



Forest Hills EFC
5183 Pebble Creek Trail
Loves Park, IL 61111

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December Newsletter

Forest Hills Evangelical Free Church

December 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 8:00 am Men Pray Ladies Christmas Paint, Tea & Cookies
2 Advent 1st Sunday Lord's Supper 9:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am Fellowship 10:25 am Worship	3 Pastor's Study Day 9:30 am Ladies Bible Study 3:00 pm Lego League uses Fellowship Hall	4 Pastor Teaches AM	5 6:30 pm AWANA 6:30 pm Bible Study	6 Pastor's Day Off	7 Pastor Teaches AM	8 8:00 am Men Pray
9 Advent 2nd Sunday 9:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am Fellowship 10:25 am Worship	10 Pastor's Study Day 9:30 am Ladies Bible Study	11 Pastor Teaches AM 12:00 pm Diaconate Mtg 12:00 pm Missions Mtg	12 6:30 pm AWANA 6:30 pm Bible Study	13 Pastor's Day Off 12:00 pm Goldenagers	14 Pastor Teaches AM	15 8:00 am Men Pray
16 Advent 3rd Sunday 9:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am Fellowship 10:25 am Worship	17 Pastor's Study Day 9:30 am Ladies Bible Study	18	19 6:30 pm AWANA 6:30 pm Bible Study	20	21 Pastor's Day Off	22 8:00 am Men Pray
23 Advent 4th Sunday 9:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am Fellowship 10:25 am Worship	24 8p Christ. Eve Service Pastor's Study Day Christmas Eve	25 Christmas Day	26 AWANA Break	27	28 Pastor's Day Off	29 8:00 am Men Pray
30 9:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am Fellowship 10:25 am Worship	31 Pastor's Study Day New Year's Eve					



**December
2018**

**Forest Hills EFC Messenger
5183 Pebble Creek Trail
Loves Park, IL 61111**

WWW.FHEFC.ORG

Email: office@fhefc.org

Office: 815-877-1919 Pastor: 815-391-3133



Birthdays This Month

If we have missed your birthday or someone else's, please contact the office to inform us.

- December 5 Judy Kloster
- December 10 Theresa Thode
- December 11 Scott Saylor
- December 17 Katie Clow
- December 18 Jane Block
- December 21 Tina Leinbaugh
- December 22 Virgil Smith
- December 24 Jim Hardin
- December 25 Coledeane White

Thru December 4

We are requesting help with toy donations for less fortunate children. Gifts can be \$1 and up. There is a box under the table in the foyer. Please call Judy Dray with questions - 815-997-3536.

Christmas Eve Church Service

Please join us for our Christmas Eve service on Monday, December 24th at 8 pm.

Christmas Cards



Do you send Christmas cards to friends who regularly attend FHEFC? This year you can "mail" them here at church. Cards should have recipient's name clearly printed on the envelope. No postage necessary. Deposit in the "mail box" on December 2nd and 9th. Cards will be sorted and ready for delivery here at church on December 16th and 23rd.

Quilts for the Homeless

We are continuing to make quilts that will be given to the homeless of Rockford. We can still use any sheets in like new condition or used blankets - any size, plus fabric suitable for quilting. Thread is also needed. Donations can be placed in the Carpenter's Place basket under the table in the hallway and all donations are greatly appreciated.

2019 Phone Directory

We are updating our church phone directory. There is a draft copy on the table in the foyer. Please make any corrections/additions by the end of 2018.

INFORMATION DEADLINES

Bulletin Announcements
Deadline for announcements, please email us or call by 10 a.m. Wednesday

Newsletter
Deadline for the Newsletter, please email by 17th of the month

Beware of the Latest Wind of Doctrine Andy Stanley Asks Us To Unhitch From the Old Testament

Jesus warns in Matthew 7:15...

" Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. "

The Apostle Paul warns in Acts 20:28-30...

" Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. ²⁹ "I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; ³⁰ and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. "

Why start with such harsh warnings? Because in these days, we have become very susceptible to teachers who sound persuasive in their appeals to our emotions, but when we step back and make a careful examination of their words, we realize they are false teachers. This is the case with one of the most popular teachers of our day, Andy Stanley.

Pastor Stanley has preached a series of sermons entitled Aftermath in which he argues Christianity needs to "unhitch from the Old Testament." He followed up with his latest book, Irresistible Reclaiming the New the Jesus Unleashed for the World. He persuasively appeals to the many stories about the errors and excesses of the Church over the centuries. Many of his criticisms of Christianity in practice are very fair and accurate. It is his contention that our "clinging to the Old Testament" is the cause of most of these errors and abuses of the Church. Thus, his solution is to forsake looking to the Old Testament as authoritative in the lives of Christians.

He contends Jesus and Paul both taught the Old Testament should have no authority over Christians, and in particular argues Acts 15 – The Council at Jerusalem – validated this view. He says directly, Christians should not look to the Old Testament and very specifically the Ten Commandments as standards for our conduct.

My Qualified Half-agreement, but Strong Disagreement

Let me begin my personal reaction with a partial agreement. There are many Christians caught up in legalism, who are trying to establish their righteousness before God by trying to abide by the commands of the Old Testament Law. Pastor Stanley is correct in this criticism, but I am categorically unwilling to go any farther with him. It is my opinion, he is overreacting to his legalistic upbringing and taking his theological training to a regrettable extreme. Multiple times he refers to his legalistic early years, and knowing his theological training was under the Dispensationalism of

Dallas Seminary, I can understand how he might overreact to both of these and arrive at his current destination.

Dispensationalism teaches as a foundational idea that God deals differently with humanity in different time periods or "Dispensations." I have strong personal misgivings about this system, but have many friends who I call brothers and sisters in Christ who hold this system without going to the extremes Pastor Stanley has gone. But, while extreme, this is a logical conclusion of this system. If God treats people differently in each era of human history, then why wouldn't God's revelation of Himself change?

Let Me Ask Some Questions to help us think through this:

- 1) If Jesus is God, and Jesus claims "I and the Father are One (John 10:30)," then doesn't that require us to believe the God of the Old Testament is exactly the same God of the New Testament?
- 2) If Jesus is "The same yesterday, today and forever (Hebrews 13:8)," then wasn't He the same in the days of the Old Testament?
- 3) If the Old Testament is not authoritative for Christians, why do Jesus and all the Apostles quote it as authoritative around 700 times?
- 4) If God changed from the Old Testament to the New Testament, what would keep Him from changing from the present system of salvation to a "Newer" system?
- 5) If God altered or broke His promises to Israel in the Old Testament, then how can we trust Him to keep His promises in the New Testament?

I would suggest what is going on in this case is the latest fad or "wind of doctrine" or "trickery of men" (See Ephesians 4:14) in an attempt to make it easier to accept Christianity. The desire to make Christianity less offensive or difficult to accept shows a fundamental misunderstanding of the Gospel. I would ask: Is it possible to believe the Gospel without the initial offense of being shown how sinful we truly are? Is it possible to expose the sinfulness of man without the Old Testament Law?

The final question: Isn't the essence of the Gospel a promise made by a holy and unchanging God who sent His own Son to die in the place of sinner like us?

In His Grip & Grace
Pastor Mitch