



Friendship Focus

January 2026

Friendship Church Family,

Grace to you and peace from God our Father, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

As we turn our calendars to a new year, I find comfort in God's Word from the revelation to John,

And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true." Then he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. (Revelation 21:5-6a)

In his revelation to the apostle, we see God busy and active, promising to be present in the beginnings and the endings. God is the first and the last, omnipresent – ever present, omnipotent – all powerful, omniscient – all knowing. God promises to be with us as we close out 2025 and start the new year.

Many will make new year resolutions to attempt to better themselves; many will resolve to spend more time at home with family and less time at work; many will commit to greater acts of charity. Often all our well-intentioned resolutions and goals for a new year will fail.

But God's love never fails. God's grace, mercy and forgiveness never fail. The promise of God's presence with us, Emmanuel: God is with us - never fails us.

I cannot wait to see all the wonderful works of God in and through us here at Friendship Lutheran Church in 2026. I look forward to a faithful year of mission and ministry alongside you, looking to God, who promises to make all things new again, to guide and direct us this year and beyond.

Please join me in praying this prayer and blessing for the new year:

Dear Father God,

We praise you for your abundant grace and desire to give good gifts to your children! As we begin a new calendar year, we are reminded that your will for us is to give us hope and a future. Incline our hearts and minds to be receptive to all the blessings you will grant to us in the new year and keep us focused on the promises you intend for us to know and live.

We recognize the difficulties of this past year, but more so, the wonderful gifts you have granted which are far greater. Even though we have not deserved your mercy, you have been gracious in lending your love to us each and every day. Continue to do so as you keep us from all harm and danger of the mind, body, soul and spirit. Create in us new hearts and a spirit to sustain us in any and all challenges to come.

Empower us by your Spirit to seek your forgiveness and live according to your will. Draw us with fervent hearts to your Word and Sacraments that we may know true strength in order to live out the calling to which you have given us. Stir our passions to that which is good, right and holy; pleasing you and blessing our neighbors. May we know compassion and empathy for those in need and a greater desire to share the good news of life in the Name of Jesus.

Free us from the past of our sins and guilt that we may move freely into this new year full of joy to be of service to you and your kingdom. Grant an extra measure of Your Spirit's anointing for a greater zeal in living out the commission and life to which we have been called. Be with all who are in need and tend to them with your gracious hand.

Thank you for being the God who is for us and not against us! Thank you for your continued faithfulness and that amidst an ever-changing world you are always the same and your promises are new for us each day. Receive our praise as we glorify your holy name with gratitude for the grace that is ours through your Son, Jesus Christ!

In his name and for his sake we pray! Amen and Amen!
(adapted from David Nuottila, www.mylutheranroots.com)

Happy New Year! God bless you and our ministry together!

PJ

January News

Secret Sisters meet Saturday, January 3rd at 9am.



**American
Red Cross**

Red Cross Blood Drive - Sunday, January 4th, 12:30-5 pm. Please visit 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 @ 632-3544.

Fellowship Potluck Supper is **Monday, January 5th @ 6pm.** All are welcome to join us for great food & fellowship.

CARE Team meet **Monday, January 12th at 6pm.**

Men in Mission breakfast is **Saturday, January 17th at 8am.**

Church Council meets on **Tuesday, January 20th at 6pm.**

Mission Trip - The youth are excited about going on a mission trip to Charleston, SC in **July 2026!** They will be hosting fundraisers to raise money needed to go on this mission trip. However, a general note about financially supporting children, youth and youth missions ministries at Friendship: donations given that are marked "youth" or "children/rooted" are split between rooted and youth ministries. **Donations given that are specifically marked "youth missions" are placed in the designated fund for youth mission trips.** Thank you for your financial support of these important ministries to our congregation!





