



# Talk



a newsletter for the Forest Hill Church of Christ since 1974

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This year I simply can't wait for spring to spring. Being confined since January 4th because of my operation and the weight of the continued confinement of the pandemic has made it hard to be hopeful and to stay positive. It has been an entire year that we have all been dealing with this unthinkable disease. Every illness, death or depression seems to be made twice as bad as usual, because we can not support each other with visits and hugs. We do not have the comfort of gathering at church every week, and that is a constant pain.

But, you know what—I am still here, you are still here. I still pray every morning and beg God to end this awful pandemic and to help those who are hurting. Spring WILL spring again; we can all be sure of that. The trees will come into leaf again. The flowering bushes, and the daffodils and tulips WILL push up through the earth again. The temperatures *will* warm up. We will be able to sit out on our porches or in our yards again. It WILL happen because God decreed that it would be so. No matter what happens: pandemic, war, death, illness—spring will come again to the earth, and perhaps our hearts will feel the rebirth as well. God decreed that too—that we should learn and imitate His creation in the spring. That may even be why God decided to create the season of renewal.

No matter how much our sad hearts may imagine it—***we are not alone***. God has never let us alone our whole lives long but rather matches us step for step all along our life path. He is always as close as a whisper, and we have only to utter His name in prayer to open the line of communication between us and our God.

***Never forget: God loves us!***



The *Talk*, since 1974, has been a monthly newsletter for the Forest Hill Church of Christ and is dedicated to Christian unity. The usual deadline for submission of articles is the last Sunday of every month with the exception of December.



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Get your vaccine & come to Church!

We celebrate with Matt & his family a successful first year as the minister at Forest Hill Church of Christ. And what a year it's been! Here's your church and, oh by the way, everything's going to be shut down for a year or more. So you can minister but without people in the pews, you can visit but only virtually, and you'll have to find a way to inspire, lift up and care for your 'flock' in

completely new ways. *Yipes!* It was going to take not only intelligence, faith and courage but a quick, bright, innovative mind and heart that could think outside that box and have compassion for situations he'd never yet experienced. Oh, and let's throw in a new baby in the mix just for giggles! There's no doubt that this year has tested us all: how strong is our faith, can we maintain that faith without our beloved church family, can we endure loneliness, isolation, and sometimes illness beyond what we have ever known. It is clear that Matt was the right man at the right time. We will get through this and come out stronger on the other side—stay safe, stay strong!

Hang on just a little longer—the first day of spring is March 20th!

Man is wise and constantly in quest of more wisdom; but the ultimate wisdom, which deals with beginnings, remains locked in a seed. There it lies, the simplest fact of the universe and at the same time the one which calls forth faith rather than reason.

Hal Borland



Clyde Caver continues to need our prayers as he deals with prostate cancer. Don't forget the nurses and doctors who face exposure every day—wear your mask! Vera Traylor's mother has been put into a nursing home after having a stroke. Wayne Clum, Pete & Arthur Porter, and Louis Abney have all had COVID and are recovering. Arthur lost his daughter on February

13th—please pray for his family during this hard time. Tom Hawkins lost his sister—please pray for the Hawkins family. Death is never easy to handle, but during these times it is doubly difficult! A good friend of Kip Thornton's, Anne, was in the hospital with congestive heart failure and kidney disease. She is home now and trying to handle it. Pray for her healing and that she will turn to Jesus. Many more battle loneliness and depression from just being stuck in their homes. Pray for all these and please use the Prayer Hotline if you have a specific need.

Many of us have already gotten our vaccine. If you haven't then check the Internet for how to get it. You can also phone your local hospital or doctor's office or your local drugstore to find out if they are doing the vaccine. You can sign up either on line or over the phone and then when you go I don't think it costs anything—you just need a picture I.D. and your health insurance card. We are gathering on Wednesday nights again at the building while still doing the Zoom meeting on line as well. For Sunday morning, though, you have to have had both your shots and then waited 2 weeks before you can come. Hope it changes soon!

# Of interest...

## NO DOUBTS

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**I** have never broken a bone nor had major surgery. I think that is a pretty good track record for someone my age. So, imagine my terror/shock/disbelief as I sat in my doctor's office, and he told me I needed open heart surgery to replace a bad aortic valve in my heart.

