



The Window

The Newsletter of Fort Hill Presbyterian Church

December 2020

Message From the Pastor

The Weary World Rejoices!

2020 has been a tiring year. While we cannot sing together much, the Christmas carol "O Holy Night" beckons to our weary souls:

*O Holy night! The stars are brightly shining,
It is the night of our dear Savior's birth.
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,
'Til He appears and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope **the weary world rejoices.**
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.
Fall on your knees; O hear the Angel voices!
O night divine, O night when Christ was born.
O night, O Holy night, O night divine!*

This is the season when life is pregnant with the hope of possibilities. 2020 is a year to pause and reflect on God's gift of Jesus to us- God with us. Jesus was born into a world where the hurting, broken, and oppressed needed a hope that is deep and wide, not just tinsel and Christmas parties.

This will be an unusual Advent and Christmas. The pandemic causes us to reflect on a world of chaos and disorder, disconnection and fear, and see that God gifts us with a time when "all is calm, and all is bright" not because of those things, but in spite of them. Jesus is born into a world where Herod's rule is capricious and feared. Jesus is born into a world where the poor need to hear good news- made real, in the flesh, not just charity, but righteous social relationships. Those essential workers like shepherds were chosen to first hear the news. We have essential workers, working the night shift, too, to care for us. Jesus is born to a young, vulnerable woman who had plenty of reasons to fear, but trusted the LORD, and a spouse, Joseph, who took the responsibility and commitment of caring for them to heart. Both chose to love, defend, and protect the Christ child.

Jesus is born! He brings new life. He is in our midst and is coming again. In the meantime, we worship him. We follow his lead, choosing faith over fear, joy over despair, and life over death.

I hope you will draw near to the Christ child by enjoying our devotionals, worshiping, and by sharing the Good News of great joy with the giving of Christ Child boxes of groceries to feed our neighbors.

Hope, Peace, Joy, and Most of all, Love,

Pastor Laura

Inside this issue:

| | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Weekly Lectionary Scriptures | 2 |
| Baptism of Natalie Turner | 2 |
| Sabbatical Update | 2 |
| Choir Corner | 3 |
| Drive Thru Nativity | 3 |
| In Christian Sympathy | 3 |
| Church Mouse | 4 |
| News from Presbyterian Women | 4 |
| Christ Child Boxes | 5 |
| From the Finance Ministry | 5 |
| Advent Devotionals | 5 |
| Art Workshop | 6 |
| Together for Joy | 6 |
| December Birthdays & Anniversaries | 7 |
| Christmas Eve Services | 7 |
| Lessons and Carols | Back |

Fort Hill Presbyterian Church

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www.forthillchurch.org

Laura Smith Conrad, Pastor
Mary Morrison, AP for Discipleship
Michael Sanchez, AP for Univ. Min.
Katie Wilson, Children's Ministry Coord.
Margaret MacKay, Director of Music
Judy Bonham, Organist/Handbell Dir.
Becky Bowman, Pianist
Lori Houck, Administrator
Julie Bryant, Admin. Assistant
Scott Thrailkill, Facilities Caretaker

Joining together on a journey of Christian faith, we seek to be Disciples of Christ and to share God's love in our community and around the world.

Weekly Lectionary Scriptures

12/6 2nd Sunday of Advent

Isa. 40:1-11; Ps. 85:1-2, 8-13;
2 Peter 3:8-15a; Mark 1:1-8

12/13 3rd Sunday of Advent

Isa. 61:1-4, 8-11; Ps. 126 or
Luke 1:46b-55; 1 Thess. 5:16-24;
John 1:6-8, 19-28

12/20 4th Sunday of Advent

2 Sam. 7:1-11, 16; Luke 1:46b-55 or
Ps. 89:1-4, 19-26; Rom. 16:25-27;
Luke 1:26-38

12/27 1st Sunday of Christmas

Isa. 61:10-62:3; Ps. 148; Gal. 4:4-7
Luke 2:22-40



Natalie Adair Turner was baptized on November 15, 2020 at Fort Hill. She is pictured below with her parents Trevor & Marie Turner. Her big brothers are Bennett & Daniel (not pictured).



