

# The Edge

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF FOREST HILLS CHURCH  
FEBRUARY 2019

## From the Pastor's Perspective

### Monthly Church Events

For weekly events see the calendar

A Very Unique Gathering!

Special United Methodist General (Global) Conference  
February 23-26, St. Louis, MO

*"I pray that they will all be one, just as you and I are one--as you are in me, Father, and I am in you. And may they be in us so that the world will believe you sent me." -John 17:21*

The United Methodist Church, the world-wide denomination to which Forest Hills United Methodist Church belongs, is hosting a special General (global) Conference later this month. This is a special conference called for the purpose of setting our church's official stance on human sexuality.

Before 1972, homosexuality was not referenced in our church's official guidelines, published in what is called The United Methodist Book of Discipline. Then, in 1972, included in this Book of Discipline was the declarative statement that "homosexuality is incompatible with the Christian lifestyle." Ever since then, United Methodists have disagreed about this statement. On this stance, the *United* Methodist Church has never been *united!*

Our global decision-making body, called General Conference, meets every four years. There are delegates from every continent, as the United Methodist Church is a world-wide church. Only the General Conference can make changes to

February 2	9:00 am United Methodist Men
February 3	<b>GROW GROUPS START</b> HOLY COMMUNION 8:30 am Prayer 8:45 am Grow Group 10:00 am Worship 11:15 am Grow Group
February 6	5:30 pm Shared Meal - Chow Mein/ Chicken Nuggets & Mac and Cheese 6:15 pm Echo, Echo Jr., Confirmation and Youth Group
February 7	12:00 pm Sarah Circle
February 8	7:00 am Grow Group
February 9	9:30 am Discipleship Training 5:45 pm Adult Fellowship
February 10	8:30 am Prayer 8:45 am Grow Group 10:00 am Worship 11:15 am Grow Group

## *Pastor's Perspective Cont'd*

our Book of Discipline. And every time they've met since 1976, there has been legislation to modify our official stance on homosexuality.

Well, in 2016, there were motions to remove references to homosexuality from The Book of Discipline. It looked like the motion was going to again be defeated, and there was an up swelling threat of schism. It seemed a significant number of United Methodists would break away because they believed so differently about homosexuality. So, on the floor, they declared a pause, and asked the bishops to help our church find a way forward that would not lead to schism.

The bishops assembled a team of 32 very diverse United Methodists from all over the glob to meet together and talk about ideas; they met together for two years. They sought ways to have conversation, to listen and to understand, and to propose a way forward. Then, the bishops called a special General Conference to be held in St. Louis in February 2019 to resolve our church's official stance on homosexuality. Their priorities have been to preserve the unity of the United Methodist Church, create as wide of a tent of tolerance as possible, and to best position the church for it's Jesus-witness in the world.

So, coming to the General Conference are three proposals. One is the Traditionalist Plan, which will in essence leave the official stance the same. The second is the Connectional Conferences plan, which will create different sub-divisions of the United Methodist Church based on stances on homosexuality. Each local church can decide which connectional conference of the United Methodist Church to be a part of, but all connectional conferences would be under a broader umbrella of the United Methodist Church. The third plan, the one that is recommended by the bishops, is called the One Church Plan. It retains one United Methodist Church, but allows each annual conference, local church, and pastor, to hold their personal beliefs on the issue.

More information on the special General Conference can be found here. [2019 General Conference Special Session](#)

Another good source answers the question, "What is a General Conference Special Session? Why now?" Click here for that information. [What is a General Conference? Why Now?](#)

February 13	5:30 pm Shared Meal - Served by Youth Group 6:15 pm Grow Groups
February 14	<b>HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY!</b> 5:00 pm Valentines Day Date Nite
February 15	7:00 am Grow Group 5:00 pm Unload Community Care Truck
February 16	6:00 am Community Care Set-up 8:00 am Community Care Distribution
February 17	8:30 am Prayer 8:45 am Grow Group 9:45 am HYMN SING 10:00 am Worship 11:15 am Alaska Missions Trip Mtg 11:15 am Grow Group 6:30 pm Lifeline
February 18	PRESIDENTS' DAY
February 19	10:00 am Rebecca Circle
February 20	5:30 pm Shared Meal - Pancakes 6:15 pm Grow Groups
February 21	6:30 pm AMT Meeting
February 22	7:00 am Grow Group
February 24	8:30 am Prayer 8:45 am Grow Group 10:00 am Worship 11:15 am Grow Group
February 25	LEAVE FOR DULAC MISSION TRIP
February 27	5:30 pm Shared Meal - Hosted by Nancy 6:15 pm Grow Groups

For full coverage of General Conference 2019, including live streaming, click here.

[2019 General Conference - Full Coverage](#)

This is going to be a difficult discussion. No matter what happens, it will be painful. But this is the cost of loving those who think differently. We don't think alike. We struggle to find unity. So, as we struggle each in our own lives to love those who think differently, I also call on you to pray for our United Methodist Church. Pray for God's Spirit to lead. Pray for us to reflect His glory in all that we do. Pray for the unity of His church.

