

# The Edge

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF FOREST HILLS CHURCH  
JANUARY 2018

## From the Pastor's Perspective

In January we are asking EVERYONE in our church to join one of the new small groups we're starting. Ten different people are hosting a small group at different days, times, and locations. There's one that works for you! Groups will run weekly for six weeks (January 7 through Feb. 13), and sessions are planned to be about 90 minutes each. All ages are urged to sign up!

Small groups are a key way for us as individuals and as a whole church to reignite our spirituality and to grow deeper in our relationship with Jesus. The first small group cycle will use a method of listening to Scripture passages and having sharing times that invites the Holy Spirit to make that passage real in our daily lives. It's called *lectio divina*, and the point is to let the Holy Spirit speak to us through Scripture, rather than focusing on learning information about the Bible, like we would in a typical Bible study.

Some of the small group hosts are suggesting the group share a meal together. Some groups are going to meet Wednesday evening after the shared meal (in place of the "more" activity). From January 7 - Feb. 13, the Wednesday activity after the meal each week will be either small group or board games. Families with school-age children are asked to consider signing up for one of the Wednesday evening groups. make it possible for us to gather all the kids into one kid's sharing time for part of the group session.

Although there are a variety of options, all of the groups will offer the same session. They will follow the Winter Sunday message series, "At the Rail." The series calls us back to our primary and foundational relationship with Jesus, inviting us to go "back to the prayer rail" to deepen our commitment to Jesus and our experience of the Holy Spirit directly in our lives.

Launching church-wide small groups is the fourth part of our church's 5-part Healthy Church Initiative (HCI) plan for our Jubilee year. The first part (PAUSE) is to declutter our building, administrative structure, and our church schedule. The newly-formed Action Ministry Team (AMT) is currently working to continue to implement what some of us are calling the "purge"

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### Monthly Church Events

For weekly events see the calendar

January 1	CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED
January 2	11:30-3:30 Youth Eko Backen Trip
January 3	5:30 pm M&M—Pot Luck
January 4	6:30 pm Small Group Training
January 6	9:00 am United Methodist Men
January 10	10:00 am Birchwood 5:30 pm M&M—Pancakes
January 13	5:45 pm Adult Fellowship
January 14	5pm YPA Dress Rehearsal
January 15	Martin Luther King Day 6:30 pm CMMT Meeting
January 16	10:00 am Rebecca Circle
January 17	11:30 am Romeos and Juliets 5:30 pm M&M (Coley Family)
January 19	5:00 pm Unload Community Care Truck 5:00 pm YPA Dress Rehearsal

## Pastor's Perspective Cont'd

and "pause!" (See AMT update in this newsletter.)

The second part (WORSHIP) is simple, soulful Sunday worship for all ages, which we started in August, and continue to modify through experimentation. The third (FELLOWSHIP) is inter-generational Wednesdays, and we started Meal and More (M&M) in September. The fourth part (NURTURE), is four cycles throughout the year of six-week, weekly small group sessions engaging the whole church. We are launching our first in January!

There will be no small groups from Feb. 14 through April 1, but the next weekly small group session will be from April 8 through May 26. We will invite people to form different small groups each session in order to include as many new people as possible.

Sign up for a small group! You can sign up in the church lobby, on the church website, or by contacting the church office. Talk to one of the hosts. Chances are, there's one you know! So, don't miss out! We're committing to do this together as a church.

We need small groups! You need this small group! It's a great way to begin our church's Jubilee year, as well as the 2018 calendar year! It's a great way to jumpstart your faith!

New year, new starts. Keeping Jesus in our hearts!

Happy New Year!

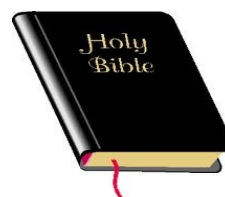
Pastor David

## Winter Message Series: "At the Rail"

We begin the new year and our Sabbath Jubilee by rekindling our passionate spirituality. For six weeks starting Sun., Jan. 7, we are going back to our first Love, and recommitting ourselves and our church to our foundational relationship with Jesus. We will follow Peter's words to Jesus as he struggled to follow Him closely; we are much like Peter! Each Sunday during this series we will invite people to spend time at the altar prayer railing during worship to put their hearts with God's. We'll see you at the rail!



