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## 2021 Pastor's Report

by Pastor K. Anna Shin

*"As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, to everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to Abba God through him."*  
Colossians 3:12-17 (NRSV)

2021 has been an incredible year for me to witness the companionship with God as the Friendship Church leaders have united in spirit and truth to navigate in such an unprecedented time in history over the almost two years to build up the church. As the world has begun to reopen as more people got vaccinated, Friendship has followed the Center for Disease Control guideline in every possible way to keep the building and the people in it safe and healthy while committed to carrying out our missional goals: **spiritual growth, getting connected to the needs of**

### the surrounding communities and strengthening the leadership.

The resilient spirit of the congregation and the adaptability of the leaders in such a time of transition have been inspiring and critically essential features of a healthy congregation. That is what I have witnessed.

Through the unexpected much-shortened life of the Council leader, Deji Sanyaolu, we've experienced the importance of the community and learned that God's grace has been present even during such a painful loss in the life of this congregation. Several leaders gradually filled the gap that Deji left behind. I am incredibly grateful to Leonard Jones, Carolyn Jones, Carolyn Weber, Jane Pierce, and Reanna Tyree. As a new council chair, Reanna has been a fresh air and brought us a new level of commitment as followers of Christ.

2021 has been a year of transition. I have witnessed that when one door closes, another opens. After Kim Bailey, who served as Office Manager for the last seven years, left for a full-time job at the end of July, seven people took turns taking the front post of our congregation Monday through Friday for August and September. (Continued Page 2)

# Friendship United Methodist Church

## The Link December 2021

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Join Us Sundays  
for Worship  
In Person and Online  
at 10AM

## 2021 Pastor's Report (Continued from Page 1)

I want to acknowledge their spirit of volunteerism: Carolyn Weber, Marcia Devgun, Susan Varno, Amania Drane, Susan Higginbotham, Muffy Paquette, and Jane Pierce.

While preparing ourselves for a new school year, the leaders have concurred that the time has come to reconfigure our current staff to be a faithful steward of financial resources. First, we would like to keep our financial commitment to our Northern Illinois Conference by giving 100% of the apportionment we haven't held for many years. Second, we want to prepare ourselves for a new online era in ministry.

In October, we welcome **Pat Prins**, who has served as a building manager for many years, switches to serve as **the Director of Administrative Services and Facilities**, the primary office staff. In addition, we welcome **Patti Cash**, marketing consultant, as **the Communication Director**, and **Daniel Chavez as Projectionist** for the worship. Finally, as the contract with Jim Molina, who helped the praise band for the last nine months (thanks for the trio, Wayne Fetters, Ann Natalie, and Dave Lichty) while holding his position as music director at the First Congregational Church in Elmhurst, came to an end in September, we could find a new music staff, **Stephen Rawson**. He will be a tremendous blessing to our worship as an

**Accompanist and a Music Director** who oversees the music ministry.

I want to recognize the hard work of the chairperson of the Staff-Parish Relations Committee, Leonard Jones, behind all these staff changes. We could build an excellent staff team with his consistent presence, support, and commitment for the best.

These are some of the highlights of 2021:

- **Live streaming of Sunday morning worship service:** We had to wean from Zoom that we all fell in love for almost sixteen months during the pandemic to provide high-quality live streaming of Sunday worship. With the dedicated production and projection team under the leadership of Donna McWilliams and Larry Hilb, we started livestreaming of worship via Facebook and YouTube. We count about 35-45 regularly attending in-person worship, 20-25 on Facebook, and a few on YouTube.
- **Leading the prayer in public:** It has been a great blessing to have a team of prayers for Sunday worship. Patricia Michalik, a certified Lay Servant in our District, offered the workshop to equip them.
- **Young People's Ministry:** Dave Lichty is a newly found storyteller for the Children's message. He will continue to record the Children's message for the first Sunday of each month. We opened in-person Sunday school in September. We hope more

children come to the church on Sunday as the vaccination for COVID starts to roll out for that age group.

