



# FRIENDSHIP PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

*small church | BIG MISSION*

April 2020



Dear FPC Members and Friends,

It's been a few weeks now since the last time we were together. We don't know how much longer it will be before we can safely come together again, but know that that day will come, and it will be beautiful! For now, I pray that this message finds you and your family at home, and safe and healthy.

Of course, this being apart is especially poignant over the next two weeks, with Holy Week and Easter coming. It is disappointing that of all times this might be happening, that it's happening *now*, during *this* season. But know this: That just as the church is not a building, but rather a *community* bound together in Christ's Love which stretches across time and space, so the truth and power of Easter will not be contained by any circumstance. The huge stone at the tomb was not enough to hold back the risen Jesus, and neither can this trial we now face keep us from worshipping God and celebrating the Resurrection!

This is our Holy Week schedule for participatory, live-streamed worship online:

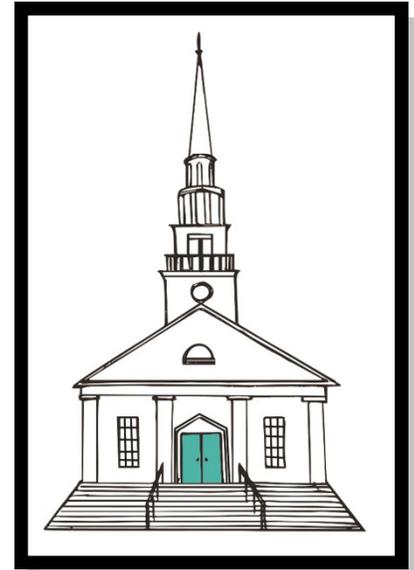
April 5 – Palm Sunday, at 11:00 AM

April 10 – Good Friday, at 6:00 PM, with Home Communion

April 12 – Easter Sunday, at 11:00 AM, with Home Communion

You read that right: Home Communion! After much consultation with fellow pastors and denominational leaders, the Session and I approved a plan to celebrate communion during our online services. As you join the live-streams on the church's Facebook page, you may use your own bread and grape juice/wine at home ... We will break bread together, and partake of the elements together, in *real time*. In our Reformed theological tradition, in Communion, Jesus is not considered "ON the table," but with us AT the table, by the Holy Spirit. And though we are physically separated, that same Spirit binds us together in deep unity as we celebrate together.

*(continued on page 2)*



8531 Macon Hwy  
Athens, GA 30606  
706-543-6077 (office)  
706-543-6199 (fax)  
[www.gotofriendship.org](http://www.gotofriendship.org)

Sunday School @ 9:45 a.m.  
Sunday Worship @ 11:00a.m.

Pastor:

Rev. J. Thomas Buchanan  
[pastortom@gotofriendship.org](mailto:pastortom@gotofriendship.org)

Church Administrator:

Donna Rigsby  
[office@gotofriendship.org](mailto:office@gotofriendship.org)

Please check out our website @  
[www.gotofriendship.org](http://www.gotofriendship.org) for our  
online calendar





(continued from page 1)

I also want to remind you all of other ways in which the work of ministry at FPC continues:

Online worship, Bible study, and even preschool chapel ... our commitment to mission through ACTS and the YWCO ... and intentional, attentive pastoral care. Most of this has been said before, but here's a summary of the most important things you need to know:

**Church Office Hours:** The church office is now open for necessary business only, for limited hours on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings, by mutual arrangement with Donna. Voice mail messages will be retrieved daily.

**Sunday Worship:**

Join us on Sunday mornings at 11 AM for live-streamed participatory worship from Pastor Tom's study. Viewership has grown, with 97 views within 24 hours of the worship stream on March 29!

Before each Sunday service, be sure to download a worship bulletin first, by going to our web site **[www.GoToFriendship.org](http://www.GoToFriendship.org)**, and scrolling down to the COVID-19 update in red lettering. You'll find there a link to download the bulletin for the following Sunday. There is also a link there to take you to the church's Facebook page, where the livestream will start each Sunday at 11:00 AM sharp. If you miss it live, you may visit later for the full video. *Please note that you do NOT need to have a personal Facebook account to view the live-stream or video.*

In addition, printed sermons are available on the church web site, using the "Sermons & Newsletters" menu item on the home page, and new ones will be added right after they are given in the livestreamed service.

**More Online Opportunities:**

For the young and young at heart, don't miss live-streamed Friendship Presbyterian Preschool CHAPEL on Tuesday mornings at 9:30 AM sharp! Just like live chapel times for our preschoolers, it will include singing, a Bible story, and a prayer – and all in real time.

