

The Edge

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF FOREST HILLS CHURCH

From the Pastor's Perspective

New Year Momentum

"You will make known to me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; in Your right hand there are pleasures forever." -Psalm 16:11

We need some momentum as we start the new year! This past year of social distancing and staying remote has really sapped our momentum, including our spiritual engagement. We've grown weary of a life on pause, in a holding pattern, just surviving. It's hard to get motivated!

So, we're starting at the beginning of the new year with a resolution to make progress in our spiritual lives. Our new Sunday message series takes up The Beatitudes. These are Jesus' description of a true Christian life, and they are His prescription for how to embody and live out the true Christian life.

It's easy to get sidetracked and stuck as we follow God's call. We settle for what we have, and we give up on moving forward in our spiritual lives. Jesus uses the Beatitudes to teach us how to receive more of God's blessings. As I look back over last year and look forward into the new, I have a yearning for what really matters, for making progress in my life—especially my spiritual life, which drives the rest of my life—and to seek the full intention God plans for me. I think that this past year of isolation has revealed a shallowness in our lives, and a shallowness in our reliance on God. It's time to make the main thing the main thing again.

A year ago we went back deep into the Old Testament to the Ten Commandments. We heard God's two-fold intention for His people: to love God completely and to love others. This is the godly life. And this fall we took a journey into the boardrooms of our souls and discovered that there is much inside that is not given to God. So now we are primed for getting real, and going deeper.

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Monthly Church Events

Jan 3	10:00 am - Online Worship
Jan 4	8:00 am - Monday Morning Men
Jan 6	6:00 pm - Wednesday Night Programing for all ages 6:30 pm - Sanctified Rehearsal
Jan 8	7:00 am - Grow Group
Jan 10	10:00 am - Online Worship
Jan 11	8:00 am - Monday Morning Men
Jan 13	6:00 pm - Wednesday Night Programing for all ages 6:30 pm - Sanctified Rehearsal
Jan 14	6:30 pm - AMT Meeting
Jan 15	7:00 am - Grow Group 2:00 pm - Unload Food Truck
Jan 16	6:00 am - Set up Community Care 8:00 am - Community Care
Jan 17	10:00 am - Online Worship
Jan 18	8:00 am - Monday Morning Men
Jan 19	10:00 am - Rebecca Circle
Jan 20	6:00 pm - Wednesday Night Programing for all ages 6:30 pm - Sanctified Rehearsal
Jan 22	7:00 am - Grow Group

Pastor's Perspective Cont.

Jesus came to earth at Christmas. When He was 30, He began His public ministry, preaching and teaching to the people. Matthew chapters 5-7 records His first major sermon; we call it The Sermon on the Mount. He begins with eight blessings that we call "The Eight Beatitudes."

Jesus has come to usher in God's Kingdom, to draw people back to God, to make the main thing the main thing. In the 10 Commandments, God gives the basis of the covenant, and then focuses on external behaviors: not killing, stealing, committing adultery, lying and coveting. In the Beatitudes, Jesus takes the old covenant and its external actions and takes them internal, right down into our hearts. Jesus calls out our motivations, our devotion, our desires.

Jan 24	10:00 am - Online Worship 11:30 am - Mission Trip Meeting
Jan 25	8:00 am - Monday Morning Men
Jan 27	6:00 pm - Wednesday Night Programing for all ages 6:30 pm - Sanctified Rehearsal
Jan 29	7:00 am - Grow Group
Jan 31	10:00 am - Online Worship

The word "beatitude" comes from the Latin word that starts each one: beatus. This is what the blessed life looks like, and this is how to live the blessed life. Yet, we are surprised that the blessed life doesn't come in the way we expect. As Jesus navigates us through the beatitudes, we find that blessing comes through selflessness, grieving sin, humility, showing mercy, purity of heart and being a peacemaker.

God's people are blessed not because of what happens to us, but from our well-being and contentment anchored in knowing our position rightly with God. God's people are blessed, then, even when we face trouble and hardship.