- **Website and Social Media:** Phil Waters, the nephew of Mike and Theresa Donahue, has offered his professional expertise to improve our web and social media presence. His outstanding presentation helped us understand a new world of social media to connect to young generations and the 'spiritual but not religious.'

Lastly, I am thrilled and tremendously grateful to Leonard Jones, Carolyn Jones, Mike Dewitt, Richard Guzman, Amania Drane, and Jane Pierce, who have helped me apply for the 2021 National Clergy Renewal Program last April. Friendship UMC is one of 156 congregations across the United States selected to receive this competitive grant program, which is funded by Lilly Endowment Inc. and administered by Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis. I am looking forward to sharing my renewal plan with you in detail at the beginning of the new year.

May God, who knows our needs before we ask, continue to lead us into a new season of faithfulness and fruitfulness in God's kingdom work.

~ Pastor K. Anna Shin



# Join Us This Advent Season

As we enter the Advent season, how can our churches become houses where the Holy will be born anew offering respite, sustenance, and care, opening the doors ever wider to those seeking shelter from the challenges of life? That is what we are going to ask this season: "Housing the Holy."

The pandemic had laid bare economic and emotional difficulties. No *one* church can do it all, but each can do something. No one person can do it, but each can do *something* to make someone's life better one day at a time. We can offer the Light of Hope by being welcoming to all. May this light shine in our hearts, in our lives, and in our community, and lead to greater hospitality.

As we study the biblical prophets that call us to care for our neighbors and "make room in the inn," the lonely and frightened spaces within us are filled with the Light of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love. With Scripture, song and word, each week we at Friendship Church will await the coming of the Christ Child.

November 28: Making Room

December 5: A Place at the Table

December 12: How Much is Enough?

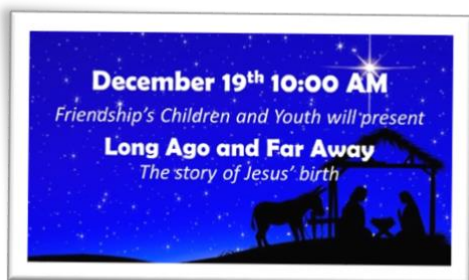
December 19: Children's program: "Long Ago and Far Away"

December 24: Christmas Eve, 7PM "The Inn"

December 26: "Dwelling" Richard Guzman, preacher



# Celebrate the **JOY** of the Season



## Children's Program - Long Ago and Far Away

Sunday, December 19 at 10AM

Everyone is welcome to FUMC's Children's Christmas Program featuring the Christmas story of the birth of Jesus told by the Friendship Choralier Choir of children and youth. All ages will enjoy this performance during the worship service with Michelle Braxton as accompanist.



## Blue Christmas Service

Sunday, December 19 at 5PM

Come and join us....

We have undergone unprecedented loss almost two years. Family and friends have succumbed to death in this pandemic, millions have lost economic security through loss of jobs, some have lost businesses they built over a lifetime. Most of us have lost our beloved rhythms of life that felt familiar and gave our lives the richness of gatherings and adventure. And we can name so many losses related to hatred and violence.

In this season of Advent and Christmas, however, our faith story invites us to reclaim our life in hope, love, joy, and peace because God is with us. God came and dwelt among us in the midst of hardship. It has become a tradition among Christian churches to hold a "Blue Christmas" or "Longest Night" service to acknowledge the loss and name them. Naming is powerful. It gives voice otherwise hidden, ignored, avoided. It is important to name our loss and pain when hope, love, joy, and peace are distant feelings.

The anticipation of renewed grief as Christmas Eve approaches can be difficult to bear for many. Ritual helps us move through these feelings and funnel our heartbreak in ways that, while not alleviating it totally, gives space for a tangible remembering. This will be especially important in 2020 because we often were not able to gather and ritualize our loss in the ways we usually do.