January

The Window Deadline

The deadline for articles, announcements, and features for the November issue of *The Window* is **Tuesday, January 15.**

Please email your item as a Microsoft Word document to the church office at window@forthillchurch.org or type the item directly into your email and send. If possible, please keep your articles to

Fort Hill Receives Another Lilly Grant

Greetings, Fort Hill Faith Family,

The Sabbatical Reflection Group and I thank you for your prayers regarding our proposal for a sabbatical which was sent in June to the Clergy Renewal Program sponsored by the Lilly Endowment. In mid-October we received word that Fort Hill Presbyterian Church and I have received the \$50,000 grant. We are elated! Due to the pandemic, we are making a formal request to Lilly to postpone the sabbatical until 2022, hoping that a vaccine will have been widely used around the world and that international travel will be safer.

As promised in July, I am sharing with you a summary of the congregation's portion of the sabbatical application.

In the fall of prior to the sabbatical persons interested in walking for their health and well-being are invited to join a new group called Peripatetic Presbyterians. (Peripatetic means one walks about from place to place, usually because of work or to stay for short periods of time in different places. Jesus' ministry was peripatetic.) Peripatetic Presbyterians will build bonds in faith, encourage vitality, and help me prepare for the Camino. Hopefully this small group will also hike while I am away as well as continue to walk and develop opportunities for shared pilgrimages in the future.



On the Sunday after Easter which will be the last Sunday before my sabbatical, there will be a commissioning service. A few meaningful gifts symbolic of the sabbatical will be shared with me. I will be away for three months. During the sabbatical, a part-time parish associate will cover some of my duties, including visitation, facilitation of meetings, and worship leadership. The deacons will take on a larger role in visitation while I am away with the expectation that this will continue after I return.

The Sabbatical Reflection Group will create "Flat Pastor Mary," a picture of me on a stick, for families in the congregation to take with them on their own travels where they might write stories or poetry, take pictures, or find other creative ways to share their journeys. Families and individuals will take pictures with "Flat Pastor Mary" on their travels and post them to social media as directed.

The Sabbatical Reflection Group will compile four weeks of devotionals to coincide with particular activities I will experience while on sabbatical. These will be shared with the congregation as bulletin inserts and electronic media. Two Sunday sermons will focus on the congregation providing pastoral care to one another by sharing Christ's love through intentional visits and sharing the gift of flowers with others.

Upon my return to ministry at the end of the sabbatical, I will share a litany of thanksgiving and renewal with the congregation and offer appreciation to the parish associate. Then together with the congregation we will celebrate the with a meal, and take time to share stories and photos of the congregation's and my sabbatical journeys with lessons learned, memories created, and hopes for moving forward.

Please let me know if you would like to be a Peripatetic Presbyterian!

With deep gratitude for the future and all that it holds for us as God's people, I am grateful for your continued prayers.

Mary Morrison

Choir Corner

Advent and Christmas are upon us!! In some ways this year crept along slowly and in other ways, I can't believe we are in December!

I don't know about you, but I need some preparation and joy this time of year. I have been thinking of the musical, **Godspell**, which has two of my favorite songs. The opening song says "Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord, make a straight path for him" and *Day by Day* says "O dear Lord, three things I pray - to see thee more clearly, love thee more dearly, follow thee more nearly day by day."

To me, those songs say it simply and completely - - to prepare our hearts and minds for the arrival of God's son, the Messiah. Then see Him clearly and completely daily for who He is. To love Him completely with our heart, soul, mind, and strength. And to trust and follow Him each and every day. The long-expected Jesus, God's only son, comes to set us free. He releases us from our fears and sins. In Him, we can find rest. He is Israel's strength, consolation and hope. Christ is the desire of every nation and the joy of every longing heart!

May we welcome Him into our hearts and lives this day and everyday.

A Joyful Advent and a Merry Christmas,

Smiling-n-Singing,
Margaret



Christian Sympathy is extended to:

Marlene Nicholas and family on the death of **David Nicholas** on November 10 in Knoxville, TN.

The family of **Jane Polk** on her death on November 10 in Seneca, SC.