Isn't this the kind of life you long for? Aren't you ready to start making spiritual progress? When this Jesus born at Christmas starts preaching and teaching, He speaks about a life that is blessed by God. That's what we're after! We desire more. And this Jesus opens up the pathway to a full and rich life. So, let's get our momentum going. Let's live the blessed life! Beatus New Year!

Pastor David Werner



Youth Group

I don't know about you but I feel great about this year. There's something fresh and energizing about a new year. It may feel like all the failures from last year are behind us and now we've got a blank canvas to make something amazing. Maybe you have your eye on the prize when it comes to sports or performing on stage or a new job. That's why I feel like this is your year.



So, for the next three weeks the youth group will break down how we can make this the best year possible. In this series, we will break down three practical concepts that will lead students to success. The Bible has a lot to say about achieving greatness and the means are so practical.

- Week 1: Vision guides our future and it's worth protecting.
 - Hebrews 12:1-2, Habakkuk 2:2-3, Genesis 30:25-43
- Week 2: To achieve the impossible we have to be "all in." Our maximum is God's minimum.
 - 2 Kings 13:14-19, 2 Kings 2:1-14, Luke 14:28-29
- Week 3: To go far in life, we need other people because they help us out when we fail.
 - Genesis 2:18, Hebrews 12:1-2, Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

Cassi Betker - Director of Youth Ministries



Mission Trip Summer 2021

This summer we will be headed to Memphis, TN. July 17-24th, 2021. In Memphis, our group will serve alongside local pastors in communities. The ministries we will be involved in are created and maintained by local partnership pastors and leaders who are pouring their lives into their communities daily. Our group will be serving in one of the most religiously diverse cities in the United States and will be able to share the love of Christ with people who need to know the truth.

While serving in Memphis on a mission trip, we will be able to meet significant needs in a variety of areas such as homeless ministries, prayer walking, and evangelism. The Praying Pelican Missions staff will work with us to find the best partnerships for your group so that our group will be able to use their gifts to help meet real needs and encourage those serving every day.

Sound interesting? Join us for a meeting on Jan. 24 at 11:30am watch emails for more information on how to join. Have questions? Call Cassi at the office 651-464-5249 or email youth@foresthillsunc.net

Kids Christmas

As we all continue to live our lives with a new awareness of safety, we may have settled into a “new normal.” Suffice it to say, this new normal is not normal at all. Any plans we make must come with a caveat: Be prepared to cancel! We have found this to be a frustration to doing ministry and it has forced us to go about things in a different way. We have tried to operate within state mandates and guidelines and even though cancellation may loom large over the plans we make, I would like to look forward to the future.

With impending announcements from the governor, we may have the opportunity to meet together again! Yes, we will have to wear masks and no, we will not yet be able to serve food, but our Wednesday nights can once again become an important part of our Christian life together. I don't want us to get used to not meeting. I don't want us to grow too comfortable with watching everything on video. As schools re-open and bans are lifted, as vaccines are distributed and danger subsides, let's join together at church! We need to see each other, to hear from each other and to worship together.

We want to be safe, and we want to grow together in Christ.

Thank you all for being patient with us as we navigate new technologies, learn how to be on camera and continue to create video content. We are still a church body even if we cannot bodily meet. But until we can, we stay calm and carry God!

“Don't stop meeting together with other believers, which some people have gotten into the habit of doing. Instead, encourage each other, especially as you see the day drawing near.” Hebrews 10:25

For the King,
Pastor Andrew

Jan Birthdays

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!

