

# FRIENDSHIP PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

*small church | BIG MISSION*



## January 2021

I hope you all had a restful and joyful Christmas. I say “had”, but the truth is, it’s probably still Christmas when you’re reading this, because Christmas is a twelve-day celebration. 2020 seemed to go on forever, why should Christmas be any different? I think this year in particular many of us are ready to move on, to chase Christmas out of the house, to turn the page at long last on 2020, and see what 2021 has in store.

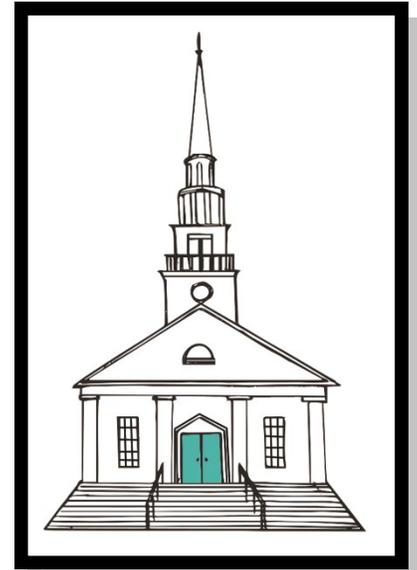
We at the Buchanan Ranch have started “de-Christmasing” the house, dragging out the tree and taking down the stockings. Of course, this also means putting up our nativity set. We’ve had a few different ones over the years, each being a little different from the others, but they all have the same basic characters: Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, a variety of animals, some shepherds, maybe an angel, maybe a star, the wise men.

There’s a lot of depth and meaning packed into a simple nativity scene. You’ve got Mary and Joseph, ordinary people, poor people, traveling by donkey while Mary is “great with child,” sleeping and giving birth in a barn. You’ve got the shepherds, the lowest caste in their society: poor, dirty, uneducated, and maybe a little sketchy. You’ve got all the stinking animals, the donkeys and the sheep and the cattle and so on. And you’ve got the baby Jesus, the newborn king on a pile of hay in a trough for feeding animals.

And then you have the wise men. In our gospel text for this Sunday, we hear their story of following a star to find the Christ child. The wise men are usually dressed as kings, with rich robes and crowns. For that reason, they might seem a little out of place. But really, they fit right in with Mary and Joseph and Jesus and the shepherds. They may have been great in their own land, they may have had wealth and power—we don’t really know. But here they are foreigners, they are outsiders. And they have power-mad Herod on their trail. They are just as vulnerable as everyone else in the nativity scene.

Mary and Joseph and Jesus, and the shepherds and even the wise men, *all* of them are people who are living on the edge, in one way or another, people who could easily fall through the cracks. Maybe that’s why it’s often a challenge for so many of us to “get” Christmas, because we like to think we’ve got it all together, that we live right at the center of things. It’s hard for us to imagine what living on the edge is all about.

*(continued on page 2)*



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706-543-6077 (office)  
706-543-6199 (fax)  
[www.gotofriendship.org](http://www.gotofriendship.org)

Sunday Worship @ 11:00 a.m.  
ONLINE  
[www.GoToFriendship.org](http://www.GoToFriendship.org)

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





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But that's where this year might be different, after the year that was 2020. Every year Oxford Dictionary names a "word of the year" to capture the essence of a year gone by. But for 2020, they just gave up. They described 2020 as "a year which cannot be neatly accommodated in one single word." Now there's an understatement! And so, they gave a whole list of words that have now become second nature to us. Words like *pandemic* and *lockdown* and *shelter-in-place*, and *furloughs* and *Zoom* and "*herd immunity*." So many disorienting words for a disorienting year.

2020 has pushed many of us to the edges, where we are unsettled, insecure, keenly aware that we're not in control, where anxiety and uncertainty and grief seem thick in the air. Maybe the good news is, it's *there*, right there, on the edges, where Christmas happened. It's *there* where the light shines. It's *there* – here on the edges – where God meets us.

My friends, this the gospel. This is what we confess and hold fast to in the midst of life's messiness and uncertainty. This is the truth that sets us free to walk into a new year with gratitude, compassion, and hope. May we do so with gladness and courage – to the glory of God!

