



## Friendship Focus July 2026

Dear Friends in Christ,

*Grace to you and peace from the one who was, who is and who will come again, Jesus the living Christ! Amen!*

This month, our nation marks a significant milestone: the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. For two and a half centuries, the United States has been a place where generations have sought freedom, opportunity, and the common good. As people of faith, we join our neighbors in giving thanks for the blessings of our nation, remembering those who have sacrificed in service to it, and praying for its future.

This momentous anniversary invites us to reflect honestly on our history. We celebrate moments of courage, vision, and progress while also acknowledging times when our nation has fallen short of its highest ideals. The Christian faith calls us not only to gratitude but also to repentance, reconciliation, and renewed commitment to justice for all people.

As Lutheran Christians, we recognize that our ultimate hope is not found in any nation, political system, or earthly institution. Scripture reminds us, "Our citizenship is in heaven" (Philippians 3:20). While we are proud and grateful citizens of this country, we are first and foremost disciples of Jesus Christ. Our calling is to love God and serve our neighbors, seeking peace, mercy, and justice wherever God has placed us.

As I reflect on the ministry that we've accomplished in the name of Christ throughout these summer months, I'm grateful for all the ways we've served God and our neighbors. Church family, we continue to share God's love and be the very hands and feet of God in our community and throughout our world! Lutheroad summer day camp; feeding the hungry through the mobile café, Chris-

tian Crisis Center and the noisy offering; youth ministry service projects; and our love and care for one another are all examples of how we serve God and neighbor.

As we continue doing God's work this month and in the months ahead, we strive to go deeper in Christian love and service in our relationship with God, with each other and with the world.

The 250th anniversary offers an opportunity to pray for our nation and its people. We pray for elected leaders, first responders, teachers, healthcare workers, military personnel, and all who serve the public. We pray for communities struggling with division and for those whose voices have too often gone unheard. We pray that God would guide us toward greater understanding, compassion, and unity.

As we gather for worship this month, may we remember that the church's mission remains unchanged. We are called to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ, welcome the stranger, care for those in need, and bear witness to God's love in the world. In every generation, God continues to work through ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary things.

May this historic anniversary inspire us not only to look back with gratitude but also to look forward with hope. As we celebrate the freedoms we enjoy, may we use those freedoms to serve others and glorify God.

May God bless our nation, our communities, and our church family as we continue to follow Christ together.

In Christ,  
PJ



## July News

Secret Sisters will NOT meet in July.

Fellowship Potluck Supper is **Monday, July 6th @ 6pm**. All are welcome to join us for great food & fellowship.

Looking for a new  
**BIBLE STUDY???**

Join Friendship Lutheran's  
**WOW** (Women of the Word)  
group for a new 6-session study!

1st session starts  
**Thursday, July 9th at 6p**  
at Friendship Lutheran Church

Meal, fellowship and  
Bible study provided!

**JENNIE ALLEN**  
**THE LIE YOU DON'T KNOW YOU BELIEVE**  
HOW TO FIND IT, FIGHT IT & LIVE FREE

**FRIENDSHIP LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
TAYLORSVILLE, NC

**WANT THE BOOK?**  
Click the link to order  
from Amazon:  
<https://a.co/d/OfMEyoIA>

*Grow in faith. Build friendships. Be the light.*



**American  
Red Cross**

Red Cross Blood Drive - **Sunday, July 12th, 12:30-5pm**. Please visit [RedCrossBlood.org](http://RedCrossBlood.org) and enter Friendship Lutheran Taylorsville or contact Sue Bumgarner @ (828) 381-7058 or Donna Icard @ (828) 310-4890 to schedule an appointment. Call Jewell Elder for serving food or desk work @ (828) 632-3544.

Men in Mission Breakfast is **Sat, July 18th @ 8am**.

Registration Open! VBS will be held at Friendship **July 26-29** in partnership with the other Lutheran churches in our county. We will have dinner each evening and games, crafts, music and learning for children pre-k & up. Adult classes will be offered as well. This year's theme is Junk Yard Redemption. If you'd like to help with VBS please see a member of the learn team or Pastor Josh.



## Welcome Vicar Beth Sheedy!

We are excited to welcome on staff at Friendship Vicar Beth Sheedy! Vicar Beth is soon starting her senior year of seminary at Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary on the campus of Lenoir Rhyne University following a year-long internship in Indiana. She is excited to come on board with us in a part-time role (15-20 hours/week) while she finishes her final year of seminary.

Vicar Beth's primary responsibilities on the pastoral staff at Friendship will include:

- Staff support for children, youth and family ministry
- Worship leadership and preaching
- Sunday School leadership
- Assisting with administrative tasks and ministry team support

Vicar Beth plans to begin her time with us on August 17th. Please read her introductory note below to get to know her more and join us in welcoming her to the Friendship Church Family soon!



