



# The Good News of Forest Hills Presbyterian Church

November / December 2011

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## Have You had your BREAK today?

One of my favorite movies to watch in college was Ferris Bueller's Day Off. I enjoy the carefree attitude that is a constant with everything that Ferris Bueller (Matthew Broderick) does, but there is also an important message to be had in the movie. Taking a break is a good thing. Now skipping school, faking a grandmother's death, stealing a car, manipulating your way into fancy restaurants and singing on float parades in downtown Chicago are not good things, but I am always struck by the last line in the movie: "Life moves pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it."

Often times we have trouble slowing down. We struggle with taking inventory of our blessings and maintaining a day of rest in the midst of our busy schedules. I don't know about you, but I still can't believe that summer is gone, fall is here, and winter is right around the corner. I am learning that time never slows down- it only seems to get faster. We find ourselves with more responsibilities, more items on our plate, and it is no wonder we become overwhelmed by the chaos of life!

I can personally speak to this as late fall is one of the busiest times in the life of the church. For instance, right now we are in the middle of our Stewardship Campaign, planning for Advent and Christmas, creating a devotional to go along with Advent this year, preparing a leadership retreat this month, trying to iron out the end of the year report and new budget for 2012, as well as hosting the Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service November 23<sup>rd</sup> and filling boxes for operation Christmas Child- whew! I am getting tired just glancing at this list and this isn't even everything we have going on! My point is that we all have more than enough to keep us busy and occupied to last a lifetime.

These things are great! But, how much time do we take in the midst of our activity to take a break and just "be?" If your calendar looks anything like mine does, you have to schedule a five minute coffee break 3 weeks in advance or it will never happen. God tells us that we need to take time to break away from the craziness of life. It can be hard to hear God over the roar and din of activities that envelop us. We need to carve out time to hear God.

This is important because if we don't stop we WILL burn out and we WILL miss what God is trying to show us. In your daily life it is very important to 'unplug' weekly. We need to break up the routine of our lives in order to both rest and renew our focus on God. Spending quiet time in prayer is another key component of this and is often a challenge with all of our distractions around us. This part of why I love to get out and spend time in nature. It is a

great opportunity to remember the wonderful creation that God has blessed us with, but also incredibly peaceful and energizing to get away from TV and traffic! Ultimately, creating time to re-energize and connect with God isn't just a once "every so often" kind-of-a-thing; there is a reason that the Sabbath is one of the ten commandments. We have limits. If we ignore our limits then both our physical health, our relational health with others, and our spiritual health before God will ultimately be compromised in the long run.

So how are you doing? Have you had your break today? Do you take time to be still, unplug and know God?

To maintain Sabbath in our lives is VERY difficult and is a discipline in itself. However, not only is it necessary- but it is commanded. And you know what? Not once, when I have been intentional about taking time out for God have I ever been disappointed. I have always ended up making everything else work, and in the end God has blessed me with both peace and refreshment. It requires priorities, discipline and sacrifice but when we take the time to rest and put God first in our lives, God opens our eyes to life in incredible and wonderful ways!

*-Ben*

## Homegroup/Small Group

At the women of Faith conference Dr Henry McCLound gave a presentation on two of the top ten things that make people happy. One of them is Connectedness, we need to be connected to people, God made us that way. You will be happier! Being in this group for the last few years I have really gotten to know folks on another level, this has been a blessing, not only to me but my entire family. I invite you to join us and take the step of digging into God's word with others and "get connected".

1 John is our next study and Bob Bindas will facilitate the discussions.

Key points of the book of 1John that we will be discussing.

- a. A direct witness to Jesus ministry on earth
- b. Light vs darkness (truth vs error), sin and desires of this world.
- c. To instruct Christians about the truth and to dispel false teachings that were taught during that time.

Join us on Wednesday nights this fall for great discussion, study the bible and get connected!

Home Group meets on Wednesdays from 7:00pm - 8:30pm at 515 Halsey Avenue  
Starting November 2 running through December 14th

If you have any questions please contact Sharon and Bob Bindas at 412-271-0679 or  
Tim and Erin Patkso at 412-244-4350.

