



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF FOREST HILLS CHURCH

From the Pastor's Perspective

Lent: Going Inward, Going Outward!

"Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil." -Matt. 4:1

Lent:

During the 40 days leading up to Easter, Christians traditionally have focused on prayer and fasting in order to rekindle their discipleship walks with Jesus. We model this time after Jesus, who spent 40 days in prayer and fasting so that He would be able to do the public ministry God had planned for Him to do. Check out this story in Matthew 4:1-11. He was led there, it says, by the Holy Spirit. The same Holy Spirit calls us to our Lenten journey of prayer and fasting. The story tells of how Jesus was tempted by the devil during this time. Lent is a time for us to face our temptations and ask for God's help to give us victory over our sin. In verse 11 it says, "Then the devil left Him, and angels came and attended Him." When we persevere against the devil with God's help, the devil will leave. God will attend us, too, and work in us to grow us inwardly and outwardly.

Going Inward:

Jesus engaged in spiritual practices during His time of spiritual grounding. We are offering spiritual practices as a church to help us during our time of spiritual grounding. Make a point to reconnect regularly in the ongoing worship activities, such as Sunday worship (in-person and remote), the video devotionals on Mondays and Fridays, and the prayer chains. In March we are also launching our next Grow Groups. This is one of the key ways our church offers us a way to grow spiritually. It is very hard to mature in your faith without being involved in groups like these. Be sure to sign up for one. And then, we are calling our church to fast from screens one evening a week. Instead, let's use that time to engage in activities that create capacity in our lives to be open to God's filling and rekindle our souls. At the end of the month we begin Holy Week, the week leading up to Easter. We're hosting a number of special experiences that week that will help us grow. Be sure to be involved!

Monthly Church Events

Mar 1	8:00am - Monday Morning Men and Prayer Knitters
Mar 2	6:00pm - Grow Group
Mar 3	6:30 pm - Wednesday Night Programing for all ages 7:45 pm - Sanctified Rehearsal
Mar 4	10:00am - Grow Group
Mar 5	8:00am - Grow Group
Mar 6	9:00am - UM Men Meeting
Mar 7	Holy Communion 8:45am - Grow Group 10:00am - In-person and online Worship Service 11:30am - Grow Group
Mar 8	8:00am - Monday Morning Men and Prayer Knitters
Mar 9	6:00pm - Grow Group
Mar 10	NO PROGRAMMING SPRING BREAK 7:45 pm - Sanctified Rehearsal
Mar 11	10:00am - Grow Group
Mar 12	8:00am - Grow Group
Mar 14	8:45am - Grow Group 10:00am - In-person and online Worship Service 11:30am - Grow Group
Mar 15	8:00am - Monday Morning Men and Prayer Knitters
Mar 16	10:00am - Rebecca Circle 6:00pm - Grow Group

Pastor's Perspective Cont.

Going Outward:

Jesus' time in the wilderness prepared Him for His public ministry that followed. Our times of spiritual retreat and renewal are never just for our own benefit. In God's leading, renewal times equip us for reaching out to bless others. As a church, we are planning a special, church-wide outreach event for our neighborhoods. We're calling it the Easter Hop! We're hosting a Trunk-or-Treat style experience on Sunday, March 28 from 2-4 p.m. in the church parking lot. We're asking our church family to come and give out Easter candy and treats to kids from our neighborhood. We're hoping for 200 kids! This will be a way for us to make connections with folks in our neighborhoods, as during this past year we all have been spending so much time in isolation. We'll also provide an Easter message for the kids, as well as an Easter picture opportunity. In addition, we'll provide information about and invitations to our church and the Easter activities we're planning during that upcoming week. We ask our church to really take this event seriously and to make every effort to participate! Perhaps decorate your trunk with Easter decorations. Perhaps wear bright, spring colors. Either way, bring lots of treats! Let's all come out to share the love of Jesus in this simple, yet very visible way.

May the Holy Spirit lead us into a time of spiritual retreat and renewal this Lent. May the Spirit fight the inward devil for us, minister to us, and call us to outward service!

Keep calm and carry God!

