



## Reflections from Pastor Anna

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“That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love.”  
Ephesians 3:17 (NRSV)

The damage that the tornadoes left has been unbearable: people lose life, shelter, and literally ‘everything.’ But as always, we have witnessed the amazing support from every corner of the world community. Hearts are united, hands are held, as the spirit of community comes alive again. In the midst of despair, hope is re-born. People return to build life again.

As I prepare myself for the Advent and Christmas season, I am reminded of the Holy Family who started their family life in exile. They were the displaced people who lost ‘everything’ not because of a natural disaster but because of genocide in their home land. Generations to generations the people of Israel cried out for a Savior to deliver them from a great darkness. They hoped the Messiah would light their way home.

Every Advent we are invited to get inside these ancient people and hear their cries, their yearning to return home where there is peace and security. Their longing for home reminds us of our cry for a place where there is peace, joy, hope, and love.

During the Advent season each year, it is important to remember not only the sentimental story of sweet baby Jesus, but the powerful meaning of Christmas: God made in flesh and dwelt among us. But the world didn’t recognize the presence of God. How do we recognize God’s presence in our life? How does ‘the word of God made flesh’ continue to dwell among us? How do we let Christ dwell in our hearts?

I have come to realize that God often comes to us through the people around us. While we are busy doing many things, finishing up a project before the end of the year, wrapping gift boxes, or standing in line for groceries, ask yourselves: “Lord, when did I shop for you? Did I welcome you at my work? When did I take the time to be with you?”

This Advent, I invite you to prepare a dwelling place for Christ in your life. Prepare your heart daily. Each morning pray a simple prayer of “Come Lord Jesus, dwell with me this day.” Join me with the daily devotional, *A Different Kind of Christmas*. You will be challenged to celebrate Christmas differently.

In Christ,

Pastor Anna



## December Events



**Advent Festival for All**  
**Sunday, December 1, 2013**  
**4:30 PM – 6:30 PM**

Ready or not, Christmas is coming! Join us for devotion, drama, chili, and fellowship.

Chili Supper (Hot dogs available)  
\$2.00 person, \$10.00 max per family  
Sign up to bring chili or a dessert!

*“Arise, shine; for your light has come.” Isaiah 60*

**Please join your church family for:**  
**“Who is My Neighbor” Holy Conferencing**  
**Thursday, December 1, 7:00pm**

This year’s church conference will provide an opportunity to focus on the question, “Who is My Neighbor” from Annual Conference. We are asking every church member to bring a picture of their neighbor, neighborhood, downtown area, “the other side of the tracks” area, etc, with them to church conference. These pictures will be brought forward by the people during “holy conferencing” in a time of prayer. We are asking for physical pictures and not digital so the resulting board can be displayed for continued reflection and ministry development.



**Cookies by the Pound! Sunday December 15**  
Between services and until they’re gone!  
Bakers needed. Contact anyone in women’s ministry.

### **First Thursday Dinner Cancelled**

The First Thursday Dinner for the month of December has been cancelled due to the Charge Conference being held at 7pm that evening. See you next month on the 2nd!



### **December 29** **10 am service**

The worship service will include a collection of monologues, "Caroling, Caroling", inspired by Christmas Carols.

You are invited to bring a sweet bread (sweet rolls or coffee cake) to share during fellowship after the service.





## Outreach & Missions

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### The Giving Tree

Friendship Methodist Women are sponsoring the FISH Pantry's Giving Tree again this year. We will provide gifts of necessary items and wishes, along with grocery gift cards for needy local families served by FISH. Please watch for the Giving Tree in the foyer beginning December 1st. Take ornaments off the tree with the name, age and wish of the family member, purchase the gift, wrap it and return it to church no later than December 15th. We must have the ornament attached to the gift so we can disperse the gifts properly. We also accept monetary donations to fill in needs and purchase grocery gift cards. Feel free to drop donations off in the office or in the offering plate, clearly marked "The Giving Tree".

We appreciate all the support of the Congregation to help those less fortunate in our own community.