Our Tuesday morning Bible study is now meeting too – by Zoom videoconferencing! Just as before, we meet on Tuesday mornings at 10:30 am. If you have not been attending Bible study and would like to join in, please email me ... **[pastortom@gotofriendship.org](mailto:pastortom@gotofriendship.org)** ... and I'll add you to the Zoom invitation list each week.

**Pastoral Needs:**

The Session has organized all members and friends of Friendship Church into "Care Groups," with each Session member having pastoral responsibility for about six or seven households. They will reach out to you regularly going forward in love and concern.

If you or someone you know needs help of any kind – practical, spiritual, or emotional – please let us know, either by talking with the Elder who is assigned to you and your family, or by contacting me directly. Again, my email address is **[pastortom@gotofriendship.org](mailto:pastortom@gotofriendship.org)** and my cell phone # is **404-729-2144**. Our church office email is **[office@gotofriendship.org](mailto:office@gotofriendship.org)**

**Giving to the Church:**

We deeply appreciate your continued giving, as you are able, to Friendship as it seeks to carry out its mission. This time is a challenging one for all institutions, businesses, and organizations, and the church is no exception. As always, pledges and offerings may be made by check, mailed to the church office. Soon, it will also be possible to make donations online by credit or debit card, on our web site, for maximum convenience. I will let you know when that is up and running. Again, we are grateful for your generosity and commitment.

God bless all of you. I am, as ever, deeply grateful to be on this Journey with you.

Tom Buchanan, Pastor  
Cell phone #: 404-729-2144



## Session Report

Submitted by Leanne Vaeth

- The annual meeting of the Congregation was held on March 1, 2020. A recap of the 2019 budget and highlights of the Session approved 2020 budget were presented, and the Congregation voted to approve the Pastor's 2020 Terms of Call.
- Session members were consulted and agreed that moving to online worship services until March 30<sup>th</sup> was in the best interest of the Congregation. Session later approved extending online worship services indefinitely with the intent of reassessing the situation every few weeks.
- Session also endorsed adopting alternative ways to incorporate church activities into an online format including preschool chapel, Tuesday Bible study, and Scouting programs. Session members also expressed support for introducing virtual communion and web-based giving for offering collections as options for addressing as many aspects of worship services as possible. Information on how to participate in these opportunities will be communicated to the Congregation in the near future.
- Session approved an online Good Friday service on April 10, 2020. An Easter Sunday service will be held at 11:00 AM on April 12<sup>th</sup>. There will not be a sunrise service. Plans for an in-person Pentecost service and a special Bluegrass service in May were discussed contingent upon recommended guidelines for gatherings at that time.
- As part of its outreach efforts during the pandemic, Session members and Pastor Tom Buchanan will regularly contact individuals and families to check on their well-being and to provide assistance with any needs that may arise during this period. Members are encouraged to share any requests they may have for spiritual support, as well as asking for assistance with grocery shopping, transportation, or resolving any technical problems they may have while accessing church programs.
- Church administration is working with the Preschool Director on contingency plans should reopening be further delayed.
- The Administration and Finance ministry area is reviewing the church's insurance policy and coverage in light of Session's recently adopted Policy on Youth Protection Guidelines.
- Session approved a monetary contribution to ACTS in support of its mission and in light of reduced opportunities for collecting food items during this time. The Mission ministry area is assessing alternatives for collecting canned goods using a doorstep donation or a porch pick up in future months.
- The Property Ministry area is working with a contractor to repair the covered walkway near the Friendship Room entrance. The Property and Admin/Finance ministry teams are working together to assess the need for improved access to the Sanctuary. A proposal for a Boy Scout Eagle project on church property was approved by Session and the local Boy Scout Council. An anonymous donation generously funded the project.
- The Welcome ministry area is identifying members and held a meeting on the Forum @ Friendship program offering.
- Judy Hibbs, Leanne Vaeth, and Pastor Tom Buchanan attended the Northeast Presbytery meeting on February 29, 2020.
- Pastor Tom expressed his appreciation to all the individuals working creatively to bring innovative solutions to the challenges we are facing during this time. He expressed gratitude to our members for their kindness to him, and to one another, and for their patience as we move into uncharted waters and introduce new ways of being together.
- The next Stated Session Meeting is Sunday, April 19<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 (contingent upon guidelines for public gatherings in place at that time).