*Erin*

# CHOIR POWER - FALL 2011

**“Sing to Him, sing praises to Him;  
Tell of all His wondrous works!  
Glory in His holy name;  
Let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice!  
(Psalm 105: 2-3)**

This fall has been a blessing filled with special music from our choir and praise team. We've also had the privilege to host several guest artists, Grace Berry and Karen Arrington. We thank them for sharing God's word with us.

The choir is now working on the Christmas Cantata “Jesus, No Other Name.” We look forward to sharing this celebration of our Lord's birth on Sunday, December 18. We would like to welcome anyone in the congregation to participate in this musical celebration. Rehearsals are Thursdays from 7-8pm.



I am happy to announce that Cathy Adamson is the director of the Bell Choir. We will be hearing from them several times this fall. It is such a blessing to have Cathy-thank you.

Also, Cindy Sherer is the director of the Children's Choir. We look forward to hearing them with the Chancel Choir and other specials. I really appreciate you Cindy.

In the upcoming months, we will be sharing several specials: special guest artists, a Praise Team Christmas celebration, soloists from our choir, instrumental specials, and renown bell players Bob and Roberta Erickson.

We look forward to sharing God's word and glorifying Him through music and in all we do.

In Christ,

*Jennie Gorton*

## Forest Hills Presbyterian Church Financial Statement September 30, 2011



Budgeted Income	YTD	\$ 126,971.00
Actual Tithes & Gifts	YTD	\$ 154,334.74
Actual Expenses	YTD	\$ 156,631.57
Unfavorable	YTD	\$ 2,296.83

# MISSION AND OUTREACH

The Mission Team is getting fired up again with ideas and ways to bring the good news to our community and the world.

We have Suzie Thompson that has jumped right in to help us with feeding the homeless and Tim Patsko who has come up with a way to share our mission vision on a letter he wrote for our clients that use the parking lot.

## Coat Drive

Sue McKibben's first coat drive took off great as her team sorted through close to 140 coats and articles of clothing. It has been a great drive as so many have donated and given their time to make this event successful. We hope this will be the start of something good. The remaining coats will go to the homeless.

## Juniper Village

The Mission team visited Juniper Village to introduce ourselves in our plans to reach people in this community with the gospel message of Jesus Christ. It was a very successful visit and we are looking forward for more visits in the future for bible reading.

## Forest Hills Volunteer Fire and Emergency Medical Service

Mission Team will plan to meet with the local fire and EMS personnel to recognize and thank them for their service of protecting our community. We will give them a basket of baked goods and treats along with bibles and devotionals and to lift them in prayer.

## Crop Walk

Although one of our major events, we will not be involved this year due to other pressing matters.

In His grace,

*Darrell*

*The Missions Team; Darrell Matthews, Betty Powell, Cindy Sherer, Susan McKibben,  
Suzie Thompson, Tim Patsko, Monica Turley and Nancy Sypolt*

# BIBLICAL STEWARDSHIP

## How We Receive From God

The tithe is God's property that we are required to return to Him. However, an "offering" is that which we give voluntarily out of our own property after the tithe has been subtracted. As we give our tithes, and give offerings above our tithe to God, He will continue to bless us and multiply our return in proportion to our investment in Him. (2 Corinthians 9:6)

I challenge you to become a tither and a giver to God, and "prove" His promise to bless you, just as He invites you to do in Malachi 3:10. Give to God in faith, expecting Him to bless your return (Mark 11:24), and give cheerfully, expressing joy and confidence in giving to God (2 Corinthians 9:7). The same proportion that you open your faith to give to Him, He will use that same proportion as His measurement to bring blessings back to you!

"Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you" (Luke 6:38).

*Patty Kemerer and Stewardship Team*

### Go Green - Receive the Newsletter by E-Mail

Keep up to date by receiving The Good News of Forest Hills Presbyterian Church Newsletter the day it is printed. All you need to do is call or email Kathy at the office and she will put you on the email list and rest assured you won't miss a thing. The email is [foresthillspc@gmail.com](mailto:foresthillspc@gmail.com) or call the office at 412.241.1647 Thank you.

