

# The Edge

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF FOREST HILLS CHURCH, APRIL, 2017

## From the *Pastor's Perspective*

In Jerusalem, there are two places identified where Jesus could have been crucified and buried. The more traditional place is covered by the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. It was constructed in A.D. 324 over the places where Jesus' cross was believed to have stood, as well as the nearby cave in which He was believed to have been buried. This 1,700 year-old building, which now stands in the heart of the Old City, is covered with ancient decorations and layers of holy veneration. Shrines and chapels have been constructed over the holiest of places. Incense fills the air. Chanting and prayers hum in the background. Religious utensils and accessories hang everywhere; gold and silver adorn important places. People tightly wiggle from one shrine to another, sometimes in lines two hours long.

As holy as the place is, the hustle of people and the unfamiliar decor make it hard for folks like me to actually worship there. The cave tomb was landscaped away to expose the ledge on which Jesus was laid. The ledge was then covered in marble, and a marble mausoleum with gold and carvings was constructed over it. Same with the hill of Calvary. It is completely overlaid with marble, and the spot where the cross stood is covered by an ornamented shrine allowing only one person in at time, on their knees. Needless to say, it is nearly impossible to envision the "skull rock" (the meaning of Golgotha) or Jesus' tomb when there.

Outside the old city is a quiet garden. An empty cave tomb was unearthed there in 1867 by a British man. Nearby stands a craggy hill looking like a skull and a grape press suggesting that the area was a garden. This place, called "The Garden Tomb," has been left in its natural state. Even if it is not the right location of Jesus' death and burial, it provides a visual and worshipful experience to celebrate Jesus' sacrifice and resurrection.

Which site is right? We may never know. What is important is that we believe that somewhere in or near these two sites, Jesus died for the salvation of us all. It actually happened. It is a historical reality. It has dirt!

## Monthly Church Events

For weekly events see the calendar

April 1	9 am United Methodist Men
April 2	11:30 am Worship team meeting
April 3	6:30 pm LLMT Meeting
April 6	12 pm Sarah Circle 6 pm MLT Town-hall Meeting
April 8	8 am Bluegrass planning meeting
April 9	11:30 am Outreach team meeting
April 10	6:30 pm Finance Meeting
April 12	11:30 am Romeos & Juliets
April 13	1 pm UMW
April 14	7 pm Good Friday Prayer Experience 8 pm Prayer Vigil
April 15	All day Prayer Vigil Until 6 am 6 am Community Care Set- Up 8 am Community Care
April 16	Prayer Vigil
April 17	6:30 pm Trustees Meeting
April 18	10 am Rebecca Circle
April 19	6:30 W.O.W.
April 20	6:30 pm MLT town-hall meeting
April 21	12 pm UMW Meeting 7 pm FMSC Mobile Pack
April 22	8 am UMW Meeting
April 26	5:30 Feed my Starving Children
April 27	Spring Rummage Sale
April 29	8:30 am High clean-up
April 30	11:30 am Bluegrass Luncheon

# Pastor's Perspective Cont...

But Easter, actually, doesn't need a location. The proof of Jesus' resurrection is our own personal experience of Him in our lives. So, Easter is wherever we are, whenever we proclaim, "Christ is risen!" We, thousands of miles away from Jerusalem, verify that Jesus is not dead. Easter is real because it changes us, makes us different. It affects how we live, how we behave, what we say, what we do. Easter is dirty still, for it is located wherever we plant our feet.

We are having two witnesses to Jesus' resurrection at Forest Hills this year, too. We are hosting two main (identical) worship services, one at 9:00 a.m. and one at 11:00 a.m. Both are valid. Both will be true worship. Just as the two worship sites stand in Jerusalem bearing witness to Jesus' resurrection, so we will have two worship services bearing witness to our joy in Easter.

There are other festivities planned, too. On Good Friday we will have a prayer service at 7:00 p.m. The Prayer Vigil will begin after the Good Friday service and continue nonstop until Easter morning. At 6:00 a.m. on Easter morning there will be a Sunrise service at Forest Lake Memorial Park to greet the rising of the Son. An hour before each main worship service will be breakfast and the Hunt for Easter at the church.

