



## Friendship Focus

### December 2023

*O come O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,  
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.*

*O come, O King of nations, come, O Cornerstone that binds in one:  
refresh the hearts that long for you; restore the broken, make us new.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.  
(O Come, O Come, Emmanuel vs 1&7 ELW 257)*

Grace to you and peace from Him who was, who is and who is yet to come, Jesus, the Christ. Amen. As we turn our calendars to December, we begin the season of Advent, awaiting the coming of Christ.

Is it worth the wait? This season of Advent is all about waiting, preparation and hope. But, I wonder with all the time, effort and energy that it takes to pull off family Christmas celebrations and traditions, with all the money spent and all the sacrifice taken to ensure we get into the “Christmas Spirit” buying gifts for loved ones that they will enjoy; with all the sales, all the decorating and all the cooking, is it really worth the wait?

For many, especially children, this time of waiting is definitely worth it as we anticipate all of the wonderful things that come with Christmas: making a list for Santa, helping to decorate the tree, watching Christmas movies, time with family and playing with the new toys that were found under the tree. For others this time of year might represent a year’s worth of planning and saving all so we could “make Christmas special” for our family; this time of year might bring more stress than seems it’s worth as we think about how we might possibly get everything done in these short four weeks of preparation. And still for others, this season might carry with it pain and grief, bringing to light all the times that are now distant memories with loved ones who are no longer with us. This season becomes a time of grieving ones we’ve lost and the temptation is to isolate ourselves from the traditions and celebrations.

We might consider these different experiences of the Advent season and wonder if it's worth the wait, worth the preparation and worth the hope. After all, this world has made it possible for us to live life without waiting, it has shown us preparation isn't always necessary and that hope is all but lost in the world.

The time of waiting, the efforts of preparation and the call to hope that are central to this season of Advent are all experienced differently for each one of us, therefore this season of Advent is vital to the Christian faith. Like the season of Lent, Advent calls us into a time of deep spiritual formation, a time when we intentionally wait, prepare and hope for the birth of Christ. Advent calls us into a time of evangelism as we sing out, "Go tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born" sharing the good news with others. And Advent calls us into a season of prophetic mission as we hope for the return of Christ.

Friends, this season of Advent is definitely worth the wait. Worth the wait as we re-live the birth of Christ and worth the wait as we carry out the mission of God here in this place in hope and expectation that Christ will come again. This is what the season of Advent is all about and it's definitely worth the wait.

My hope and prayer for you this season is that you can find the time to slow down and faithfully live into this time of waiting, expectation and hope realizing that Advent is experienced differently by everyone. As you read through these pages in this newsletter, you will find many opportunities to experience the discipline of this season and many opportunities to help others experience Advent as well. Take advantage of those opportunities with the knowledge that it's worth the wait, preparation and hope.

In Christ,  
Pastor Josh

**\*Advent Sermon Series** "The Promise" begins **Sunday, December 3rd**. This series will use the Scriptures to point us to the promise that comes to us in this Advent season of waiting and expectation. **Join us Sunday mornings at 8 or 10:30am for "The Promise" of Christ.**

## **December News**

**Secret Sisters** meet **Friday, December 1st, at 6 pm.**

**Christmas Parade** The Taylorsville Christmas Parade is **December 2nd at 3pm.** Friendship will have a float for the church & one for the preschool again this year. Anyone that would like to ride are welcomed to do so. Contact Leah Hayes or Kristi Tucker to reserve your spot. We are taking candy donations in the handprints area.

**WELCA** meets **Sunday, Dec. 3rd at 4pm** in the chapel.

**Not A Silent Night** is the name of an Advent bible study Pastor Josh is leading this Advent season. The study group will meet **December 4, 11 & 18 at 10am** in the Followers of Faith Sunday School classroom. Not a Silent Night is written by Methodist Pastor Adam Hamilton and looks at Jesus' birth through Mary's point of view. The birth of our Savior was anything but a silent night! All are welcome to join this Advent study opportunity!

**Community Mid-Week Advent Worship** - This advent season four Lutheran churches are partnering together to share a mid-week Advent worship as we wait with anticipation and hope the Lord's coming. Each Wednesday in Advent at noon we'll gather at one of the churches for a brief time of worship followed by a lite lunch. The four pastors will take turns preaching at a different church. The host church will be responsible for providing the lunch.

**12/6/23 @ noon at St. Luke**

**12/13/23 @ noon at St. John's**

**12/20/23 @ noon at Reformation**

**Children's Christmas Play** this year is on **Saturday, December 16th at 4pm** in the **FLC**. Come out to hear the story of Christ's birth as shared by the children of Friendship.

