

APR-JUNE 2023

# FORCEY FOCUS

*zooming in on the  
God stories of forcey*







# 90 YEARS OF GOSPEL MINISTRY

01

by Pastor Mike Foster and Dr. Clark Forcey

## KEEPING IT FRESH FOR 90 YEARS

One of my favorite moments of spring is opening a window in the house for the first time. As fresh air pours in, stale air is ushered out and new life fills our home and my heart. I breathe deeply and feel alive like the cherry blossoms flourishing outside. We love fresh things, whether the air, our bread, or our coffee. I believe God loves fresh faith. This month our church turns 90 years old, a milestone we will especially celebrate in September. But, as we mark this anniversary, we long for a fresh work of God in our lives. Like David in Psalm 143:5-6, as we “remember the days of long ago and meditate on all His works,” we “spread out our hands” anew to the Lord and “thirst” for him afresh. Dr. Forcey planted our church in 1933 with a passion for Christians to keep their faith fresh. With that in mind, I want to share a selection of a chapter in one of Dr. Forcey’s books, *Crossing the Spiritual Divide*:

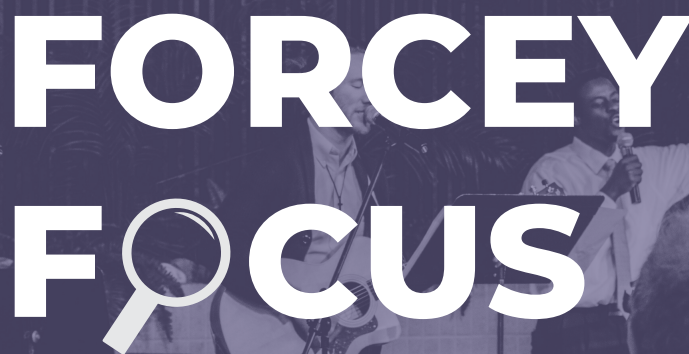

### Fresh Christians

*“I shall be anointed with fresh oil” (Psalm 92:10)*

A “FRESH Christian” is one who experiences fresh joys to share with others. Were it not for daily events, newspapers would have no news to print. It is the happenings of today which fill their pages. Who would care about reading a paper full of occurrences a month old? Christians who have no new spiritual experiences have no fresh joys to talk about. They are not up-to-date Christians. They do not keep step to the drum beats of God’s eternal presence. They have lost interest in men and things, and have grown sour, cynical and languid.

The Psalmist talks about being anointed with “fresh oil.” He did not want something that was old and stale, like so many peoples’ religion, but he wanted God’s up-to-date, new and fresh touch on his heart.

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# FORCEY FOCUS

APR-JUNE  
2023  
EDITION



## what is the Forcey Focus?

The Forcey Focus is a quarterly newsletter set out to do one thing: zoom in on the God stories around our church! Often so much is happening and it's impossible to even document every single thing - but we want to give God the glory for as much as we can in honest, vulnerable, and worshipful ways.

- Think of this newsletter as a newspaper - these are the current happenings and ways God is moving!
- Think of it also as a family holiday newsletter - we are family through and through. We want to stay updated on what's *really* going on and what *really* matters to our church family!



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# Sisters in Symphony Women's Ministry Retreat 2023

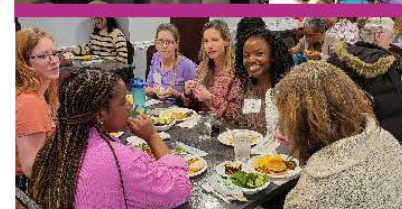
# 03

Sweet, sweet, SISTERhood! What an incredible time was had by all the sisters who were able to attend this year's SIS Retreat. The serene setting of Bon Secours was completely interrupted with the sounds of thunderous laughter, prayerful whispers, songs of praise, and tears overflowing from thankful hearts. The theme "Walking in Faith" was thoughtfully woven into every aspect of the weekend. From the centerpieces and snacks, to the thought provoking message of hope presented by Christina James, and Spirit filled worship led by Justin & Heather Moe, we were all encouraged and challenged in our personal and corporate FAITH journeys.