Pastor David

## ***End of the Year Financial State of Our Church: Surplus!***

We praise God and thank all the generous givers to God's work at Forest Hills Church in 2018! We are so excited to report that for 2018, overall income was \$4,432 above overall expenses! Adding this to the carryover surplus from 2017, our church has a current surplus of \$16,071! The good news is that this means we will be able to allocate about \$11,000 from this surplus to put towards roofing of the fellowship hall in 2019. We expect the cost of roofing (which is reaching the level of urgent!) to greatly exceed monies already raised for this need, so the carryover surplus will be put to good use! Thank you all again so much for your faithful and generous giving to God's work that we do together at Forest Hills Church. It is so awesome to be a part of a church that is working so hard to make Jesus known, that has such generous givers, and that has careful and faithful stewardship-leaders of our church's resources. Please pray that our church would continue to convert monies, time, and resources into tangible expressions of God's love. At Forest Hills Church, we Love.Grow.Serve!

## ***AMT UPDATE***

The Action Ministry Team has started the new year with a bang! Last Saturday we had a day long retreat at the Gruber's. This extended time really helped us solidify the unity of our team and get us thinking deeply about the culture of Forest Hills.

Our goals for this day included an intentional time of reconnecting to God, personally and as a group. Seeking God, sitting with Jesus and being filled by the Holy Spirit through meditation and prayer allowed that to happen.

We finalized what we call the "Grounding Principles" for establishing and evaluating ministries within our church taken directly from our updated mission statement.

***Forest Hills is Christ-Centered, with a focus on making disciples who love God and others, grow in Christ, and serve our wider communities.***

Love.Grow.Serve. AMT is encouraging each ministry to purposefully take time within their group to evaluate ways to put each "Principle" into the goal of their ministry. How is your ministry making disciples who love God and others? Is your group growing in its faith in Christ? How is Christ's love more visible in our community by this ministry? We have very good ministries at Forest Hills, but how do we make them "God's Best" ministries?

AMT is also finalizing a “New Ministry Proposal Form” to guide new ideas into meeting the new grounding principles. We plan on using a similar form to help us as each ministry, with the help of AMT, evaluates their own group. We will be setting up follow-up conversations with each ministry’s key leaders to talk about how we Love.Grow.Serve. The thoughts and input from your ministry’s perspective is very valuable as our church moves toward the goal of “making disciples who make disciples”.

The Action Ministry Team is excited and energized to continue moving our church into the plan God has for us.

Toward that end, AMT is encouraging all church family members to attend the Connecting New People to a Discipleship Pathway Seminar. Read the article in this Edge Newsletter about it.

God is good, all the time!

Marilee Leonard

## ***Walk to Emmaus***

Below are the dates for the Winter Walk to Emmaus:

Main Street Church (North Branch)

Men February 7-10 2019

Women February 14-17 2019



Walk to Emmaus is a 3 day spiritual retreat that recharges and re-centers you spiritually. Talk to those who have attended from our church: David and Hellen Ash, David and Reese Werner, Steve and Cassi Betker, Chris and Teresa Gruber, Paulette Johnson, and Marilee Leonard. Everyone needs to go - perhaps this is your time!

If you are interested in more information, or need a sponsor, please talk to Teresa Gruber or Pastor David.

## ***Connecting New People to a Discipleship Pathway –Coming Soon***

Our mission is to “make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.” But we often lose sight of that in the busyness of doing things at a church. These sessions are meant to help you refocus on the Great Commission.



Rev. Kelly McCuaig, lead pastor of [Hilltop UMC](#) in Mankato, Minnesota, was called to full-time ministry in fourth grade and has since traveled the world to follow that call. At the forefront of Kelly’s mind is always, “Are we making disciples?” This never-ending journey of walking more closely with Jesus is something Kelly is passionate about pursuing in his own life and leading others to pursue. He is dedicated to helping churches discover how they can make disciples in their own contexts for the transformation of their lives, their families, their communities,

To that end, he has created a seminar, consisting of four Saturday morning sessions. All of the sessions are remotely accessible, or at minimum pre-recorded, so members of the church family can utilize the material in the midst of a busy Lenten/Easter season at their own church.

Everyone at church is welcome to attend.

The training schedule is as follows:

- Session 1: February 9 9:30-noon at Forest Hills church
- Session 2: March 16 9:30-noon at Forest Hills church
- Session 3: April 13 9:30-noon at Forest Hills church
- Session 4: May 11 9:30-noon at Forest Hills church

## ***Grow Groups!***

Grow groups start this Sunday, February 3rd! Wednesday groups start on the 13th. If you haven't signed up for a group yet, there are sign up sheets in the lobby, or you could just show up!

### **Sunday morning before worship:**

Title: "Elijah, A Person Just Like Us"

Host: Rev. Dan Hair

Days: 11 sessions, Sundays, Feb. 3 - April 14

Time: 8:45- 9:45 a.m.