Pastor David



St. Andrew Shelter

St Andrews Shelter week of meals! Forest Hills is schedule to host the week of Mar. 7-13. Rather than serving on site we will be providing meals on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Meals may be homemade and brought warm ready to serve or frozen, ready to prepare. Another option is to pick up a prepared meal at a restaurant meal: KFC, Papa Johns, etc... Don't forget dessert! Sign up in the lobby, email or call the office.

Mar 17	St Patrick's Day 6:30 pm - Wednesday Night Programing for all ages 7:45 pm - Sanctified Rehearsal
Mar 18	10:00am - Grow Group
Mar 19	8:00am - Grow Group 2:00pm - Unload Food Truck
Mar 20	6:00am - Set up Community Care 8:00am - Community Care
Mar 21	8:45am - Grow Group 10:00am - In-person and online Worship Service 11:30am - Grow Group
Mar 22	8:00am - Monday Morning Men and Prayer Knitters
Mar 23	6:00pm - Grow Group
Mar 24	6:30 pm - Wednesday Night Programing for all ages 7:45 pm - Sanctified Rehearsal
Mar 25	10:00am - Grow Group
Mar 26	7:00 am - Grow Group
Mar 28	PALM SUNDAY 8:45am - Grow Group 10:00am - In-person and online Worship Service 11:30am - Grow Group 2pm - EASTER HOP
Mar 29	8:00am - Monday Morning Men and Prayer Knitters
Mar 30	6:00pm - Grow Group
Mar 31	6:30 pm - Wednesday Night Programing for all ages 7:45 pm - Sanctified Rehearsal



Join the fun

Easter Hop

MAR. 28TH, 2-4PM

**Easter, Trunk or
Treat Style!**

**Stop by for candy, eggs,
and FREE Easter pictures!**

Forest Hills Church
1790 11th St SE Forest Lake
www.foresthillsumc.net

EASTER HOP!

This Easter we are reaching out to our community and inviting them to fun event. This past Oct. our trunk-or-treat was a huge success and we want to keep that “momentum” going. We are planning a trunk-or-treat style event for Palm Sunday.

We need you! It is so easy to be a part of the fun: decorate your car, supply some candy and bring your smile (even if it can't be seen)! This year is an especially great opportunity to let our neighbors know how much fun church can be, how God desires for them to experience His joy and how, even in this year, we can celebrate.

Join us March 28th from 2-4pm. Contact the office if you would like to host a trunk, donate some candy to the cause and let your neighbors know the best place to start Holy week this year is Forest Hills Church!

Holy Week Activities:

Mar. 28 Palm Sunday morning worship 10am

Easter Hop, 2-4 p.m.

April 2 Good Friday Worship, 7 p.m. In-person and Zoom

Prayer Vigil: Good Friday following the service through Saturday Midnight - both in-person and remote, sign ups [on line](#). Also Shepherds are need [sign up here](#).

April 4 Easter Sunrise service 6:30 a.m.

Easter Worship, In-person and recorded

Prayer Vigil 2021

Hello everyone! Amanda Lucas here to bring you an update on the upcoming Prayer Vigil in April.

The Prayer Vigil is an event we host each year from Good Friday evening into Easter morning where we as a church pray around the clock. Individuals sign up for specific times to pray during those two days. In 2020, we were fully remote which was one of many things we had to battle through last year.

It is one of the most looked-forward-to events of the year and I am thrilled to say that we will be offering not only a remote option but an in-person experience as well this year!

As we said in 2020, our current COVID situation has changed a lot of things for us but we are very excited to be able to bring back the vigil this for Holy Week 2021. Here are some of the details:

- When: 8:00 pm Good Friday (April 2nd) – 12:00 am Easter Sunday (April 4th)
- Where: Church Sanctuary and Remote/at-home
- Sign-Ups: On the church [on line](#) and in church lobby

You may be wondering what the plans are for hosting an in-person event with COVID concerns still present. I'm glad you asked! The answer is straightforward – we have made some changes. What changes? Again, glad you asked! Here are some of the ideas/changes we are implementing this time around:

- Remote option available – you can sign up to pray from home!
- Masks are required at all times while attending vigil in person, even when alone.
- No interactive stations available this year to minimize touching shared surfaces.
- Attendees will have a “grab bag” available to them with various items for the vigil that they can take home!