Pat & Lisa Street on the death of Lisa's mother **Eveabeth Winton** on November 12 in LaFayette, GA



Drive Thru Nativity—December 20

In place of our annual Angel Vespers, the Fellowship Ministry is hosting a Drive-Thru Nativity at the church. Reserve some time on Sunday, December 20th between 6:00--8:00 PM to drive by the church on McHugh Lane (the one-way street above College Avenue).



Here you will find angels, sheep, shepherds, the holy family, wisemen, and camels to greet you. We will have Christmas carols and the stories from Matthew and Luke's gospel broadcast through an FM transmitter so you can tune in to listen in your car.

Anyone who would also like to give thanks to God can drop off a letter to God in a special mailbox that will be available at this special event. Below is more about the letter.

Remember writing letters to Santa asking for what you wanted the most?

Well, you can write a letter to God in the same way. You can share about your year, your lows (pows) and your highs (wows), your fears and your hopes. This is an opportunity for you to put your trust in God, the giver of all good gifts. Share with God your thanks as well.

After writing your letter, seal it in an envelope and place it in the special mailbox at the December 20th Drive-Thru Nativity. Offer your prayer to God, with thanksgiving, hope, and joy for the new year.



Church Mouse



Praise be, there are people in church again. Ok, so not many but yea!!

Let's talk about the music provided during the YouTube and Livestreaming services: (two very new words for me along with COVID): Bells – Margaret MacKay, Robbie Stokes, Gensie Waldrop, Mark Kwist, Caroline Thomas, Jacquie Worley and Bridget Trogden. Now to the singers: Mark and Robbie Stokes, Diane & Chip Egan, Joe and Niki Johnsonwall and their children: Julianne, Jeremy, Joanna, Jocelyn, & Juliette. Plus, how can we forget the beautiful organ music provided by Judy Bonham.

BUT MOST IMPORTANT ARE THOSE BEHIND THE SUCCESS OF YOUTUBE AND LIVESTREAMING: CHUCK MOEDE, BRUCE WHISLER & CHRIS GRIFFIN.

On All Saints Day, November 1, I got to hear the bagpipes played by Devon Broome. Ushers were the Jay, Tommi and Grant Jones and Catherine with head usher Caroline Thomas. We also heard from our "Saints" at the Foothills Community: Wes & Judy Koch, Beth Wilkinson, Dorothy Vedder, Charlotte Gruosso, Raenota Merrill, Rocky & Mary Coronato, Steve & Laurie Lefevre, Joan Egan, and Pat Rutledge.

Our children in the choral program were all given Rhythm Bags so they could play along when they watched the services. They were created by Margaret MacKay.

Speakers in church on the Stewardship campaign were Art Williams and Bo Crader (a child of Fort Hill).

Be sure to thank these people by a note or even an email.



News from Presbyterian Women

Thank You!

We would like to extend a big thank you for all of you who donated boxes for Samaritan's Purse, an organization benefitting underprivileged children and the amazing amount of clothing for Safe Harbor. Thank you, also, to those who collected and sorted the items! Your generosity means so much to so many!

Christmas Gifts for Clinton Presbyterian Community

Please note: There will be a box placed in the Narthex of FHPC (in front of the long blue table) to receive your gifts until December 6, 2020.

We will be delivering Christmas gifts to the residents of Clinton Presbyterian Community on December 6, 2020. We request donations of the following gift items:

Postage stamps, post-it notes, scratch pads, LARGE PRINT word search puzzle books, and paperback books. 2021 calendars, picture frames, pens, pencils, small umbrellas, rain hats, men's handkerchiefs, shower caps, hair brushes, laundry bags, combs, lip balm, nail polish, emery boards, nail clippers, toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, lotion, Kleenex, greeting cards, socks, knee-highs, batteries, deodorant, mesh laundry bags, flashlight with batteries.

Please DO NOT wrap these gifts as it will be much easier to distribute them to the appropriate resident.

Contact Eva Henry, (864) 654-3737.