"It's so hard to pick a favorite thing about the retreat, the teaching, the worship, the HOPE offered was exactly what I needed", was a sentiment echoed by so many. Another sister shared "Christina was so surprisingly honest about her struggle, that I felt safe to share mine with my small group" and others admitted that they had been so busy with life that "walking" felt more like "hiking" in heels, their faith walk had become a bit shaky.

How refreshing to hear a message from the Lord through the lives of Hannah, Gideon, and Jehoshaphat. The lasting impression for me was in the story of Hannah found in 1 Samuel 1-18, specifically vs. 9 in some versions it simply says Hannah stood up and presented herself to the Lord. WOW, what a greater reminder. In her distress, she took her troubles to the Lord, the One who could best care for her.

I was reminded just today that Jesus gets us, and that was evident in the way He spoke to hearts to meet the needs hidden in our daily routines and masked by our polite greetings on Sunday mornings. Taking time to get-a-way from our demanding schedules to meet with Him, and with one another, is exactly what a retreat is for. Thanks to all who made it special by being there!





# A Clear View Into Forcey's Stained Glass Windows

• Don Vislay

Some of the most beautiful and arresting architectural elements of Forcey Bible Church's remarkable sanctuary are its distinctive stained glass windows. Contracted through the Willet Stained Glass Studios, Inc., of Philadelphia, and designed by glass artist Charles Z. Lawrence, the 12 windows have graced the sanctuary and choir room since the church was built in 1974. The two-year process of creating the window designs began in 1972 when a Forcey committee reviewed slides provided by Willet Studios showing stained glass installations in churches from across the nation. Windows from 14 churches were highlighted from cities including Seattle, San Francisco, Denver, and Houston. The Forcey committee's preferences were recorded and summarized by the building architect, Benjamin P. Elliott, in a letter to Willet Studios on November 9, 1972:

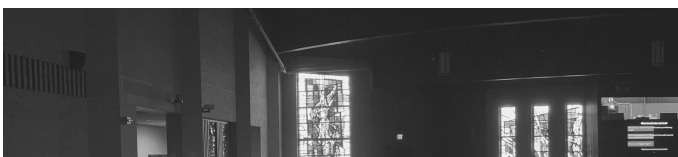
***"The windows should be generally bright and warm with the introduction of some cool colors to provide a symphony of colors. A full orchestration of flowing melodies, warm and inspiring, punctuated with staccatos and counter points...Vertical motifs, not necessarily straight up and down, varieties of size with smaller pieces woven through and working them into a pattern seemed to be a kind of design that the [Forcey] Committee desires."***

The musical and directional motifs are evident in the final designs, which flow and rise dynamically in a way that can almost be heard as well as seen.



From these initial ideas, the artist created the windows we have today. Charles Z. Lawrence ("CZ" to friends and associates), was a noted stained glass artist who worked at Willet Studios. During his over 60-year career, he created 5 windows in the Washington National Cathedral, as well as many others for various facilities including the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C, the University of Rochester, and Penn State University. Lawrence received The Stained Glass Association of America (SGAA)'s Faceted Glass Design Award twice, the Interfaith and Forum on Religious Art and Architecture Award twice, and the St. Francis Xavier Chapel Award of Excellence. In 1994, the SGAA presented Lawrence with its Lifetime Achievement Award. A senior advisor for the American Glass Guild, he was also an associate member of the British Society of Master Glass Painters. He worked from his own studio in Mt. Airy, Maryland, until his death on January 1, 2019.

Continued on page 8



# Keeping it fresh for 90 years

cont.

05

Some good folks are a thousand years old and do not know it. Their religious lives, thoughts and feelings belong to past times. They have prayed the same prayers for twenty years, which none enjoy hearing, save themselves. A Christian who prays a new, fresh prayer every day is one who has a fresh experience every day.

Others are reminiscent Christians, who delight in talking about “the good old days,” who speak about their conversion forty years ago, about the experiences they had in the days of Finney and Moody and other evangelists. They spend all their time in the graveyard of the past, while their hearers whisper, “Sing us a new song, brother.”

*Would you be a fresh Christian? Listen to this prescription:*

**First**, stop thinking moody thoughts. Thoughts, you know, breed feelings which beget moods and deeds, good or bad. Think thoughts that develop the best feelings. Forget all gloomy memories of the past, or else your happiness will be clothed in black to the end of your life. Let your mind dwell on people, events, and scenes of a pleasant nature. Think on the good things you have enjoyed and on present blessings.