Grateful to be on the Journey with You,  
Tom Buchanan  
Pastor



## Session Notes

Submitted by Leanne Vaeth, Clerk

- Session approved the appointment of Judy Hibbs as Treasurer to replace Marks Towles who is completing his term at the end of the year.
- Session received the recommendation of the Nominating Committee of a candidate to serve as elder for the class of 2023.
- The preschool is at full enrollment and continues to generate a budget surplus. Pledged giving for 2020 is forecasted to end slightly above ninety percent of expected income. The draft budget for 2021 is being updated accordingly.
- Members provided weekly visits and cookie deliveries during Advent as part of "Caroling with Cookies". The outreach effort is part of the church's goal of connecting with members who have limited opportunities to leave their homes during the pandemic.
- An analysis of the online tool used for receiving donations was conducted. The findings show that the tool is generating new sources of donations and that church members usually offset the service fee by adding it to their donation. Session agreed to the continued use of the tool.
- Attendance continues to grow during live programming offered online including Forum@Friendship and Tuesday Morning Bible Study. Programs posted online also show increasing viewership on YouTube and Facebook. A video introducing Friendship Presbyterian Church to residents of Presbyterian Homes of Georgia is being developed.



### Sunday Morning Coffee & Fellowship and Tuesday Morning Bible Study

On Sunday mornings at 9:30 AM, we gather online on Zoom, for fellowship and conversation on the scriptures being read in online worship for the day! Tuesday morning Bible study on Zoom also continues each week at 10:30 AM. If you would like to join in either or both of these opportunities, please send an email to [PastorTom@GoToFriendship.org](mailto:PastorTom@GoToFriendship.org) ... and you'll be added to the Zoom invitation lists each week.





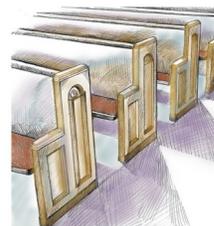
Worship continues each Sunday – completely online! ***If you are on our church e-mail list, you will now receive an email in your inbox early on Sunday morning with a direct link to the worship service!*** Or, if you wish, you can still simply go to our web site [GoToFriendship.org](http://GoToFriendship.org) and scroll down for the graphic link to it. An archive of past worship service videos and printed sermons are available from the “Sermons and Newsletters” page of our web site.



### Midweek Devotional

Join us on the church Facebook page each Wednesday at 12 noon ... [www.Facebook.com/FriendshipPresbyterianChurch](http://www.Facebook.com/FriendshipPresbyterianChurch) or just link to Facebook from our web site [GoToFriendship.org](http://GoToFriendship.org) ... for a live-streamed Midweek Devotional, with scripture, encouragement, and prayer. If you miss it live, you can always catch it later by going to the Facebook page. ***Please note that you do NOT need to have a Facebook account to view the Midweek Devotion.***

The Sanctuary is available - by appointment for 30 minute increments - on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday between 9:00 AM and 1:30 PM for prayer and meditation. Please contact Donna if you would like to make such an appointment.



Pray in the Sanctuary



- Frances Wilson
- Libby Rice
- Jane Towles
- Rosemary Salter
- Rhenn Priep
- Elizabeth Broomfield
- Lydia Hood (daughter of Marks and Jane Towles)
- Desmond Goergen (great grandson of Bev Davis)
- Nancy Adams (Sarah Bennett's niece - cancer)
- Jennifer Mitchell

If you have any updates or additional prayer requests, please notify an Elder or the Church Office.



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 Pastor Tom directly: [PastorTom@GoToFriendship.org](mailto:PastorTom@GoToFriendship.org) or by phone, 404-729-2144.



 **Preschool  
News**   
by: Susanne Hayes 



The school was buzzing with excitement from the Christmas season.

It is always a wonderful & magical time of year.

Wishing everyone joy, peace and hope for the year ahead.

Merry Christmas!

Friendship Preschool Teachers & Staff



## Scouting at Friendship

By: Scoutmaster Paul Matthews

Happy new year! Troop 149 is looking forward to a great 2021, and we'll be kicking it off in January with a couple of troop activities, including a service project the first weekend of the month at Friendship, helping with the Stancil garden area. We are also undertaking a new fundraiser, a pick-up service for taking old Christmas trees to be "recycled" in exchange for a donation. And, later in the month, we'll be using the long MLK weekend to travel to south Georgia, for a trip canoeing at the Okefenokee Swamp!