Honorary Life Membership Nominating Forms

Each year we honor a member of our church with the Honorary Life Membership Award at our annual PW Birthday Luncheon. This award is given to a dedicated Christian whose witness, long and dedicated service, and spiritual influence in our community reflect the love of God and His church. Prayerfully consider the Presbyterian woman/man you would like to nominate for her/his outstanding lifetime contributions to FHPC. Nomination forms are due by **January 20, 2021**.

Please contact the Honorary Life Membership Committee Chairmen for more information:

Cathy McInnis, Chairman, (864) 654-4003 (H)

Myra Cato, (864) 639-6542 (H)

Judy Blackwell, (864) 506-1138 (C)

Joan Dixon, (864) 506-1428 (C)

Dates to Remember

December 6, 2020—Deadline for Presbyterian Home donations

January 20, 2021—Deadline for Honorary Life Membership applications

Submitted by Mary Barron, PW Publicity Chairman
mb1cb1@bellsouth.net or (864) 247-1322

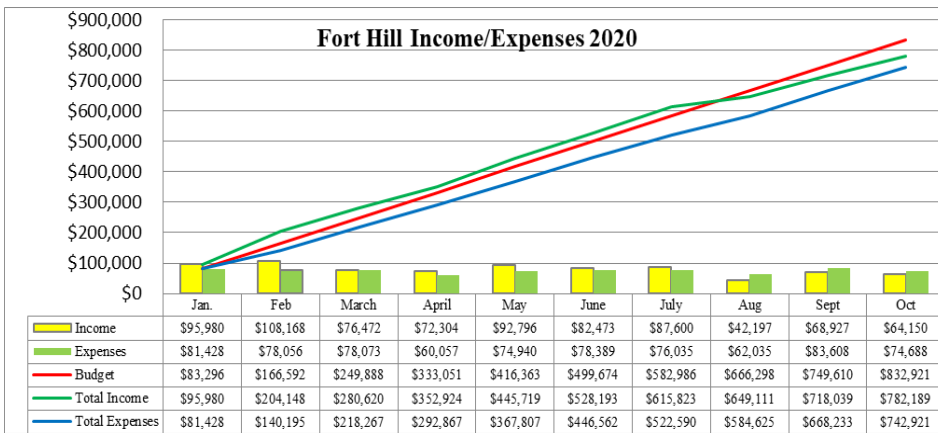


From the Finance Ministry

From the Finance Ministry – Through October, total income was \$782,189 while expenses for the first 10 months were \$742,921 for a surplus of \$39,268. Overall expenses are at 74% of budgeted, while income is at 78.2%. As you can see, income is approximately 5% below budget while expenses are 9% below. General Fund suffered a loss for the month of \$10,500 bringing year-to-date surplus to \$39,268. October contribution revenue was \$17,300 under budget while YTD revenue is \$30,000 under budget. Total expenses are underbudget \$91,600 YTD and \$8,900 for the month.

If you have not returned your 2021 pledge, please prayerfully consider your pledge for the coming year, so Fort Hill can continue its ministries to members, community and around the world.

Bridging Generations Update: Loan principle: \$294,319.40.



Christ Child Boxes

This has certainly been a challenging year and many of our traditions have also been impacted. We began a new tradition four years ago in order for our congregation to be more involved in a “hands on” endeavor that would have a meaningful impact on our community. The idea of our Christ Child Boxes for the Clemson Community Care food pantry was to encourage families to work together to fill a box of needed items to provide for the less fortunate in the Clemson area.

We will have empty boxes available again this year in the Narthex if you are able to attend a worship service in person. Our deacons will also touch base with you if you would rather have a box delivered to you. Filled boxes can be returned to the church throughout the month of December if you will be worshipping in person or you may contact your deacon for them to pick up your box. The boxes will contain a list of suggested items which is the same list we have used in past years.

We know that not everyone is comfortable to venture out to the grocery store this year and for those of you who fit that category but still want to participate, we suggest sending a check payable to Fort Hill Church and note “Christ Child Boxes” in the memo line. We estimate that filling a box would cost approximately \$50 but, of course, any amount will be appreciated.