### Blanket Program

Now that the Coat Drive has ended, and the nights are getting cold; it's time to start sewing our squares together to make our blankets. This year, I would like the squares sewn together 6 across and 6 down to make into lap blankets. I'm hoping to be able to distribute them to our shut-in friends and maybe some Senior Citizen homes to use as lap blankets, when our congregation goes Christmas Caroling in the beginning of December. Please, feel free to take home 36 squares of your choice and help us out; again I will be happy to crochet the trim around the edges. Thank you for your help.

Judy Holmes

# Coat Drive

## Sharing Warmth & God's Love With Those in Need

During the summer of 2011, work began to develop an idea to get coats that folks might have hanging in the back of their closets that they didn't use anymore to folks that needed a coat.... plain and simple. That was the beginning.

One hundred and forty coats were donated throughout the fall. Judy Holmes and Judy Ways crocheted hats and scarves for the drive effort. The Boy Scouts made some coat racks to help display the coats. Four scouts: Ryan Ash, Cameron McIntosh, Liam Reinert and Evan Cuarocucaro came to assist on the day of the give away. McDonalds donated Orange Drink, Foxes donated pizza, Dunkin Donuts donated donuts, Sams Club donated muffins and Turners donated Iced Tea. Our other helpers were Paul, PJ, Judy H., Monica, Darrell, Betty, Cindy, Phil, Dick and Darla.

On Saturday, October 15<sup>th</sup>, the day of the Coat 'Give Away', there was a line of folks anxiously waiting for the doors to open so they could go in to choose their 'new warm coat'. At the end of the day, 83 coats had been given away and all the hat and scarves had been distributed. The remainder of the coats will be taken to the homeless next month. It was a good Spirit Filled Day!

Thank you to everyone who assisted with this effort by giving generously of their time and by donating coats.

*Susan McKibbin*

## Advent Wreath Making Workshop

The Annual Advent Wreath Making Workshop will be Sunday, November 27, 2011 during the Sunday School hour. Come out and enjoy fellowship with others and make a beautiful wreath that will both brighten your home and serve as a reminder for the real reason for the season. Donations for the wreath making will be accepted.

## Attention ALL Youth

There are plenty of seats available in your youth room on Wednesdays at 7:00 pm @ Youth Group! We can squeeze a couple more into the library for Youth Bible Study @ 9:15 on Sunday mornings. (Refreshments Provided)

# Deacon's Corner

Fall has brought the winds of change to FHPC. To keep you in the loop so you aren't blown away, we want to update you on what is happening and how you can be a part of this exciting change.

The Deacons supported a Soup Sale to benefit the Sypolt family on October 23, 2011. We prepared many wonderful soups and the sale was a great success. Many people ordered and also donated money to help the Sypolt's. Thank you all for your support.

With Thanksgiving just around the corner, we have again asked Woodland Hills School District for a list of 5 families that will benefit from our Thanksgiving baskets. This was greatly appreciated in the past and we want to make sure this tradition continues. If you feel led to donate to this wonderful cause, please speak with a Deacon.

õ**Calling ALL Bakers!!!!** Please plan to bring some cookies to the parlor at church on November 23. That is the night we will celebrate Thanksgiving with an Ecumenical service combining St. Maurice church with Hope Lutheran. A warm reception will await you after the service so plan on attending.



**OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD** is moving forward with the disappearance of all the boxes in the Narthex. Your generous spirit will bring a needy child a Christmas box to open full of surprises. If you can't shop for presents to fill the box, a donation is also appropriate. You can bring the filled box to church ahead of time when you are ready but the deadline is **November 13, 2011**.

The Deacons are caroling again this year and will be visiting the shut-ins. We want to extend an invitation to anyone who loves to sing to join us. The more, the Merrier! We will head out after a hearty lunch at church on December 11 and fa la lalala our way into many hearts. We need your harmony, so please give us a hand (or a note).