## Worship's Word



We are entering into an exciting time at Forest Hills! I know it must seem like we have been talking about this Jubilee Year for so long, we have been talking about certain changes that are coming, talking about rest and talking about sitting, like Mary, at the feet of Jesus. That is a lot of talk!

The time has now come for us to do. It is now up to us to live into the plan that we believe God has laid before us. It might be an uncomfortable plan and it might not make sense to everyone, but we believe God is calling us to pursue a deeper relationship with Him. So laying aside our personal preferences and committing ourselves to Sunday mornings and small groups, we look ahead to a year of re-focus and rejuvenation.

January 20	6 am Community Care Set-up 8 am Community Care
January 21	HYMN SING 3:00 pm YPA Performance— Footloose 7:00 pm YPA Performance— Footloose
January 24	5:30 pm M&M (Nancy's kitchen)
January 25	7:00 pm YPA Performance— Footloose
January 26	7:00 pm YPA Performance— Footloose
January 27	7:00 pm YPA Performance— Footloose
January 28	6:30 pm Lifeline
January 31	5:30 pm M&M (Nancy's kitchen)

To begin this Year of Jubilee, we come before God with honesty and openness. This is what our "At the Rail" series is all about. The altar rail stands as an invitation to come as you are, but expect to be changed. We all have baggage, questions, sin and weakness. We bring all of these before God at the rail, placing all of who we are on the altar as a living sacrifice. This is hard work...it's dangerous because we are putting away the old things in exchange for something new. It requires trust. Do we trust God enough to turn over what we are currently holding so we are able to receive what he wants to give us?

As a church, we start this Jubilee year together singing a new song. It's called, "Different". Typically, worship songs should focus on God, his greatness, his power and majesty. This one, however, is about us. It is about our cry to God :

"I want to be different, I want to be changed  
'Till all of me is gone and all that remains  
Is a fire so bright the whole world can see  
That there's something different, so come and be different in me."

Jesus makes all the difference. People who sit at his feet and listen to his voice are different. People who die to themselves so God's light can shine through are different. This Jubilee Year will be different. Come to the rails and get back on track.

For the King,

## FOREST HILLS YOUTH

What is the Christmas season without a lot of parties? The youth group had two parties this year. On Dec 17th we had our annual Christmas party, we discussed how Christmas isn't always like we expect. The first Christmas definitely didn't happen as Mary and Joseph expected it, but we can find joy in the unexpected. If we stay focused on the real gift, we will never be disappointed. The teens also made Christmas cookies for the police department.

On Dec 28th, we kept the parties going with an 80s Throwback Party. This was a fun day for the teens to just hang out together during break. We played some games, did some trivia, watched a movie and of course ate lots of food. We also made baby blankets for the crisis center and dog / cat toys for the Humane Society. It was such a fun day of fellowship.

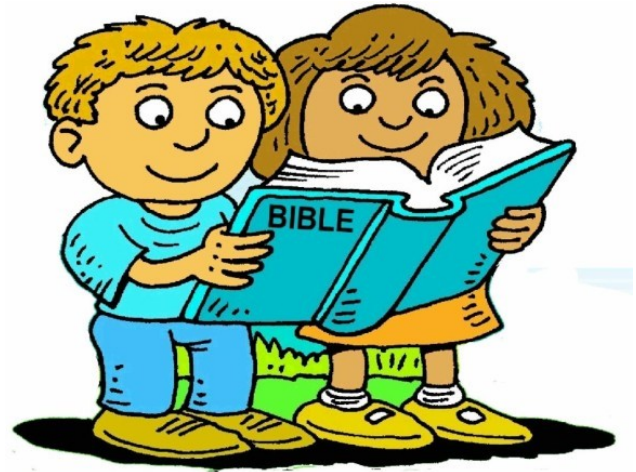
We finished off the year by continuing our study on prayer. We discussed how to hear God whether he speaks loudly like a fiery bush or softly like a gentle whisper.

It's exciting to now start a new year. We will be starting a new series this January about "Who am I?". We will be discussing our identity in Christ and what that means for us.

*1 Peter 2:9-10 "...for you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God's very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light. Once you had no identity as a people; now you are God's people. Once you received no mercy; now you have received God's mercy."*

Cassi - Director of Youth Ministries

# KID'S CORNER



Our Jubilee year has officially begun!