## Christmas Eve Service

Friday, December 24 at 7PM

Worship with us this Christmas Eve at 7PM. Please join us in the sanctuary if you can or watch us online here. All through the season of Advent as we prepared for Christmas, we've been exploring how we can "make more room in the inn," becoming more hospitable to the needs of our community. On this Christmas Eve, we declare that The Inn is open for the business of compassion with room enough for all! The long-awaited Messiah has been born and on him the light shines. We have only to open the doors of our lives and say "welcome." Our Advent journey has led us to this moment when the light shining through the closed doors in life becomes an open door to new possibilities, new relationships.

## DIY Devotionals

Did you ever consider that YOU are a "House for the Holy?" That's right. Your life—your very being—is a place where hope, peace, joy, and love are housed. At Christmas, we remember that Jesus was born into a simple stable because there was no room in The Inn. So, no matter how simple you believe yourself, or your home, or your life to be, you are a container for the Holy, a place where Divine Light can shine into the dark corners of this world. You are sacred. You are worthy. You belong. We hope this little booklet of

weekly devotionals will open the doors of your heart, mind, and soul, and offer you hope, peace, joy, and love. You can use it on your own, you can share it with your family. You can read it all at once or spread it out over weeks.

These devotionals are based on our weekly worship. Even if you are coming to the sanctuary for Sunday worship each week, use this booklet to deepen your reflections during the week. And if you can't come to worship one or more weeks, you'll be able to use this to light your own Advent candles at home and enter into the story of God's welcome no matter 'when' or 'where!'



Click the image for a printable copy of the Devotional or pick up a copy at church on the information table

# Upcoming Events and Mission Opportunities

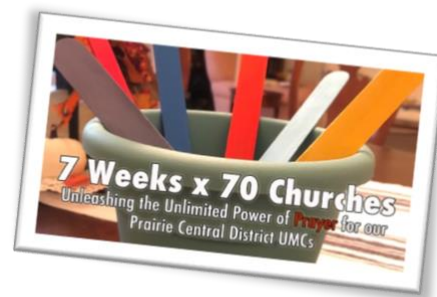
## 7 Weeks x 7 Churches

Unleashing the Unlimited Power of Prayer for our Prairie Central District. Each week, we will pray for a church in the Prairie Central District. Additional information is available on the information table.

December 5 – Federated Church of Wauconda

December 12 – Wheaton: Aldersgate

December 19 – Bolingbrook: Friendship



## UMW Gift Card Mission

Friendship's UMW is collecting funds to purchase gift cards for homeless Valley View students and their families for both Thanksgiving and Christmas. Please leave your check (payable to Friendship UMW) or cash in the box on the Information Station. You may also use Zelle for your donation. Instructions are on the table. Thank you for your generosity!

## Special Charge Conference

On Sunday, December 5 at 11:10AM, a Special Charge Conference will be held to vote on the reorganization plan of the Boy Scouts of America.

## The Christmas Giving Tree

Friendship's annual Christmas Giving Tree will be up again this year. We will be collecting gifts online, through SignUp Genius, as we did last year. Follow the directions given, click on a gift and click Submit to sign up. Drop off the bagged gifts, clearly marked with the student number at Church during office hours or on Sundays. This is a safe, secure site used by schools everywhere! There will also be a few tags on the tree at the Welcome Station, for those that do not have access to a computer. Happy Holidays!

[Click here to sign up for a gift using SignUp Genius](#)



## J.E.D.I. (Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion)

1st Thursday of the month at 7PM. We seek to help our church become the Beloved Community by doing justice, seeking fairness, embracing diversity and inclusion, and growing closer to God and each other.

## Daybreak, Joliet

3rd Friday to Saturday of the month. Join us in serving Friday dinner and Saturday breakfast. [Email Richard Guzman](#) for questions, donations, and serving.



## Micro Pantry

24/7, at the North entrance, with the spirit of "Take what you need, leave what you can," neighbors helping neighbors ministry started in 2020.

