



Friendship United Methodist Church

December 2021

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Friendship Store
Manager~Terry Hodge

Good Morning! I hope that you are all doing well! Are you ready yet? Is your tree up? Have you hung the Christmas lights? Have you started wrapping presents? Have you even begun to buy Christmas presents yet? Are you overwhelmed yet? I hope that you are not! I hope that you are just as excited about Christmas as I am! I am hoping for a great celebration of hope this year! We have so much planned for this Advent; I hope that you will take time to enjoy it! These past three years have not been easy for our community. Moving from recovery to facing a pandemic has not provided a climate of celebration for many people. With everything going on in our lives, all the busyness that surrounds us and the chaos that seems to swirl, it can sometimes be hard to see hope. The truth is that hope is always present! Hope is never absent! Hope is the reason that we are celebrating! Hope is the reason that we can preserve through all that we are facing!

Below are the lyrics of a song that I believe is a beautiful reminder to us all about our real and true hope found in Jesus.

Hope Is Born This Night

Tonight, I can see a star shine. And its splendor fills up the sky. It's the same that appeared. And the wisemen revered. When Hope was born this night.

Out upon the snowy fields. There's a silent peace that heals. And it echoes the grace. Of our Savior's embrace. Because Hope was born this night.

Glory to God in the highest. Peace on earth, Goodwill to men. Let all of the world. Sing the chorus of joy. Because Hope was born this night.

I can hear the Christmas bells ringing. As softly a church choir sings. It's the song used to praise. The ancient of days. When Hope was born this night.

There are angels in this place. And my heart resounds in the praise. Like a shepherd so scared. I'll rejoice and declare. That Hope was born this night.

Glory to God in the highest. Peace on earth. Goodwill to men. Let all of the world. Sing the chorus of joy. Because Hope was born this night.

"Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.

Luke 2:10

Nate

FRIENDSHIP UMC
US 84 and Woolfork Ave.
Donalsonville, GA 39845

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If only ...

There are many of you ... who think to yourselves: "If only I had been there! How quick I would have been to help the Baby! I would have washed his linen. How happy I would have been to go with the shepherds to see the Lord lying in the manger!"

Yes, you would! You say that because you know how great Christ is, but if you had been there at that time, you would have done no better than the people of Bethlehem. ... Why don't you do it now? You have Christ in your neighbor. You ought to serve him, for what you do to your neighbor in need you do to the Lord Christ himself.

—Martin Luther

A season of waiting

Our oven recently bit the dust, and the needed replacement part is no longer manufactured. Due to an appliance shortage, we had to wait eight weeks for a new oven! Yet even amid inconvenience, I see God's purpose. We were thankful to have a grill and slow cookers in the meantime. We creatively attempted to cook favorite meals in different ways. And though we craved anything baked in an oven — cookies, casseroles, even chicken nuggets — we realized that waiting eight weeks for an oven isn't truly a trying time.

Many of us wait for much greater milestones and miracles: physical healing, the return of a prodigal child, an end to financial struggles. Paul offers us hope as we wait: "May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had" (Romans 15:5, NIV).

When you're in a season of waiting — including Advent! — consider what you're thankful for and what you crave. Tell God how you're feeling and ask for endurance while you wait.

—Janna Firestone

A message from Kimberly

We're back and refreshed from our Youth Retreat at Jekyll Island and now we are ready to jump right on into the Christmas festivities! We have a ton of exciting things going on in the youth program this month. December 2nd, we will be decorating and hosting a float in the town's annual Christmas parade! Make sure you come on out and celebrate with your family at 6pm, we've got a ton of kids that will not only be on our float, but kids who will be representing our Church by participating in school sports and other organizations in the parade. On December 5th, we are decking out the Church van and heading to Bainbridge for a night full of worship, Christmas pj's (or other Christmas themed attire), Christmas lights, and hot chocolate. If you haven't gotten a chance to stop by and see the Christmas trees out on Woolfork, make sure you swing by and take a look! The youth in our Church absolutely love sports and talk about sports constantly, so we went with a sports theme this year! No matter where we come from or what team we root for on Saturdays, we're all on Team Jesus! Mark your calendars because on December 15th we are having our Children's Christmas Program here at the Church from 6-7pm. This is such an exciting time of year, but between all the hustle and bustle, we can sometimes forget to stop and enjoy the moment with our families and remember the true meaning of Christmas. Parents, here is a prayer you can pray for your child this month: "God, sometimes this world doesn't offer a lot of hope. Help my child to know that they can always trust in You to provide hope when things seem dark."



Christmas Parade



December 2nd at 6pm

Downtown Donalsonville, GA

SEASON OF SPREADING HOPE

In the spirit of Hope, I would encourage you all to try to be Jesus this year to someone who may have lost hope. It may be a friend who has lost someone close to them, a coworker who lives alone and thinks Christmas just reminds him or her how lonely they are when they see others celebrating, or a less fortunate family that can't afford to have much of a Christmas because they just need to keep the power on and put food on the table. If you look around and pay attention, you are in a unique position to bring hope to someone that has lost it for any number of reasons. Not sure what to do? Keep checking on the friend that lost someone. If you don't feel like going to the trouble, that's when you should definitely show up. Go hang out with the lonely coworker outside of work and see how you can help them get involved in something, so they don't feel alone. Bring your lonely friends to church with no more than a desire to see them not be lonely, God will absolutely honor that. If you know somebody that is struggling and doesn't get to normally celebrate Christmas, help them with it. Take some out of your own Christmas fund and get them some gifts to put under the tree. People lose hope because life can be cruel. We get the opportunity to restore their hope that the future could be brighter than they expect. So, keep your eyes open and don't let those within our periphery that have been marginalized by the world go another day without hope. Don't forget to mark your calendars for Simple Night of Hope on December 12th at 6:00 PM. Please plan to join us. Have a good week and we hope to see you on Sunday.

