

When it comes to a new year, do you tend to look back on what happened the year before or look ahead to the things that are going to come? Maybe a little bit of both?

I think I am generally a look ahead guy. Maybe it is because the sporadic way that my brain works doesn't lend itself to any good end of year data. It is all sort of just jumbled into one big pile of "stuff Shane tried for a bit." But I think that a new year is a great time to look ahead to what is coming.

That's one of the cool things about being a follower of Jesus is how much it is looking ahead. We remember who we were and we remember what was done for us, but ultimately what matters isn't what we were last year or even yesterday, what matters is who we are becoming, how we are growing. Jesus calls to us to continually grow. We are to grow in our knowledge of Him and grow to be more like Him.

Paul said it like this:

Philippians 3:12-14 (CSB)

12 Not that I have already reached the goal or am already perfect, but I make every effort to take hold of it because I also have been taken hold of by Christ Jesus. 13 Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and reaching forward to what is ahead, 14 I pursue as my goal the prize promised by God's heavenly call in Christ Jesus.

That is how we are to live, as those who are forgetting what is behind and reaching for what is ahead. We are to pursue the heavenly call. We are to put our eyes forward and pursue Jesus. This isn't always an easy thing to do. In fact, it is often a hard thing to do. There are things that pull our eyes back to our past.

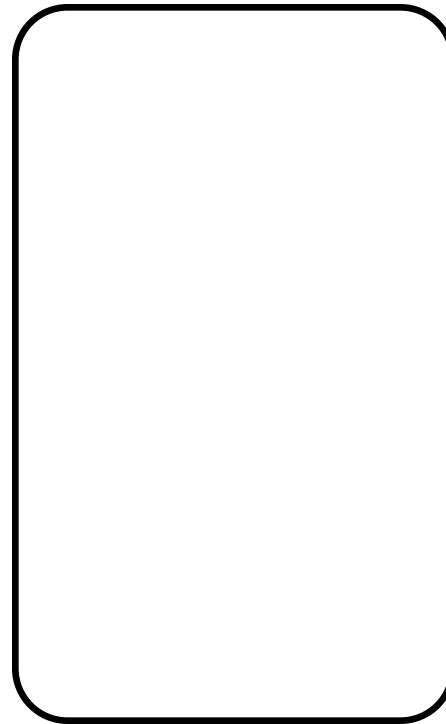
Sometimes it is our pain that pulls us back. We have been hurt and we can't seem to shake that pain. We feel like it is an anchor that holds us back, a stake driven into our heart pinning us into the past. But we don't have to stay there. We don't have to live trapped by our pain. Jesus is offering us hope. He is offering healing. Turning our eyes from our suffering to our savior isn't easy, but if we can do that we can take those first steps toward healing.

Sometimes it is our traditions that hold us in the past. We remember how we did it before and think that is how it should always be. The world is changing and we find ourselves longing for what it was when we were younger. But time doesn't move backward. We can't get trapped in things that happened yesterday and forget that there is life happening today.

Sometimes it is our sin that keeps us trapped in the past. We feel like all of the things that we have done are a weight that holds us back. Maybe there are people in your life who are also using your sin to hold you in place. But that is what is so amazing about Jesus. He offers us freedom! He offers us forgiveness! He offers us grace!

So this year as you move into a new one, remember to look ahead and keep striving toward being more like Jesus. Let Him set you free from those things that are holding you in the past and reach out to be more like him every day.

Shane



Weekly Activities

SUNDAY

Sunday School - 9:30 am
Worship - 8:15 am & 10:45 am
Evening Worship - 6:00 pm
Children's Bible Study - 6:00 pm
Youth Bible Study - 6:00 pm

WEDNESDAY

Prayer Service - 6:30 pm
Youth Bible Study - 6:30 pm
Kids Choir - 6:30 pm



COOKIE BRIGADE

Jan. 1 — Debbie Sisco
Jan. 15 — Susan Knight
Jan. 29 — Pam Hawkins

Phone: 270.534.1900
www.friendshiponthenet.org
www.facebook.com/friendshiponthenet
Dr. Jason Browning, Pastor
Rev. Shane Yancey,
Minister to Students & Children
Rev. Chad Davidson,
Minister of Music & Worship

Budget Receipts

Required to Date: \$ 510,981
Received to Date: \$ 541,853

Nursery Volunteers

January 1
10:45 a.m. — Spencer & Melissa Hawkins
January 8
8:15 a.m. — Tori Ramsdell
10:45 a.m. — Carol Fields & Lakyn Noland
January 15
8:15 a.m. — Masami Smith
10:45 a.m. — Kathy Goodman & Kathy Baucum
January 22
8:15 a.m. —
10:45 a.m. — Jessica Collins & Meredith Yancey
January 29
8:15 a.m. — Earl & Henrietta Mitchell
10:45 a.m. — Jamie Hawkins

The LINK

Friendship Baptist Church

146 S. Friendship Rd.
Paducah KY 42003

Volume 23

JANUARY 2023

Number 1

Therefore if anyone is in
CHRIST
he is a
New Creation
The old things have **PASSED AWAY**
Behold **ALL THINGS**
have
Become New
2 CORINTHIANS 5:17



Happy New Year! As we begin a new year, I make it a priority to carve out time to look back as well as to look ahead to the new year. I look back to consider and celebrate the things God has done in my life and in His church. And for those things, I give Him praise. But I also take time to look ahead. I look ahead and pray that God will accomplish in my life and in His church all that He desires.