These were not words I ever thought I'd hear. First, there had to be a heart catheterization—a procedure the doctors do to have a good, intimate look at your heart to assess the damage. Yet another scary procedure. Even though there were lots of needles I need not have worried—the procedure was relatively painless and they discovered that the heart itself is in good shape. The doctor then explained in detail what he had to do and what was wrong with the valve and how he could fix it.

In the midst of all this I could not recognize it yet, but God was already taking good care of me. The catheterization was a relatively painless procedure, I had drawn one of the best, most experienced doctors for this valve replacement operation, and his manner was very matter of fact and easy. That put me a bit more at ease.

It is so typical of our Lord to be looking out after us before we even know it! Of course, I had put the whole situation on the prayer

hotline here at Forest Hill but also on my cousin's in South Carolina and several sweet friends on Facebook.

Even though I was scared I knew this thing had to happen; so I began, with God's help, to adjust my thinking. It was a weird process: at first, of course, I was scared, then I just felt anxious, but then it tipped over into a sort of numbness and a feeling of, 'well let's get this over with.' Then the day of the surgery I did not feel anxiety or fear or any of the negative, unproductive emotions. I had given it to God, my friends were praying for me, 'I'm ready. Let's go'. Instead of 'why me' I thought how fortunate I was that this operation was so routine. It happens all the time and for my surgeon—just another Monday. I thought what an absolute bona fide miracle it is that the humble pig has a valve in its heart that matches ours in every way; so, replacement is a snap! God was with me, protecting me.

Perhaps it was my naiveté but before the operation I did not dwell on what my recovery would be like after the operation. That was surely God protecting me from needless anxiety. The doctor and nurses told me several times to tell them if the pain began to escalate and not just to try to endure it. They asked me constantly what level of pain I was experiencing. I discovered the blessings of drugs I'd only heretofore heard of in relation to abuse by addicts on the

street. Used properly these powerful drugs are *a real godsend*. I respected their power enough to get off them immediately when I got home. God was protecting me in the form of a drug and allowing me to put it away when I left the hospital.

I felt every day the many people who were praying for me. The nurses seemed surprised at how quickly I was getting better. They did not comprehend the mighty power I had in back of me. They did not know of the constant love and attention my husband gave me! They did not know the myriad of friends who were holding me up in prayer.

When God has something He needs you to be doing He doesn't mess around. I am not exactly sure what that thing is other than, in part, articles like this one testifying to the truth of God's promises and the power of His presence—but I know God will make it all plain to me and will give me the wherewithal to accomplish whatever He has set out for me.

I want to say one more thing—the **prayer hotline works**. Don't hesitate to use it. Prayer is the most powerful tool God has given us. We should not discount it when we are in times of need, and we must not forget it when everything works out well!

“. . . God has said, Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.” Hebrews 13:5

“Now may the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and

ever. Amen.”

Hebrews 13:20-21

**Prisoners currently in our Ministry:** Jose Agosto, Michael Bell, Terrance R. Boyd, Larry Duncan, Dean Dupont, Glen T. Evans Sr., Michaellyn Hutchins, Israel D. King, Christopher Konkel, Albert Lacy, Derrick Lartdale, Latrina Lewis, Chris Love, Scott Markel, Ralphonzo Martin, Bradley Mason, Thomas McCarthy Sr., Leon Napier, Lakiesha Phillips, Melvin Rear-don Jr., Antonio Spates, Thomas E. Stephens, George Weaver, and Timothy Wilson. **Also, for those released—** Kenneth Anderson, Nicholas Bowers, Greg Breville, Tony Campbell, Alfred Cleveland, Leonardo Frazier, Emmanuel Gonzales, Willard Hall, Tyrell Havergne, Keith Hume, Mark Slayton, Jewell Trischler.

None of these people wanted to have the  
 say that they will truly  
Christ so that the rest of  
working for Him and

**E:** We continue to engage the men and women in our Prison Ministry during these times of COVID. Our Christmas letter triggered several letters from inmates about their hearings before the parole board. A number of them have been disappointed in thinking they had served their time and after 20 plus years may be getting released. All of them received additional time. I can't imagine how disappointing that would be, and we have tried to help those who have written to us about their situations. I want to share with you that one of our inmates is sending a check to our church almost every month. He has said that he wants to support this work and although the amount would seem small to us, it is his way of showing what this ministry has meant to him. He has referred to it as his tithe from his earned income. It is such an encouragement to us every time we receive a check. His heart and his money is

to him. He has referred to it as his tithe from his earned income. It is such an encouragement to us every time we receive a check. His heart and his money are involved in this ministry we are doing.