Hi there, my name is Beth Sheedy, and I am currently a senior at Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary. I am originally from the Harrisburg/Hershey area in Pennsylvania, I spent a few years in the Carolinas, jumped out to Indiana for a year, and am now making my way back to North Carolina. I have always been very active in the church and have a passion and varied experience in youth ministry. I attended undergrad at Bloomsburg

University of Pennsylvania where I received a degree in social work, so I also have a drive toward advocating for justice and empowering individuals and community. When I am not in church you can find me out with my dog Bowman, somewhere with a good book, or having game nights with family and friends. I look forward to joining the family at Friendship this year as we all continue to be the work and word of God in the world today!

**Pastor Craig** - We are grateful for Pastor Craig's leadership in worship and pastoral care over the last two years at Friendship. Pastor Craig will continue to offer worship leadership over the next few months at which time we will formally thank him. He will also not be a stranger to us here, as he will continue to supply preach when needed. We wish him and Susan more time at the beach!

**Adult Sunday School Classes Join Together!** Beginning **June 28th**, and over the course of the next five Sundays, the Followers in Faith and the Chapel Sunday school classes will meet as one class for a book study entitled, "Your Story Has a Villain" by Jonathan Pokluda. You can purchase the book if you'd like to read along with the study, but it's not necessary to participate. Make plans to join this bible study opportunity!

\*\*Other adult Sunday school classes will continue to meet in their regular spaces during the Sunday school hour.

**July Birthdays**

Donald Smith	7/01	Shelia Rogers	7/19
Marty Buff	7/03	Payton Boyles	7/20
Jacky Wike	7/03	Karsyn Kerley	7/20
Hayden Sipe	7/04	Gracyn Tucker	7/24
Ava Chapman	7/05	Todd Smith	7/25
Nikki Icard	7/05	Myra Bowman	7/26
Quinley Boyles	7/07	Allen Bowman	7/27
Nova McBride	7/08	Matt Payne	7/27
Gail Hand	7/10	Michael Bumgarner	7/28
Jean Stafford	7/11	Carolyn Fox	7/29
Elan Hayes	7/12	Diane Hollar	7/29
James Hayes Jr.	7/13	Sommer McDill	7/30
Tootsie Richey	7/13	Andrea Robinette	7/30
Leslie Elder	7/14	Steve Icenhour	7/31
Judy Feimster	7/17	Lydia Nicholas	7/31



## Friendship Lutheran Church Council

May 19, 2026, Regular Meeting in Person

Members present: Hannah Bostian, Jenna Buff, Brian Chapman, Eric Frye, Tyler Hall, Mary Ann Icenhour, Michelle Miller, Kasi Sigmon, Todd Smith, Monica Stafford, Tamara Stafford, Barry Swift, Pastor Josh Tucker, and Dana Frye. Absent: None

President Mary Ann Icenhour called the meeting to order.

Motion by Tamara Stafford; seconded by Michelle Miller to approve the agenda with the addition of “f” New Business: Council nomination committee. Motion carries.

Brian Chapman shared a devotion.

Motion by Jenna Buff; seconded by Kasi Sigmon to approve minutes from April 21, 2026, Regular Meeting and May 1, 2026, electronic vote. Motion carries.

Treasurers report was distributed. Motion by Michelle Miller; seconded by Brian Chapman to approve. Motion carries.

### **TEAM ASSIGNMENTS/REPORTS:**

Administration – Hannah Bostian – No report.

Care – Tamara Stafford – No report.

Learn – Jenna Buff – No report.

Worship – Todd Smith – No report.

Share – Kasi Sigmon – Shared proof of new brochures and cards.

Finance – Michelle Miller – No additional report.

Rusha Austin Scholarship – Brian Chapman – No report.

Preschool – Monica Stafford – No report.

Building & Grounds (BAG) – Eric Frye – No report.

Technology – Tyler Hall – No report.

Cemetery – Barry Swift – No report.

### **PASTOR’S REPORT:**

Pastor Josh shared his report. He has received positive comments regarding Preschool Appreciation Sunday. Enrollment is open for 3-year-old class. Lutheroad only has 1 or 2 open spots. May 31 will be a Fifth Sunday One Service Sunday, with Sunday School at 9 and Worship at 10 in the Nave. Discussion was held regarding updating our constitution and the member roster. Pastor Josh and his family will be on vacation the week of May 31.

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

► Duke Energy Assessment was received with options to better use our energy. Tyler Hall will read over the data we received and see how we can benefit.