## Sunday School

Children's Sunday School is available during worship except on the first Sunday of the month when we encourage families to worship together.

## 90-Day Challenge for Reading the New Testament – November 1 to January 29

Take the challenge and join one of these groups. An “in-person” group meets Sundays in the youth room, 9:15 – 9:45 am. There is also a Zoom session every Sunday at 9:15 – 9:45 am. (Meeting ID – 757-2049-9847 passcode – MwCrF4) You can also pick up a schedule on the information table.

### Children’s Mitten Tree

Our 2021 Mitten tree will again include donations of new warm winter children and youth sized mittens, gloves, scarves, hats, and socks. Please, place your donations around the tree in the front hallway **by December 19**. These warm winter items will go to needy children at several local Valley View School District elementary schools. Some will be placed in our church micro pantry. Let’s help keep our neighborhood children and youth nice and warm during the upcoming cold days of winter! Thanks to all for your generous donations!



### United Methodist Women

#### The UMCOR Coffee Project through Equal Exchange

UMW will again sell Equal Exchange fair trade coffee, tea, chocolate, and more! Stop by our UMW table on Sunday morning after the worship service or stop by the church office during the week and purchase your favorite products!! Instead of buying your coffee, tea, chocolate products and more at your grocery store, buy them at church and support small scale farmers in Latin America, Africa, Asia, and the U.S. so they can build a better future for their families!



In addition, for each pound of coffee, tea or chocolate purchased through the project, Equal Exchange contributes to UMCOR programs that support community-based cooperatives in coffee growing regions. 100% of Equal Exchange’s coffee, tea, and chocolate products are fairly traded. So, buy these also delicious products at Friendship Church and join many other United Methodist congregations who support The UMCOR Coffee Project by selling top quality Equal Exchange products to make this world a better place for all of us!

## Get to Know Friendship UMC’s New Staff Members

### Daniel Chavez, Projectionist

Daniel Chavez’s current duties include operating the sound system for Friendship Church services, setting up the cameras, editing, reviewing, and projecting the messages, prayers, Bible verses, and hymn lyrics on the wall screens. He also projects the words for praise band rehearsals.

Two years ago, he was questioning whether to go back to church. At Friendship, he found what he was looking for. Soon after, he began volunteering with Larry Hilb on Sunday mornings.

Born in Texas, Daniel’s family moved to Cicero, Illinois, when he was five. Later his family rented a house in Clarendon Hills. Then they bought a house in Downers Grove where he lives now.

In 2018, he graduated from North Central College in Naperville with a Bachelor of Arts in Communications and a minor in Computer Science. After graduation, he passed the Comp TIA A+ exam and was awarded a certificate in technical troubleshooting. The skills he learned qualified him for his current job as a tech aid at a Darien elementary school in District 61. He is also in charge of the District’s audio and video for their live streaming concerts.

In his spare time, Daniel likes to read non-fiction. He’s currently reading *The Irresistible Revolution* by Shane Claiborne, which he describes as a mix of scripture and Shane’s experiences. The author’s focus is to redefine what it means to follow Jesus.

Asked what he’d like to have happen at FUMC, Daniel said, “I would like to see at Friendship Church a new sound board. The one we have was good enough until we

started live streaming, and I noticed that it has limitations.”



## Pat Prins, Director of Administrative Services and Facilities



“We have been members here at Friendship for many years,” Pat said. “Our three children grew up in the church. We first came to Friendship Church for our children. Everyone was so friendly starting with when we first came through the doors.” She added, “We are an outdoorsy family. We like to camp. At one time, all our children would do that. Now it’s just one of them.”

Pat began working for Friendship Church so long ago she doesn’t remember when she started, but it was more than ten years ago. During that time, she’s been the Building Manager. This includes supervising the janitor, making sure rooms are scheduled and cleaned for various activities, rentals, complying with the inspections required by the Village of Bolingbrook, and more.