Some materials will be available on the church website so bring a phone, computer, or tablet if you'd like to access these items:

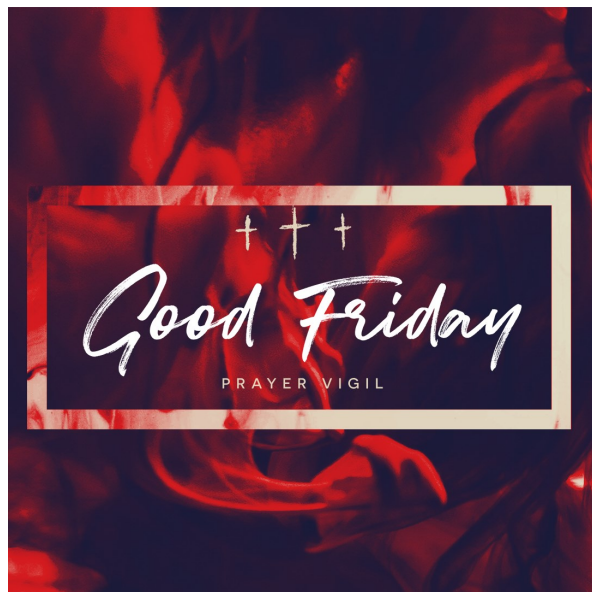
- Links to music, stations of the cross, etc.
- Hand sanitizer will be provided in several locations at the vigil for pray-er's use.
- Specific instructions will be posted at the vigil regarding procedure for entering/exiting/etc.
- Prayer seats will be distanced apart and used in alternation so no one chair is used for back-to-back individuals.
- Pray-ers will be asked to sanitize their chair with the provided cleaning wipes as they depart.
- Snacks will not be provided this year for the shepherds – sorry!

Beyond the changes above, the Prayer Vigil will go on as we have always done it: in an intimate and reflective manner that brings home the experience of Good Friday going into the celebration of Easter morning. We will still need shepherds to watch over the pray-ers and we need people to sign up to pray!

Again, we are so excited to be able to offer this experience again this year and we look forward to praying together as a church. May God bless this time we will share together in prayer and reflection!

Blessings,

Amanda Lucas





Echo: Say it again...again...again

The Bible is not a novel. Sure, it is the best-selling book of all time and yes, parts of it have been adapted into scripts and made into innumerable movies. It contains all the tropes: drama, intrigue, epic warfare, romance, and supernatural elements. But we believe the Bible is unlike any other book. It contains the words of God. It reveals the character of who God is. It is the primary means by which the Holy Spirit speaks to believers. The Bible is to be studied and obeyed. It is authoritative for our lives.

As such it is to be read and re-read and then read again. It is to be meditated upon and memorized. It is to be in our hearts and in our mouths (Romans 8:10). We know this does not happen by accident. Though we may have been born into a Christian family, none of us are born Christians. We are taught the truth of God's word and we either accept or reject this truth.

In his book "Transforming Children into Spiritual Champions," researcher George Barna says that by age 13, one's spiritual identity is largely set-in place. He writes, "If you want to have a lasting influence upon the world, you must invest in people's lives; and if you want to maximize that investment, then you must invest in those people while you are young."

Think about your own faith journey. Likely there were some important people who played a formative role in your life of faith. Now it is time for you to become that person. The one who helps shore up the faith of someone else, the one who speaks truth into the life of a young person. Whether we come to Christ as adults or children, we need one another. We need to be encouraged and strengthened by each other. We need to hear the stories from the Bible again and again and again.

Our Wednesday night Echo is for you, and for kids. It is for the one who knows Scripture well and the one who could use some brushing up. It is for the parent who wants to raise their kids biblically, it is for the retiree who wants to stake a claim in the future of God's kingdom.

Echo is for you. Take one Grow Group cycle a year and engage in Echo. You can sign up like you would any other Grow Group or simply let me know you're interested! Do it for the kids. Do it for your own growth. Learn something new that you never caught before as you say the truth of God's Word again...again...again.