**Breakfast with Santa Fundraiser for Preschool -**



**Sat, December 9th, 8 - 11 am.** Bring your children to join the fun! They will have breakfast with Santa, hot chocolate, a craft to take home, face painting & a picture with Santa! Donations only please. Proceeds go to preschool needs. This fundraiser is open to the community! Invite your friends & neighbors!

**Poinsettias** - if you would like to donate a poinsettia to decorate the altar for Christmas, forms are available at both services. Forms can be placed in the offering plate. The **cost is \$8.50** & checks should be made out to Country Road Greenhouse. Contact Dana Frye for questions or details. **Deadline is Dec. 10th.**

**The Angel Tree** - The tags will have the child's clothes size and special items they have asked for. You do not have to buy all of the items. The gifts must be back to the church by **Dec. 13th**. Contact Lisa James at 632-2451 with any questions.



**Newsletter Deadline-** Send items for the **January** issue of **Friendship's Focus** by **Tues, Dec. 19th**. Call the church office @ 632-4482 or email your items to [friendhipsecretary4@gmail.com](mailto:friendhipsecretary4@gmail.com).

**Christmas Eve Services** - We will have Sunday School at **9:15** & **one worship service at 10am in the Nave**. Our family service will be at **5 pm outside with the nativity**. At **9 pm**, we will have our **traditional candle light service in the Nave**. Please make plans to attend.

**Church office** - will be **closed** **Monday, December 25th & Tuesday, December 26th for Christmas & closed Monday, January 1st for New Year's.**

**JOY (Just.Older.Youth)** Welcome all the empty nesters, retirees, pre-retirees and those adults in-between to your own youth group. A group for young at heart adults. We will meet once a month **starting Sunday, January 14<sup>th</sup> at 5pm.** We will meet in the FLC. Bring your favorite side dish or dessert & favorite game (card game, board game, etc). For more details, please reach out to Brittany Greathouse or Pastor Josh.

**Women and the Word Bible Study** is a new study that will meet the 3rd Tuesday of each month. We will start with a bible study from Candace Cameron Bure (DJ Tanner) entitled “Worrier to Warrior”. Our 1st meeting will be **Tuesday, January 16<sup>th</sup> at 6pm.** Each month there will be a different host & food. Our first host will be Michelle Bowman. What to bring? Your Bible, the book (if you want it) & your favorite beverage. For more details, please reach out to Brittany Greathouse.

## December Birthdays

Harvey Bentley	12/01	Monica Stafford	12/11
Tony Cothren	12/02	Wade Cline	12/13
Ruth Deal-Lackey	12/02	Brenda H. Bowman	12/18
Zoey Moose	12/03	Kim Ramsey	12/18
Barry Swift	12/04	Lucas Mitchell	12/21
Katelyn Hammer	12/04	Kristi Tucker	12/21
Barry Swift	12/04	Sandra Icenhour	12/22
Michael Slooppe	12/06	Lynleigh Wike	12/23
Dara Swift	12/06	Logan Gant	12/26
Stedman Smith	12/09	Leon Bowman	12/28
Kyle Wike	12/10	Debbie Hefner	12/28
Lynn Jolly	12/11	Pat Payne	12/30
Thomas Setzer, Jr.	12/11		



Friendship Lutheran Church Council  
October 10, 2023, Regular Meeting in Person

Members present: John Adair, John Bostian, Payton Boyles, Marty Buff, Guy Chapman, Robert Farrens, Mason Frye, Tyler Hall, Taylor Payne, Gary Richey, Steve Shealy, Monica Stafford, Pastor Josh Tucker, and Dana Frye. Absent: none

President John Bostian called the meeting to order.

Motion by Mason Frye; seconded by Robert Farrens to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carries.

Tyler Hall shared a devotion.

Motion by Payton Boyles; seconded by Monica Stafford to approve the minutes from the regular meeting on August 8, 2023, and electronic votes on September 17, 18 and 21, 2023. Motion carries.

The treasurer's report for the month was distributed. Motion by Marty Buff; seconded by Tyler Hall to approve the report as presented. Motion carries.

**TEAM REPORTS:**

*Administration* – Guy Chapman – No report.

*Care* – Taylor Payne – Gods Work, Our Hands will be October 28 and 29 with sign ups available. Cruise In was very successful. Blood drive had a good turnout. Next drive at Friendship will be January 7, 2024. October is Pastor Appreciation Month. An application has been sent in to NCDOT Adopt a Highway for the Friendship Church Rd. The requirement is to clean up the roadside one time per quarter. Waiting to hear back on this.

*Learn* – Payton Boyles – Rooted is back to meeting regularly. Plans are to have the Christmas Program on Saturday, December 16 at 4 pm. Sunday school is averaging approximately 60 a week. Adult class teachers are looking for helpers.

