Friendship Church is a reconciling congregation. We are a dynamic multicultural and multi-generational congregation. As followers of Jesus Christ, we celebrate God’s gift of diversity and unconditional love. With open hearts, open minds and open doors, we see all people as sacred in God’s eyes, embracing and affirming each person regardless of age, racial and ethnic background, sexual orientation, gender identity, socio-economic condition, physical and mental ability and family status. At Friendship Church, we welcome all people into full inclusion in the life and ministries of the church. No matter where you have been in life’s journey, we invite you to come and join us on our walk of faith, helping one another and the world to see the face of God, experience the love of Jesus Christ and live in the power of the Holy Spirit. For more information visit rmnetwork.org
Limited In-Person Worship Returns February 7th!

With the governor lifting the Tier 3 COVID mitigations, we are cautiously and carefully welcoming a limited number of worshipers back to the sanctuary beginning on February 7th. CDC guidelines are being followed to ensure everyone’s safety. We hope you can join us - as you feel comfortable doing so!

Reservations are strongly suggested. Invitations to reserve your spot are emailed each week - please be sure to update your current contact information by emailing the church office at fumcbolingbrook@gmail.com. You may also call the office to reserve your spot at (630)972-1011.

Services will still be available via Zoom conference call, and streamed live via Facebook on Sundays at 10am. Recorded services are available after noon on Sundays on our website and Facebook page. A copy of the week’s bulletin and announcements is also available on our website.

Ash Wednesday Worship-Holy Vessels-Shattered
Wednesday, February 17th—7pm
In-Person by reservation or on Zoom and Facebook Live

Ash Wednesday is a time of naming brokenness. As we enter the season of Lent, we commit to enter also into a season of healing and recovery that requires the naming of what has been shattered as a first step. We take “the yoke” of responsibility as disciples of Jesus to be the Body of Christ—a body of those who need healing and offer healing in the world. The promise of Jesus is that he is with us in our weariness and burdens.

As part of the worship service you will need a few items: beach glass, candle, a bowl with some sand or dirt in it, a bit of water, and a small sheet of water soluble paper. The beach glass and paper will be available for no contact pick up from the South Entrance on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 10am to 3pm beginning on February 3rd. For those choosing to worship in person, the items will be available that evening.

Login information will be made available soon for those choosing to join us virtually.

Lenten Worship Series
Sundays at 10am beginning February 21st
“He took our infirmities and bore our diseases.” Matthew 8:17b

Each of us is created a precious and holy vessel of embodied love. We have been through a harrowing time since last Lent that has shattered our sense of wholeness—body, mind, and spirit—like a glass vessel fractured into pieces. In this Lenten “season of recovery” for our physical, communal, mental, intellectual, and environmental health, we will explore the healing narratives of Jesus that tell of divine solidarity with human suffering and remind us that we can begin a journey toward making something beautiful from that which is seemingly broken. Beach glass offers us a multifaceted symbol of this transformative process. Join us each week during worship-Sundays at 10am either in person or virtually.

A limited number of Lenten material packets for you and your family to use during your Lenten journey will be available for no contact pick up from the South Entrance on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 10am to 3pm beginning on February 3rd. We are asking for a $5 free will offering which will be donated to the UMW’s micro pantry. Devotional items will also be made available via email for download if you prefer.
Reflections from Pastor Anna

*Make your ways known to me, LORD;*
*teach me your paths.*

5 *Lead me in your truth—teach it to me—*
*because you are the God who saves me.*

*I put my hope in you all day long.* —Psalm 25:4-5, Common English Bible

I have enjoyed small group conversations at the breakout group session via zoom over the last several weeks on Sunday. I was delighted to see half of the worship attendees engaged in this grace-filled space. It was just 12 minutes conversation, but I was amazed how God connects us who are so different from each other, and I always learn something about life and the human condition we are all in together. Some of you shared how much you appreciated your church members honestly sharing their struggles and thoughts.

All of us have life experience. It varies from one person to another. One thing in common, though, is that most of us need someone to tell our stories. Most of us need someone who helps us see something in us and about us. Most of us need someone who cares enough to be available and become present in others’ lives, struggles, and pain, even doubt, without judgment.

Recently I have been in training with a group of clergy who seek to create a ‘gracious and braver space’ in our life together where the Gospel of Jesus Christ is practiced and lived out, where powerful and powerless gather in one place to learn to give up their power and reclaim their power to build and become an inclusive community.

The first step toward building an inclusive community is having conversations. To create a gracious and braver space for conversations, there are some guidelines that we need to pick up in our practice, which is called ‘mutual invitation.’ At Friendship, we have practiced this occasionally. But I’ve learned that we can apply these tools more intentionally in whatever setting we may set up, such as Bible study classes, ministry team meetings, leadership retreats.