### Matthew 25:37-40

37"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? 38When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? 39When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'40"The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'



### Parent Mentoring Program

The holiday season should be a joyous time of the year, but sometimes the stress of dealing with financial issues and family demands can be more overwhelming than usual. Please join us for our next monthly workshop, **Stress Relief & Work Life Balance**, presented by Joy Maguire Dooley, Youth & Family Services, Lisle Township. As always, dinner and childcare will be provided at no cost if you e-mail [niaenterprises1@comcast.net](mailto:niaenterprises1@comcast.net) by Sun., Dec. 1. The Parent Mentoring Program (PMP) is a community-based, self-help program for parents. We provide a support network and resource information for developing a disciplined and well-thought out plan toward achieving independence through individual and family goals. You are not alone. Come with us as we **"run this race together!"**

Event held at Friendship United Methodist Church, 305 E. Boughton Road, Bolingbrook, IL on Thursday, December, 5 with dinner served at 6:45pm. For more information, contact Amania Drane at [niaenterprises1@comcast.net](mailto:niaenterprises1@comcast.net).

Again, registration is required by **Sun., Dec. 1**.  
**Please spread the word!**

# Church Anniversary

### Friendship: Forty & Forward

This is the theme of celebrating our past and looking to the future that the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary committee is suggesting for the celebration in 2014.

A decision was made to host a luncheon after the single 10am Sunday service on **October 5, 2014**.

Our former pastors will be contacted soon asking them to save the date. Pat Prins will prepare some skits leading up to the celebration date. Our church historian, Loren Weber, is completing our church history. Pictures and information will be shared throughout 2014. Any suggestions? Please contact Carolyn Weber.



### Thanks to our Lawn Mowers and Gardeners

We want to thank our faithful lawn mowing crew for the great job that they did this summer keeping the church property looking great. Thanks to Greg Jacobs for setting up the schedule and mowing. Our other mowers were Efren Ramos, Tom and Walter Marsh and Gene Paquette. Larry Hilb was our resident mechanic and kept our mower running in tip top shape. The efforts of these gentleman save the church several thousand dollars each summer because we do not have to pay for a lawn service. We also want to thank Kathryn Bulman for watering and weeding the gardens and roses all summer long.



**We appreciate all of your work for Friendship Church.**

### Church Council News

Core Groups are up and running for a second year with 3 strong groups. If you have not been contacted to attend a meeting, please call the church office. The church is delighted to have welcomed four new members on November 17<sup>th</sup>. Much of our November 19<sup>th</sup> meeting was spent on the proposed 2014 budget. Watch for more on this in the coming months. Our annual church conference with the Aurora District Superintendent will be held at the church at 7 PM on December 5<sup>th</sup>. Please bring a picture of your neighborhood that evening. Our monthly gathering at The Patio will be cancelled for December. There will be 2 services for Christmas Eve, one at 5 PM that will be family oriented and the second at 11 PM with the Chancel Choir.



**\*\*Save the Date for January 25, 2014 for our annual church-wide retreat.\*\***

Submitted by: Carolyn Weber





## From the Stewardship Committee

### **Financial Course to be offered in January**

During our Stewardship Campaign we read daily devotionals and heard sermons about the virtues of living within our means, the dangers of debt and how debt can prevent us from putting God first. If we are going to “put God first in living in giving” we may have to reevaluate some of our priorities and develop a sound financial plan. No one, regardless of their age or financial situation, is immune to the temptations that our consumption oriented society presents to us every day. It seems that regardless of how much “stuff” we have, we want “just a little bit more.” Often we find that getting that “little bit more” doesn’t bring any real satisfaction or happiness. Instead, we often feel that we have to get the next “little bit more.” It never ends.

Would you like to break that cycle? Are you interested in learning how to put your financial house in order? Are you ready to take a step towards freeing yourself from the burden of credit card debt? Are you ready to experience the joy that comes when we live our lives according to God’s plan? Are you interested in having a Biblical foundation for your financial life?

If so, you might be interested in signing up for a four week course to be offered in January. Dates and times for the meetings are to be determined and we hope to make child care available if needed. More information and signup forms will be available in the bulletins in December.

Think about it.



### **First-putting God First in living and giving Stewardship Campaign**

Packets were distributed, sermons delivered, discussions were held, and pledge cards were committed. The members of the committee would like to thank all who participated. Follow up letters will be coming in the mail. If you have not returned your pledge card or need one to fill out, please contact the church office. A more detailed report will follow next month!