We are still sending out birthday cards to those having birthdays along with a letter explaining why there are not the personal notes and signatures on their cards. In the month of March we have six birthdays that we will celebrate. We miss the opportunity of laying out the cards on the tables in the back of the auditorium for everyone to sign. I know our men and women find our letter a poor substitute to seeing your notes of encouragement, but for now it is the best we can do!

Thank you for the encouragement you give us. Our congregation as a whole, has been very helpful in this ministry and your good prayers and helpful notes really keep us going while we are working to help these people behind the walls. *Continue to pray for these men and women as they face problems daily.*

Portia and Joe

NOTES FROM TWO OF OUR FRIENDS:

“I do want you to know that you guys have helped me over some great road blocks through your Prison Ministries and I thank you guys so much for taking the time and doing what you are doing for inmates everywhere. Thank you my friends and know that I’m 100% part of the solution and 0% of the problem from here on out.”

Chris Love, Grafton Correctional

“Thank you for your inspiring Christmas message. It is always wonderful to hear from you. Also, please thank the members of your congregation who also sent Christmas greetings.”

Tom McCarthy, Grafton Correctional

# F.Y.I Healthspot...

LIVE YOUR BEST LIFE—yes, even while confined at home. Perhaps it is even more vital now during the pandemic to watch our health in every aspect and do our best to stay as healthy and mobile as we can.

Of course, a vital element of Christians staying healthy is to stay close to our Lord every day. Because we don’t have church services right now to boost our spirits each of us *must be diligent* in our prayers and our Bible study. There is no substitute for staying on an intimate basis with the God who created us and our world.

**SLEEP IS MEDICINE**

Poor sleep is linked to obesity, heart disease, stroke, cancer, dementia. Aim to sleep 7 or more hours each night.

**EXERCISE IS MEDICINE**

Help your heart, mind, and body by moving more throughout the day. The journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step!

**Love is Medicine**

Show gratitude, make time for family and friends, practice mindfulness, and pass the gift of kindness to others.

**FOOD IS MEDICINE**

You don’t need to follow the latest fad diet, A whole-foods plant based diet will improve every aspect of your health.

# Recipe...

## GARLIC CHEESE GRITS

Prepare everything before starting to cook the grits. You will need a 3 quart buttered casserole dish.



### Grits:

7 cups boiling water

Add 1 teaspoon salt

2 cups uncooked grits (add very slowly to boiling water, stirring continuously until thick and bubbly)

### Add:

1 pound cheese, shredded (Kraft garlic cheese if you can find it, otherwise regular cheese and 3-6 cloves of minced garlic instead)

1 cup butter

4 eggs, well beaten

½ cup milk

1 pound cheese, cut into small pieces, put on top of mixture (that is 2 pounds of cheese in total)

Pour all into your 3 quart casserole dish. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Bake at 350°F for 1 hour.

When I saw this recipe in my files with Connie's actual handwriting on it I just knew you all would get a kick out it. Our dear Connie, how I miss her!



*Really good.  
I serve it at  
parties & the  
men keep coming  
back for more  
Connie  
Patt*

# Birthdays...

## April

1-Sean Brown

1-Ella Hopkins

6-Leroy Stewart

9-Mike Drozd

13-Shirley Balfour

23-Lottie McClain



May you have peace and contentment on your birthday and throughout this year along with a profound appreciation of how much God loves you.

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY!**

Please don't hesitate to share your good or inspirational news with all of us. We need to hear from you! The next Talk deadline will be March 28th. You can send something to my home address: 2422 Demington Dr, Cleve Hts, Oh 44106 or email me at [pthorn50@roadrunner.com](mailto:pthorn50@roadrunner.com). Thanks and love to all!

# Good News...

I thank my God every time I remember you. . . It is right for me to feel this way about all of you since I have you in my heart. . . God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus.

Philippians 1:3,7,8

Our mission: to love like Jesus, to serve like Jesus and to teach others to do the same