It is a way of empowering all participants in the conversation and allowing them to pay attention to the present without worrying about what to say and when to say it. After the first person (often the facilitator) shares first, he or she invites another person to share. After the next person has spoken, that person is given the privilege to invite another to share. When the person invited to share is not ready to share, that person may say, “I pass for now” and invite another to share. Those who pass will be invited to share later on. After everyone has had an opportunity to share, there will be time to respond and ask clarifying questions. Mutual Invitation, which was developed by the Kaleidoscope Institute, has been practiced in many churches and various organizations over several decades.

Friendship is not an accident. It requires intentional commitment to sustain and strengthen it.

The year 2020 has been a year full of much disruption, sorrow, and loss. We also see God’s grace and mercy breaking in through the pain and struggle. I have ascertained that the way God uses us is often related to the hurts we have gone through, and we learn more clearly from our mistakes and the painful experience. Our life experience is a great resource for God’s work in healing a hurting world.

During this Lent season, we will focus on how to be used for restoring the bodies of our own and our communities’. Each of us is created a precious and holy Vessel of God’s love. May the Spirit of God work in us, and our journey together will be a journey of recovery for wholeness.

Peace,

Anna Shin

P.S. I hope you are able to take advantage of the Lenten Devotional materials that will be made available via email or for pick from the church! Check your email for more details in the next few days!
Sunday, February 14th, 10am — Special Guest Speaker during worship
Join us for a special message from Elgin District Superintendent, Reverend Darneather Murph-Heath.

Reverend Murph-Heath joins us on Transfiguration Sunday, a day set aside to prepare our hearts for the upcoming Lenten season.

We look forward to welcoming Reverend Murph-Heath to our congregation.

3rd Sunday Fellowship
Sunday, February 21st, following worship
Presented by the JEDI group, Richard Guzman will introduce a short film that Starbucks showed their employees about Discrimination bias, various people giving testimonials about their experience and what they are having to go through on a daily basis simply due to the color of their skin. Unfortunately, this has become the norm, and we need to know why and how we can make a difference.

This film is bringing awareness to others about the struggle that Blacks are still going through. There will be a short time for questions and answers led by Richard Guzman following the film.

This film will not be shown during our Facebook Live session, you will need to be logged into the Zoom conference call to participate.

An Update from Reverend Christina Kim - Global Mission Middle School has opened!
Thanks to all the generous donations, the Global Mission Middle School in Tanzania has opened. Here’s a note of thanks from Reverend Kim:

There are so many people I’m thankful for, but I’m especially thankful for those who participated in the Malaika Project Scholarship Project. What I was able to recruit 40 students in 2 weeks is because of the scholarship that light up the big burden of parents. I cry because of kwon and Zhang who decided to give a full scholarship to 3 orphans and 2 single moms children. Parents cry too. Blowing. turn all glory to the Holy Spirit who has done these history.
Year End 2020 Stewardship Report

The Stewardship Team is very pleased to report that our 2020 member giving was very strong. We had 75 members who turned a financial commitment last year for a total of $225,696. As of December 31st, we received $223,753 which is 99.1% of the pledged amount. This is one of the highest percentages of pledge giving that we have ever had.

Of the 75 pledges, 53 members gave 100% of their commitment and 8 of those 53 were actually at 125-150% of the pledged amount. Thank you to those members who were so generous last year.

Our “loose” giving (non-pledge income) for the year was $13,255 which is also more than we budgeted. According to Carol Fetters’ itemized giving report, total member giving for the year was $237,008. Despite the challenges of COVID and not being able to meet in person for most of 2020, your financial support of Friendship Church was amazing.

We paid off our mortgage in December which reduced our fixed expenses by $30,000. However, with little or no rental income from outside groups, 2021 will be challenging. The Church Council has supported the idea of increasing our Connectional Giving to the conference this year. We hope to increase our support for the work that the Methodist church does around the world. To meet that goal, we will continue managing our expenses very carefully, and we look to each of you to do all that you can with your financial support to our ministries.

We have used the theme, “Make Friendship Church your charity of choice.” The Stewardship Team and all the church leadership encourage you to prayerfully consider what that idea means to you.

Again, we thank you for your generosity and may God Bless you in 2021.

Gene Paquette
Reporting Secretary for the Stewardship Team

Something New at the Micro Pantry!

Friendship United Methodist Women has added a new piece to our Micro Pantry. Weekly managers of the pantry noticed that with a higher demand for food, due to the winter and the food insecurity in our town, there wasn’t much room in the existing pantry for non-food items. Paper goods, hygiene items and donated hats, gloves and mittens are needed just as much as food items. A new resin cabinet next to the existing pantry has plenty of space for bulky items. So when you are doing your shopping for your next food donation, please remember to pick up such items as diapers, napkins, paper towels, hygiene items such as soap, shampoo, feminine products, toothpaste and toothbrushes to add to the new cabinet.