January Birthdays

Terry Payne	1/02	Amy Farrens	1/18
Wendy Watts	1/03	Angie Smith	1/18
Ella Bostian	1/05	Ben Icenhour	1/19
Sharon Goble	1/06	Tamala Christopher	1/20
Thomas Bedzinski	1/10	Stasya Frye	1/22
Terri Cook	1/10	Asher Wike	1/22
Raylie Stafford	1/10	Mabel Sweat	1/23
Sam Birchfield	1/11	Ivy Hayes	1/24
Larry Ingle	1/11	Wendelynne Pearson	1/24
Debbie Deal	1/12	Brenda P. Bowman	1/25
Jane Nichols	1/15	Mary Ann Icenhour	1/26
Kyndal Benfield	1/16	Dawn Shealy	1/27
Donna Bowman	1/16	Tamara Harrington	1/29
Paulette Hefner	1/17	Rickie Gantt	1/30



Friendship Lutheran Church Council
October 21, 2025, Regular Meeting in Person

Members present: Hannah Bostian, Chris Bowman, Wade Cline, Eric Frye, Nikki Icard, Chris Jolly, Michelle Miller, Angie Mooney, Doug Ramsey, Tamara Stafford, Barry Swift, Pastor Josh Tucker, Dana Frye, Charlie Sipe, and Lori Overcash.
Absent: Monica Stafford

President Doug Ramsey called the meeting to order.

Motion by Michelle Miller; seconded by Chris Bowman to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carries.

Wade Cline shared a devotion.

Lori Overcash from the Preschool was present for an opportunity for Council get some one-on-one time with her and for her to share an update on the preschool. Everything is going great!

Motion by Wade Cline; seconded by Tamara Stafford to approve minutes from September 16, Regular Meeting, and the October 13, electronic vote. Motion carries.

Treasurers report was distributed. Motion by Michelle Miller; seconded by Angie Mooney to approve. Motion carries. Charlie Sipe discussed the 2026 spending plan and sharing that overall, there was a 3% increase from 2025. Motion from the Finance committee (no second required) to approve and present the spending plan to the congregation at the annual meeting. Motion carries. Charlie will get with Penny and have copies out for pick up by Sunday, November 2.

TEAM ASSIGNMENTS/REPORTS:

Administration – Hannah Bostian – No report.

Care – Tamara Stafford – Meals are being delivered after the Monday night community suppers; 46 units were collected at the blood drive on October 12, next drive is January 4; God's Work Our Hands will be October 25 and several projects are lined up; Thanksgiving meals will be prepared and delivered November 27; looking to revamp the Emergency Meal this year due to low attendance.

Learn – Nikki Icard – No report.

Worship – Chris Jolly – There is a financial need in the Holy Lands. A speaker will be at Friendship on December 7 at both services for a temple talk and everyone will have the opportunity to purchase items made from olive wood to support the Holy Lands during this time. The area pastors will be meeting to discuss the Advent season services and the Thanksgiving service will be at St John's on November 26.

Share – Chris Bowman – Motion by Doug Ramsey; seconded by Tamara Stafford to allow the team to attach welcome letters to the wall above the entrance doors to the fellowship hall. Motion carries. Motion by Nikki Icard; seconded by Tamara Stafford to allow the team to purchase a camera up to \$900 (funds will come from line item 5251, Communications) and use this camera for church events and upload them to our sites. Motion carries. This will enhance our social media for everyone to view. Plans are for a media coordinator to be available to use the camera at these events.

Finance – Michelle Miller – No additional report.

Rusha Austin Scholarship – Angie Mooney – No report.

Preschool – Monica Stafford – Motion from the Preschool team (no second required) to put \$26,000 from their regular account and half of the \$42,000 designated funds held in the church account, into an interest-bearing money market account. Motion by Doug Ramsey; seconded by Chris Jolly to amend the motion to state \$26,000 from the preschool regular account and \$42,094 from the designated funds held by the church, be deposited into the money market account at Taylorsville Savings Bank. The principal funds from the designated gift remains subject to council authority. Amendment motion carries. The preschool will not have Breakfast with Santa this year.