*Worship* -Monica Stafford – Met in September. One service Sunday will be October 29 and a potluck meal will follow. Thanksgiving service will be joint with St Johns, St Luke, and Friendship at 7 pm on November 22 at St Luke. Advent services will be joint with St Johns, St Luke, Reformation and Friendship at noon with each church taking a turn to host. Pastor Josh will talk with Ian Elkins about organizing the old choir and moving some practices back there.

*Share* – Robert Farrens – No report.

*Finance* – Steve Shealy – See New Business.

*Rusha Austin Scholarship* – Marty Buff – No report

*Preschool* – John Adair – Preschool has 22 Pre-K kids and 26 preschool age kids. The preschool is renting a float for the Christmas parade (\$600.00). Breakfast with Santa is planned for December 9.

*Building & Grounds (BAG)* – Mason Frye – The Team received 3 bids for the playground fence. Recommendation from the team (no second required) to accept the bid from Fence Pro for \$6,400.00. Motion carries. They will be able to start within 2 weeks of being notified and the fence will be black coated chain-link.

*Technology* – Tyler Hall – Wi-Fi installed for the remaining Sunday school rooms; Ring camera installed, along with garage camera. Parish office and preschool ring cameras are up and running.

*Cemetery* – Gary Richey – Discussion on inactive-members who wish to be buried in the cemetery. Guidelines allow for this. No council action is needed. It would be a good idea for a small group to gather information on a columbarium for the future.

#### **PASTORS REPORT:**

Pastor Josh shared his monthly report. Life Screening has inquired about using Friendship for a health screen outreach event. More information is needed and will be discussed at the November meeting. Directory deadline is October 16. He will be out of the office October 16-20 for NC Synod Convocation at Lutheridge.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

► Lawn care contract needs to have a couple changes added that will detail communication between the contact holder and the church. Changes will be made with the proper wording and the council will be asked to read and approve by electronic vote next week. Bids will need to be returned to the church/BAG team by November 10. A member of the Mutual Ministry team may be an option to oversee the contract and be a liaison between the BAG team and the contract holder.

► Preschool expansion continues to be a work in progress. Current funds and funding for the project and what that project fully entails has not been decided.

*Minutes continued on next page.*

**NEW BUSINESS:**

► Steve Shealy presented the 2024 Spending Plan as a recommendation from the Finance Team (no second is required). A new line item is the largest expense at \$50,000.00 for Pastoral Assistance. At this time, that position has not been defined but it needs to be in the budget for planning purposes. Motion carries.

► Council nominations from the congregation must be turned into John Bostian or Payton Boyles in writing, no later than October 22, 2023, to be published according to the constitution.

► Motion by Taylor Payne; seconded by John Adair to approve the church having 2 floats in the Christmas parade. Motion carries. Each float is \$600.00. One will be the church youth and the other will be the preschool. The preschool will pay for one float and the church will pay for one with funds coming from the current expense.

► Strategic Planning will be summarized by Pastor Josh, John Bostian and Payton Boyles and presented to the congregation.

► The Board of Elections has notified the church that each time they use the fellowship hall for an election, the church will be reimbursed \$100.00 beginning in March 2024.

Agenda items for next month need to be sent to John Bostian or Pastor Josh by November 3, if possible.

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

Our next regular monthly meeting will be Tuesday, November 14, 2023, at 6 pm. Guy Chapman will share a devotion.

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**ELECTRONIC VOTE ON OCTOBER 16, 2023**

Recommendation from the Property /BAG Team to publish the attached lawn care contract for bids. No second is required. Motion carries.

**ELECTRONIC VOTE ON OCTOBER 19, 2023**

October is Pastor Appreciation Month. Motion by John Bostian; seconded by Payton Boyles to give a financial gift of \$500.00 from the Family Ministry Line item to Pastor Josh. The gift will be presented to him at the one service Sunday, October. 29. Motion carries.



## Thank You

**Thank you** so much for the delicious spaghetti you provided the ACHS Band.

Patrick Watkins & Jennifer Weddington

**Congratulations** to those elected to serve on our Congregational Council for a **two year term starting in December:** Chris Bowman, Doug Ramsey, Wade Cline, Angie Mooney, Chris Jolly & Nikki Icard. 2024 Council members will be installed **Dec. 10th at both services.** **Thanks** to John Bostian, Tyler Hall, Marty Buff, Gary Richey, Steve Shealy & Monica Stafford for serving on council the past 2 years.