**Second**, look ahead with expectant eyes, believe God’s promises, listen to the voice of hope and the singing of a glorious future. The emptiness, the dead sunsets, the broken vases, the withered flowers, and the disappointing past are behind you. Face to the east, where the sky is cloudless, where the flowers breathe fragrance, where the brooks laugh, where the birds are pouring out their joyful songs, where the children are playing, and where the day is young and lovely! Do not look backward! Constant regret brings perpetual worry. “Remember Lot’s wife!”

**Third**, keep in close contact with Christ. Let me remind you that as a fine, delicate flower maintains its beauty and freshness by clinging to the parent vine, so you can keep your Christian life fresh, strong and beautiful, and have new joys every day, by keeping in close contact with Christ. There is no substitution for Him. Theological confections and creeds can never take His place. A creed may be only the ashes of a dead experience, and if so cannot but any fire or music into your life. Only a creed with the cross of Christ and the Christ of the cross in it can do that; therefore, keep close to the risen, living Christ.

**Fourth**, keep young with Christ. He never grows old. He is always joyful and becomes a greater Christ to the growing Christian. Draw nigh to Him and you will enjoy the bloom and fragrance of spirituality; your faith will need no crutches, your hope will not grow dim, and the bells in the tower of your soul, rung by an unseen hand, will continually give forth melodies, thrilling others with their charms.

This can only be done as you keep the anointing of the Holy Spirit on your heart and life. Christ said that He would send “another Comforter” and that He would abide with the believer forever. No wonder Jesus commanded the disciples to wait for the Father’s promise of this anointing. We Christians need it. We cannot get along without it. We must be fresh, interesting, and helpful. We must get out of the graveyards of the past and stay out. We must have the “fresh oil” of the Psalmist if we are to attract people to Christ.

May God help us all to be fresh Christians!

**-Pastor Mike Foster and Dr. Clark Forcey**

## 06

# Meet the Elders and Trustees

My wife, Stacy, and I have been married 14 years. We attended Forcey Elementary School and have known each other since we were 10. (But back then, girls had cooties, so we didn't really want to get to know each other.) It wasn't until high school that we got to know each other through mutual friends, and then in college we started dating. We even carpooled to church together from campus at University of Maryland on Sunday mornings. We now have 3 kids, and one of our favorite things to do is spend time together as a family.



My favorite Bible verse is I Cor 9:24-25. I'm fond of this verse (among many!) because I'm a physical therapist, and I treat physical ailments and help people with physical training all the time. There is sooo much time & effort put toward "running the race," and it's nothing in comparison with the rewards from spiritual training.

I've seen God move in our church family and our community through my experience on the Board since 2017. One great example is how Forcey has fared over the course of the Covid-19 pandemic. We're used to dealing with church finances as a Board of Trustees, and we're used to dealing with situations that involve tough decisions about those finances. We're always prayerfully seeking to be good stewards of the resources God has blessed us with, and we seek to be faithful no matter the circumstances, however the pandemic was one of the biggest tests of faith that our church family has been through. We weren't sure if God was going to provide or how God would provide. Now that we can look back over that whole period of time, we can see how God has answered our prayers in the form of many great blessings! Not only did our



church community get through the pandemic; we thrived in many ways! Our leaders were given wisdom about how to operate differently and use our resources wisely.

In terms of hobbies, one of my favorite things to do is exercise and physical challenges. Indoor rowing is one of my regular activities. I'm currently in the process of rowing 3 million meters. I completed the 2-million-meter mark last October. My next physical challenge is to be able to hold a handstand for more than 10 seconds.

Besides being on the Board, I'm also a leader in the Men's Ministry, Band of Brothers. I emcee our various events, which gives me a great perspective of our church family. It's so awesome to see the diversity of men at Forcey; diverse in age, race, occupations, physical ability levels, interests, etc. I also help in the nursery with Toddler Tigers and our pre-K/Kindergarten Sunday school class.

**-Trustee: John Jowers**



# A WORD FROM THE PRINCIPAL

07

The spring brings some exciting program notes from Forcey Christian School.