► Columbarium – Motion by Hannah Bostian; seconded by Tamara Stafford to contract with EUROfloors to stain the new and old concrete up around the cross and columbarium area for a cost not to exceed \$3,000, and funds will come from the Columbarium fund. Motion carries.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

► Motion by Tyler Hall; seconded by Tamara Stafford to allow Pastor Josh to apply for a grant that would supply a new AED to be placed in the parish office. Motion carries.

► Recommendation from the Administration Team (no second required) to approve the updated Cemetery guidelines to include the columbarium. Motion carries. Updates include but are not limited to 2 remains per niche; responsibility of the family for price with engraving fonts set forth in guidelines; cost of a niche would be same as traditional burial.

► Recommendation from the Administration Team (no second required) to approve the Child & Youth Protection and Abuse Prevention Policy offered by Synod. Motion carries. The policy will put our adults and children in the best possible situation.

► For informational purposes only the ELCA Annual report has been filed.

► Discussion for how Friendship can move forward with support growth and support.

► Motion by Todd Smith; seconded by Brian Chapman to allow the ballfield to continue to be used by the Wittenburg Recreation dept. Motion carries.

► Motion by Mary Ann Icenhour; seconded by Todd Smith to approve the 6 outgoing council persons to serve as the nominating committee for people willing to serve on the council for 2027-2028. Motion carries. The congregation will have the option to nominate a person as well.

► Kasi Sigmon will take care of planning a meal for the council and Lutheroad Counselors on Tuesday, June 9. This will also be the monthly meeting of council. Any business will be discussed after the meal.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned with prayer.

Our next regular monthly meeting will be Tuesday, June 9, 2026, at 6 pm. Michelle Miller will share a devotion.

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**SPECIAL CALLED MEETING JUNE 2, 2026**

Members present: Hannah Bostian, Brian Chapman, Eric Frye, Tyler Hall, Mary Ann Icenhour, Michelle Miller, Kasi Sigmon, Monica Stafford, Tamara Stafford, Dana Frye, and special guest Elizabeth “Beth” Sheedy. Absent: Jenna Buff, Todd Smith, Barry Swift, and Pastor Josh Tucker.

Motion by Michelle Miller; seconded by Brian Chapman, to extend an invitation to Elizabeth Sheedy to begin August 10, 2026, for 15-20 hours per week at \$24 an hour. Details will be worked out between her and Pastor Josh. Motion carries.



Have you considered how big and vast our God is? As the body of Christ, we are connected to so many different ministries, agencies and institutions that serve to shine the light of Christ in the world, share the good news of the gospel and help those in need. Together, we are the church, serving God and neighbor through the works of these ministries for the sake of the gospel!

Agape Kure Beach Ministries is a camp partner ministry with us in the Lutheran Church in North Carolina. With a camp location in Fuquay-Varina, NC and camp property in Kure Beach, NC, Agape offers year round faith formation and programs for Christians of all ages. This summer AKB has initiated seven major goals for camp: 1. To build self esteem and self value in campers 2. To be positive Christian role models for campers 3. To provide wholistic safety for campers 4. To instill a sense of creation stewardship 5. To help build leaders in today's church 6. To play and sing lots of music 7. To have fun!

For more information about Agape Kure Beach Ministries please visit their webpage [agapekurebeach.org](http://agapekurebeach.org)



# Financial Stewardship

## OFFERINGS

	<u>MAY, 2026</u>	<u>YTD</u>
CURRENT	\$42,236.62	\$184,183.70
BENEVOLENCE	\$1,675.00	\$7,663.85
BLDG/IMPROVEMENT	\$1,895.00	\$10,842.75
PRESCHOOL	\$105.00	\$805.00
WORLD HUNGER	\$0.00	\$50.00
BACKPACK MINISTRY	\$795.00	\$2,790.00
CHRISTIAN CRISIS CTR	\$1,035.00	\$4,282.80
LUTHERAN DISASTER RELIEF	\$150.00	\$600.00
RUSHA AUSTIN SCHLOR.	\$500.00	\$7,345.00
YOUTH	\$947.00	\$8,592.00
NOISY OFFERING	\$1,172.00	\$4,463.50
COLUMBARIUM	\$0.00	\$1,950.00
MEN IN MISSION	\$0.00	\$173.00
ADULT MISSIONS	\$0.00	\$95.00
LUTHEROAD	\$585.00	\$4,165.00
LUTHERIDGE CAMPAIGN	\$135.00	\$810.00
CONFIRMATION GIFTS	\$0.00	\$315.00
LENT 2026/BRIDGING TOGETHER	\$0.00	\$483.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$51,230.62</b>	<b>\$239,559.60</b>

## SPENDING

	<u>MAY, 2026</u>	<u>YTD</u>
CURRENT	\$43,446.75	\$181,287.72

# Summer Youth Series

All rising 6<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> graders invited to attend!