## Our Sharing

### **OFFERINGS**

	<u>OCTOBER, 2023</u>	<u>YTD</u>
CURRENT	\$33,541.46	\$308,927.56
BENEVOLENCE	\$1,760.00	\$15,895.51
BLDG/IMPROVEMENT	\$5,405.00	\$38,310.00
PRESCHOOL	\$500.00	\$4,315.00
WORLD HUNGER	\$450.00	\$3,290.00
BACKPACK MINISTRY	\$400.00	\$4,706.00
CHRISTIAN CRISIS CTR	\$185.00	\$1,980.00
FOOD PANTRY	\$0.00	\$75.00
LUTHERAN DISASTER RELIEF	\$0.00	\$1,445.00
RUSHA AUSTIN SCHLOR.	\$200.00	\$29,008.91
YOUTH	\$712.00	\$8,044.00
ADULT MISSIONS	\$0.00	\$6,311.00
NOISY OFFERING	\$583.00	\$6,117.50
GIDEONS INTERNATIONAL	\$0.00	\$1,504.00
HOSPICE OF ALEX CO	\$0.00	\$100.00
VBS 2023	\$0.00	\$320.00
CRUISE IN/CHARLOTTE VINSON	\$13,435.00	\$13,435.00
	\$57,171.46	\$443,784.48

### **SPENDING**

	<u>OCTOBER, 2023</u>	<u>YTD</u>
CURRENT	\$37,884.35	\$305,195.40

# 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...

Darryl Adkins	(C. Gant-10/30)	Maynard Annas III	(P. Shealy-11/13)
Wayne Morrow	(S. Bumgarner-10/30)	Rachel Heck	(T. Birchfield-11/15)
Lori Seagle	(P. Setzer-10/30)	Danny Parks	(P. Josh-11/15)
Leon Bowman	(P. Josh-10/30)	Phyllis Ann Fox	(J. Gant-11/20)
Neal Nichols	(J. Nichols-10/30)	Mark Gantt	(P. Josh-11/20)
Roy Bolick	(P. Josh-10/30)	Rachel Miller	(L. Hefner-11/20)
Stella Hanshaw	(P. Shealy-10/30)	Gale Ham	(C. Icenhour-11/20)
Katelyn McKinney	(W. Cline-11/6)	Billy Harrington	(L. Hefner-11/20)
William Whiteside	(W. Cline-11/6)	Nancy Pearson	(W. Pearson-11/20)
Linda Peak	(J. Gant-11/6)	Lee Oxendine	(L. Hefner-11/20)
Bev Miller	(J. Gant-11/6)	Jeri Haynes	(P. Josh-11/20)
Martha Johnson	(C. Kerley-11/6)	Harold & Carol	
Barbara Manning	(S. Icenhour-11/6)	Mecimore	(G. Kerley-11/27)
Kenny Little	(B. Cline-11/6)	Jaycee Bauer	(K. Ramsey-11/27)
Megan Rader	(B. Cline-11/6)	Lacey Pritchard	(K. Ramsey-11/27)
Don Hammer	(N. Windsor-11/7)	Dwayne Helton	(L. Cothren-11/28)
David Adams	(M. Sipe-11/8)	Denny Teague	(P. Josh-11/28)
Carol Price	(M. Sipe-11/8)	Susan Tucker	(P. Josh-11/28)
Lonnie Hand	(G. Hand-11/8)	Emo & Benny Bebbber	(P. Josh-11/28)
Terry Frye	(C. Bowman-11/13)	Whitney Dillard	(L. Hefner-11/28)
Helen Patterson	(D. Ramsey-11/13)	Ramsey family	(P. Josh-11/28)
Deanna Smith	(S. Smith-11/13)		

## Family & friends of:

Johnny Chapman	(D. Payne-11/6)
Leroy Miller	(P. Josh-11/7)
Barbara Barnes	(B. Icenhour-11/13)
Pastor Scott Johnson	(P. Josh-11/20)

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

Fate Hefner, Mitchell Price, Earl Bostian,  
Benny & Emo Bebbber, Steve Icenhour, Joyce Deal.

**If you know of someone that should be added to or taken off  
this list, please call the church office.**

# Church Council and Staff

## Council (Term ending)

### Officers

John Bostian - President	( '23)
Payton Boyles - VP	( '24)
Jane Gant - Treasurer (non voting)	( '24)
Dana Frye - Recording Sec (non voting)	( '24)
Guy Kerley - Financial Sec (non voting)	( '24)
Marty Buff - RA Scholarship	( '23)
Tyler Hall - Tech	( '23)
Gary Richey - Cemetery	( '23)
Steve Shealy - Finance	( '23)
Monica Stafford - Worship	( '23)
Guy Chapman - Adm.	( '24)
Mason Frye--Bldg. & Grounds	( '24)
Robert Farrens-- Share	( '24)
John Adair--Preschool	( '24)
Taylor Payne--CARE	( '24)

## Staff

Denny Teague	Sexton
Penny Stikeleather	Parish Secretary
Silsa Moore	Organ/Piano
Ian Elkins	Choir Director
Hope Wike	Preschool Director
Josh Tucker	Pastor

## CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Penny is in the office Mon-Thurs,  
9:30-4:30 (Lunch-12:30-1:30)  
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.