“I make sure when people come on Sunday everything is good. It takes a lot of time to be sure we have heat and air conditioning.”

Added to those responsibilities, her new duties include running the office, doing

printing, mailings, and whatever else is needed. Now with her duties combined as Director of Administrative Services and Facilities, her hours are fewer, and her duties are more. “My hours are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. I’ve also been the church Treasurer for over a year. The reason I’m here and I do what I do is I want to help people.”

For many years, Pat directed our members and their children in church plays. “Every year, we did plays for Good Friday, Easter, and Christmas. We did little skits here and there and some dinner theater. I thought with drama I could help people understand the Scriptures.”

She concludes, “Many people at Friendship Church give of themselves to help others. Because of Covid, we’re finding new ways to do that. It’s very exciting. I would like to see our church grow. That’s what everyone here would say. We’re going in the right direction. We need to tell people out there about what we’re doing.”

## Stephen Rawson, Music Director

For the past few weeks, Stephen Rawson, age 28, has been choosing the hymns and directing Friendship United Methodist Church’s praise band. In the future, he’ll take charge of our choir, bell choir and other musical programs.

“I began playing the piano when I was five,” he said. “I grew up north of Minneapolis. As a teen, I was invited to join our Lutheran Church’s praise band. That experience was important to me. I want to pass that opportunity on to others.”

Stephen earned his Bachelor’s degree in music and composition at the University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire, and his master’s from the University of Oregon. After graduation, he joined friends who were living in Chicago. He’s had a variety of jobs, most of them connected with music. Currently, he teaches at the Old Town School of Music in Chicago.

His most interesting work has been with actress/singer Jennifer Hudson, who lives in Burr Ridge. For a year, he gave her son piano lessons. When she was offered the starring role in the Aretha Franklin biopic, Jennifer asked Stephen to teach her to play piano in the gospel style Aretha was famous for.

He said, “I went with her to the movie sets, some in New York, the rest in a studio in Atlanta. She and I still work together.”

Asked what his goals are for FUMC’s music program, Stephen said, “I want to present a variety of music from bluegrass and gospel to contemporary styles. I’d like to involve more of our members in performing. I’d really enjoy getting our young people to play musical instruments and either start a youth praise band or have some of them sit in with our adult praise band.”

He also wants to send our musical groups out to offer musical worship in various places in Bolingbrook.

In his free time, Stephen enjoys outdoor activities including camping, water skiing, and downhill skiing.



**Patti Cash,  
Communications Director**



Patti Cash said, “For the past 25 years, I’ve done communications work for small businesses, non-profits, and other organizations, mostly in the Woodridge and Downers Grove area.” In addition to social

media, website design, marketing planning, and newsletters, she creates literature and brochures.

As a member of Woodridge United Methodist and a consultant for other area churches, she works to improve the church’s social media and community outreach. When Friendship United Methodist needed a better social media presence, we reached out to Patti for help.

“I feel marketing and communications is as much of a ministry as any other church ministry. First, I work with the organization to see what they have in place already and assess what they need. Every group is different. We establish priorities, and I present a plan.”

Since the pandemic began in 2020, her priority has been with livestreaming, Zoom, and other online outreach possibilities. Since being hired by FUMC, she has been assessing what our volunteers and staff have accomplished and suggesting future improvements.

“We want to tell our story to people who don’t know about Friendship Church. I want others to become engaged in what’s happening here. We hope people in the community will become interested and participate in our fellowship.”

Patti and her husband live a few miles from Friendship Church. “We are recent empty nesters.” Their oldest daughter lives in Milwaukee. Their son and younger daughter are away at college. “It’s been a different year for us, a quieter house.”

She and her husband are active at Woodridge Methodist with mission and outreach including community events, DuPage Pads, and a revitalization project.

“We love to travel and especially enjoyed Jamaica and Costa Rica.”

Asked what she wants to tell our congregation, she said, “I am open to new ideas. I always want to learn more and to help people, collaborating as best I can.”