# Symbols of Advent, Christmas and Epiphany

## Advent Wreath

An Advent wreath provides a visual way to move through the four Sundays of the season. The wreath's circle has no beginning or ending, symbolizing God's love which never ends. Evergreen symbolizes everlasting life, and holly reminds us of the crown of thorns with drops of blood. Traditionally, the Advent wreath contains four blue candles, or three blue or purple candles and one pink candle that are progressively lit on each Sunday in Advent.



## Advent Calendar

Advent calendars are a daily way for children and adults to mark our waiting and to anticipate the celebration of Jesus' coming into our world. People use a variety of different types of calendars such as paper chains.

## Jesse Tree

In the biblical accounts of Matthew and Luke, we read that Jesus was a descendant of King David, whose father was Jesse. The people of Israel expected the Messiah to be from David's line. The Jesse Tree symbolizes the extended "family tree" of Jesse, including his ancestors in faith. Made from bare twigs or a potted house plant, it is decorated with symbols representing people who prepared the way for Christ.



## Crèche

St. Francis of Assisi popularized the crèche scene around 1200 CE when he created one in a cave near his village using live animals and people. Francis wanted to revitalize devotion to the Christ Child among the people. During Advent, the manger should be absent or empty. On Christmas Eve or morning, add the baby. Save the magi figures for January 6, the Feast of the Epiphany.



## Bells

For centuries, bells hanging high in church steeples announced special occasions and good news, in addition to calling the faithful to worship. In the Middle Ages, the poor rang hand bells in the streets and collected money from those who were wealthier. Christmas bells symbolize the good news of Jesus' birth which brings justice and peace for all.



## Christmas Tree

The tree is an evergreen symbol of ever-lasting life—living forever with God. This is the good news that Jesus' death and resurrection proclaimed to all humanity.



## Christmas Lights and Candles

The books of Isaiah and John talk about the Messiah as one who brings light. Jesus is proclaimed in the Gospels as the light of the world. Lights are used to symbolize this, and in some traditions, to guide the Christ child to the home awaiting him.



## Candy Canes, Shepherds, and Sheep

Candy canes were invented by an Indianapolis candy maker. He made hard candy in the shape of the letter "J" as a way to remind children that Jesus was at the heart of Christmas. Today candy canes also remind us of the staff the shepherds used. In the book of Luke, the shepherds were the first to hear the good news from the angels and to visit the new baby.



## Stockings

In the early fourth century, Nicholas, the bishop of Myra (in Turkey), secretly gave gifts of money to the needy. One legend says that he tossed gold in a window. They landed in the stocking hung from the fireplace to dry.



## Angels

The word angel comes from the Greek word meaning "messenger". An angel communicates news from God to the people. Angels appeared both to Mary and Joseph, bringing news that Mary would give birth to Jesus. Angels also appeared to the shepherds in the fields to announce Jesus' birth.



## Gifts

Presents symbolize the gifts brought by the magi to the young child. In some countries, gifts are exchanged on Epiphany or "Three Kings Day", January 6. Today, we exchange gifts to remind us of Jesus—God's gift to us.





# Glow in the Dark Night @ Friendship ~ October 25, 2013











## Halloween at First Friends Preschool



Monday, Wednesday,  
Friday Class

We dressed up for Halloween, we sang songs for our parents, had a special snack, and went trick-or-treating in the hallway.



Tuesday Thursday  
Class





### **Block Building is a favorite activity**

In the past few weeks, the children have really been getting into building with blocks. We have encouraged exploration by providing books about skyscrapers and bridges, construction and building houses. The children use the books to get new ideas about structures that they want to create. We take pictures to document their progress. We hang the pictures up so that they can compare and make new plans. A few children have been interested in drawing up their own plans on paper before they begin a new project. Next, I would like to put all of the photos into a class book!

# Children & Family Ministry News



## Mission Projects

The children and youth are helping to build churches all over the world! They collected over \$160.00 during the month of October for this special mission project. The money collected was sent through our connectional giving here at FUMC.

November's mission project, the Joyful Noisy November loose coin collection, brought in over \$200.00 for several United Methodist Church mission projects including UMC leadership development, UMC church growth, UMC ministry with the poor and UMC global health, in particular, Imagine No Malaria. This offering is also part of our connectional giving.

