

ForestPark

Lead Team Updates 9/11/2020 for Summer 2020

1) MARY O'BRIEN

Hello Forest Park! My name is Mary O'Brien and I bring you greetings from your Lead Team. As you recently read, Dr. Craig McBrayer, the Chairperson of our Lead Team, has retired after decades in practice as a vascular surgeon. He has touched many lives with his surgical expertise. He has touched many souls with his love of Christ and service in the church and community. I want to take this opportunity to thank Craig for his years of service to Forest Park. He has been instrumental in the formation and development of our Men's Ministry, served on the LT for the past 3.5 years, chaired the LT for the past 2.5. He was a member of the Search Team for both Pastor David and Pastor Ken. Craig has given countless hours to the spiritual development of the Lead Team and has had a profound impact on each and every one of us, and on this church. Many people talk about "God's timing" but Craig lives his life looking and waiting for the Holy Spirit to inform his decisions.

I'd also like to thank Craig's wife Renee for her work, esp. with the children of this church teaching in Sunday School and Vacation Bible School. She also has been faithfully corresponding with and mentoring through the Prison Ministry. In her volunteer work with hospitality she has probably baked thousands of cookies. Renee has regularly prayed for many of us in this church community. We wish them a blessed, joy filled retirement as they move to Kansas to be closer to their family. If you would like to send a note of thanks to Craig and Renee, their new address in Kansas will be in the Day One Announcements next week.

The LT and staff made a decision 7 weeks ago to worship outside "no matter what". We have been blessed to have 6 Sundays of beautiful Michigan weather! Thank you God. Every week, we also continue to live stream our worship service on YouTube or church online. So far, worshipping outside has worked well for our congregation. We have over 200 people safely gathering together, socially distanced in our parking lot. We have another 100+ homes watching online. THANK YOU to our hard working pastors, staff, worship team, greeters, ushers and kids who have worked so hard to make this happen. A special thank you to everyone who usually attends our 2nd service. You have pivoted to an earlier worship time while we have only one service. If you are having trouble accessing the worship service online, please call the church office. We have been able to help a number of people access the service and online

communications more easily. We want everyone to stay connected and COVID 19 has made the use of internet resources more important than ever.

Many churches are struggling right now -- trying to decide how to be together safely. Despite the restrictions that COVID 19 has required, Forest Park is finding new ways to reach our children, our students, and our church family. In the coming weeks, you will hear and see ways we will be improving our online presence. God can and will use this time that we are physically separated to draw us nearer to him and to each other if we are open to him and continue to look for where he is at work.

We continue to impact our community through our local missions, and in the world through our support of the Evangelical Covenant Church and Great Lakes Covenant global missions. In these times of social unrest, if you are not familiar with the Covenant Church's initiative "[Love Mercy Do Justice](#)" I encourage you to go online and read about it. [Subscribe to the Covenant Companion](#) -on line or paper. As the Covenant Church seeks to increase the understanding of racial righteousness, the Lead Teams at both Forest Park and Kingdom Embassy Lead are committed to working together so that the Covenant Church will continue to be a force for good in this community.

Thank you all for being faithful in your prayer life, in worshiping together, in encouraging each other, and in faithful giving. The months ahead will be unpredictable and we will continue to be flexible, fluid and faithful.

2) CINDY ACKERMAN

Greetings. I am Cindy Ackerman. I am the Lead Team liaison to the Connections Team. The Connections team is made up of: Jeff Chittendon, Marci Gawkowski, Chip Hall, Deanna and Tim Holman, Linda Ladd, CheyAnne Orr, Jan Peterson, Susan Schecter, Jack Sischo, Bev Wierengo and Pastor Ken.

Pre-Covid, the Connections Team was focused on welcoming newcomers to Forest Park, establishing relationships with them, engaging them in the gospel and helping them get connected with fellow believers through small groups, service opportunities and the like.

Since Covid, the Connections Team's focus has changed a bit. We still encourage Forest Parkers to welcome newcomers and invite guests to join us but the Connection Team's emphasis is now on connecting Forest Parkers with each other.

Jesus calls on us to love one another. He also calls on us to accept one another, encourage one another, restore one another, care for one another, carry one another's burdens. But let's admit it, it's been hard to do this during Covid when we can't spend time with one another.

The Lead Team is hoping that an updated photo directory will help all of us to be able to connect with one another ..with cards, phone calls, emails and texts. We can share experiences, struggles and the ways in which God has been faithful in our lives during

these stressful times. We can encourage one another. We can learn one another's names!

The directory will be done soon but it really depends on you. Check out the Friday Email blast for the form to fill out. Photos can be emailed to the office or you can have your photo taken on Sunday morning by our awesome photographers Marissa Sischo and Duane Schechter. I will even come to your home to take your photo! Just let me know.