As I look forward to what this new year might bring, I can't help but wonder if 2023 will be the year when Jesus returns. It seems that all of my life I've had to "be ready." As a child, I had to be ready for dinner by washing my hands. As an adult, being ready for important responsibilities continues to be an ongoing reality. But I've come to realize that nothing is more important than being ready for our reunion with Jesus.

In 1 John 3:3, John speaks of the return of Christ, explaining to us that **"everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself."** Looking forward to Jesus' return fills my life with hope. It fills me with a solid expectation that motivates me to keep my heart from sinful distractions and it centers my attention on becoming more like Him. If we really believe this might be the year of His return, then we will be more ready to forgive, to seek forgiveness, and to share God's life-changing love with others.

I encourage you to make sure you are ready for Jesus' return. Do you have Jesus? Does Jesus have you? I pray that we will strive daily to live our lives in such a way that Christ is honored and exalted. As followers of Christ, we long for the day when pain and sorrow will be replaced with the everlasting joy of His presence. But until He comes again, we must faithfully worship Him and sacrificially serve one another.

God is good! All the time!

Jason

2023 Contribution Envelopes — Are available in the worship center. If you do not find yours or would like a box, please contact the church office.



COOKIE BRIGADE — Volunteers are needed to serve in this ministry. You would be asked to make homemade cookies approximately once every four months to be used for Operation Andrew visits. See Pam Hawkins if you would like to be added to the list.

JANUARY

- 2 Church Office Closed
- 3 11:30 a.m. — JOY Club
6:00 p.m. — Operation Andrew, Team 2
- 4 5:00 p.m. — Family Night Supper
- 8 7:00 p.m. — Deacons
- 10 6:00 p.m. — Operation Andrew, Team 3
- 15 9:30 a.m. — Rooted Class Begins
- 17 10:30 a.m. — Women on Mission
6:00 p.m. — Operation Andrew, Team 1
- 18 5:30 p.m. — Finance Team
6:30 p.m. — Business Mtg.
- 24 6:00 p.m. — Operation Andrew, Team 2
- 29 7:00 p.m. — Church-wide Birthday Fellowship
- 31 6:00 p.m. — Operation Andrew, Team 3

Tuesdays @ 6:30 a.m. — Men's Prayer Group

Inclement Weather — In case of service cancellations due to inclement weather, we will send a text message to those registered to receive text alerts. You may also check the Friendship Facebook page or WPSD Snowman 6 for service announcements.


Text Alerts - If you would like to receive text alerts with prayer requests, service cancellations, and other important announcements, please contact the church office and we will add you to our list.



CHURCHWIDE BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

Sunday, January 29
7:00 p.m.

Join us as we celebrate YOUR birthday! Twelve tables will be decorated representing each birthday month. If you would like to help, or for more information, see Patty Bickerstaff.



Sundays at 9:30 a.m. (begins January 15). This class is designed for new members and prospective members and outlines who we are, why we are here, and how we expect to fulfill the eternal purposes of our Lord. If you have recently joined Friendship or sense this might be the place God intends for you to serve, come and join us in this exciting study. Let us help you find that special ministry that God has designed just for you.



As I continue to share the story behind the song, this month is one of our newer worship tunes: "Hymn of Heaven" by Phil Wickham.

"This song is all about bringing Heaven to this moment with the way we act, the way we speak, and the way we live. It's about letting Jesus be the King and letting His rule and His way take over."
-Phil Wickham

This song is all about how the Kingdom of Heaven is here right now. Jesus tells us in scripture that the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand, and as Christians we show the world the Kingdom of Heaven through the ways that we live. Sometimes we look forward to the day when we have access to the Kingdom of Heaven, but it is important that we remember that the Kingdom of Heaven is already alive through Christ in us.

"Throughout the process of crafting new music during a global pandemic that created unprecedented obstacles for the local church, Wickham saw an opportunity — the church wasn't relegated to a building. It was happening in our homes and in our hearts."

"'Hymn of Heaven' is full of praise and thankfulness, just lifting up the name of Jesus and speaking what we really know the reality is even though we don't see it," Wickham said. "All I want to do is facilitate moments where people can encounter the presence of God."

Wickham said, "I just want to write songs that I'd want to sing with my church in a way that musically lights my heart up, and I think I've done that better on this record than I ever have before. I cannot wait for people to hear this album. I can't wait for these songs to be a part of people's lives."

Taken from: <https://www.wnypapers.com/news/article/current/2021/06/25/147158/phil-wickham-shares-hymn-of-heaven>
And <https://www.wcicfm.org/song/hymn-of-heaven/>

Under the Master's Baton,
Chad



Family Night Supper —
Wednesday, January 4, 5:00 p.m. The menu is: Potato

Soup/Taco Soup, Sandwiches, and Cookies. Sign up in the worship center or call the church office by noon on Tuesday, January 3 if you plan to attend. The cost is \$6 for adults; \$3 for children 10 and under. Please remember that the food is purchased according to the number who signed up, so you will need to pay for your meal if you sign up and do not attend.



The JOY Club will meet at Strickland's on Tuesday, January 3 at 11:30 a.m.