**Check out our newly  
refurbished road sign!**

Thanks to Loren and Carolyn Weber for their generous gift that made it possible. Thanks to Larry Hilb, Mike Donahue, and Gene Paquette for painting and installing the new signboard and tracks for the letters.



# 2021 Annual Report by Church Council

by Reanna Tyree

In February 2021, the Church Council suffered a huge loss with the passing of the Chairperson, Ayodeji Sanyaolu. Carolyn Weber stepped in to chair the committee until September 2021. Then, I became the Chair of the Church Council.

The Church Council, we conducted six meetings in 2021. We met in February, April, June, August, September, and October. The Council concentrated their efforts on ensuring the wellbeing of the congregation during the continuing Covid-19 pandemic. The council prepared for the reopening of indoor church services in February of 2021. We followed all CDC, NIC, and Gov. Pritzker mandates to ensure the safety of all church members. Zoom and Facebook services continued for those who wished to attend services at home. Zoom services were discontinued in June, and YouTube was added.

The goals of the Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion Team (JEDI) have permeated the committees of Friendship UMC. We are working hard to call attention to and take action to eradicate or minimize the impact of all forms of prejudice in our community. We intend to create, nurture, and strengthen discipleship for Christ by our example of loving our neighbor as ourselves. As I draft this report, I am astounded by the amount of work Friendship UMC has done just since 2019. If every church in the Northern Illinois Conference could do as much, we as disciples of Christ could make an enormous difference for Social Justice.

The JEDI team continues to meet via Zoom monthly. The JEDI team calls attention to and acts on current racial injustices and supports the LGBTQIA community. In April 2021, JEDI held a Zoom call with the local school district to discuss racial policies at the district. In June 2021 we decorated the church, inside and out, in support and recognition of the LGBTQIA community. In July JEDI held an anti-racism rally on the sidewalk in front of the church. In August, the United Methodist Women supported and facilitated an immigration workshop by the Southwest Suburban Immigrant Project, a non-profit organization that is committed to improve immigrant rights by helping to fill out paperwork to submit to the government for citizenship. Also, in August 2021 the JEDI and Outreach teams

held a call to support 360 Youth Services in Naperville, IL. 360 Youth Services is a non-profit that helps homeless LGBTQIA. We collected \$870 in gift cards to grocery stores for the youth. Three members of the JEDI team are volunteering at the 360 Youth Services offices to sort and store donated items. In September 2021, the JEDI team hosted a Northern Illinois Conference Anti-Racism workshop at Friendship UMC. In September 2021, the JEDI team attended the Joliet Pride Parade and spread the word that Friendship UMC is a safe and affirming church for the LGBTQIA community.

The micro pantry is still receiving great support from the congregation as well as food donations to the local food pantry.

The Faith Formation team is working on activities for disciple making system for the membership. The committee chair has developed a description of their committee.

The Shepherding Team has stopped the weekly calls but still has a monthly check in on people via calls, cards, or email.

The All-Church Retreat was held on September 18, 2021. Rev. Martin Lee, the director of Congregational Development and Redevelopment for the Northern Illinois Conference, was a guest speaker. We developed our yearly calendar of events for 2022. We also held the Ministry fair on October 17, 2021. It highlights all the activities that are available to join at the church. We hope the fair will get the membership excited to join others in mission work.

The pandemic has impacted the church finances negatively, but we still are able to continue our work of loving our neighbors. We are increasing our apportionment giving each year, we are at about 85%. The membership of Friendship UMC has been faithful and supportive in giving during the 2021 year. The mortgage was paid in full in 2020. We need to play a celebration for this blessing.

Friendship UMC was blessed to confirm and baptize one young lady in October 2021. Monthly child Sunday school videos by Dave Lichty continue. Sunday School is offered the other Sundays. We

usually have 1-3 children attend in person. Vacation Bible School was offered in July and was attended by children, youth helpers, and adult volunteers. Despite the small numbers we all had a wonderful time.

