

The Edge

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF FOREST HILLS CHURCH

From the Pastor's Perspective **Monthly Church Events**

For weekly events see the calendar

"Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your hearts, with fasting, ... Return to the Lord your God, for He is ... full of faithful love" -Joel 2:12-13

Over New Year's, my niece told me how excited she was about joining the new trend of intermittent fasting. I had been doing some casual reading about this before, but my niece (an RN at a hospital) said that it seemed everyone at her work was trying it. Initial research has shown that our bodies benefit from limited fasting. "The sweet spot," she told me, "is to go more than 16 hours without consuming any calories." Only in recent history have humans started eating "three square meals a day." For most of human history, people ate once a day or even less. (My question to her was if there was a link to the more recent eating better and the more recent living longer!)

She argued that eating throughout the day keeps our digestive track constantly working. It is so much healthier to give it a break and let it rest for some hours. The common wisdom to eat small amounts throughout the day, then, is not preferred. Intermittent fasting, she argued, is good for us: for weight loss, yes, but also for better overall health.

Fasting has been an age-old "trend" by God's people. In my current message series on the 10 Commandments, I've been reading about how Moses met with God on Mt. Sinai and how God gave Moses the 10 Commandments and the rest of the laws to give to God's people. Exodus 34:28 says that Moses was up with God for 40 days, and during that time he fasted - all 40 days! Being with God, the Bible teaches us, feeds us in a different way. It feeds us spiritually.

Fasting is not a law or command in the Bible but rather it is described as a common practice of God's people. Fasting is a way to get closer to God. It is giving our bodies and lives a break from normal eating and routine so that we can focus on God more intentionally. The hunger we feel in our stomachs is a calling for us to hunger for more of God.

Throughout the Old Testament, turning to God in repentance is often marked by "prayer and fasting." The prophets particularly call God's people to turn away from our obsession with earthly things and to use fasting to focus better on

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| Feb 1 | 9:00 am United Methodist Men |
| Feb 2 | HOLY COMMUNION 8:30 am Prayer 10:00 am Worship |
| Feb 3 | 8:00 am Monday Morning Men 8:30 am Prayer Shawl Knitters and Comfort Quilters |
| Feb 5 | 5:30 pm Free Community Meal 6:15 pm Echo Jr., Echo, Confirmation, and Youth Group 7:30 pm Sanctify Rehearsal |
| Feb 6 | 12:00 pm Sarah's Circle 6:30 pm AMT Meeting |
| Feb 7 | 7:00 am Grow group - It Came from Within |
| Feb 8 | 5:45 pm Adult Fellowship meeting at 3rd Gear |
| Feb 9 | 8:30 am Prayer 10:00 am Worship |
| Feb 10 | 8:00 am Monday Morning Men 8:30 am Prayer Shawl Knitters and Comfort Quilters |
| Feb 12 | 11:00 am Romeos (TBD) & Juliets (Norman Quacks) 5:30 pm Free Community Meal 6:15 pm Echo Jr., Echo, Confirmation, and Youth Group 7:30 pm Sanctify Rehearsal |
| Feb 14 | 7:00 am Grow group - It Came from Within 5:00 pm Valentine Date Nite 5:00 pm Community Care Set-up |
| Feb 15 | 6:00 pm Community Care Set up 8:00 pm Community Care |

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Pastor's Perspective Cont'd

God. In the New Testament Jesus continued the practice of fasting. When He began His earthly ministry, He started by fasting for 40 days, just like Moses!

This summer I'm leading a Study Tour to Ireland. Our highlight will be to visit where the Irish saints of the 5-10th centuries lived in simplicity and asceticism. Fasting was a trademark of their passionate connection to God.

John Wesley suggested 300 years ago that Methodists practice twice a week what we are now calling "intermittent fasting." This "Wesley Fast" is to abstain from food after supper Tuesday and Thursday, through the next day until supper (fasting breakfast and lunch on Wednesdays and Fridays). But like all biblical fasting, it's not just about physical health. Rather than just skipping meals, Christians REPLACE that time with Bible reading, prayer and meditation. Further, donate the cost of the food you skip to a food ministry, such as our Community Care food distribution.

At the end of this month, we begin Lent (it starts on Ash Wednesday, this year Feb. 26). Lent is a season before Easter that the Church calls people to a closer walk with God. Hallmarks of Lent are "prayer and fasting."

Let's do it! Let's go back to the ancient biblical practice and incorporate "prayer and fasting" in our lives during Lent this year. Some people fast certain things for the whole 40 days (like desserts, coffee, etc.). But let's try "old fashioned" fasting! I'm going to do the "Wesley Fast" during Lent. Will you try it with me? Then, I want to encourage you to talk with others about how you are trying the current trend of "intermittent fasting," but also share with them the spiritual blessings you are receiving as a faith practice. You will grow in physical health, spiritual health, and in your witness to others. Fasting is awesome!

Hungry for God,
Pastor David

Calendar Cont....