## Curriculum

The children are finishing up the first part of our curriculum, Grow, Proclaim, Serve! December 8<sup>th</sup> we will begin a new unit about the birth, life and ministry of Jesus. Through the Grow curriculum, we want children to grow in their relationship with God and Jesus, grow in their love for the Bible and Bible skills, grow in their relationships to one another and grow to love their neighbors as themselves.

## Thank you for our Sunday school teachers!

Our Sunday school teachers are the best ever! They are faithful, prepared to teach and really care about each and every child and youth who attends Sunday school! So, when you see one of these people around the church, please say thank you for his or her dedication to our children and youth here at FUMC! We are making disciples for Christ!

## Children's Choir

The Children's Choir began rehearsals during November and will continue rehearsals on December 4, and December 11. The choir sang at our Stewardship/Thanksgiving service and sang the grace for the Thanksgiving dinner which followed. We will also sing on Sunday, December 15<sup>th</sup> at both services. All children 4 years old through 8<sup>th</sup> grade are welcome to come and sing!



## Advent Festival

Our Advent Festival will be held Sunday, December 1<sup>st</sup>, 4:30-6:30 p.m. at the church.

We will have a short worship service including drama and singing. Following that, we will all gather together for a chili dinner with desserts! The Advent Festival is an intergenerational event! All ages are invited to attend!

## Family Worship Sundays

The first Sunday of each month is Family Worship Sunday. We encourage families to worship together on these Sundays, so children learn to become familiar with the worship order, the symbols of worship, and the music and songs of worship. Activity bags for children will be available. Younger children, ages 3 years through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, will leave during the sermon to do a worship related activity. We hope Family Worship Sunday will be a meaningful experience for our children and our families!





# youth group

SCHEDULE

December 1st - NO youth  
December 8th - Youth ministry team meeting 12:15 - 1:30  
December 8th Youth 2-4  
December 20 - 21 Lock-in/help at Daybreak  
December 22nd - NO youth  
December 29th - Youth 2-4



## Movie Nights

Friday Dec 27 - Mystery  
Monday Dec 30 - Final Harry Potter  
Friday Jan 3 - Comedy

For times and more information, please contact Robin Lichty at 630.759.4804



## Service

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### Prayer Ministry

Please email your requests to [prayerrequests@friendshipchurchmc.org](mailto:prayerrequests@friendshipchurchmc.org) if you don't use email please call the church office and the request will be forwarded. If you do not have access to a computer and wish to join the prayer chain, please advise the church office or see Kathryn Bulman, prayer chain coordinator. Please be mindful that even though prayer requests may be common knowledge, it is our responsibility to maintain confidentiality.

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### Celebration offerings

The tradition of the Celebration Offering came to us from our African Fellowship.

On the first Sunday of each month as we celebrate God's abundant gifts on our lives, a special offering is taken in addition to the general offering. It's a chance to celebrate the blessings God has bestowed upon our lives. Look for the special offering envelope in the bulletin. There is a place to mark if you would like to share your story with the congregation during a Sunday worship.

We have been blessed continuously with generous sharing and giving from our church families to share their moments of thanksgiving and joy with others who need an extra encouragement.

November's celebration offerings come from 11 envelopes, totaling \$90.00. They are for God's grace on a family, God's goodness in life, the celebration of a birthday that begins a new decade of life, family and good friends that are always there when times are hard, improving from depression, and being healthy and alive.

May God continue to bless you richly as your compassionate heart grows daily!

Blessings, Anna

### DAYBREAK

Serving at **Daybreak** is a long standing tradition at Friendship. On the third Friday (and following Saturday morning) we donate food, cook and serve two meals. Watch inserts in 2nd Sunday bulletins for details on how to donate and get involved in serving at the shelter.

