

Forest Hill Church: Communion Service

May 7, 2023 ~ 11:00 am

You may also join worship online using this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SMG84KsRY1U>

**Please stand if able*

Centering Words

*Come to the table of grace.
This is God's table; it's not yours or mine.
Come to the table of grace.
(From Hymn 507)*

INTROIT

John Bell

"Stand Firm"
Chancel Choir

Greeting Our God with Joy

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Come, let us praise and worship the living God. **We will offer our songs and prayers to the glory of the Creator.**

Come, be open to the love of Jesus. **We will seek to walk in his way and show his truth as we live his life.**

Come, let the Spirit refresh your spirit. **We are ready to go where the Spirit leads!**

***HYMN NO. 33**

"Praise the Lord! God's Glories Show"

Renewing Our Relationship with God

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Merciful God, in your gracious presence we confess our sin and the sin of the world. Although Christ is among us as our peace, we are a people divided against ourselves as we cling to the values of a broken world. The profit and pleasures we pursue lay waste the land and pollute the seas. The fears and jealousies that we harbor set neighbor against neighbor and nation against nation. We abuse your gifts of imagination and freedom, of intellect and reason, and have turned them into bonds of oppression. Lord, have mercy upon us; heal and forgive us. Set us free to serve you in the world as agents of your reconciling love in Jesus Christ.

TIME OF SILENCE

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Hear the good news! Hope does not disappoint us, for God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit given to us in baptism. Believe this good news and give thanks: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! **Thanks be to God!**

HYMN NO. 589

"Alleluia"

Affirming the Good News in Our Lives

CHILDREN’S WELCOME

Amy Wheatley

Children will leave the sanctuary with their adult leaders to go to Sunday School.

ANTHEM

arr. John Ferguson

“Speak, O Lord”

Chancel Choir

Speak, O Lord, as we come to You
To receive the food of your holy word.
Take Your truth, plant it deep in us;
Shape and fashion us in Your likeness,
That the light of Christ might be seen today
In our acts of love and our deeds of faith.
Speak, O Lord, and fulfill in us
All Your purposes, for Your glory.
Teach us Lord full obedience,
Holy reverence, true humility.
Test our thoughts and our attitudes
In the radiance of Your purity.
Cause our faith to rise
Cause our eyes to see,
Your majestic love and authority.
Words of power that can never fail;
Let their truth prevail over unbelief.
Speak, O Lord, and renew our minds;
Help us grasp the heights of Your plans for us.
Truths unchanged from the dawn of time,
That will echo down through eternity.
And by grace we’ll stand on Your promises;
And by faith we’ll walk as You walk with us.
Speak, O Lord, ’til your church is built
And the earth is filled with Your glory.

Opening Our Hearts to God’s Word

THE LIVING WORD (NRSV)

John 14:1-14

After the readings

Hear what the Holy Spirit is telling God’s people.
Thanks be to God.

SERMON

Rev. Dr. John C. Lentz, Jr.

“The Heart of the Matter”

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD’S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

FRIENDSHIP REGISTER

To participate in our online Friendship Register, please leave a comment in the Live Chat box listing the names of those participating in this morning's Live Worship or email the office.

OFFERING

Giving and Offering is available by texting: 216-400-5300
Or you may give online: <https://fhc.breezechms.com/give/online/>
You may also mail a check to the church office.

OFFERTORY

Paul Baloché

“Open the Eyes of My Heart, Lord”

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION
GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. **And also, with you.**
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

WORDS OF INSTITUTION AND PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

WE DISTRIBUTE THE GIFTS OF GOD TO THE PEOPLE OF GOD

SHARING THE ELEMENTS

MUSIC DURING COMMUNION

Barbara Hamm

“Come to the Table of Grace”
Chancel Choir

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Bless the Lord, O my soul; **and all that is within me bless God’s holy name.**
Bless the Lord, O my soul; **and forget not all his benefits.**
God of abundance, with this bread of life and cup of salvation you have united us with Christ,
making us one with all your people. Send us forth in the power of your Spirit that we may
proclaim your redeeming love to the world and continue forever in the risen life of Jesus
Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Going Forth to Live as God’s People

*CLOSING HYMN

“Sent Forth By God’s Blessing”

Words by Charles Ghose sung to the tune of ASH GROVE (Hymn No. 37)

1. Sent forth by God’s blessing, our true faith confessing, the people of God from this dwelling take leave.
The supper is ended. Oh, now be extended the fruits of this service in all who believe.
The seed of Christ’s teaching, receptive souls reaching, shall blossom in action for God and for all.
Your grace shall invite us, your love shall unite us, to work for your kingdom and answer your call.
2. With praise and thanksgiving to God ever-living, the tasks of our ev’ryday life we will face—
our faith ever sharing, in love ever caring, embracing God’s children, the whole human race.
With your feast you feed us, with your light now lead us; unite us as one in this life that we share.
Then may all the living with praise and thanksgiving give honor to Christ and his name that we bear.

*BENEDICTION

"Sanctuary"

POSTLUDE

Jacques Lemmens

“Postlude in D”



What is a Matthew 25 church?

Matthew 25:31–46 calls all of us to actively engage in the world around us, so our faith comes alive and we wake up to new possibilities. Convicted by this passage, both the 222nd and 223rd General Assemblies (2016 and 2018) exhorted the PC(USA) to act boldly and compassionately to serve people who are hungry, oppressed, imprisoned or poor.

How the vision unites all Presbyterians

By accepting the Matthew 25 invitation, we recognize Christ’s urgent call to be a church of action, where God’s love, justice and mercy shine forth and are contagious. And we rejoice how our re-energized faith can unite all Presbyterians for a common and holy purpose: our common identity to do mission.

The invitation, open to any church or mid council, has three goals:

- **Building congregational vitality** by challenging congregations and their members to deepen and energize their faith and grow as joyful leaders and disciples, actively engaged with their community as they share the gospel of Jesus Christ in word and deed.
- **Dismantling structural racism** by fearlessly applying our faith to advocate and break down the systems, practices and thinking that underlie discrimination, bias, prejudice and oppression of people of color.
- **Eradicating systemic poverty** by acting on our beliefs and working to change laws, policies, plans and structures in our society that perpetuate economic exploitation of people who are poor.



Prayer Request:

To request prayers for a personal concern, please email Pastor Lentz (pastorlentz@fhcpresb.org) no later than Thursday afternoon of each week for inclusion in next week’s congregational prayer.

Prayers are requested this week for:

The family of Cooper Andrews, Kiva Bohanon, Deborah Howard, Beverly Thomas, Grace Uhle, Doreen Underwood, Susan Way, the family of Beryl Williams, and Sharon Wiggins.

Please remember these homebound members in your prayers:

Robert Kellermeyer, Florence and Ron Klein, Carol Hopkins-Lutz, Emelia McGuire and Henrietta Williams.

Care Groups will assist our pastors with members’ needs. Please call the church office to report an illness, hospitalization, family emergency, birth or death. Information will be passed on to the **head of the Deacons, Dean Sieck** (deacons@fhcpresb.org). **The deacon for the month of May is Peg Weissbrod.**

Thank you, all office volunteers: Joan Bacon, Lynda Bernays, Cathy Ghiandoni and Nancy Grube.

Thank you, all Stream Team Volunteers! Anyone interested in helping stream Sunday services should contact Kurt Haas at kurt@dangereddy.com.

The deadline for the bulletin and weekly email is Tuesday of each week at 5 pm. The next TOWER deadline is **May 11 (for the June TOWER) at 8:00 am**. Please submit your written requests to office@fhcpresb.org.