We have embarked on a journey of rest, of letting go and of trusting God. When it comes to our kids, we have discontinued our normal Wednesday activities, and we no longer have a separate Kid's Church on Sundays. We stopped these ministries back in September since we did not want to pull the plug mid-season. We also needed to allow for some time to think carefully about what our Jubilee year should look like.

But we are in a bit of a paradox: Moving forward, we want our small groups to constitute the main focus of our time and energy. We do not want to be distracted from the community and relationships that small groups bring. We want everyone to be involved! In order to make that a reality, we have freed up our adult leaders from teaching Awana and Kid's church. We want them to be devoted to a small group instead! However, we still have the kids to think about.

Over the past few months, we have had some small groups meeting with kids and we have wrestled with the best way to incorporate them into an inter-generational group. Overall, as a church, we have overvalued the transmission of information and undervalued the importance of spiritual formation. Kids need to see and hear how faith is modeled and lived out. And there are no better people to do this than their own parents and other adults from church. That said, we have sought to strike a balance between these two important poles and to do justice to both.

If you have kids, sign-up for a small group that meets on Wednesday nights! (There are several of them). Come Jan. 10th we will gather at church for our normal meal at 5:30. Then at 6:15 everyone will break into one of the classrooms with their group. Kids are also a part of this portion. The group will have time to talk about the Scripture passage, engage in some activities and pray for one another. About halfway through (7:00) the kids will then be invited to join me (Andrew) in the youth room for a more lesson-based time. This would be similar to Awana and/or Kid's Church but it would continue to allow our adult leaders to remain committed to their own small group time.

While the kids are together, learning in a Sunday school type setting, parents and other adults will have an opportunity to dig a little deeper into the Scripture passage and speak freely about life and faith.

With this plan in place, we hope to take seriously our call to enact a Jubilee rest as well as provide both Biblical information and spiritual formation for our kids. Sign up for a small group either online or on paper in the lobby area! Let's sit with Jesus together!

For the King,

-Andrew





# FOREST HILLS YEAR IN REVIEW

This has been quite a year at Forest Hills United Methodist Church! From a trip to the Holy Land and camp at Red Rock, to missions trips to Dulac, Louisiana and Duluth/Superior (Wildfire), we did a lot of work, learned a lot, and helped a lot of people. We also had a lot of fun.

Speaking of missions work, we also collected food for the kids during the summer, put on a fantastic Bluegrass Festival, in which we collected \$5010, allowing us to donate generously to Feed My Starving Children, St. Andrew's Family Shelter, and Our Lady School of the Mountains (Paintsville, KY). We also gave \$750 in gifts to Emma Norton Residents for Christmas, held Community and Car-care weekends every month, had 2 Rummage Sales, an Arts and Crafts Sale, and we celebrated 50 years of being our church in a BIG way. For the last three months, it seemed as if every moment was consumed in one way or another by our 50th Anniversary and celebration. Between our guest Pastors, locating former church members, collecting food, and preparing for the "big day," our church was busy! We also added M&M, replacing the former Wednesday night programming activities with something more specific to fellowshiping between all church members, and our services were changed to be more kid-friendly.

As we look back at 2017, it becomes clear that we are a busy church, used to being active in so many things. Now we begin this year of Jubilee in 2018.

This is a year of rest for us at Forest Hills. It is time to take a break from the busyness of the past, and rest with our God and each other. Its time to discern what Jesus has planned for our future. Its time for something new! While none of us knows what our Lord has in store for us, our faith

## Events and Info

### Adult Fellowship

January 13th at 5:45 pm. Watch for the sign-up sheet in the lobby.

### Romeo's and Juliet's

January 17th at 11:30 a.m. More details to come; watch for updates on locations.

### Community Care

Saturday January 20th 8 am - 11 am  
Truck unloading Friday, January 19th at 5pm

### Small Groups Starting January 7th!

Small Groups begin on January 7th!  
We will be following the winter Sermon Series "At the Rail." Sign up sheets are in the lobby!  
Join us, as we meet Jesus at the rail

### Lifeline Sunday January 28th at 6:30 pm

Sometimes God can feel distant and it seems like we are alone. If you are weary and disconnected, come and seek God's presence. Lifeline is a simple gathering of prayer and praise. Come and be filled!