*Dinner on Friday, December 20 @ 5:00 pm*  
*Breakfast Saturday, December 21 @ 5:00 am*  
Richard Guzman, Coordinator

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### SENIOR BIBLE STUDY & LUNCHEON

Is open to all senior adults. It meets on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 11:15am. The study is led by Pastor Anna and is followed by a delicious luncheon. If you would like to attend, contact the church office at 630-972-1011

*Study & Lunch: Thursday, December 19 @ 11:15 am*

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### AA & GA

Friendship is a place of help and hope for those struggling with addictions. Meetings are open to all.  
**AA Meetings:** Saturday @ 9am & Sunday @ 5pm

**GA Meetings:** Friday @ 7:30 pm

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### DRESS A GIRL

**Imagine a world where every little girl owned at least one dress.**

Turn donated t-shirts into beautiful dresses for girls in need. Join us for cutting, sewing and assembling dresses. Call the Church office to find out when and where we are meeting next.

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### ANXIETY/PANIC ATTACK SUPPORT GROUP

Meets the 2nd & 4th Thursdays of the month from 7—9pm. Open to all

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### STUDY CLUB

Wednesdays 4-5pm. Mentoring students from WoodView School.

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### PARENT MENTORING PROGRAM

PMP's mission is to equip parents with the tools and a support network to achieve success for themselves and their family. Meets the first Thursday of the month at 7pm.

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### DONATIONS FOR FISH & WEST SUBURBAN FOOD PANTRIES

2nd Sunday of every month



# December 2013 ~ Friendship Church

Worship on Sundays ~ 9:00am & 10:45am

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1</b> Family Worship 12p Confir- mation 2p Youth Group 4:30p Advent Festival	<b>2</b> 5:30p Girl Scouts	<b>3</b> 10a Hour of Faith 7p Nomina- tions commit- tee	<b>4</b> 11:15a Women's Study 3:30p Study Club 6:30pScouts 6:30p Chil- dren's/Bell Choir 6:30p Chancel	<b>5</b> 6:30p Staff Parish 7p Church Conference 7p Parent Mentoring	<b>6</b> 10a Hour of Faith 6p Daisy Scouts 7:30p GA	<b>7</b> 8:30a Market Day 9a AA
<b>8</b> 12p Confirmation 12p Youth Ministry Team 2p Youth Group 5p Gujarati Worship 5p AA	<b>9</b> 5:30p Girl Scouts	<b>10</b> 10a Hour of Faith 7p Boughton Ridge Town- home Assoc. 7p Communi- cations com- mittee	<b>11</b> 11:15a Women's Study 3:30p Study Club 6:30p Scouts 6:30p Chil- dren's Choir 6:30p Bell Choir 7:30 Chancel	<b>12</b> 7p Anxi- ety/Panic At- tack Support	<b>13</b> 10a Hour of Faith 7p Preschool Christmas Pro- gram  7:30p GA	<b>14</b> 9a AA
<b>15</b> Cookies buy the pound 12p Confirmation 2p Youth Group 5p AA	<b>16</b> 5:30 Girl Scouts	<b>17</b> 10a Hour of Faith	<b>18</b> 11:15a Women's Study 3:30p Study Club 6:30p Scouts 6:30p Bell Choir 7:30 Chancel	<b>19</b> 11:15 Senior Lunch  7p Staff Parish	<b>20</b> 10a Hour of Faith <b>Newsletter Deadline</b> 5p Daybreak 7:30p GA	<b>21</b> 5a Daybreak 9a AA
<b>22</b> 12p Confir- mation 2p Youth Group 5p Gujarati Worship 5p AA	<b>23</b> Preschool Break (school resumes 1/6)	<b>24</b> <b>5p &amp; 11p Christmas Eve Services</b> Office closed at noon	<b>25</b> Christmas Day Office Closed	<b>26</b> Office Closed	<b>27</b> 10a Hour of Faith 7:30p GA	<b>28</b> 9a AA
<b>29</b> 10a One Wor- ship Service 5p AA	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>				



**Advent and Christmas Sermon Series:**

December 1 – December 22

9:00 am and 10:45 am

“A Different Kind of Christmas”

What is the real meaning of Christmas to you?

Come and rediscover the joy of this season,  
the season of miracles and love.

**Traditional Candlelight Services**

**Christmas Eve, December 24**

Come early for some very special music!

4:45 pm (prelude)—5:00 pm Family Friendly Worship with Lessons, Carols,  
Children’s Story Time and Youth Drama

10:45 pm (prelude)-- 11:00 pm Lessons and Carols with Holy Communion

**After Christmas Sunday (one service)**

December 29

10:00 am

Interactive Christmas Story for all ages,  
Carols and Monologues