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

Technology – Wade Cline – It was asked about a light to be installed over the choir area in the sanctuary. Wade will get with Tyler Hall and see options and prices.

Cemetery – Barry Swift – No report.

PASTOR'S REPORT:

Pastor Josh shared his report. After his surgery in September, he is working a little slower. He has 16 kids in confirmation. This includes kids from St John, Reformation, and Friendship. There will be 5 kids on target to be confirmed in May, 2026. Homecoming was good, now planning Thanksgiving service at St. John and the Advent services with other churches. Installation for Bishop Emily Hartner will be November 15. Christmas play for the children will be Sunday, December 21.

OLD BUSINESS:

- Information continues to be collected for a columbarium.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Motion by Tamara Stafford; seconded by Hannah Bostian to approve new members: Sandra Knowlton, Ed Longworth, Ricky and Dana Rector into membership. Motion carries.

- Ian and Gabriel Shepherd have transferred their membership to Sardis Lutheran Church, where Pastor Oscar Shepherd is serving.

- Hayden Sipe will be baptized October 16, and Madelyn Farthing will be November 9.

- Motion by Wade Cline; seconded by Michelle Miller to adjourn the congregational meeting on November 16, 2025 at 10:20 am, if still in session, to prepare for the 10:30 am service and reconvene on Sunday, November 23, 2025 at 9:15 am. Motion carries.

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

Our next regular monthly meeting will be Monday, November 18, 2025, at 6 pm. Barry Swift will share a devotion.

SPECIAL CALLED MEETING, NOVEMBER 13, 2025,

Present: Chris Bowman, Eric Frye, Nikki Icard, Michelle Miller, Monica Stafford, Tamara Stafford, Doug Ramsey, Dana Frye and Charlie Sipe.

Motion by Chris Bowman; seconded by Tamara Stafford to amend the 2026 Spending Plan to include Portico Package Value Pay 4000 for Parish Secretary Penny Stikeleather. Motion carries. Package includes health insurance, life insurance, disability and retirement. Amended \$11,000 as a separate line item.

Our Sharing

OFFERINGS

	<u>NOVEMBER, 2025</u>	<u>YTD</u>
CURRENT	\$34,947.89	\$386,155.63
BENEVOLENCE	\$2,452.00	\$17,274.42
BLDG/IMPROVEMENT	\$1,875.00	\$22,386.42
PRESCHOOL	\$225.00	\$3,545.00
WORLD HUNGER	\$0.00	\$1,325.00
BACKPACK MINISTRY	\$775.00	\$5,325.00
CHRISTIAN CRISIS CTR	\$940.00	\$6,835.00
LUTHERAN DISASTER RELIEF	\$450.00	\$1,620.00
RUSHA AUSTIN SCHLOR.	\$600.00	\$16,999.00
YOUTH	\$410.00	\$2,475.00
NOISY OFFERING	\$945.50	\$8,197.50
COLUMBARIUM	\$1,148.42	\$46,021.84
MEN IN MISSION	\$50.00	\$598.00
ADULT MISSIONS	\$25.00	\$530.00
LUTHEROAD	\$0.00	\$6,188.00
ALZHEIMERS BENEFIT	\$0.00	\$4,254.75
LUTHERIDGE CAMPAIGN	\$185.00	\$4,675.00
CRUISE IN BENEFIT	\$0.00	\$27,763.00

SPENDING

	<u>NOVEMBER, 2025</u>	<u>YTD</u>
CURRENT	\$28,487.12	\$377,683.65

Ministry Team Spotlight!

Cemetery Team

The Cemetery Ministry Team is responsible for the faithful stewardship, care, and management of our congregation's cemeteries. Guided by the mission and values of Friendship Lutheran Church, the team ensures that the cemeteries are maintained as a sacred, dignified place of rest, remembrance, and Christian witness.

The Cemetery Ministry Team serves families during a great time of need in accordance with the bylaws of the cemeteries and any applicable local and state regulations. The ministry of this team is held accountable and regularly provides reports to the Congregational Council.