This Easter, make the spiritual pilgrimage: not to Jerusalem, but to the gatherings of worshipers who witness to Jesus' resurrection at Forest Hills. We don't need an empty tomb for proof. We have the opportunity to meet and experience the living Jesus. Don't miss this opportunity. Your eternal life depends on it!

Pastor David

## Events and Info

### **40 Day – 40 Items – Pick up your bag!**

Each of the next 40 days remove one clean and reusable item from your house that you no longer wear or need and put it into a black trash bag. Black is the color for repentance, for cleaning out, for Lent. Bring your full bag to worship by Easter morning, and we'll donate them all to the church's Rummage Sale and Community Helping Hand Thrift store.

### **Community Care**

Saturday April 15th 8 am - 11 am  
\$20 Donation at the door, bring a basket or two for all you things.

### **Bluegrass Festival Luncheon**

Sunday April 30th  
we are having a fundraiser the last Sunday of each month following worship to help cover costs for the Bluegrass Festival in July. Be sure to stay and eat!

### **Romeo's and Juliet's**

Will be April 12th at 11:30 a.m. More details to come; watch for updates on locations.

### **Easter Service**

6:00 am Easter Sunrise Service at Lakeside Memorial Park

8:00 am Easter Breakfast and Hunt for Easter

9:00 am Easter Worship

10:00 am Easter Breakfast and Hunt for Easter

11:00 am Easter Worship

### **Adult Fellowship**

Will be April 8th at 5:45 pm. Watch for the sign up Sheet in the lobby.

### **A Call to Prayer**

Forest Hills is a place of prayer! We want to move where the Lord is leading by asking, "God, what is Your call for us?" To do that, we need everyone seeking God together. To receive daily prayer prompts on your phone simply text your name and number to [612-200-4421](tel:612-200-4421).

# Worship's Word

Jesus declares in Mark 11:17 that God's temple will be called a house of prayer for all nations. Jesus is throwing out merchants and money changers while he says it. Jesus is also quoting the prophet Isaiah as he is wont to do. At the time, the temple was a holy venue. It was the very place where God chose to dwell!

We don't give too much thought to the temple today. We understand that our church building itself is not in any way holy. God has instead brought about a way in which his presence can reside within our hearts. You and I now exist as God's holy temple.

What does that mean for us? Is Jesus throwing merchandise and money out? Is he proclaiming that we ought to live as a house of prayer?

I think so. Prayer is so fundamental, it can never be overstated. It can never be overdone. In fact, the more we do it, the more we see the need for it. I want what Jesus wants: to live my life as a house of prayer. To follow after his example. To encourage others to do the same.

This month in worship, we will be lifting up a new song unto the Lord. And just like the priests would slaughter a sheep or a goat in the temple, so we are going to lay ourselves down at the alter with a simple prayer: "You can have it all Lord."

"All" is a scary word because it leaves nothing out. There are storage rooms in our hearts filled with things we would like to hang on to. But now is the time to lay ourselves before God, asking him to take it all. The result is peace and joy.

*There is no greater call  
Than giving You my all  
There is no greater love  
No higher name above  
I lay it all down*

*You can have it all, Lord.*

For the King,

Andrew

# Scott's Script...

What's your story?



## Speaking in Story

A lot of times in churches, we say things like “we want to do it like Jesus” or we talk about doing ministry like Jesus did. And it makes perfect sense; I mean, we are followers of Jesus, so why not do ministry and teach like He did? In the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke), Jesus communicates through story about 35% of the time. Jesus knew something 2,000 years ago that marketing experts are just realizing: storytelling is the most powerful form of human communication. Storytelling uniquely drives empathy for the listeners, and it gets people to pay attention! When Jesus was presented with a tricky question, He responded with a story that captured the attention of the listeners and got them to think through the question and answer much deeper than before. Here at Forest Hills Church, we want to have faith in and live like Jesus, but we also want to teach and be like Jesus in so many ways! What would it look like if we shifted to make a third of our communication and teaching based on stories?

