiatives as they arise.

God bless you, John

Giving/donation options- Friends and family of FHC, during this time, you can give monetary donations using our website (www.fhcpresb.org) and clicking the PayPal link. You may also mail in a check to the church bookkeeper (3031 Monticello Blvd. Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44118).

Music Notes



These are unfathomable times. I have no words. . . Yet, there are glimmers of hope and good will when I see so many acts of creativity and generosity sprouting forth from the citizens of our global family: balcony concerts in Italy, children's scavenger hunt walks (6-ft. apart) in Cleveland Heights, virtual concerts and lessons springing up on Facebook and other platforms.

We will all miss worshipping together during Holy Week and at Easter. But the FHC worship teams (Sunday School/Pathways as well as 11:00 worship) are working to plan meaningful and comfortable rituals of tradition and community that you can watch on your electronic devices. As I write this on March 19th, the first day of Spring, none of us can predict what the world will look like a month or a year from now. Let us love one another.

Soli Deo Gloria~

Anne Wilson

P.S. Here's one of the anthems the Chancel Choir was preparing for Easter: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BywqBsShy50>

Organist/Director of Music
annew@fhcpresb.org
216-321-2660, ext. 208

**Just a little
breeze** 

Privacy Only congregants who have logged in can access our online church directory. You can update your contact information and many of the items in your profile, and you can control how much, if any, of your contact information is displayed. Please keep in mind, however, that Breeze is designed to replace the old printed Church Directory and over time will be the only way many of your fellow members can get in touch with you.

Between the Coronavirus and normal emergencies that can arise in our building, it is important for everyone to complete the Emergency Contact portion of their Profile. Please designate at least one person as your emergency contact, indicating their relationship to you and whether they have a key to your home. If your insurance requires a particular healthcare provider, please let us know in the Medical Preferences field. Finally, if there are any disabilities---mobility, sight, hearing, etc.—that you wish us to be aware of, there is a field for you to enter those as well.

How Do I Change Information in My Profile?

- Select the gray header above the information you want to change
- Make the changes
- Select “Save” on the gray header

(If the information is not available for editing, the “Save” and “Cancel” buttons will not appear on the gray bar.)

Getting onto Breeze

The best way to learn Breeze is on a desktop or laptop computer, using Chrome as your browser. You just need to remember our church initials, FHC, followed by Breeze and CHMS, which stands for Church Management System. So the address is fhc.breezechms.com

Password Help

If you forget your password, you can reset it. You'll just need access to the email account you used when you created your log in.

Suggestions

Do you have questions or suggestions? Contact the administrator at pegw@fhcpresb.org or call 216.291.2586. (You can also text your questions to 216-288-3398.)

GCC Update

The outside may have been windy, cold and snowy, but the inside of Olivet Institutional Baptist Church on Thursday, February 27th was bursting with energy as 1,038 citizens loudly called for the creation of two offsite pre-booking mental health and addiction crisis diversion centers. Thank you to the 102 Forest Hill Church members and friends who helped GCC to reach our goal and make this important public meeting a success!

The evening was packed with action, including voting to receive two new GCC member congregations -- Lakewood Congregational UCC and Lee Road Baptist; viewing a gripping video about the impact of the lack of crisis centers on the community; powerful testimonials by two mothers, Anita Arrington-Bey and Cantor Laurel Barr; and the endorsement of GCC's roadmap for the crisis centers by the assembled gathering.

In one of the many highlights of the evening, Bill Mason, chief-of-staff for Cuyahoga County Executive Armond Budish, confirmed the county's intention to build two offsite pre-booking crisis centers, one on the East Side and one on the West Side of Cleveland. In addition, Dr. Akram Boutros, president and CEO of the MetroHealth System of Cleveland, pledged \$1 Million to the effort to create the diversion centers.

Here's what Cleveland.com and the Cleveland Jewish News had to say about the evening:

Cleveland.com

<https://www.cleveland.com/news/2020/02/greater-cleveland-congregations-others-urge-cuyahoga-county-leaders-to-open-crisis-centers-for-people-with-mental-health-drug-problems.html>

Cleveland Jewish News

https://www.clevelandjewishnews.com/news/local_news/cantor-laurel-barr-incarceration-has-not-helped-my-son/article_37bb6654-59ee-11ea-a340-2f19e0d44b9e.html

The GCC Criminal Justice Team, which is spearheading our effort for the Crisis Diversion Centers, holds its next meeting on Thursday, April 23rd at 7PM, location TBA. As GCC goes forward, we will continue to keep you apprised of other meetings or happenings related to the initiative to make the mental health and addiction crisis diversion centers a reality!