Our administrative assistant resigned on July 30, 2021. Pastor Anna and the SPRC developed a job description for a new combination of office and facilities services and will hire a replacement by the Charge Conference on November 2, 2021. The new job of Online communicator is currently being held by a volunteer. He is the nephew of a church member and is volunteering his time to get this vital area up and running. We hope to hire a permanent communicator by Charge Conference. A Marketing director for FUMC was hired, to make our church known in the area. Online platforms of YouTube and Facebook average about twenty people per Sunday. The in-person services have about forty people currently.

The goal for next year will be to remain flexible as we accept the new reality that we may continue to have a sizable group of parishioners who prefer to stay online rather than return to church in person. We would like to embrace this change and strengthen our relationship with our online members. We plan to expand our social justice work to be an example of people following the example of Christ and loving our neighbors. Friendship United Methodist Church of Bolingbrook is a diverse, dynamic, loving congregation. We are a small congregation but with the Grace of God and the leadership of Pastor Anna Shin we will continue to grow in our faith and make disciples for Christ.





# Happenings at Friendship UMC

## Ministry Fair

A Ministry Fair was held on October 17, 2021. Despite the pandemic, Friendship's ministries were alive and well, and available to anyone wishing to serve.



## Panel Discussion

On Sunday, October 24, Friendship Church's UMW planned and hosted Illinois State Senator John Connor, Illinois State Representative Natalie Manley, and DuPage Township Trustee Tom Braxton in a panel discussion after worship. Senator Connor and Representative Manley spoke about recent legislation and current matters being discussed that relate to Friendship Church's focus on justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion. Trustee Braxton defined the township's role in those areas and what current programs are in place in the township.

A lot of questions were asked by in-person and virtual program attendees and there was extensive discussion of a variety of topics. While some church members were meeting and hearing from these elected officials for the first time, many members were glad to welcome them back. Senator Connor and Representative Manley have been part of informational discussions in the past and Trustee Braxton was a Friendship UMC member and is a charter member of Crossroads of Faith United Methodist Church, which was started by Friendship.



Senator Connor (with microphone), Representative Manley, and Trustee Braxton

# In the Community

The Friendship Mission and Outreach team members are trying to increase Friendship’s visibility in the community by attending more community events.

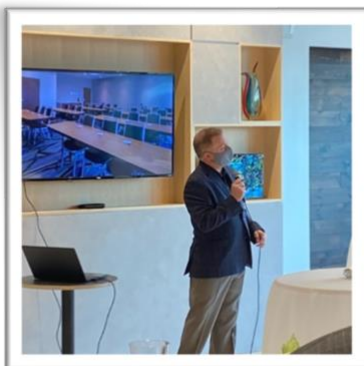
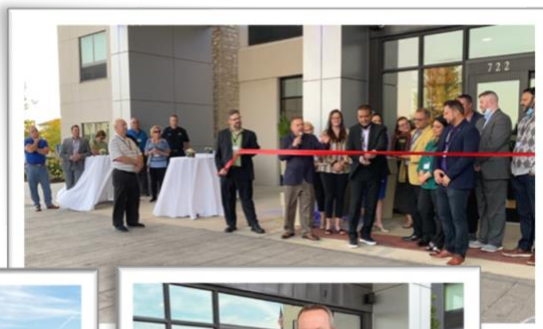
Cavalcade of Planes at Bolingbrook’s Clow Airport  
June 5, 2021



Village of Bolingbrook Picnic  
June 27, 2021



Ribbon Cutting Ceremony at the  
Holiday Inn Express & Suites, Romeoville  
September 30, 2021



### Freaky Fun Friday Event

October 22, 2021 on 'Trick or Treat Trail' next to the Hidden Oaks Nature Center., Bolingbrook. The young lady pictured stopped by to tell us she was impressed by our church's sign and by our flag.



