

Forest Hill Church

presbyterian



Merry Christmas

3031 Monticello Blvd., Cleveland Hts., OH 44118

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

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

Rev. Dr. John C. Lentz, Jr., Pastor
Dr. Amy Wheatley, Dir. of Family, Youth & Children's Ministry
Dr. Qin Ying Tan, Director of Music
Rev. Carol Wedell, Parish Associate

Forest Hill Church: diverse, inclusive, welcoming

*Forest Hill Church:
Christmas Eve
Worship Service*

December 24, 2022 ~ 5:00 pm

You may also join worship online using this link:

<https://youtu.be/Ch4AO7FS6M0>

**Please stand if able*

How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given!

WELCOME

INTROIT

“Lo, How a Rose E’re Blooming”

Madelaine Matej, soprano

CALL TO WORSHIP

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLES

Bissett Family

Reader: In a world where so many despair, God lights a candle of hope in our hearts.

Reader: In a world where so many experience violence, God lights a candle of peace in our hearts.

Reader: In a world where so many are sorrowful, God lights a candle of joy in our hearts.

Reader: In a world where so many experience hatred, God lights a candle of love in our hearts.

Reader: In a world where so many wait in darkness, light comes into our hearts through a baby born in a manger! He is Immanuel, Christ the Lord! Hear the word of the Lord:

For a child has been born for us; a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9:6)

All: The light shines and the darkness cannot put it out!

***PROCESSIONAL HYMN NO. 133**

“O Come All Ye Faithful”

Chancel Choir

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Give us, O God, such love and wonder that with shepherds and magi, and pilgrims unknown, we may come to adore the holy child, the promised savior; and with our gifts worship him, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE LIVING WORD (NRSV)

Isaiah (9:2-7)

Cora Bissett

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness— on them light has shined. You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

*HYMN NO. 115

“Away in a Manger”

Psalm 98

Amy Wheatley

O sing to the Lord a new song, for God has done marvelous things. **The Lord’s right hand and God’s holy arm have gotten the victory.** The Lord has made the victory known; God has revealed the divine vindication in the sight of the nations. **The Lord has remembered the steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel.** All the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God. **Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises.** Sing praises to the Lord with the lyre, with the lyre and the sound of melody. **With trumpets and the sound of the horn make a joyful noise before the King, the Lord.** Let the sea roar, and all that fills it; the world and those who live in it. **Let the floods clap their hands; let the hills sing together for joy at the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is coming to judge the earth.** The Lord will judge the world with righteousness, and the people with equity.

“O Holy Night”
Madelaine Matej, soprano
Chancel Choir

Gospel of Luke (2:1-20)

Cassie Webster, Jessica Owusu, Margaret Dyck

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” So, they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

***HYMN NO. 113**

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

TELLING THE STORY

Rev. Dr. John C. Lentz, Jr.

***HYMN NO. 134**

“Joy to the World”
(Stanzas 1,2,4)

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE 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.

CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING

Giving and Offering is available by texting: 216-400-5300
Or you may give online: <https://fhc.breezechms.com/give/online/>
You may also mail a check to the church office.

OFFERTORY

by Leonard Cohen

“Christmas Hallelujah”
Em Ezell, Madelaine Matej,
Jack Lentz, Seth Ungemach

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

***CLOSING HYMN NO. 122**

“Silent Night, Holy Night!”

***BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE

G.F. Handel

“Hallelujah Chorus”

*Christmas Eve Service TONIGHT at 11:00 PM featuring **Elégie**
with milk and cookie reception after the service.
Christmas Day service tomorrow at 11:00 a.m.
Joyful hymn singing and praise! Come in your PJs!*



Christmas Door Wreaths: Thank you Garden group for your donation!

Prayer Request:

To request prayers for a personal concern, please email Pastor Lentz (pastorlentz@fhcpresb.org) no later than Thursday afternoon of each week for inclusion in next week's congregational prayer.

Prayers are requested this week for:

Cooper Andrews, Kiva Bohanon, Mark Davidson, Deborah Howard, Joanna Klingenstein, Ginie Mast, Kitty McWilliams, Beverly Thomas, Grace Uhle, Susan Way and Sharon Wiggins.

Please remember these homebound members in your prayers:

Robert Kellermeyer, Florence and Ron Klein, Carol Hopkins-Lutz, Emelia McGuire, Beryl and Henrietta Williams.

Care Group: *The All Church Group* will assist our pastors with members' needs in **December**. Please call the church office to report an illness, hospitalization, family emergency, birth or death. Information will be passed on to the **Care Group leader, Kathryn Himmelsteib** (deacons@fhcpresb.org).

Thank you, all office volunteers: Joan Bacon, Lynda Bernays, and Cathy Ghiandoni.

Thank you, all Stream Team Volunteers!

The deadline for the bulletin and weekly email is Tuesday of each week at 5 pm. The next TOWER deadline is **January 12 (for the February TOWER) at 8:00 am**. Please submit your written requests to office@fhcpresb.org.

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CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING

The best gift of Christmas is the baby born in a humble stable who led us and connected us to himself and to each other. Our Christmas Joy Offering allows us to give to those who have given so much of themselves to create a Christian community and continue Jesus' teachings.

The offering honors and celebrates leaders like retired pastors, church workers and their families who have led us, but now find themselves in critical financial need. In addition, it supports emerging leaders, students at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.

50% of your gifts assist current and retired church workers and their families. One minister who retired after a lifetime of service to others suffered a stroke. His wife writes, "we are so grateful to directly benefit from such financial assistance in our great need since [his] stroke."

50% of your gifts make it possible for students to learn and grow in faith at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. John Sitler, Upper School teacher at Menaul School (a recipient of Joy Offering funds) in Albuquerque, N. Mexico writes, "We teach that faith is to be lived out in the world. Because so many young people today see the church as building walls to isolate and separate, we at Menaul are all about opening doors to the richness of God's creation."

Please give what you are able when the offering is collected on December 24, 25 and January 1. Thank you!