Location: Fellowship Hall

### **Wednesday Evening:**

Title: "Epic of Eden"

Host: Vicky and Jason Keintz

Days: 12 sessions - Wednesdays Feb. 3-May 8

Time: 6:15-7:30 pm

Location: Education Wing Classroom

### **Sunday morning after worship:**

Title: Epic of Eden

Host: David Werner

Days: 12 sessions, Wednesdays, Feb. 3 - May 5

Time: From 11:15 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Location: Fellowship Hall

### **Wednesday Evening:**

Title: Not a Fan: Becoming a Completely Committed Follower of Jesus

Host: Reese Werner

Days: Wednesday - Feb. 13 - March 20

Time: 6:15-7:30 pm

Location: Education Wing Classroom

### **Wednesday Evening:**

Title: Lord of the Rings: A Film Bible Study

Host: Amanda Lucas

Days: 6 sessions, Wednesdays Feb. 13 - March 20

Time: 6:15 - 7:30 p.m.

Location: Education Wing Classroom

### **Friday Morning:**

Title: Why Worry?

Host: Brad Blocher

Days: Fridays, Feb. 1 - March 8

Time: 7:00 am

Location: Fellowship Hall

## ***Worship's Word***

In the cold, harsh wind of the tundra that is February, there lies an oasis of warmth midway through the journey. I am talking of course about Valentine's Day! Yes, it is a concocted marker on the calendar invented to boost Hallmark sales. Yes, affection for loved ones should be expressed every day of the year. No, we do not need a world filled with more cutesy hearts and cupids. Yet, here we are. And since we are here, we ought to make the most of it.

On February 14<sup>th</sup>, Forest Hills will be hosting our Valentine's Day Date Nite! We want to bless the families in our community by providing a worry-free evening for parents. They can drop off their kids and enjoy a night out together while we play games, eat pizza and inject a vacuous holiday with the love of God!

This event will run from 5pm until 8:30 pm. We will have five stations that will need two volunteers each: Kitchen, Nursery, Lobby, Games and Movies. That is a total of eight people who want to reach out and serve our neighborhood! Also, in the course of the night, we will take some time to gather in the sanctuary with the kids so we can share with them a short message about God's great love for them.

Sign up in the lobby and be a part of making Valentine's Day a blessing! If you have any additional questions, contact Andrew.

## ***Forest Hills Youth Group***

We began our series "One Gospel" a study through the book of Galatians, looking at the challenges that the church in Galatia faced surrounding legalism, and how Paul combated the issues by simply reminding the church that the gospel proclaimed by Jesus was all that they needed.

In January, we announced exciting news! We opened up the mission trip to include adults. This aligns the mission trip with the church's overall focus to be inter-generational. Also, the more people, the more excitement and work we can do in Alaska. We have three adults already looking into coming with. For more information talk to Cassi Betker or sign-up on the clipboards ASAP.

Coming up in February we will be having a fun and fellowship day on the 20th. Then we will be moving on to our next series "Impact." We will be building a culture of IMPACT through student involvement, next steps, and opportunities to live out their faith.

Cassi

## ***Eyeglass Collection!***

Carol Humphrey is collecting used eyeglasses and cases for the Forest Lake Lions Club. If you have any old eyeglasses, or know someone that does, they can be brought to the church and put in the box on the shelf in the lobby. Carol will then make sure the Lions Club gets them!





Happy Birthday to our February born! This month we celebrate the birthdays of the following individuals:

Harris Miller - February 3

Rebekah Werner - February 4

Pat Rosenbaum - February 5

Sarah Dittberner - February 7

Glen Geving - February 8

Tracy Bonsell - February 8

Harold Berg - February 10

Chuck Yetter - February 21

Joyce Ann Betz - February 23

Nick Thoen - February 25

To all of you! Have a wonderful birthday and a blessed year! If your birthday is missing, please call the office and let us know!

## ***Do you have a family member at Mayo and need a place to stay?***

Christ UMC in Rochester offers a hospitality house for those receiving care at Mayo Clinic. Please contact the church at 507-289-4019 or at [email@cumethodist.com](mailto:email@cumethodist.com). All that is needed is a pastor's recommendation and a free-will donation!

## **Events and Info**

### **Adult Fellowship**

**Saturday, February 9th, 5:45pm See  
Rozanne Foster for more details!**

### **Discipleship Training**

**Saturday, February 9th 9:30 am to noon**

### **Romeos and Juliets**

**Romeos and Juliets meet on  
February 13th at 11:30 am.**

### **Valentine's Day Date Nite**

**Thursday, February 14th - 5:00-8:30pm**

### **Community Care**

**5pm 2/15 - Unload Truck**

**6am 2/16 - Set-up**

**8 am 2/16 - Distribution**

### **Lifeline Sunday February 17th at 6:30 pm**

**Lifeline is a way for us to come together to be with God. There will be songs to sing and prayers to pray, but you can simply come to enjoy the presence of God. All are encouraged to attend. because we need Jesus! Our church needs Jesus! Hang on tight to the lifeline.**