GCC Core Team leaders
– Scott Lafferty and Diana Woodbridge

Message from the Deacons

Dear Church Family,

Please remember that the Deacons exist to care for the congregation. Though we are making calls to those whom we know might need extra help right now, there are certainly those among you whom we will overlook, as it is impossible to "know all." Please, if you have need of an errand, a prayer, and a phone call to reduce your isolation, or something we have not named, contact Mary Hosier at m.avis@roadrunner.com and she will organize the follow up. We look to those wiser than we feel we can be at this time, and offer this prayer for Lent...a Lent of true sacrifice for all of us:

I Will Lean In **(a daily prayer to say during Lent)**

I will lean in, retreat from the pressures I face, and move closer and deeper into your love.

I will breathe out, refrain from the distractions I seek, and become open and receiving of your grace.

I will linger, encircled by the depth of your care, and receive the endless nature of your mercy.

I will whisper, in the quiet of this sanctuary, and be honest and real in your presence.

I will listen, awaken all my senses to your voice, and become expectant and hopeful of your kingdom work in my life.

~The Deacons

Pandemic
By Lynn Ungar
March 11, 2020

What if you thought of it as the Jews consider the Sabbath—the most sacred of times? Cease from travel. Cease from buying and selling. Give up, just for now, on trying to make the world different than it is. Sing. Pray. Touch only those to whom you commit your life. Center down.

And when your body has become still, reach out with your heart. Know that we are connected in ways that are terrifying and beautiful.

(You could hardly deny it now.) Know that our lives are in one another's hands.

(Surely, that has come clear.) Do not reach out your hands. Reach out your heart.

Reach out your words. Reach out all the tendrils of compassion that move, invisibly, where we cannot touch. Promise this world your love—for better or for worse, in sickness and in health, so long as we all shall live.

Love in the time of Covid-19

(With a nod to Gabriel Garcia Marquez novel, Love in the Time of Cholera)

Well friends I believe it is safe to say that we have never experienced anything like the Coronavirus pandemic in our lifetime. The other night I was asked by our daughter: “Dad, is this what 9/11 felt like.” After a moment, I said: “No, this is different. 9/11 was a horrible day of shock, fear and sadness. But after two or three days we didn't feel at risk. The terror attack rocked us to our core. Many changes were made in the way we traveled. But we came to tap into a national spirit of unity and support. Within weeks life was pretty much back to normal. We went to church, went out to dinner, went shopping, went

back to school, and spent time with friends. Even baseball and the NFL were back in business within a few weeks.”

There may be some of you who remember the polio scare, or even remember stories about the 1918-1919 flu pandemic. Certainly, the present crisis is similar to these earlier events.

World War II? Life changed dramatically as sons and daughters were drafted and sent overseas. I cannot imagine the worry that parents, spouses and children felt daily. The dangers and horrors that service men and women faced are incomprehensible to me.

For me, what makes the Coronavirus so difficult to get my head and heart around is the isolation of it all. While maintaining social distance is absolutely important, we NEED each other! Being the “body of Christ” is a concept of social togetherness, engagement, touch, body to body, sitting next to folks, welcoming everyone. Jesus touched lepers and we too are called to make room for the sick, the lonely, particularly the isolated.

This is a real theological dilemma for Veronica and for me, indeed the entire staff. For those who need our food pantry to survive, what do we do? Thanks to Paul and the volunteers the food is now packaged and handed out as folks pass by outside. What about the women and men who need 12 step programs to make it through each day? We have invited these groups to continue meeting at FHC, spreading the chairs to create the necessary space.

But, as you know, we have closed the church for worship, ministry meetings, choir and other programs.

So, what does one do to continue to love one another in the time of Covid-19? Well...

- Join us for worship on your computer as we offer a video/audio of Sunday service. It is shorter than usual (a positive perhaps) and we have to worship without the choir (very much a negative) but we will worship God, and pray together, and maybe even sing a song or two. (Watch for announcements!)