Advent Devotionals 2020

A lot of things seem to feel worse in 2020, but the Discipleship Ministry is excited to invite you to enjoy the 2020 Advent Devotionals which will be offered to you on YouTube each Monday--Saturday of Advent. We hope you will enjoy the worship services on the Sundays of Advent.

The Teams of Children’s Ministry, Youth Ministry, and Adult Ministry have invited families and individuals to share a Scripture, story and prayer with you in their own words through short videos. Videos will be posted to the Fort Hill Presbyterian Church YouTube Channel and Facebook page each day.

We hope you will enjoy seeing your fellow congregational members and prepare your hearts for the coming of the Christ child.



Advent Workshop

Meet Ashley Mason Brown, Recipient of the Pansy Duke Scholarship

The Pansy Duke Scholarship was established to support and encourage people of all ages considering careers in church service or seeking God's will for their lives. Awarded annually to qualified individuals based on leadership, academic excellence, and the commitment to explore means to attain a life of faith-based servant leadership.

Our newest recipient of the Pansy Duke Scholarship is Ashley Mason Brown! A resident of Greenville, SC and member of Westminster Presbyterian Church, Ashley is attending Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Austin, TX in the Master of Divinity degree program. It was while spending summers working at Montreat Conference Center that she learned to love God, and to use art and creative writing to connect with Him. Ashley is a registered Inquirer with the Foothills Presbytery, and endeavors to help combine creative expression with holy union; to help people tap into their creative sides to build their relationship with God.

We are therefore very excited that Ashley has offered to lead an art workshop for us. This is a great way for you to meet her and we hope that you will join us!

Star of Bethlehem Advent Art Workshop with Ashley Mason Brown

Sunday, December 6

3:00-4:00 PM by Zoom video conference

All ages are welcome

Limit of 30 participants

Register in advance for this event:

<https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tjcf-urrjkrEtbkasdbI1NNiS5ooUCFylup>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email with details about joining.

In this workshop we will be engaging our inner child, and connecting to God through the act of creation. *Is not God the ultimate artist and creator? How better to serve tribute to Him, than through art!?*

We will be painting the night sky, and star of Bethlehem, in honor of Advent (Matthew 2, 9-11).

Each person participating needs to have the following:

- Cheap toothbrush (to flick paint to make the stars)
- Black acrylic paint
- Blue acrylic paint
- White acrylic paint
- Purple acrylic paint
- A medium sized paintbrush
- Canvas/canvas paper (8x10/8.5x11 canvas recomb)
- Paper towels for cleaning up

Optional:

- Gold or silver acrylic paint
- Disposable plastic gloves (1 set per artist)
- Estimated cost of supplies is \$10-\$15.
- Contact Mark Kwist for info makwist@yahoo.com.



It is not too late to submit your stewardship pledge for 2021, if you have not already done so. You can either place your pledge card in the offering plate on Sunday, mail it to Lori Houck, or pledge online.

To pledge online, go to the following web address:

<https://www.forthillchurch.org/worship/stewardship/online-pledge-card>



December

BIRTHDAYS

| | | | | | | | |
|------|--|-------|--|-------|--|-------|--|
| 12/1 | Oron Broome | 12/9 | Jim Leisinger Olivia Mueller Addie Nebesky Elizabeth Sisson | 12/17 | Cleo Gregg Jillian McLaurin Nickie Mueller | 12/24 | Linda Gahan Jan Kahle |
| 12/2 | Vernie Roberts | | | | | 12/25 | Anita Fredman Hilarie Sehorn |
| 12/3 | Aaron Mantia Donald Spitler | 12/10 | David Collins Meredith Lecroy | 12/18 | Lee D'Andrea Tina Sitton | 12/26 | Bob Stout |
| 12/4 | Elise Halbig Linda Newmark | 12/11 | Lori Houck Helen Wooten | 12/19 | Eric Mueller | 12/27 | Marcia Barker Judy Koch Stephen Sefick Dorothy Vedder |
| 12/5 | Lynn Carlson Chip Egan Alice Kennedy Hazel Sparks | 12/12 | Amelia Alexander Leslie Hicklin | 12/20 | Chuck Conrad Stephanie Scott Geoffrey Wilson | 12/28 | Alice Dorn Terri Smith Heather Wright |
| 12/6 | Laura Hunter Emily Miller | 12/15 | Man Chi Chor Danny Gregg Melanie Job Mike Money | 12/21 | Will Hiott Mike Nebesky Tipton Wright | 12/29 | Kate Mills |
| 12/7 | Melissa McGraw Marchita Culpepper Joanna Walling | 12/16 | Crew Lecroy Allen Smith Ben Trammell | 12/22 | Bryce Smith Jason Wilson | 12/30 | Cheryl Aaron |
| 12/8 | Blackie Cook Keller Rodgers | | | 12/23 | Debbie Collins | 12/31 | Calia Worley |