For the King,

Pastor Andrew

Grow Groups

Grow groups start today and carry on through April. There are a variety of options offered: in-person and remote, topics, days, times, and hosts. Grow groups are a key "method" that Methodists grow spiritually. Sign up today!

Youth Group

We are in the middle of our Lenten series. "Standing at a Crossroad" is a four-week series that looks at several different stories from the last week of Jesus's life. Four people were standing at a crossroad. They had to decide what they were going to do with Jesus. Would they choose to follow Him or go in the other direction?

Next week March 10th, there will be no Youth Group due to Spring Break! I hope you all have a wonderful break with some family time.

At the end of March we will be starting our new series. "Misquoted" is a 4-week series that investigates four popular sayings that are often attributed to the Bible. The only problem is, you won't find them in there! The words we speak say a lot about who we are. So it's frustrating when someone takes our words and twists them, because it leads people to believe things about us that aren't true. Likewise, when God is misquoted, it causes people to believe God is someone He is not. This series challenges students to draw near to God, because the closer we are to someone, the more likely we will know their voice. The misquotes we will explore are:

1. "God helps those who help themselves."
2. "God wants me to be happy."
3. "God will never give you more than you can handle."
4. "Bad things don't happen to good people."

April 7th, I will be out of town. For youth Group that night we will be taking a break and doing a serve moment. The Youth Group will be joining Echo to have a night with the younger kids in our church family. This will be a great time for the teens to role model to the younger ones.

Cassi Betker

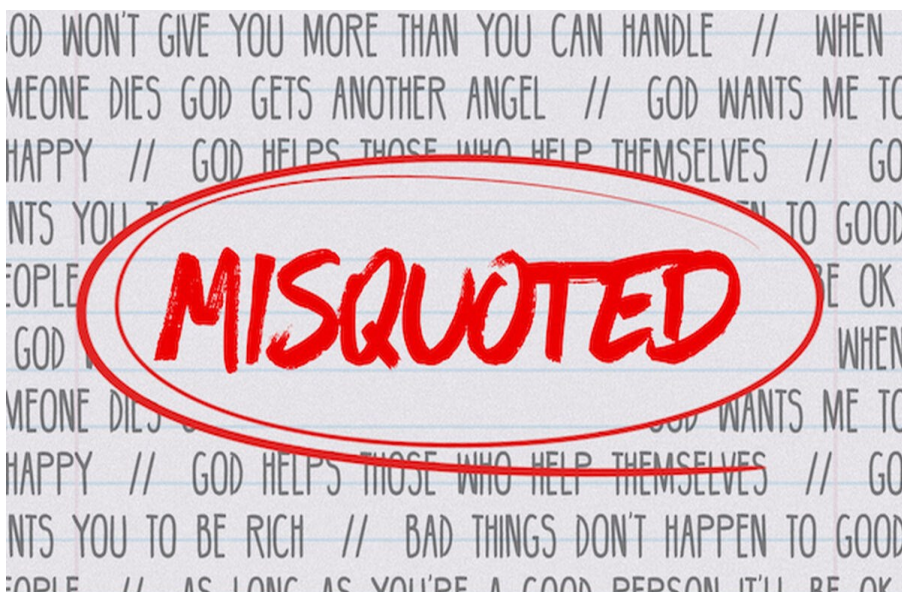
Director of Youth Ministries

MISSION TRIP UPDATE!

We have decided to postpone our out of state mission trip for a year, due to the questions around travel while still dealing with a pandemic. But, don't worry we have a great option to replace it with.

We will be having MISSION WEDNESDAYS all summer long! This will give everyone a chance to spread God's love through the Forest Lake area. We will be serving within the community then returning back to Forest Hills Church for a bonfire and fellowship.

More information will be coming soon!



College Students

We are sending a March care package to our college students. Please get to the church office (either emailed or dropped off) a note of encouragement to one or all of the students by Sunday, March 14th. We will be sending the package as a St. Patrick's Day treat from their home church family!