Lutherroad & Kool Park

Youth will prepare lunch for camper and join in the fun at Kool Park. Thursday June 11th, 9am - 3:45

Serving Lunch at The Corner Table

Newton Community Kitchen  
Tuesday July 7th  
leave church @ 8:30  
plan to return @ 2:30pm  
will stop for lunch - bring lunch \$

Bowling & Lunch

Pin Station in Newton  
Friday July 10th  
leave church @ 10:30am  
plan to return @ 3pm  
bring lunch \$

Carowinds

Thursday August 6th  
Please let us know if you have a season pass and/or parking pass  
Need adults willing to go as leaders  
\$25 for ticket; bring \$ for food  
leave church 9am  
plan to return 8:30pm

## Prayers of the Church

*“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything,  
by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your  
request to God.”*

~ Philippians 4:6-7

**As God’s people we commit to pray for one another, and for all in need.**

Please call the church office to add/take someone off this list.

### **Let us pray for...**

Donna Rhyne (D. Rhyne-5/29)	Teresa Wallace (W. Pearson-6/8)
Noah Manning (S. Icenhour-6/1)	David Pearson (W. Pearson-6/8)
Jimmy Hayes (M. Stafford-6/1)	Sherrie Orren (D. Payne-6/8)
Jay Dean Mitchell (D. Ramsey-6/1)	Tammy Wiles (L. Gant-6/8)
Ricky Rector (J. Smith-6/1)	Paul Jr. Cline (J. Smith-6/10)
Tony Cothren (P. Josh-6/1)	Lewis & Judy Tabor (L.Cothren-6/10)
Theresa Setzer (R. Bowman-6/1)	Conrad Millsaps (B. Cline-6/15)
Dwayne Barnes (C. Bowman-6/1)	Steve Sharpe (P. Stikeleather-6/16)
Hal Deal (D. Payne-6/2)	Robert Gant (P. Josh-6/16)
Michael Matlock (D. Payne-6/2)	Rick Jones (J. Gant-6/22)
Gloria Atkins (J. Stafford-6/3)	Kelvin Elder (J. Elder-6/22)
Tonya Blackwelder (W. Pearson-6/3)	Christie Sarver (A. Palmer-6/23)
Lauryn Dennie (J. Watts-6/8)	Mitchell Martin (P. Josh-6/23)
Darryl Adkins (C. Gant-6/8)	Lana Simmons (MA Icenhour-6/25)
Nicole Davis McNamara (J. Gant-6/8)	

### **Family & friends of:**

Amie Bowman	(D. Payne-6/8)
Gary Millsaps	(P. Stikeleather-6/11)
Annette Huffman	(D. Ramsey-6/12)
Betty Teague	(T. Bowman-6/12)
Alex Austin	(B. Cline-6/15)
Rob Arguelles	(M. Miller-6/18)
Bobbie Mullies	(F. Keever-6/22)
Max Keever	(P. Josh-6/23)
Patricia Shepherd	(P. Josh-6/23)

### **Please be in daily prayer for our Home Bound/Extended Care members:**

Steve Icenhour, Joyce Deal, Dallard Lail,  
Reba Bolick, Bob Russell.

# Church Council and Staff

<u>Council</u>	<u>(Term ending)</u>
<u>Officers</u>	
Mary Ann Icenhour - President	('27)
Todd Smith - VP	('27)
Jane Gant - Treasurer (non voting)	('26)
Dana Frye - Recording Sec (non voting)	('26)
Charlie Sipe - Financial Sec (non voting)	('26)
Brian Chapman - RA Scholarship	('27)
Tyler Hall - Tech	('27)
Barry Swift - Cemetery	('26)
Michelle Miller - Finance	('26)
Todd Smith - Worship	('27)
Hannah Bostian - Administration	('26)
Eric Frye - Bldg. & Grounds	('26)
Kasi Sigmon-- Share	('27)
Monica Stafford--Preschool	('26)
Tamara Stafford--CARE	('26)
Jenna Buff - Learn	('27)

## Staff

Josh Tucker	Pastor
Craig Sigmon	Associate Pastor
Penny Stikeleather	Parish Secretary
Denny Teague	Sexton
Ian Elkins	Choir Director
Silsa Moore	Organ/Piano
Lori Overcash	Preschool Director

## CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Penny is in the office  
Mon-Thurs, 9:30-4:30  
The office is closed on Friday.

**You may reach Pastor Josh**  
on the his cell phone: **828-461-4688**  
or his email: **[pastorjoshtucker@gmail.com](mailto:pastorjoshtucker@gmail.com)**

Please do not hesitate to be in touch if you have a pastoral concern, or if there is something the pastor needs to know.