UMW thanks you for remembering those in need!
Sunday School Returns –
Sunday, January 31st at 9:15am via Zoom

We are so excited to be offering Sunday School for ages 4-8th grade via Zoom! Emails containing specific login information have been sent. If you have not yet received an invitation, but would like to join us, please contact Theresa Manning-Donahue at tdfriendshipkids@yahoo.com.

Hope you can join us!

Senior Lunch Delivery/Pickup
Thursday, February 18th

The Senior Lunch Ladies are back in business—preparing 19 lunches last month!

Every third Thursday (unless it’s a holiday) our cooks will create a lunch and deliver it to your front door, or you can drive up to the church for curbside pickup. No contact necessary! All food will be prepared with CDC guidelines. You will be contacted prior to the above date when you can let them know if you would like a lunch and your preference of curbside pickup or delivery. We are so excited to offer this program again.

We wish we could be together at Friendship but for now, we send our blessings for good health!
Thank you to all who have been so generous during these trying times. We have received many grateful messages from West Suburban Community Pantry as they struggle to meet the growing needs in our community.

No contact drop off of non-perishable items can be made during office hours on Wednesdays (10am-3pm) at the south entrance to our building, and will be delivered to West Suburban Community Pantry.

Current needs are: pancake mixes, boxed potato mixes, canned tuna and chicken, boxed dinner mixes (like hamburger helper), jelly, paper towels, tissues, napkins, baby wipes and diapers. There is also a need for individual, low sodium meal mixes for Seniors in need.

Coffee, Tea, Hot Chocolate?

Our UMW coffee and other beverages will be available on Wednesdays from 10:00am-3:00pm. The cart will be located inside the south entrance. You are welcome to take what you need and leave your payment.

Come over and support the UMCOR coffee project and donate to local food pantries at the same time!

Offering Information

Thank you for your continued generosity during these uncertain times! We are so grateful to our Friendship Family for their support!

Please continue your giving in the following ways: sign up for electronic giving, mail your donation to the church or visit our website for online giving. friendshipchurchumc.org

Leader Recognition

We are grateful for the many volunteers who lead our church and are happy to recognize and pray for them as they continue their leadership as members of our Church Council.

Please remember the following people as they navigate the many challenges ahead: Pastor Anna, Carolyn Baker, Dena Byrd, Kathleen Campbell, Barbara Collins, Fern Deatrick, Mike DeWitt, Amania Drane, Carol Fetters, Wayne Fetters, Jody Hargett, Carolyn Jones, Leonard Jones, Vicki Karns, Gene Paquette, Muffy Paquette, Jane Pierce, Efren Ramos, Pat Prins, Deji Sanyaolu, Carolyn Weber, and Loren Weber.
Prayer Chain
Requests are treated confidentially and shared only with Pastor Anna and the Prayer Chain. The Prayer Chain participants receive weekly prayer requests and pray for submitted requests. You may send your requests to: 630.972.1011 or churchoffice@friendshipchurchumc.org

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.

We are grateful for the offerings made in the month of January for unspoken celebrations.

Blessings,
Pastor 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. Contact Richard Guzman, coordinator if you are interested in donating food or serving.

Richard Guzman, Coordinator
rrguzman@comcast.net to donate

SENIOR LUNCHEON
Invitations have been sent for a once a month delivery of lunch. If you would like to be placed on the mailing list, please contact the church office - 630.972.1011.

AA & GA
Friendship is a place of help and hope for those struggling with addictions. Meetings are open to all.
AA Meetings: Saturdays @ 9am
GA Meetings: Fridays @ 7:30 pm

DONATIONS FOR LOCAL FOOD PANTRIES:
West Suburban Community Pantry
Wednesdays from 10am-3pm

Friendship Micro Pantry
North Entrance of building
“Take what you need, leave what you can”

FIRST FRIENDS CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL
MONDAY-FRIDAY
9:00am-12:00pm
Contact Chris Bosacki, Director, for more information.
chrisbosacki@firstfriendspreschool.info
Registration open for Fall 2021

Birthdays
Amy Hanna, Jennifer Jones-4th
Kathleen Campbell, Francis Nettey-5th
   Joel Grapengeter-6th
   Emmanuel Nettey-14th
   Nathan McWilliams-15th
   Kian Valdez-19th
Jessica Jones-20th
Josh Ramirez-23rd
Curt Collins-24th
Faith Ann Fialek-25th
Suress Christian, Cesar Tumambo-26th
   Deji Sanyaolu-28th
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