In December, several of our activities ended up not being able to take place (including the planned Pancake Breakfast fundraiser, and the end-of-school "lock in"). However, we did have a day-activity of "pumpkin chunkin" in the field south of the church, in which our Scouts (as well as four of the 5<sup>th</sup> Grade "Arrow of Light" Cub Scouts from Pack 149) worked on lashing together catapult/slingshots to launch tennis balls (and also some small pumpkins!) at cardboard-box targets. As usual, that proved to be a fun day. We also held a "make-up" swim check at the YMCA for a couple of the Scouts and adults who needed it still to qualify for the Okefenokee canoeing trip. Ethan Smith also led Scouts and adults in enhancing the sign areas at both entrances of the church, as an Eagle Scout service project.

Although we took a break from our weekly meetings for the final two Mondays of December, earlier in the month we focused on merit badges including Family Life, Scouting Heritage, Personal Management, and Aviation, as well as drug/alcohol prevention education, pioneering lashing, and first aid. We have also opened the sign-up window for those interested in a two-week backpacking trek to Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico, in June 2022!

The Pack has continued to have some activities for its Cub Scouts, though attendance and level of activity have also been impacted. They are also hoping for an uptick in 2021.

As always, thanks for your continued support of the Troop and Pack!



Pumpkin chunkin after firing



Pumpkin chunkin making targets



Pumpkin chunkin firing



Pumpkin chunkin lashing



A big “Thank You” to Ethan Smith for refurbishing the signage for Friendship Presbyterian Church. Ethan is a Boy Scout in Troop 149 and this was his service project.





<b>Giving in December</b>				
	Week of Dec 6	Week of Dec 13	Week of Dec 20	Week of Dec 27
General Giving	\$13,594.00	\$2,418.80	\$402.00	\$900.00

<b>Friendship Presbyterian Church</b>	
<b>Year-To-Date Through November 2020</b>	
Selected Assets and Liabilities	
Cash in Bank -- General Fund	\$27,409.27
Cash in Bank --Restricted Fund	<u>13,200.51</u>
Total Cash in Bank	\$40,609.78
Restricted Educational Funds	
	\$12,954.05
Savings -- New Covenant Securities	
	\$54,098.06
Income Statement Summary	
Receipts from Congregation	\$7,946.80
Dye House Rent	874.00
Support from Preschool	2,960.75
All Other Income	<u>3.96</u>
Total Receipts	<u>\$11,785.51</u>
Administration Expenses	
	\$2,446.83
Personnel Expenses	12,511.87
Membership Development & Care Expenses	0.00
Discipleship/CE	0.00
Mission/Bldg & Grounds Expenses	0.00
Worship Expenses	<u>3,985.39</u>
Total Operating Expenses	<u>\$18,944.09</u>
Net Income / (Deficit)	
	(\$7,158.58)



**Giving  
to the  
Church**

Online giving is available on our web site! This is an easy, safe, and secure way to make donations to the church, without having to go to the trouble of writing and mailing a check. Simply go to our web site [GoToFriendship.org](http://GoToFriendship.org) and scroll to the bottom and click on **Give Now**. Doing so will take you to a secure portal where you will be asked to create a simple profile, and then allow you to make donations through your bank account or debit or credit card!