- Forcey Christian School just finished very successful girls' and boys' basketball seasons. The boys' finished in second place in our division after a hard-fought loss in the final game. With many beginning players, girls' basketball experienced some game losses with a season record of 4-10. However, we are so proud of the things that the girls learned and accomplished as a team this season. Each player as an individual learned and improved in some way.
- Girls soccer season has just kicked off and off to a great 2-0 start. Boys' soccer played a great fall season. • For all things FCS sports, check out our athletics page at <https://fcsathletics.school/>
- FCS is preparing for our upcoming spring gala on Friday evening, April 28. Our gala will be a silent auction, catered dinner, and a way to highlight the talents and gifts of our own student body, including instrumental solos and duets, art work, and vocal presentations. The gala is part of our annual Fund. Each year FCS sets a specific financial fundraising goal and then works to follow through with improvements to building and program. To date, we have raised \$54,000 towards our \$60,000 annual fund goal. If you would like to contribute to this effort, you can check out our annual fund page at <https://fcs.school/annual-fund/>
- Our parent teacher organization (PTO) is planning another Spring Fling on Saturday, May 20. This will be a fun day of outdoor games, food, events, prizes, and maybe even a few pastors in the dunking booth! For more information about the FCS PTO and upcoming events, go to <https://fcs.school/pto/>



Our vision at FCS is to: To train-up future generations of servant-leaders, who impact their world spiritually, intellectually, and socially, while leading lives that bring glory to Jesus Christ.

Since we make discipleship our mission, we love to highlight these moments as they relate to our student outcomes:

- Pastor Foster spoke in both ES and MS chapel about what it means to live a life of faith and growing in your relationship with Jesus Christ. At the end, he provided an opportunity for students to respond to an invitation and to communicate with a staff member. The response was Twenty-two students chose to receive Christ that day and 7 more asked to speak to a staff member about it.
- A fourth grade teacher shared that after the class completed a study on baptism, and the reason for baptism, a student declared with enthusiasm that she generously wanted to be baptized.
- Several students' reflective writings indicated a desire to become missionaries or ministers in order to win souls for Jesus Christ.
- A PreK teacher shared, "In all of my years this is definitely the most "unchurched" class I've ever had. It has been exciting to see them go from a group that was totally unfamiliar with the Bible stories and who God is, to a group that asks for Bible time, eagerly answers questions, battles to be picked to be the one to pray, chooses Bible story books during free time, says they love chapel and passionately sing "Jesus" songs. One student who had never prayed before, says she now prays at home. It's been a blessing to us, and we are reminded of why we are here!
- One PreK parent shared that she takes every opportunity to invite families from our school to her church. She recently invited a family that has not gotten connected yet and they have been attending every week. Her daughter (a 3-year-old in my class) tells me that she sees this family at her church. She and her husband share about Jesus with so many people. I am so thankful for families in our school that also see this as a mission field.

We are excited to see how God is moving and honored to be a part of His mission work at Forcey Christian School each day.

*Mrs. Cheri L. Vislay*

# FORCEY'S STAINED GLASS WINDOWS

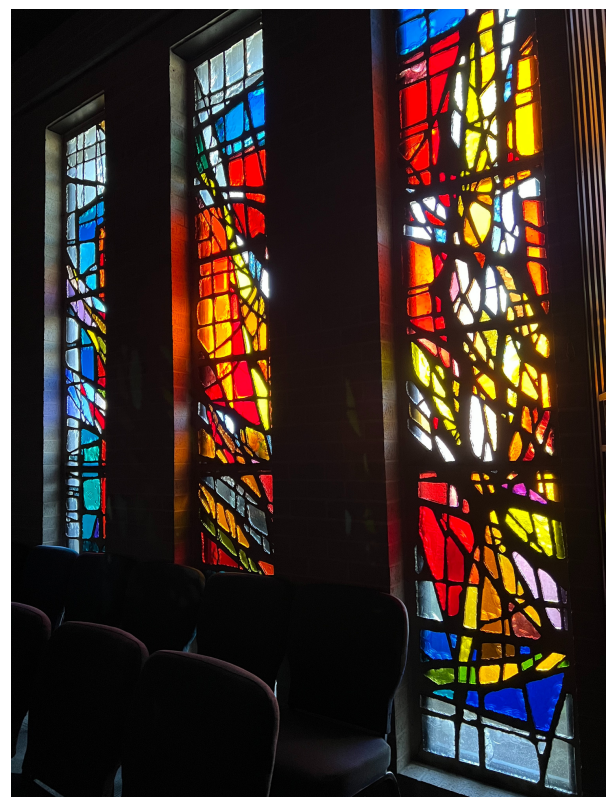
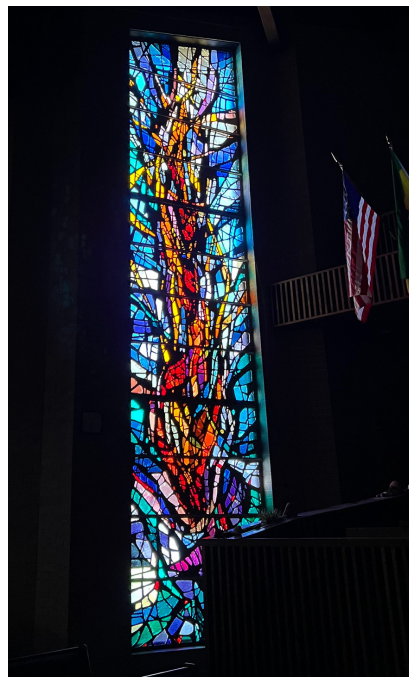
**CONT.**