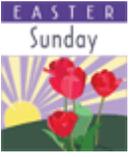
<b>Worship Attendance &amp; Giving in March</b>					
	March 1	March 8	March 15	March 22	March 29
Attendance	45	32	-	-	-
General Giving	\$3672.00	\$482.00	\$3110.00	-	-

<b>Friendship Presbyterian Church</b>	
<b>Year-To-Date Through February 2020</b>	
Selected Assets and Liabilities	
Cash in Bank -- General Fund	\$36,374.48
Cash in Bank --Restricted Fund	<u>13,351.54</u>
Total Cash in Bank	\$49,726.02
Restricted Educational Funds	
	\$12,035.45
Savings -- New Covenant Securities	
	\$46,076.16
Income Statement Summary for February 2020	
Receipts from Congregation	\$6,284.40
Dye House Rent	2,087.01
Support from Preschool	2,960.75
All Other Income	<u>4.87</u>
Total Receipts	<u>\$11,337.03</u>
Administration Expenses	
	\$8,427.11
Personnel Expenses	
	13,857.81
Membership Development & Care Expenses	
	0.00
Discipleship/CE	
	0.00
Mission/Bldg & Grounds Expenses	
	1,582.72
Worship Expenses	
	<u>0.00</u>
Total Operating Expenses	<u>\$23,867.64</u>
Net Income / (Deficit)	
	(\$12,530.61)



APRIL 2020

Names in red-birthdays  
Names in green-anniversaries

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>29</p>  <p>Richard &amp; Evelyn Montgomery 11:00 AM Worship Service- ONLINE</p>	30	31	1	2 <i>Shirley Harris</i>	3 <i>Linden Crossley</i>	4
<p>5</p>  <p>11:00 AM Worship Service- Online</p>	6 Preschool Spring Break	7 Preschool Spring Break 9:30 AM Preschool Chapel-Online 10:30 AM Adult Bible Study-Online	8 Preschool Spring Break	9 Preschool Spring Break	10  <p>GOOD FRIDAY</p> <p><i>Elizabeth Broomfield</i> Preschool Spring Break 6:00 PM Good Friday Service w/Home Communion- ONLINE</p>	11 <i>Libby Rice</i>
<p>12</p>  <p>11:00 AM Worship Service w/Home Communion-ONLINE</p>	13	14 9:30 AM Preschool Chapel-Online 10:30 AM Adult Bible Study-Online	15	16	17	18 <i>Charlie Newcomer</i>
<p>19</p> <p><i>Grace Hawn</i> 11:00 AM Worship Service- ONLINE</p>	20	21 9:30 AM Preschool Chapel-Online 10:30 AM Adult Bible Study-Online	22	23	24	25
<p>26</p> <p><i>Nancy Graham</i> 11:00 AM Worship Service- ONLINE</p>	27	28 9:30 AM Preschool Chapel-Online 10:30 AM Adult Bible Study-Online	29	30 <i>David Ivy Jane McGahee</i>	1	2

## Praying for You

Please submit news for  
May's Newsletter to the church  
office no later than  
**Sunday, April 26, 2020.**

Due to office schedule  
submissions after this date may  
not appear in next month's  
newsletter.  
All submissions are subject to  
editing.



If you have  
any updates or  
additional  
prayer  
requests,

please notify  
an Elder or the  
Church Office.

- Jane Towles
- Rosemary Salter
- Rhenn Prip
- Elizabeth Broomfield
- Grace Hawn
- Mildred Rice
- Desmond Goergen (great grandson of Bev Davis)
- Mum and Reggie (friends of Lisa Buchanan)
- LMHB (dear friend of Lisa Buchanan)
- Nancy Adams (Sarah Bennett's niece—cancer)
- Richard Weber (loss of his wife Diane - Kathy Roberts' best friend)
- Andrea Williams (throat cancer)
- Skylar Kirkpatrick (granddaughter of Bev Davis)
- Jennifer Mitchell
- Jim Miller (friend of Bev Davis—melanoma)
- Donald Clem (Donna Rigsby's dad—Alzheimer's)

### FRIENDSHIP PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH MISSION STATEMENT

As followers of Jesus Christ, assured of God's unconditional love for everyone, we strive to be an accepting and joyful community that centers upon worship, encourages personal growth, celebrates diversity, nurtures individual gifts, and moves beyond boundaries to share, through service, Jesus' love, compassion, and justice in an uncertain world.

Grace to you and peace, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Friendship Presbyterian Church  
8531 Macon Highway  
Athens, GA 30606