Jeremiah 29:11 For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

God Bless...Michael



02-Bella Pumphrey	17-Brody Rogerson
04-Sloane Kelley	18-Addie Capuson
08-Luke Williams	18-Drew Godwin
10-Beverly Carr	18-Whitney Jones
11-Chris Thompson	19-Shannon Reynolds
12-Royce Cannington	20-Erica Lehman
12-Leigh Fain	21-Bill Rogers
12-Van Dennis	21-Ed Rogers
13-Dona Burke	22-Gary Cunningham
13-Stephen Drake	23-Sheryl Cannington
14-India Jernigan	23-Jason Dick
14-Michelle Pumphrey	24-Kirby Lane
14-Cleve Bridges	25-Jimmy Drake
14-Waylon Lehman	25-Drew Atkinson
14-Emily B Kitchens	25-Joshua Ross
15-Charlee Davis	26-Bill Burke
15-Verna Dennis	28-John Wurst
16-Mary Kate Kelley	28-Kaitlyn Ross
17-Anne Trawick	29-Madison Warriner



Kenny and Gina King	December 14, 1986
Mike and Beverly Carr	December 15, 1972
Beau and Erin Cannington	December 15, 2001
Billy and Meredith Shingler	December 17, 2016
Fred and Joyce Brackin	December 18, 1949
Mikey and Sarah Hampton	December 19, 1987
Jeffrey and Jennifer Ross	December 19, 2009
Tommy and Rachel Holloman	December 20, 2003
Will and Sara Grace Cunningham	December 20, 2019
Thomas and Alexa Vines	December 21, 2018
Dave and Leigh Fain	December 27, 2003

Oh, I can hear the melody now, can't you?... "it's the most wonderful time of the year"... The town is bustling, and decorations adorn each lamp post. Classic commercials are being aired, and Hallmark is counting it down, running Christmas specials throughout the day. Yes, it's festive indeed!

Yet not all of us are always feeling that "wonderful." There are countless reasons why the holidays evoke a feeling of hopelessness. But as a child of God, we can always find hope. I love that "hope" is this year's theme for Advent. A Christian's hope isn't an escape or wishful thinking, as C.S. Lewis says, but something a Christian is meant to do. We have hope in eternal life, which means that we can attack today with a renewed vigor and strength.

Lots of opportunities to celebrate hope this season at FUMC, starting with the Simple Night of Hope at the shed on Sunday, Dec. 12, at 6 PM. Also, be sure to come and see the YWA and children's play, "Glory to God in the Lowest" on Wednesday, Dec. 15 at 6 PM. We will have a dress rehearsal that same day, December 12 at 4:30 PM. Kids will remain at church. A reception will be held in their honor, immediately following the program, and I can't think of a better way to begin "Christmas week" by listening to our wonderful chancel choir perform this year's cantata on Sunday, Dec. 19th. As Paul writes to the Romans in Chapter 15, verse 13: "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit, you may abound in hope."

In His Love,
Maribeth

A NOTE FROM GENE

Ok! Stop! Look around you! "It is beginning to look a lot like Christmas, everywhere we go"..... well, almost everywhere we go. We look around for beautiful lights as we hear music playing and carolers singing in the snow. What? Where's the snow? We are busy looking for that gift that seems just right for special people in our hearts. Some send Christmas cards depicting Mary, Joseph, the baby Jesus, shepherds, farm animals and the three wise men. But wait, sometimes we get so caught up in giving gifts that we forget the real gift. What about the gift of love? Is there someone that we need to offer the gift of love? Is there anyone that you might know who could use a gift of joy? Do an act of kindness for someone to bring a little joy into their life. Recently the choir had a rehearsal after church. One of our choir members made homemade soup, cornbread, baked cookies, and tea for us, thus spreading joy throughout the choir. What gifts might we bring to Jesus this Christmas? The wise men offered Jesus gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. We can't give Jesus these kinds of gifts, but we can give Him the greatest gift the wise men offered: The gift of worship. "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We have come to worship him" (Matthew 2:2) Whether we kneel with heads bowed low or sing with heads held high, we declare that He alone is worthy of praise. December 19, we will sing our Christmas music. We will worship our Christ, the Lord. He will offer peace, joy, and hope!

KIDZ CLUB



The preschool kids will be learning about the Christmas story through the alphabet. "A" is for angel, "J" is for Jesus and "W" is for wise men. The bottom line is God gave us Jesus. Basic truth is God loves me. The memory verse is "God has given a son to us."

Isaiah 9:6

The theme for the elementary kids is Light show. The monthly life app is Celebrating Jesus, God's greatest gift. The Basic truth is I can trust God no matter what. The Bible verse is "God so loved the world that He gave His one and only son. Anyone who believes in Him will not die but will have eternal life." John 3:16



December 1st 6:00-Christmas tree lighting and rehearsal for the play after the lighting.

- The children will have a tree; you are not going to want to miss this

December 2nd 5:15- Christmas parade

If you are interested in helping us with our float please see Erica or Kimberly. We also need people to ride on the float. **Be at line up at 5:15 (beside the school board office)**

December 5th 4:00- Movie and hot chocolate night. Wear Christmas pajamas and we will be watching The Star in the movie room. This will be for **ALL children preschool and elementary.**

December 8th 6:00- play rehearsal

December 15th- Christmas play (Dress rehearsal before and play at 6:00) and cookies with Santa afterwards in the social hall

December 22nd- Youth and children Christmas caroling