December

ANNIVERSARIES

| | | | | | |
|-------|----------------------|-------|---|-------|---|
| 12/1 | Jimmy & Jill Weir | 12/16 | Rodney & Julie Johnson | 12/19 | Donna & Kelly Crader |
| 12/5 | Greg & Jane Sosebee | 12/17 | Jay & Alice Kennedy Wes & Judy Koch | 12/20 | Mark & Robbi Stokes |
| 12/8 | Jason & Stella Hudak | 12/18 | Andy & Reagan Blondeau Michael & Helen Steele Pat & Lisa Street | 12/22 | Eric & Elizabeth Bost Darrel & Lanie Hedrick |
| 12/10 | Eddie & Megan Chavis | | | 12/23 | Michael & Jeannie Bailey |
| 12/14 | Bryan & Lauren Young | | | 12/26 | Hugh & Peggy Garner |

Christmas Eve Services

Light the Night

Help light luminaries and offer prayers for the world, remember a loved one, and pray for peace. Luminaries will be on the sidewalk outside the Sanctuary to bear witness to all who pass that Jesus, the light of the world, is born! Feel free to drive by between 4:45 and 5:15 to prepare for evening services. Worship with us or let this be an act of worship if you cannot stay.

5:30 pm—Outdoor Candlelight Circle Service
(Handicap Parking Lot)

9:00 pm—Candlelight Communion
(In-Person and Livestream)





Non-Profit Organization
US POSTAGE PAID
Clemson, SC
Permit #11

101 Edgewood Avenue
Clemson, SC 29631

(864) 654-2061
www.forthillchurch.org

Return Service Requested

Fort Hill Presbyterian Church

Lessons & Carols

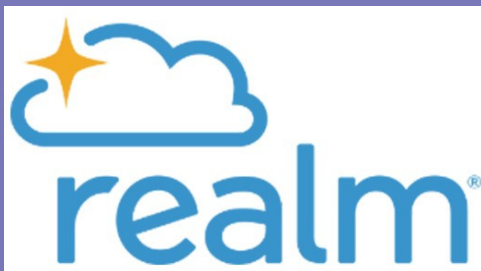
Sunday, December 13

10:45 am

Livestream and In-Person Worship



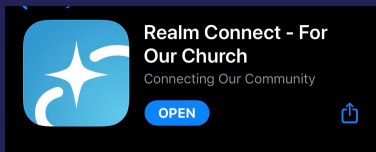
Registration required for In-Person Worship



FORT HILL'S NEW INFORMATION SOLUTION

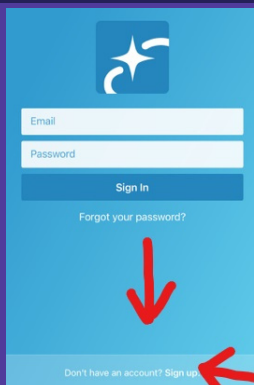
01

Download the free app
Connect - Our Church Community
from your app store



02

Sign up with the email address on file at FHPC. If you don't have it, please call the office.



03

There are lots of things Realm can do, but for now you can update your contact info, set privacy and track your giving

04

Contact info is not public or searchable on the internet but can be viewed by other members if you allow in Settings

05

Track your giving, check pledge progress, and print statements. This feature cannot be viewed by other members

06

Use of Realm is not required but after Feb 1, 2021, ChurchLife will not be available. As always, if you have any questions or need help, please call the church or email julie.bryant@forthillchurch.org