But please don't wait for the directory. Reach out to someone today! If you need a phone number, call the office. We are the body and many of us are feeling isolated and lonely. If you are one who is feeling isolated or lonely, please call the office or any member of the Lead Team or staff.

To all Forest Parkers: we love you and we pray for your spiritual, physical and emotional health and safety. Be well and God bless.

3) DUANE SCHECTER

Hello Forest Park! I am Duane Schechter, a member of your lead team, and the Financial Officer. Something new! This month's financial report is being delivered by video.

The month of July was a financially good month for FPCC. We collected \$967 more than we had budgeted to collect. For this, I would like to thank the people of Forest Park for their continued generosity. Year to date, however, our collections are \$44,800 below what we had budgeted to bring in.

During these difficult times, with the activities at Forest Park dramatically reduced or eliminated, our expenses have reflected our reduced operations. July saw us spending \$18,600 less than we had anticipated spending. Year to date our expenses are \$136,400 below what we had budgeted to spend.

Earlier this year, we applied for and received a Payroll Protection Plan loan from the SBA in the amount of \$61,500. This money was used to pay our employees during this time. We are confident we used the money as intended and soon hope to apply to have this loan forgiven.

Lastly, the Finance Team will soon begin preparing the 2021 church budget. Building the budget is a process of 10 important deadlines and meetings. I would like to highlight 4 of the 10 important dates.

- 1) Tues 10/6 Ministry teams will have their requested budget submitted to Finance Team
- 2) Tues 10/20 Budget Summit – all ministry teams will present their proposed budgets -
- 3) Tues 11/10 Congregational Business Meeting -- Budget Presentation to congregation
- 4) Tues 11/17 Congregational Business Meeting -- Budget Vote by the congregation

All 10 of the important dates for preparing the 2021 FPCC budget are listed below and will also be listed in the Day One Announcements. Thank you Forest Park for your generosity allowing us to continue our ministry to each other, our community and our world.

4) BRENT WARREN

Hello Forest Park family! I am Brent Warren and I am the Lead Team liaison to the Properties, Grounds & Building Usage Team. I am here to give you some updates on what the team has been working on behind the scenes to further our church and maintain our wonderful facility.

As good financial stewards to the church, our properties team has continued to focus on properly maintaining our grounds and buildings while also reviewing expenses for opportunities to reduce costs. Here are a few examples of the excellent work the team has accomplished YTD.

- Natural Gas Cost Reduction - The team reviewed existing contracts compared to current market opportunities and identified a 44% reduction in the cost per cubic foot of gas within the church.
- Parking Lot Lighting Improvement - The parking lot lights were upgraded to LED lights which consume less energy than the previous fixtures. This project was completed by Meekhof Electric at no cost to Forest Park Covenant through Consumers Energy.
- Grounds Keeping Cost Reduction - A huge thank you to Shaun Wade, owner of Lake Harbor Gardens who generously offered to mow our grounds at no cost to Forest Park Covenant through the month of June to help us reduce cost during the pandemic.

One area that members of our church could consider serving within the church is with our fall clean up. If this is an area that you are willing and able to help our church prepare for winter, please be on the lookout for an opportunity that will be communicated soon in the Friday email blast.

In preparation for possible less favorable weather, the staff researched, and the Lead Team approved, the purchase of a heavy duty tent for our worship team. This tent will protect our musicians, instrumentalists and their equipment during our Sunday worship, allowing them to remain outside even if it rains. As you know, we have rented large tents in the past for several outdoor activities per year including "all church events". The team's research showed that purchasing was the best option versus renting. The tent will allow us even more flexibility this fall with our outside meetings, small group gatherings, Children's and Student gatherings. Thank you Pastor Justin and John Wescott for helping the LT to find the best option.

We praise God for blessing us with the wonderful facilities we have and the team who works all year to maintain them!

Please share your thoughts, concerns and feedback with the Lead Team at leadteam@forestparkcov.org

Or call the church office (780-4784) if you would like someone from the Lead Team to contact you. Thank you!

Budget Timetable

- 10/6 (Tues) Ministry team 2021 budgets to Finance Team
- 10/13 (Tues) FT Revenue Setting Meeting
- 10/20 (Tues) Budget Summit
- 10/27 (Tues) FT Budget Setting Meeting
- 11/2 (Mon) FT sends 2020 Budget to LT
- 11/3 (Tues) Election Day (VOTE!)
- 11/4 (Wed) *LT Meeting (Note this is a Wednesday)- review 2021 budget*
- 11/5 (Thurs) LT Meeting approval of budget
- 11/10 (Tues) Congregational Business Meeting - Presentation to congregation 2021 Budget
- 11/17 (Tues) Congregational Business Meeting - Vote by congregation