The meaning of the abstract shapes that make up the windows has been a source of speculation for years, as was intended right from the start. Willet Studios summarized the design this way:

***"As the people enter the Church perhaps each will have a different interpretation of the window[s]. The orange and red forms seem to suggest flames. It is the flaming sun which keeps the earth alive. The burning bush where Moses saw God is used as a symbol of the presence of God. In the New Testament, tongues of fire indicated the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost to guide the Church. Again, a continuing presence. The golden blaze at the top also suggests the New Jerusalem, the golden city, where the ascended Christ is seated on the throne in glory. The blue background might be the infinite sky. The color blue symbolizes the love of God for all His creatures."***

Several of the windows were originally installed in the rear of the church near the choir rehearsal room, a part of the church that is not frequently seen. To ensure the widest possible audience was able to enjoy these windows, they were moved during the sanctuary's refurbishment in Summer 2020 and placed in the vestibule just inside the sanctuary, where they can be enjoyed by everyone attending services.

**-Don Vislay**



Sources:

<https://www.charleszlawrence.com/>

<https://talkingoutyourglass.com/cz-lawrence/>





09



Have you ever been in a conversation and found yourself thinking, “I could talk for hours about \_\_\_\_?” That’s exactly what Ignite is all about! Forcey’s men’s ministry, Band of Brothers, held its annual Ignite event in January (after a pandemic hiatus). Men look forward to it all year! The special guest speakers are a variety of men in the Forcey community, and each person gets the mic for 5 minutes to talk about, well, anything! Their calling, passions, interests, expertise, a life experience, a story, etc.

This year’s event was both interesting and entertaining. Everyone who attended learned interesting facts on topics like learning Spanish, treating malaria, blowing stuff up, self-defense, life after a stroke, and the dominion of the eye, among many other attention-grabbing topics.

Those of us who attended found ourselves laughing, crying, and praising God. There’s always such a wide variety of emotions in a 90-minute event that feels like it goes by almost too quickly. By the end, many men enjoyed talking with each other, and many of the speakers were invited to lunch by members of the audience who are interested to learn more about their talk.



The Forcey Men’s Ministry is a place for the men of Forcey of all ages to gather together in small and large groups, discipling and fellowshiping together. Mark your calendars to attend our next major event, the annual men’s retreat at Skycroft Retreat Center, November 3-5, 2023. Whether you’ve attended 30 times, once, or never, all are welcome. Registration will begin at the beginning of the summer. We’re looking forward to seeing you then!

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**From then  
until now...**

## **Forcey Bible Church's First Missionary**

As we celebrate our 90th Anniversary this month, I am reminded that Forcey Bible Church has a rich legacy of worldwide outreach with the Gospel of Christ. In the 1940s, under mission-minded Pastor Deloss Scott, the church began supporting its first missionary. Rosella Entz was a missions candidate with SIM (Sudan Interior Mission) when the church was in prayer for someone who needed support to go overseas in missions. By the end of the 1940s with Forcey's support, Rosella was headed to Dahomey, W. Africa (present day Benin) where she served for over 2 decades. As part of a team, she helped translate several books of the Bible into the Baatonum language for the Bariba people. But initially she had a problem – writing by hand was time consuming and Rosella asked for a typewriter so she could work more efficiently. The Forcey Ladies Missionary Society took on the task and raised \$55 (\$686 in

today's money) to send a typewriter to Dahomey, Africa in April 1950. After translation of 2 Gospels and several of Paul's letters, Rosella reported in the British edition of "The Sudan Witness", July 1969, "I am thankful to say that with the Lord's enabling – and in spite of the heat – we [working with Bariba pastors] were in due time able to complete translation of the Book of Acts."