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| Feb 16 | 8:30 am Prayer 9:45 am Hymn Sing 10:00 am Worship - Pastor David 6:30 pm Lifeline at Pastor Andrew's |
| Feb 17 | 8:00 am Monday Morning Men 8:30 am Prayer Shawl Knitters and Comfort Quilters |
| Feb 18 | 10:00 am Rebecca's Circle |
| Feb 19 | 5:30 pm Free Community Meal 6:15 pm Echo Jr., Echo, Confirmation, and Youth Group 7:30 pm Sanctify Rehearsal |
| Feb 21 | 7:00 am Grow group - It Came from Within |
| Feb 23 | 8:30 am Prayer 10:00 am Worship - Pastor David |
| Feb 24 | 8:00 am Monday Morning Men 8:30 am Prayer Shawl Knitters and Comfort Quilters |
| Feb 26 | 5:30 pm Free Community Meal 6:30 pm Ash Wednesday Service |
| Feb 28 | 7:00 am Grow group - TBD |
| Feb 29 | LEAP YEAR! |



Wednesday Evenings

Wednesday evening is church family night! You are included! It will begin with a shared meal together, beginning at 5:30 p.m., provided free of charge!

Upcoming Wednesday meals:

1/29: Spaghetti Pie (Nancy)

2/5: Turkey & Ham (Staff)

2/12: Swedish Meatballs (Rosenbaums)

2/19: Nancy's Choice

2/26: Soup Bar (Sue LaVigne & friends)

Starting at 6:15 - 7:30 pm we have discipleship for all ages. Echo is a time for kids-and-adults to interact together. Echo's purpose is to help pass on (echo) our Christian faith to the next generations! We want kids, parents and other adults to hear the message of the Gospel, as we seek to be disciples that make other disciples. For our preschoolers we'll have Echo Jr. in the nursery, a time of Bible stories and fun. For youth we will host confirmation and youth group.



Invite a friend, a new person, to come and join. Let's keep our church family growing, in number, in faith, and in how welcoming we are!



Spring 2020 Grow Groups

Our spring Sunday and Wednesday grow groups will all offer the same study. This parallels our winter and spring Sunday message series on the Ten Commandments. We will adapt Mary Evans' "The Ten Commandments: Living God's Way", adding ice breakers, video clips, discussion starters and personal application. Come and learn how the Ten Commandments were not demands from a distance, but were linked to the people's covenant relationship with a loving God. You'll be surprised how relevant this study will be to your daily life!

Sign up for any of the time slots, schedule posted in the lobby.

Children Ministry Update



"Children are a gift from the LORD; they are a reward from him." - Psalm 127:3

Kids are indeed a blessing, but parenting them is no walk in the park! Parents have the hardest, most tedious and stressful job and the pay is terrible. But those who are in the trenches of rearing up little ones and those who have "been there, done that" know that the effort is worth it; but it's always nice to have a little help along the way.

As a church we get to support each other as we endeavor to build Godly households and faith-filled kids, but we also need to support parents within our community. Good, bad or otherwise, every parent is in need of an extra pair of hands. I want to invite you to reach out and bless a family this coming Valentine's Day.

Forest Hills church will be hosting a Valentine's Day Date Nite for families in our community. Parents can drop their kids off with us and go out to enjoy an evening together. Every marriage deserves a little boost and we get to know some kids and minister to families who might not otherwise walk into a church.

The event will run from 5-8 pm on Fri. Feb. 14th . We will have movies, games, food and fun! Please consider spending your Valentine's Day with Forest Hills and helping serve families in our area. Contact Andrew or the church office if you would like to help.

"Roses are red, violets are blue, Kids are important to us and marriages are too!"

Pastor Andrew

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Feb Birthdays

Harris Miller 2/3 (95!!)
Rebekah Werner 2/4
Pat Rosenbaum 2/5
Sarah Dittberner 2/7
Glen Geving 2/8

Tracy Bonsell 2/8
Harold Berg 2/10
Chuck Yetter 2/21
Joyce Betz 2/23
Nick Thoen 2/25

May your special day be blessed and filled with joy! If your birthday isn't listed, please call the office and let us know so we can add you to the list!

Youth Group

"And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith." - 1 Corinthians 15:14

We are half way through our series called Lenses. The whole goal of this series is to examine five common worldviews that many teenagers tend to hold (their "lenses"), gently expose them as unfulfilling narratives for their lives, and help students begin to swap out the lies for gospel truth (God's lens).

After Ash Wednesday, we will move on to our next series "Death and Resurrection." Christ's death and resurrection are the most important factors when it comes to following Jesus. The Apostle Paul bluntly wrote in 1 Corinthians 15:14 that if it weren't for the resurrection, which obviously required Christ to die first, our faith would be totally pointless. As important and familiar as the story is to many, what often gets overlooked is the way the four accounts that we have at times differ from one another. Some include content that the others don't. Why? Some of the authors contradict the others in some of the details. Why?

For some, these differences have led them to discredit the entire event of Christ's death and resurrection. However, if we take the time to understand what the God-inspired authors are trying to communicate with the way they tell the story, it can lead to greater depth. This VIVA! Series will invite your group into these differences as you explore the most important story in the Bible. Here is what we'll be discussing:

Week 1: Mark's Account

Week 2: Matthew's Account

Week 3: Luke's Account

Week 4: John's Account

Cassi

Director of Youth Ministries



Summer 2020 Mission Trip - Fundraiser

"Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can as long as ever you can." – John Wesley

Please help financially support our teens as they head out this summer to serve those in the Minneapolis area. Our goal is to raise \$3000, so far we have \$690. These funds will help cover half the cost of the teens to go on the trip and two chaperones. For each \$50 we raise we will add a van to our board, help us reach 60 vans! If you haven't signed up to go there is still time!! Everyone over the age of 13 is welcome to come with.

Cassi

Director of Youth Ministries