

# The Edge

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF FOREST HILLS CHURCH, FEBRUARY 2017

## From the *Pastor's Perspective*



*"Pray continually." -1 Thessalonians 5:17*

God is up to something in our church! We want a clearer understanding of what that is. So, our church has begun the Healthy Church Initiative (HCI) journey to discern the direction and future into which God is leading us.

The first part of our HCI journey is prayer and self-study. The HCI prayer team is leading us in a renewed initiative of prayer as a church together. First, we are cultivating our own personal prayer lives. Check out the resources for the Prayer of Examen on the church's web site. The next step will be praying together for our church.

Prayer is the life-blood of our faith, and the currency of our relationship with Jesus. It unleashes the Holy Spirit in our lives, and it aligns our hearts and wills to God's.

Christians talk a lot about prayer. It is a lot of things. But in the end, prayer is one of those Christian blessings that I cannot fully grasp. (Check out my recent blog on prayer the church's web site - I grapple with some of the questions around prayer.) What I do know is that in a basic sense, prayer is simply connecting with God. It is from that connection that life and power and peace and hope and joy and trust all flow. As Christians we have the amazing joy of an intimate, personal relationship with God. It is so personal that we can talk with God on a one-to-one basis, just as we talk with any other person.

One of the shortest verses in the Bible is one of the most important. 1 Thessalonians 5:17 says, "pray continually." Prayer is not only a Christian discipline, it is a continual means of existence. It is as important as breathing, and should be as continual. Praying continually is an ongoing awareness of Christ's presence, with the natural inclination to bring before Him whatever I'm thinking about or doing.

Wesley once observed "God will do nothing but in answer to prayer." We at Forest Hills UMC want God to move. We want God to act. We want God to lead. We want God's will to be done. We want a hope and a future for our church that is centered in God's plan for us. If this is truly the case, then we need to get serious about prayer. There is much about prayer that I don't fully understand, but I do know that if we want God to lead us and bless us, we need to be praying. So as your pastor, I call us to prayer.

Spend intentional time each day in prayer. Pray individually for your own personal needs. Pray for the needs of our community,

## Monthly Church Events

For weekly events see the calendar

Feb 2	12 pm Sarah Circle
Feb 3	Youth Super bowl lock-in
Feb 4	9 am United Methodist Men
Feb 6	6:30 pm LLMT Meeting
Feb 8	10 am Birchwood Service
Feb 9	6 pm SPRT Meeting
Feb 11	6 pm Adult Fellowship
Feb 13	6:30 pm Finance Meeting
Feb 14	10 am Rebecca Circle 5 pm Valentines Date Night
Feb 15	11:30 am Romeos & Juliets 6 pm History of the Holy Land 6:30 pm W.O.W
Feb 16	6:30 pm MLT Meeting
Feb 18	6 am Community Care Set- Up 8 am Community Care
Feb 20	Dulac Mission Trip Leaves 6:30 pm Trustees Meeting
Feb 25	10 am Confirming HCI Workshop
Feb 26	11:30 am Lunch Service

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## Pastor's Perspective Cont...

country and world as you read the newspaper. Pray for your co-workers at work. Pray for those driving next to you on the road. Pray for those suspicious-looking folks on the street. Pray for the grumpy cashier at the grocery store. Pray for the kids you don't want your child to hang around. Pray for your loved ones on their birthdays. Pray for our church.

Yes, pray for our church. Pray earnestly. Pray intentionally. Pray for individuals of our church family by name. Take the Church Directory and put it with your devotions; pray for a few people each day. Page through the church's website, newsletter, and bulletins, praying for the ministries and issues of our church life. Next time you come to church, wander through all the rooms and pray for the ministries that take place there.

We will be emphasizing prayer in our congregational life as well. Come into the sanctuary on Sunday mornings at 8:30 a.m. and pray for that morning's worship as well as the whole life of the church. After worship, spend some minutes with the prayer team at the front of the sanctuary praying for people who have specific needs. Everything we do as a congregation needs to be blanketed in prayer.

I get a sense that as a church we are at a critical time. Prayer, I feel, will be the pivotal factor for our future. If we want God to be answering, we need to be praying! Jesus said, "If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you" (John 15:7). As a congregation, let's spend some time asking.

Pastor David

## Events and Info

### AARP TAXES

Starting Tuesday, Feb. 7th AARP is offering free tax help for low-to-middle-income taxpayers, with special attention to those 60 and older.

TUES & WED 9 am-2 pm

For an appointment, please call: 651-675-7126

### Adult Fellowship

Will be Feb. 11th at 5:45 pm @ New Bangkok in Forest Lake.

Sign up sheet will be located in the lobby.

### Romeo's and Juliet's

Will be Feb. 16th at 11:30 a.m. More details to come; watch for updates on locations.

### Dulac Mission Trip

Feb. 20th-24th

For more information call Kay Bergerson at (612) 590-8354 or online at [www.foresthillsumc.net](http://www.foresthillsumc.net)

### Super Bowl Sub Sale

Youth will raise money for their summer mission trips by selling subs for the Super Bowl. The order forms are available in the lobby or online. Deadline is Sat. Feb. 4th.

### Bluegrass Festival Potluck Luncheon

Sunday Feb. 26th

We are having a potluck fundraiser the last Sunday of each month following worship to help cover costs for the Bluegrass bands for the Bluegrass Festival in July. Bring a dish to share, but be sure to stay and eat!