# JANUARY 2021

Names in red-birthdays  
Names in green-anniversaries

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>27</b> 9:30 AM Sunday Morning Coffee & Fellowship - via ZOOM 11:00 AM Worship Service-ONLINE	<b>28</b> Church Office Closed Preschool Holiday Break	<b>29</b> Church Office Closed <i>Holly Ivy</i> Preschool Holiday Break	<b>30</b> Church Office Closed Preschool Holiday Break	<b>31</b> Church Office Closed Preschool Holiday Break	<b>1</b> Church Office Closed Preschool Holiday Break	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b> 9:30 AM Sunday Morning Coffee & Fellowship - via ZOOM 11:00 AM Worship Service-ONLINE	<b>4</b> Preschool Holiday Break 9:00 AM Open Sanctuary - by appointment only 7:00 PM Boy Scout Troop 149	<b>5</b> Preschool Holiday Break Preschool Parent/Teacher Conferences 9:00 AM Open Sanctuary - by appointment only 10:30 AM Adult Bible Study - via ZOOM	<b>6</b> 9:00 AM Open Sanctuary - by appointment only 10:00 AM Preschool Chapel 12:00 PM Midweek Devotion (live-streamed)	<b>7</b> 6:00 PM Den Meeting	<b>8</b> Church Office Closed <i>Kevin Kelly</i>	<b>9</b>
<b>10</b> 9:30 AM Sunday Morning Coffee & Fellowship - via ZOOM 11:00 AM Worship Service-ONLINE	<b>11</b> 9:00 AM Open Sanctuary - by appointment only 7:00 PM Boy Scout Troop 149	<b>12</b> 9:00 AM Open Sanctuary - by appointment only 10:00 AM Preschool Chapel 10:30 AM Adult Bible Study - via ZOOM	<b>13</b> 9:00 AM Open Sanctuary - by appointment only 10:00 AM Preschool Chapel 12:00 PM Midweek Devotion (live-streamed) 12:30 PM Preschool Open House	<b>14</b> <i>Alan &amp; Suzanne White</i> <i>Charles Kauderer</i> <i>Wendy Arthur</i>	<b>15</b> Church Office Closed	<b>16</b> <i>Martha Courie</i>
<b>17</b> 9:30 AM Sunday Morning Coffee & Fellowship - via ZOOM 11:00 AM Worship Service-ONLINE	<b>18</b> Church Office/Preschool Closed 7:00 PM Boy Scout Troop 149	<b>19</b> 9:00 AM Open Sanctuary - by appointment only 10:00 AM Preschool Chapel 10:30 AM Adult Bible Study - via ZOOM	<b>20</b> 9:00 AM Open Sanctuary - by appointment only 10:00 AM Preschool Chapel 12:00 PM Midweek Devotion (live-streamed)	<b>21</b> 7:00 PM Pack Meeting	<b>22</b> <i>Carolyn Sloan</i> Church Office Closed	<b>23</b>
<b>24</b> 9:30 AM Sunday Morning Coffee & Fellowship - via ZOOM 11:00 AM Worship Service-ONLINE 12:00 PM Stated Session Meeting via ZOOM	<b>25</b> 9:00 AM Open Sanctuary - by appointment only 7:00 PM Boy Scout Troop 149	<b>26</b> 9:00 AM Open Sanctuary - by appointment only 10:00 AM Preschool Chapel 10:30 AM Adult Bible Study - via ZOOM	<b>27</b> 9:00 AM Open Sanctuary - by appointment only 10:00 AM Preschool Chapel 12:00 PM Midweek Devotion (live-streamed)	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> Church Office Closed	<b>30</b>
<b>31</b> <i>Henry Hibbs</i> <i>Jane Towles</i> <i>Lizbet Adams</i> 9:30 AM Sunday Morning Coffee & Fellowship - via ZOOM 11:00 AM Worship Service-ONLINE	<b>1</b> 9:00 AM Open Sanctuary - by appointment only 7:00 PM Boy Scout Troop 149	<b>2</b> <i>Betsy Lange</i> 9:00 AM Open Sanctuary - by appointment only 10:00 AM Preschool Chapel 10:30 AM Adult Bible Study - via ZOOM	<b>3</b> 8:00 AM Preschool Staff Meeting 9:00 AM Open Sanctuary - by appointment only 10:00 AM Preschool Chapel 12:00 PM Midweek Devotion (live-streamed)	<b>4</b> 6:00 PM Den Meeting	<b>5</b> Church Office Closed	<b>6</b>



Please submit news for February's Newsletter to the church office no later than **Sunday, January 24, 2021.** Due to office schedule submissions after this date may not appear in next month's newsletter. All submissions are subject to editing.

**CHRISTMAS TREE PICKUP FUNDRAISER**

ONLY  
**\$10**

Our Scouts will come pick up your Christmas Tree & Take The Tree To Be Part of "One for the Chipper"

Go to our website, [Troop149OconeeGA.org](http://Troop149OconeeGA.org)  
Make the Payment  
Enter your Address  
Leave the Tree on The Curb By 10am Jan 3rd and Our Scouts Will Come Do The Rest!

1. Order Online  
2. Pay Online

SIGNUP & PAY AT [Troop149OconeeGA.org](http://Troop149OconeeGA.org) **SUNDAY Jan. 3rd** 100% of Donations GO TO THE SCOUTS!

Questions? Email: [lvaeth48@gmail.com](mailto:lvaeth48@gmail.com)

**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  
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