- Worship with your family. It is simple: read a passage of scripture and talk about it, sing a favorite song, say prayers together. (*Shhh.... Don't tell anyone but a minister is not required to praise God!*)
- We are scrambling to get up to speed on social media and platforms like Zoom or Google Meet so we can continue to hold meetings but from the safety of our homes.
- Call someone to let them know you care. Write more letters. May your prayers become actions!
- Pay your pledge. It is vitally important that we keep the church financially sound.
- If you have the extra means then contribute to the needs of those who are particularly affected. It may be that members of FHC have real needs for groceries, medicine and other necessities. Not everyone in the church is financially stable.
- If you are young and in the low risk population perhaps you can go to the grocery store for the elderly, leaving the bags on the front or back steps. You may be low risk but you can still spread the virus.

God's work goes on. In time we will be back together. As with the other historical crises, this Coronavirus too shall pass.

May this crisis become the opportunity for faith, hope and love that does not stop in the time of Covid-19.

God bless you,

John

The Next Exploring Membership Course! Will be held May 16 from 9 am-12 pm and May 17 from 9 am-10:30 am. Come join, explore, or just learn more about us! **Please RSVP to Angela (church growth ministry) at churchgrowth@fhcpresb.org to attend.** Light breakfast will be served.

Volunteer Opportunities

The following are ways in which you can help Leonor and her family as needed:

1. Picking up Leonor and/or the boys when they need to come to Cleveland from Akron
2. Taking Leonor and the boys back to Akron
3. Providing meals when the family is in Cleveland
4. Providing activities for Luis Mario (8) and Adan (6) during the day and evenings when they are in Cleveland
5. Overnight stays with the family at the church
6. Food preparation with Leonor for special events (she is trying to earn money by cooking and selling her food and by catering events)
7. Transport of food from our food pantry to Leonor every week

If you are interested in becoming a part of this effort, please contact Charity Stock at charitymcdonald@gmail.com. Your name will be added to the Sign up Genius list and you will be contacted as needed. Thank you for your continued support! - FHC Immigration Task Force

EASTER LILIES, 2020: PLEASE ORDER BY APRIL 10

Name of Donor _____

“Given by” if different from donor _____

Indicate which form of dedication: In memory of / In honor of /In
thanksgiving for/ To celebrate

#Of plants @ \$20.00 per plant _____ Total cost _____

#Of plants to be donated _____

Donated lilies will be taken to members who are ill or shut-in. Thank you for your donation. Please put this in the mail or deliver it to the church office. Please write Easter lilies on the memo line of your check.

Words from Tim and Lynn Shetzer: Please say prayers that Tim and Lynn Shetzer (and all others stranded) will find a way home to the states from Morocco. Also if people can call the state dept. The squeaky wheel gets the grease as they say. Please call: 202-647-4000 (ext. 4) and ask to speak with the overseas citizen services duty officer. There are nearly 1,000 Americans in Casablanca, Morocco who are stranded due to unexpected border closings with no warning. They are all trying to get home.

COVID-19 Checklist to Help the Isolated or Quarantined

Top 5 Things You Can Do to Help Someone Who Is Isolated or Quarantined due to COVID-19

Isolation separates sick people with a contagious disease from people who are not sick.

Quarantine separates and restricts the movement of people who were exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become sick.

Ohio Department of Health Director Amy Acton, M.D., MPH, suggests the following activities to help show kindness to any friends, family, or others who may be isolated or quarantined due to COVID-19:

- Call, text, or video chat with them to let them know you are there to support them. They may be scared and lonely staying home for two weeks. Seeing or hearing a friend this way can show them kindness while still practicing social distancing.
- Drop off food or drinks at their door since they may not have had a chance to prepare, and might be running low on important items. Reach out to see what they need or want and try to drop it off at their door.
- Offer to do their yard work, to take their trash or recycling to the curb, or to drop their mail at their door.
- Offer to run errands to pharmacies or stores for essentials if they need anything to support themselves or household members through an extended period. Consider supplies for their four-legged companions too, like food, treats, or indoor absorbent pads if their owners are unable to take them outside without exposing others.
- Think about what you would like if you were stuck in your home for two weeks. Would you want books, games, other comfort measures? Treat those around you like you'd want to be treated, and consider outside-the-box ways to help those in your life.

For additional information, visit coronavirus.ohio.gov.

For more information, visit: coronavirus.ohio.gov

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Social Groups and Circles

Iris Circle

Women of FHC! We hope to go to lunch Friday April 17 at EDWINS Butcher shop near Shaker Square. We will meet at the church to carpool at 11:30 am. Since EDWINS is one our charities, we wanted to visit the new businesses, the Butcher Shop and the Bakery. Contact Cathy Ghiandoni for reservations at 216 408-2514 or preferably ghiandoni.c@gamil.com. We will update you in and email closer to the date. Save May 21 for a Bible Study with Pastor Veronica Goines. This is a Thursday, hopefully to encourage others to attend. We will have a Pot Luck at Noon in Bodwell Hall. This event was well received last year and we look forward to a thoughtful afternoon.