Friendship is blessed to have ample cemetery space. The cemetery across Church Road to the east of Friendship is referred to as the "Old Cemetery". This cemetery was filled to capacity in 2015 and is generally closed to future burials. Only in special situations where one spouse was buried, and an adjoining space was left open for the remaining spouse will burials be permitted in the old cemetery.

The cemetery adjacent to the existing building is open to active members and their spouses as well as their dependent children at no charge. Non-active members, associate members or former members also have access to be interned in the Friendship cemetery at a fee per the cemetery bylaws. General upkeep of grave markers and burial plots are the responsibility of the family.

Generally, the ministry team serves to:

- Oversee the general care, appearance, and upkeep of cemetery grounds
- Coordinate in conjunction with the Building and Grounds team mowing, landscaping, snow removal, and seasonal maintenance
- Ensure monuments, markers, and plots are maintained in accordance with cemetery bylaws
- Identify and coordinate with families the needed repairs or improvements, recommending any action to council as necessary
- Manage the allocation and records of burial plots
- Coordinate burials with the pastor, funeral directors, sexton/caretaker, and families
- Ensure burials are conducted respectfully and in accordance with church and cemetery bylaws
- Maintain accurate maps and records of graves, ownership, and interments
- Develop, review, and recommend revisions to the cemetery bylaws
- Ensure compliance with local, state, and federal laws governing cemeteries
- Address questions, concerns, or disputes related to cemetery use and regulations

We at Friendship are grateful for God's blessing of beautiful land in which we can faithfully lay our loved ones to rest. Any questions or concerns regarding the cemeteries should be directed to the ministry team or council. If you are interested in serving on this ministry team, please see Pastor Josh.

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...

Carolyn Fox (N. Windsor-12/3)	Sutton Bowman (B. Bowman-12/16)
Ricky Rector (P. Josh-12/8)	Jimmy Hayes (M. Stafford-12/16)
Patsy Stewart (G. Kerley-12/8)	Jay Dean Mitchell (D. Ramsey-12/16)
Ian Elkins (P. Josh-12/8)	Nina Windsor (P. Josh-12/18)
Jerry Wallace (W. Pearson-12/9)	Pastor Christina Auch (D. Ramsey-12/19)
Ginger Annas (B. Icenhour-12/10)	Alta Sells (L. Hefner-12/22)
Brenda Hartness (D. Payne-12/15)	Tony Cothren (P. Josh-12/22)
Brent Warren (D. Payne-12/15)	Stella Hanshew (B. Icenhour-12/22)
Steve Matthews (K. Loudermelk-12/15)	Darryl Adkins (C. Gant-12/22)
Hal & Ruelene Deal (D. Payne-12/16)	Nicole Davis McNamara (J. Gant-12/22)
Brenda Hartness (D. Payne-12/15)	Teressa Wallace (W. Pearson-12/22)
Brent Warren (D. Payne-12/15)	Evie Milstead (P. Josh-12/29)
Steve Matthews (K. Loudermelk-12/15)	Derrick Hefner (L. Hefner-12/29)
Hal & Ruelene Deal (D. Payne-12/16)	Traci Kirby (T. Christopher-12/29)

Family & friends of:

Dennis Bumgarner	(C. Sigmon-12/9)
Agnes Harrington	(P. Josh-12/9)
Doris Hobson	(D. Ramsey-12/10)
Lois Perdue	(D. Ramsey-12/10)
Joe Simmons	(W. Cline-12/15)
Mickey Chapman	(D. Frye-12/15)
Greg Biffle family	(P. Josh-12/22)
Dumm family	(P. Josh-12/22)

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

Fate Hefner, Steve Icenhour,
Joyce Deal, Roy & Reba Bolick,
Dallard Lail, Phil & Ruth Lackey.

Church Council and Staff

Council

(Term ending)

Officers

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 (Lunch-12:30-1:30)
The office is closed on Friday.

You may reach Pastor Josh
on his cell phone: **828-461-4688**
or his email: **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.