Brandon Yetter 1/17

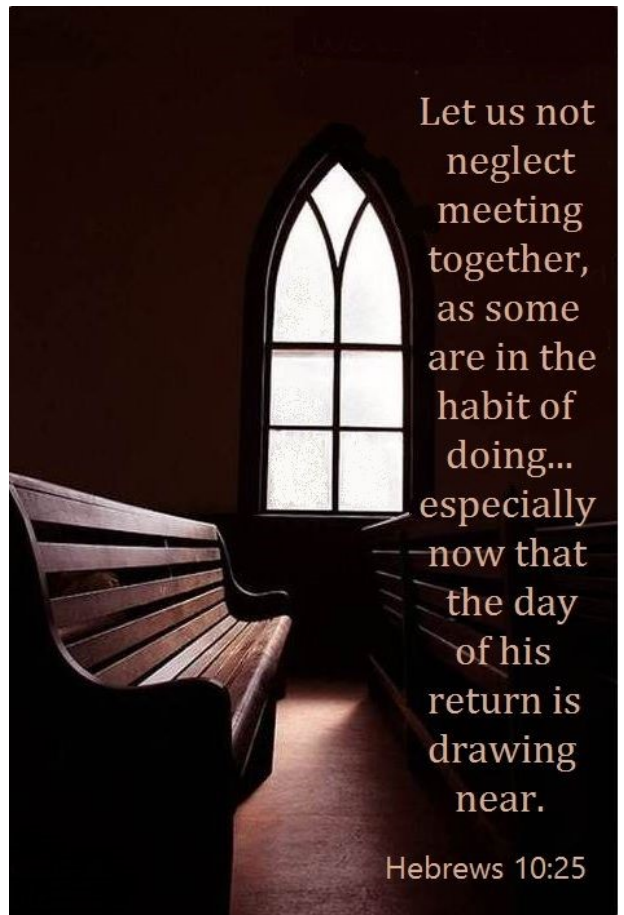
Rozanne Foster 1/21

Helen Ash 1/21

Jim Letourneau 1/24

Toby Leonard 1/25

Gloria Hair 1/30



AMT UPDATE

The following is a condensed version of my Lay Leader Report for 2020 report in case you were not able to attend our Annual Church Conference in November.

AMT started out the year by hosting a Ministry Fair in January. Each ministry in our church was invited to set up a presentation in the fellowship hall, explain their ministry and show how it meets our church's Love.Grow.Serve principles.

In March, we had a one-day retreat where our purpose was to follow the compass of our vision. The scripture leading us was from Isaiah 30:21.

"If you stray to the right or the left, you will hear a word that comes from behind you: "This is the way, walk in it."

We used the compass to help us process how our church is grounded and where we're going. North, a guiding light. West, direction of ending and letting go. East, direction of new beginnings, and South, direction of digging deeper into what is already there.

Once Covid-19 came on the scene we needed to make changes. Our staff of Pastor David, Pastor Andrew and Cassi did a superb job of switching gears to virtual worship options, grow groups, daily devotionals and more. All this while continuing to keep our church open for those in need of food, toilet paper and general counseling, while practicing social distancing. In the spring, Forest Hills offered drive-up worship, then outdoor worship for several months. All this while also recording a virtual worship option each week. Many thanks for the dedication of our staff and Sanctify for being creative with Sunday worship, and for Sue Lavigne, for continuing to offer virtual options to kids. We don't see all the work that goes behind the scenes and we appreciate all they have done.

As the national and state guidelines continued to change, our leadership teams grappled with creating a "Pandemic Plan". The Church Management Ministry Team (CMMT) spent many long hours creating a document that would help our church make decisions during the coming months and AMT approved that document which you will find on our church website.

I am so proud of Community Care's innovation of drive-up food delivery, our Kid's Bash outdoor fun, the August BBQ bash, the amazing work from all the women in our church for the Annual Craft Fair, the new ministry Hope Moves that learned about sex-trafficking in Forest Lake and how to help, and Trunk 'n' Treat's ability to engage over 300 people in our surrounding community. In so many ways our church continued to be active and engaged, even as we "sheltered at home".

Yes, God is always with us. His Holy Spirit guides us always. As His church we must continue to be a beacon of light to show the way to our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Your Lay Leader, Marilee Leonard