Group/Hilltoppers and anyone who wants to party.

Our April plan of attending the Suburban Symphony Orchestra has unfortunately been cancelled. We hope to meet Saturday, May 9 for dinner at the Khoury's home and plan for the coming year. Since the Group and Hilltoppers are working together now, we need everyone's input in our planning for a fun, and interesting year. Details will be in May's Tower.

Sundays in April

9:15 am Childcare begins
9:30 am Adult Education/Youth Education
Descant Choir
10:10 am Pathways
10:30 pm Continental Breakfast
Chancel Choir
11:00 am Worship and Children's Worship
12:00 pm Coffee and Conversation
Sine Nomine Rehearsal (every other Sunday)
7:00 pm AA: Promises on Sunday

Staff Emails

Antoinette Richardson	Administration	office@fhcpresb.org
Genetha Clark	Finance	finance@fhcpresb.org
Ann Donkin	Building Mgr.	adonkin@fhcpresb.org
Stavros Gazis	Head Custodian	custodian@fhcpresb.org
Rev. Dr. Veronica Goines	Co-Pastor	pastorgoines@fhcpresb.org
Rev. Dr. John Lentz Jr.	Co-Pastor	pastorlentz@fhcpresb.org
Peg Weissbrod	Outreach/Breeze	pegw@fhcpresb.org
Rev. David Wigger	Family, Youth, Children	CE@fhcpresb.org
Anne Wilson	Music	anne@fhcpresb.org
Tara Beverly	Youth Leader	youthleader@fhcpresb.org



3031 Monticello Blvd, Cleveland Hts. OH 44118

216-321-2660 Fax: 216-320-1214

Pastoral Care Emergencies: 216-319-3596

Email: office@fhcpresb.org Website: www.fhcpresb.org

Rev. Dr. Veronica R. Goines, Rev. Dr. John C. Lentz, Jr., Co-Pastors

Rev. David Wigger, Interim Dir. of Family, Youth & Children's Ministries

Anne Wilson, Director of Music

TOWER deadline: **8 am** on April 16

Custodians' cell phone: 216-217-5257

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Regularly scheduled events: meet every week unless noted	6:00 pm -AA: Progress not Perfection 7:00 pm -AI Anon: Now There's Hope -Book Group 7:30 pm -AA: Borton Group -Boy Scout Trp. #403 -OA Big Book	1:00 pm -Abundance Pantry 5:00 pm -Fitness Fusion exercise class -Bulletin and Weekly email Deadline	7:30 am -Bible & Bagels 12:00 pm -Staff Meeting -AA: Wednesday Women's Group 7:00 pm -Guest Group: Speak Life Bible Study	1:30 pm -English Dance 5:00 pm -Fitness Fusion exercise class 6:20 pm -Voices in Bronze 7:30 pm -Chancel Choir	9:30 am -AI Anon: Hand in Hand	
March 29 11:00 am -Blood Drive	March 30	March 31	April 1 7:00 pm -Safety Protocol Meeting	April 2	April 3	April 4 8:00 am -Men's Group 9:00 am -Tax Prep - Racial Equity 5:00 pm -Easter Cookie Decorating
April 5 3:30 pm Reconnecting with Gods Creation	April 6	April 7 6:00 pm -HCC board Meeting	April 8 7:00 pm -Ministry Meeting	April 9 Maundy Thursday	April 10	April 11 2:00 pm -AA Dinner Meeting
April 12 3:30 pm Reconnecting with Gods Creation	April 13	April 14 6:30 pm -Nominating Committee Meeting	April 15 7:00 pm -TransFamily Meeting -Jung Education Workshop	April 16 8:00 am -TOWER DEADLINE 9:30 am -Pantry Lunch Group	April 17	April 18 1:00 pm -Judy Sieck Memorial
April 19 3:30 pm Reconnecting with Gods Creation	April 20	April 21	April 22 7:00 pm -Session Meeting	April 23	April 24 8:00 pm -Camp Lilac Spaghetti Dinner	April 25
April 26 3:30 pm Reconnecting with Gods Creation	April 27	April 28	April 29 7:00 pm -IFT	April 30	May 1	May 2 8:00 am -Men's Group

April 2020