## Thank You for Your Generosity!

### “Share the Warmth” Coat Drive

Friendship’s United Methodist Women held a “Share the Warmth” coat drive during the month of October. Coats collected went to needful students and their families from our Valley View School District. The coat drive was most successful with our congregation donating over 30 new and gently used coats. A generous donor also gave \$50 toward the purchase of new coats. Our school district community liaison, Leanne Lyons, collected our donations. She was so excited to be able to distribute our warm outdoor to many needful families. We are so blessed to have such a giving congregation!



### West Suburban Community Pantry Thanks You!

Thank you for your donations. Click the image to read the full letter.

# And The Greatest Is Love.

A story and a song by Wayne Fetters

The time came for my daughter to get married. She asked me and my wife to think of ideas for readings to go into the ceremony. She also told us she didn't want it to be too churchy. I started looking up Bible verses that were appropriate for weddings and of course came across 1st Corinthians, chapter 13. This is reportedly the most read Bible passage at weddings. I also looked at famous quotes and sayings and decided not to go down that road. My daughter had also mentioned that she didn't really want hymns in the ceremony, those maybe being too stodgy and churchy.

Then the idea came to me, why don't I write her a song? I went to two or three Bibles to look at the First Corinthians chapter 13 passages and started writing notes. I ended up writing words that paraphrased the versus but in more modern language and maybe with a little bit of a country song feel. The words started coming to me rather easily and I ended up having a good template down on the first try.

I still didn't have a tune to go with it yet. For this I did what I've done before. I think of tunes while I'm busy at work and have my phone handy to make short voice recordings. I just hum the ideas and slap my hands on my chest for drums, recording passages like this in little sections. Fortunately, and with a little help from God most likely, some ideas popped into my head, and I captured them. First, I had the chorus, and then later some ideas for the verse. When I had that down I spent some time on the guitar noodling around finding chords and putting it in a key then I could sing to. I was amazed that it wasn't really that hard! The song just came together in the matter of a day or two. Divine intervention? You know, sometimes things just happen, and I say, "Thank You!"

I spent a lot of time learning to play and sing the song live. But I was a little apprehensive of doing it entirely live in the wedding ceremony. What if I messed it up? I also wanted to have more instruments in the mix of the song to give it a bigger sound. Now it was time to get it recorded.

I must thank our former FUMC music director Jim Molina for his guidance in making multi-track recordings. And strangely enough, I must credit the Covid-19 shutdown period. Because of the shutdown, all the music ministry people had to learn new skills in making recordings to be played during the zoom and live streaming services. With these new skills in hand and the deadline approaching, I was able to record three or four guitar tracks and a bass track that I was happy with.

All the time that I was working on the song, I only told my daughter that there will be a song, but never told her anything about what it was or let her even hear a single note of it. It was hard to keep the cat in the bag. I really wanted to play it for other people. But I wanted to keep the surprise.

The day finally came for my daughter's wedding. Everything was perfect. She looked beautiful. Her husband looked very handsome, and they looked extremely happy together. The DJ played my recorded track, and I sang the song live for the happy couple. I dedicated the song to them and told them it belonged to them. Thankfully I didn't forget any of the words and it came out pretty good. Working on this song was a labor of love. I give it to my daughter and her husband and to God.

Shortly after the wedding was completed, the Friendship praise band performed the song live in church. [Click here for a link to that video](#), or [click here to link to the full-service recording on YouTube](#).

Abide in thee always, faith, hope, and love, these three. And the greatest of these is love.

Wayne Fetters, Bolingbrook, IL, [Email](#)



## Friendship United Methodist Church

305 E. Boughton Road, Bolingbrook, IL 60440 | [fumcbolingbrook@gmail.com](mailto:fumcbolingbrook@gmail.com) | 630-972-1011 | [www.friendshipchurch.org](http://www.friendshipchurch.org)  
Office hours: **M, T, Th, F** 9AM to 3PM, **W** 9AM to Noon

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