Jeff Coley: UND Grand Forks, ND. Graduating 2021

Zoe Karan: Columbus, OH

Phoebe Karan: La Crosse, WI

Shane Kargel: Bethel University, St. Paul, MN

Max Thompson: Moorhead, MN

Rebekah Werner: University of Jamestown, ND

Mikayla Whitehill: River Falls, WI



Red Rock Camp

Spend a week with God experiencing his renewing love and saving, healing power at Red Rock Camp on the shore of Lake Koronis near Paynesville, MN. Red Rock Camp is for the whole family. There are speakers for children, youth and adults, they partake in a five-fold mission to: Encounter God, Experience holiness, Equip generations, Empower leaders and Engage communities. Amazing things unfold when people gather and seek Christ for a week. Nothing is impossible for those who believe! Brochures for camp are in the lobby! Sign up today and receive \$25 towards the camp store.

Camp Scholarships (Blackford Fund)

Would love to come to camp but are unsure how to afford it? We can help with that. Forest Hills offers three different styles of scholarships. The first goes to first time campers, this will pay your full registration. You can get the [application here](#) please apply by May 1st. The second is for those that need a boost of funds to pay for the registration. You can get the [application here](#), please apply by May 15th. The third way is for all campers. They will receive an incentive for going to camp. Each person under 18 receives a \$100 and everyone over 18 receives \$75.

Not able to come to camp but want to help. **Please donate to the Reverend John Blackford Scholarship fund.** This fund was set up in honor of Rev. Blackford's passion to see people have mountain top experience at camp. To donate please mark in the memo line the monies are for the Blackford scholarship.



UMCOR responding to winter storm

ATLANTA — The United Methodist Committee on Relief has worked with conference disaster relief coordinators to provide immediate funding and long-term support since the winter storm led to power outages and burst pipes across Texas and other southern states. People can support recovery efforts by giving to UMCOR's U.S. Disaster Response and Recovery Advance #901670.

AMT Update

In our February meeting we discussed some new activities coming up this spring and summer. On Palm Sunday our church will be hosting an Easter Hop in the afternoon from 2pm to 4pm. We are going to use our same formula for Trunk-or-Treat by having folks volunteer to decorate their trunk with an Easter theme and give out candy or other goodies in our parking lot. There are also plans to have families get a special picture with an Easter character. In addition to the Easter Hop, we will have a Prayer Vigil, a Good Friday service, an Easter Sunrise service, as well as our regular 10am service on Easter. In later April, date to be determined, there will be a scavenger hunt planned. On June 9th there will be a grill out plus Ministry Fair. Starting June 16 Forest Hills will be offering opportunities for all to serve our community with Wednesday Mission Days. AMT is looking to re-engage people in the ministry of our church, so we would love to have you volunteer to help with any of these. Please contact me or the church office, if you're interested in helping with these events.

According to our financial schedule it's time to start figuring out if a Capitol Fund Drive is appropriate during this pandemic season. There are still quite a number of projects that were not completed in phase 1. Church Management Ministry Team will create a task force to prioritize and put a cost to this next phase. The Action Ministry Team does support this and will await an official proposal from CMMT in the future.

At our meeting, AMT also discussed an article written by Susan Beaumont called "When is the right time for Strategic planning?" During our Healthy Church Initiative (HCI) process we engaged in strategic planning by determining "who we are" and "what is our direction". We discussed whether or not we need strategic planning during this time of Covid. We learned that we need to stop doing what we've always done. New things need to be tried that fit in with the needs we are seeing now, such as gathering together with others in a safe way. All people need to be in communion with others, we are not a solitary species. Especially as Christians, we need to support, encourage and listen to each other, in order for us to be able to reach out to others that are hurting. Offering Jesus as our hope for the future and making new disciples is what we believe we have been called to do. We need to be okay with the unknown and kind of "wing it"

AMT hopes you will come along for the ride!

God is good, all the time!

Marilee Leonard, your Lay Leader

March 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!

Vicky Keintz 3/5
Dan Hair 3/9
Duane Dittberner 3/13
Sue Dugdale 3/19
John Hendrickson 3/29

Kurt Charter 3/8
Patty Philips 3/10
Diane Geving 3/18
Lily Betker 3/25