Today, the Baatonum speaking people have the entire Bible in their own language. Close to 150,000 (13%) of the Bariba are believers and they are no longer considered an unreached people group!

As Pastor Mike recently mentioned in his sermon on Acts 2, there are still thousands of unreached people groups (UPGs) and nearly half of the world's languages have little or no Bible translation. FBC seeks to send workers to reach UPGs and is still supporting Bible translation. Three of our current missionaries, Joy & Bill Carrera (translators support), Brian Migliazza (translation oversight), and Alex Crum (IT) work with Wycliffe Bible Translators. None of these folks need a typewriter because the work has been simplified by computers. But the workers are still few... Perhaps this is an area where the Lord is calling you to serve.



**Forcey's 1st Missionary,  
Rosella Entz  
(photo taken 1967)**

**-Mary Jane Barrow**





In February, AJ and I attended the Faith Biblical Counseling conference. Before I attended this conference for the first time four years ago I was a little skeptical. Some of us have seen scripture used as a quick fix remedy for all sorts of issues. “Just throw a Bible verse at it, and all will be well” kind of mantra.

I quickly realized that this was not the case at Faith. They validated the emotions and struggles of people, while addressing the root of the issue-the heart! There was compassion with conviction, and a dependency on the scriptures to fix the heart problem of sin.

“We do what we do, because we want what we want”. This phrase echoes throughout the conference. It is derived from James 4:1, “What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don’t they come from your desires that battle within you?” To paraphrase one of the conference speakers, when a desire becomes a demand we have an idol. Identifying and uprooting these idols through Christ is what will set us free from the sin that so easily ensnares us.

Counseling does not always take place in a counseling room, rather in the calling of all believers to go and make disciples. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 says, “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”



The conference has enabled me to better use scripture to disciple others and guide their hearts towards Christ.

When we live in the freedom of Christ, we are able to direct our energy to Him.

Each year I leave the conference, I am encouraged to see Faith church’s joy and confidence in knowing Jesus . The blessings that come from obedience to God are more than we could ever ask or imagine. Faith church has been able to serve their community, because they upheld the truth of Scripture above all else. They didn’t strive to be as big as they are, or have as many community

centers and employment opportunities as possible to build their own kingdom. Instead, they have sought first His kingdom and His righteousness, and therefore all these other things have been given to them as well.

I am also challenged to memorize more scripture, and examine the idols of my own heart. The conference really is such a blessing, and such a fun week to hang out with brothers and sisters in Christ. Lord willing, I hope you will attend with us next year.

**-Anne Itzel**



# 12

## SURPRISE BLESSINGS

wives away day



What started as a few guys getting together with their kids turned into an amazing Men's event! With the wives out at the women's retreat, the men got together to spend some time together (and support each other for the day!) We had 31 people from 11 families at the church for about 6 hours. We ate 3 pizzas, 200 chicken nuggets, and just as many fruit and veggies! The guys repeatedly said what a blessing it was to get out and be together for a while. We are praying this will be an annual event and we can serve those single moms that attend the retreat next year who otherwise would not have been able to attend! Thankful for this Forcey Family.



# UPCOMING EVENTS

April - May - June  
2023

Missions Conference April 21-28

More details at [forcey.org/missions](https://forcey.org/missions)



90 YEARS  
OF GOSPEL  
MINISTRY

Forcey Bible Church is 90 years old in April! Keep an eye out for historical pieces published on our website and more information on our Homecoming event this September.

for more info on these or other upcoming events:



[forcey.churchcenter.com](https://forcey.churchcenter.com)  
or download the app



[forcey-office@forcey.org](mailto:forcey-office@forcey.org)



[www.forcey.org/events](https://www.forcey.org/events)