The Deacons want to express their love and care for the members of FHPC so if you know of a need or someone who needs a hand up, please share this with Ben or one of the Deacons. It is our joy to be Gods feet and hands in the Forest Hills Community and beyond.

In His Service,

*FHPC Deacons*

# THE MEANING OF "ADVENT"

The word **Advent** means "coming" or "arrival." The focus of the entire season is the celebration of the birth of Jesus the Christ in his First Advent, and the anticipation of the return of Christ the King in his Second Advent. Thus, Advent is far more than simply marking a 2,000 year old event in history. It is celebrating a truth about God, the revelation of God in Christ whereby all of creation might be reconciled to God. That is a process in which we now participate, and the consummation of which we anticipate. Scripture reading for Advent will reflect this emphasis on the Second Advent, including themes of accountability for faithfulness at His coming, judgment on sin, and the hope of eternal life.



In this double focus on past and future, Advent also symbolizes the spiritual journey of individuals and a congregation, as they affirm that Christ has come, that He is present in the world today, and that He will come again in power. That acknowledgment provides a basis for Kingdom ethics, for holy living arising from a profound sense that we live "between the times" and are called to be faithful stewards of what is entrusted to us as God's people. So, as the church celebrates God's inbreaking into history in the Incarnation, and anticipates a future consummation to that history for which "all creation is groaning awaiting its redemption," it also confesses its own responsibility as a people commissioned to "love the Lord your God with all your heart" and to "love your neighbor as yourself."

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This is an Advent symbol of Jesus from Rev 1:8 and 22:13: "I am the Alpha and the Omega [the first and the last, the beginning and the end]" says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty" (see also Isaiah 44:6). The first symbol is the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, Aleph, and the second is the last letter of the Greek alphabet, Omega. Not only does this symbolize the One who has come and will come again, it also emphasizes the continuity of God's work in history throughout both the Old and New Testaments.

November 27<sup>th</sup> 1st Sunday of Advent:  
9:15 am will be Advent Wreath Making and After Worship

*Erin Patsko*





## Worship Schedule November and December

<u>Date</u>	<u>Sermon Title</u>	<u>Scripture</u>
November 6	“The Fiery Furnace”	Daniel 3:12-28
November 13	“Lumberjacks Before Optometrists”	Matthew 7:1-12
November 20	“The fruit of God is Love”	2 Peter 1:2-8

## Sundays of Advent



Join us for a Christ-filled Christmas season, Sunday mornings at 10:30 am

<u>Date</u>	<u>Sermon Title</u>	<u>Scripture</u>
November 27	1st Sunday of Advent “Abram & Advent”	Genesis 15:4-18
December 4	2nd Sunday of Advent “Promise Fulfilled”	Mark 1:1-8
December 11	3rd Sunday of Advent “Witness”	John 1:6-8
December 18	4th Sunday of Advent Christmas Cantata <i>Jesus No Other Name</i> , by Jay Rouse	
December 24	Christmas Eve Services 7:30 pm Christmas Eve Service (Childcare Provided)	
December 25	Christmas Day Lessons and Carols	Luke 2:1-7

# November and December Upcoming Events

November 23: Ecumenical Service at Forest Hills Presbyterian Church  
7:30 pm Worship Service  
Father John W. Skirtich

November 26:

## Thanksgiving

November 27: 1st Sunday of Advent  
9:15 Advent Wreath Making  
10:30 Worship Service



December 4: 2nd Sunday of Advent  
9:15 am Sunday School  
10:30 am Worship Service  
Bell Duet with Robert & Roberta Erickson

December 11: 3rd Sunday of Advent  
9:15 Sunday School  
10:30 Worship Service  
After Worship – Deacons will serve a Light Lunch and  
after lunch Christmas Caroling to the Homebound

December 19: 4th Sunday of Advent  
9:30 am Sunday School  
10:30 Christmas Cantata

December 24: **Christmas Eve Services**  
7:30 pm – Christmas Eve Service – Childcare Provided

December 25:

*Merry  
Christmas*

Lessons and Carols

January 1:

## HAPPY NEW YEAR