If you have a story of your faith or someone you know that you think would be good to share, please email me at [youth@foresthillsunc.net](mailto:youth@foresthillsunc.net)! Let's build a culture of storytelling together!

Grace and Peace,  
Scott Van Daalen

# Kids Korner...

## Easter at Forest Hills

I love Easter! It is my favorite holiday. It encompasses everything that it means to be a Christian. It is the ultimate celebration of the good things with which God continually blesses us. We have new life, victory over the grave, a living, breathing Savior who stands by us at every moment, an unapproachable God who now chooses to dwell within us. There is certainly a lot going on at Easter!

How do we handle all of this good news? What do we do with all of this glorious truth?

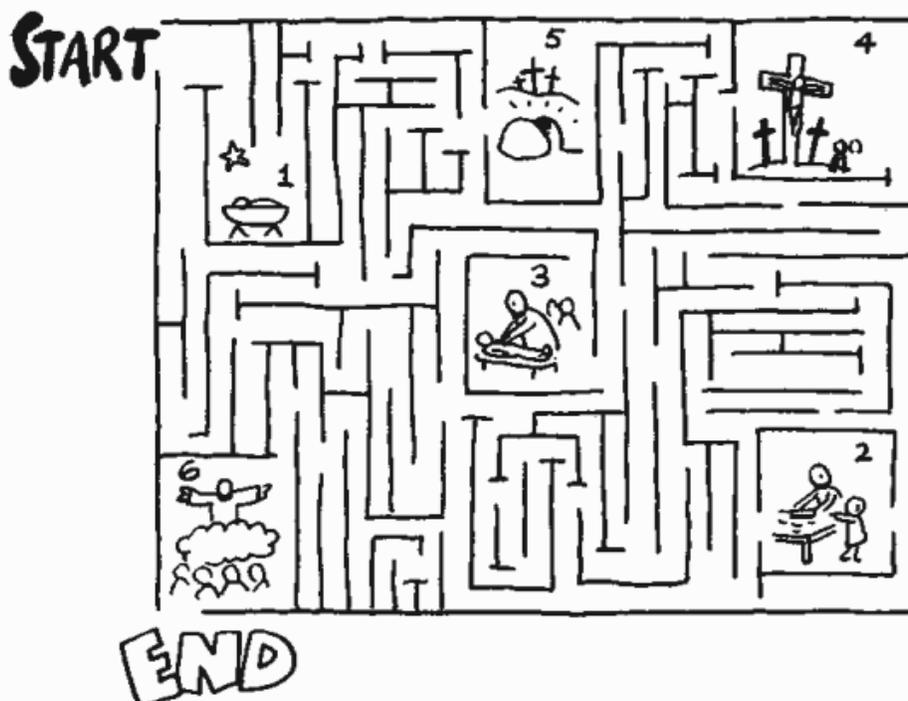
We buy candy. We hunt for eggs. We talk about the Easter bunny. We have brunch. My kids love Easter because they know that there is candy involved.

Like so many other things in our lives, we have filled the greatest day of the year with noise and distraction...and sugar. Easter is preceded by Lent, which is a time meant for us to reflect upon who we are, a time of confession and emptying ourselves before God. Easter is the grand finale! It is the fulfillment of our greatest desires! We win! That's good news!

Let's make this Easter all about the Good News! Invite your friends and neighbors, your family and friends, to Forest Hills on Easter morning. We have something for everyone: Three services (take your pick), the Hunt for Easter (an interactive experience for both adults and kids), breakfast (for eating), Kid's Church and enough joy to go around!

People are getting duped thinking that Easter is about chocolate eggs! Let's invite them to church to fill them in on the real story.

## CAN YOU FIND YOUR WAY?



You must travel right through each event in Jesus' life in the right order!

1. Jesus is born at Bethlehem.
2. Joseph teaches Jesus to work as a carpenter.
3. Jesus heals a little girl.
4. Jesus is crucified.
5. Jesus is alive again.
6. Jesus ascends to heaven.