### Community Care

Saturday Feb. 21st

8 am - 11 am

\$20 Donation at the door, bring a basket or two for all you things.

# Worship's Word

Who can stop the Lord Almighty?

It's a rhetorical question, one whose answer is obvious. And if it is obvious that our Almighty God cannot be stopped by any power or force, would the same hold true for his church?

I want to sound the alarm, to rally the troops, to raise a war cry. Our church building ought to be less of a serene sanctuary and more of a bustling HQ.

We are engaged in battle. We have been given a mission should we choose to accept it. It's a simple mandate: Make disciples. In order to do so we fight against ideologies, we fight against bad theology, we fight against our own indifference. Our greatest enemy however, remains unseen; the spiritual forces of evil that seek to destroy every human heart (see Eph. 6:12).

How can we defeat such an enemy?

We are going to sing a new song to the Lord in worship, it's a song of both victory and surrender:

Our God is the Lion of Judah  
He's roaring with power, he's fighting our battles  
Our God is the Lamb that was slain  
For the sins of the world, His blood breaks the chains  
And every knee will bow before the Lion and the Lamb

So often we relegate this victory to a matter of faith. We believe that we will win, but we don't see it played out in our reality. It is easy to feel defeated when we don't experience the spoils of victory. I am calling for a change of posture. When we bow before the Lord, when we surrender to him, he takes up our fight. Our challenge is not to do more, or to fight harder, but rather to remain on our knees in prayer. In this way, and only in this way, will we see new disciples made.

“Then one of the elders said to me, ‘Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, has triumphed!’”  
Revelation 5:5

For the King,

Andrew



# Scott's Script



Storytelling within marketing has quickly developed into the hottest marketing trend. Though the business world is currently trying to master it, the Church is the one that kicked off the idea; we should be the pros!

The last few years, I have had the chance to work with a variety of companies, groups, and people to try to get exposure to their business or product through video. This has exposed me to some of the basic marketing concepts used in the business and non-profit world. Currently, the most popular trend by far is narrative or storytelling. Companies have completely changed the way they market by putting their brand's story as the foundation of what they do.

What if we took the same approach? The very foundation of what we are should be built on the foundation of what Christ has done for us. In Acts, we see the early Christian church spreading like wild fire.

However, it is not growing so fast because the Apostles have developed a secret to church growth. It's not because they were simply amazing preachers. It is the story of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit!

As Christians, we have the most beautiful story ever told: the story of God coming closer and closer to us and eventually living within us through the Holy Spirit! We get the privilege and duty to share this story! This way of thinking has been the cornerstone of how Visual Media has been developed at Forest Hills. We want to tell stories of what we are doing and the way God has moved!

Grace and Peace,

Scott Van Daalen





## **HEALTHY CHURCH INITIATIVE (HCI) FOR FOREST HILLS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH (FHUMC)**

January 2017

Forest Hills United Methodist Church is excited to participate in the Healthy Church Initiative (HCI) promoted by the United Methodist Conference of Minnesota. This program is designed to aid churches that have shown to be a “healthy church.” FHUMC is seen, by the conference, as a church that is working hard to promote the kingdom of Jesus Christ and God, His father, in today’s world. This initiative is designed to have a church self-study itself in time proven methods that have aided other churches to do an even better job of working toward successfully advancing God’s Kingdom.

The Minnesota United Methodist Conference, upon accepting FHUMC’s application to be included in the process, is providing \$10,000 to Forest Hills to be spent over the next three-year study. This money is used to cover various costs associated with this initiative. Forest Hills is asked to commit \$3,000 and to also

include a portion of its budget ready for potential projects. Having attended or more workshops, and after much prayer, the Ministry Leadership Team and staff decided to be a part of the process, believing that God has been leading us toward this introspection exercise. Our Ministry Leadership Team (MLT) believes that FHUMC does much that is good that serves God’s kingdom. The question is, “What is best?” It is our hope that our involvement in the HCI process will help us to define this.

Currently, there are two teams working on this project. The Prayer Team and Communication, headed by Steve Ruter and Andrew Bonsell, provides what we believe is the most important thing that is done at FHUMC: consistent PRAYER! Officially a part of this team are: Hellen Ash, Lynn Ruter, Teresa Werner, Jim Letourneau, Marilee Leonard and the church prayer team. The group is praying for many aspects of faith building and growth by asking God constantly for His guidance of our/His church. It is also leading the call to prayer by the whole church. We believe that this is the crux of much of what has to be done, and we are asking for His presence at all times in all that we do, and now, especially in the HCI program.

The second team is the Leadership and Team, comprised of MLT members: Greg Klausen, Paulette Johnson, Gina Lindholm, Teresa Gruber. Others are: Lay Leader, Bob Rosenbaum, Pastor David, Scott Van Daalen, Rozanne Foster, Louis James, Amanda Lucas, Angie Prchal, and any of you who may wish to be a part of the process. This team is guiding the overall process and doing much of the assessment of the process, which is very involved.

Other activities of the process is a Weekend Consultation early spring and a National Church Development (NCD) Survey conducted this month (January). From all of this, and more, comes proposed prescriptions from the conference on which our church will vote to accept or not. At a specifically-called church conference. If any one of the prescriptions are voted down, the process stops at that time.

As leaders, it is our hope that all this work and time results in making FHUMC even more relevant to our greater community than it is now. We ask for your prayer in this matter.

**GOD IS GREAT!**

Bob Rosenbaultm, Lay Leader

Pastor David