

When I was in high school we did a youth Christmas musical and one of the songs had this line

"How do we tell the same old story using the same familiar words?"

Every year at Christmas time I find myself singing those same lyrics. How do we tell this most amazing, wonderful story in a new and fresh way? How do we help people who are focusing on presents and parties and all of the craziness of the holidays see once again the amazing story of Christmas.

If we aren't careful Christmas can become like a Hallmark Holiday movie. We all know the beats and know the story. We know who will end up together and how it will all work out in the end. It will make us smile and maybe even shed a small tear, but it doesn't really challenge or change us. It just makes us feel warm and comforted as we go on about our days. But the story of Christmas is much more than just a good feeling. It is more than hope or love or family. The story of Christmas is God becoming flesh to dwell among us. It is the God who is holy becoming lowly. It is God being willing to humble Himself so that we can know Him.

That isn't just a feeling. It isn't just a reason to pause and reflect. It is a life altering, universe shattering, daily-routine challenging amazing gift from God. Christmas is how we know that God really is the love that He claims to be. Christmas is how we know that God really does want us to have a real relationship with Him. Christmas is how we know that God is willing to go to extraordinary lengths for us to be with Him.

So how do we tell this same thing we have heard a hundred times using the same old words to tell it? We just tell it how it is. The story doesn't need anything extra.

Philippians 2:5-8 (CSB)

Adopt the same attitude as that of Christ Jesus, who, existing in the form of God, did not consider equality with God as something to be exploited.

Instead he emptied himself by assuming the form of a servant, taking on the likeness of humanity.

And when he had come as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death— even to death on a cross.

Jesus humbled himself so that we could know him. Jesus humbled himself so that we could be forgiven. That is Christmas. That is more than enough.

Shane

Merry Christmas

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
Children's Bible Study - 6:30 pm

COOKIE BRIGADE

Dec. 3 - Debbie Scourick
Dec. 17 - Debbie Sisco
Dec. 31 - Kelly Dixon

Welcome
to our
New Members

Wanda Carrell
David & Dianna Hampton
Cleason & Kim Sturgill

so glad you are here.

LOTTIE MOON OFFERING
give generously this christmas season



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



Thank you Friendship, for your participation in Operation Christmas Child year-round. Over 400 boxes were filled with your gifts so that children around the world will hear the Good News of Jesus Christ!

Budget Receipts

Required to Date: \$ 498,923
Received to Date: \$ 519,099

Nursery Volunteers

December 3
8:15 a.m. — Laura Hughes & Debbie Alvey
10:45 a.m. — Matt & Miranda Scott
December 10
8:15 a.m. — Tori Ramsdell
10:45 a.m. — Vicky & Ryley Fox
December 17
8:15 a.m. — Cathy & Lauren Barks
10:45 a.m. — Gene & Deborah Reaney
December 24
8:15 a.m. — Masami Smith
10:45 a.m. — Jessica Wyatt & Meredith Yancey
December 31
8:15 a.m. — Jim & Debbie Scourick
10:45 a.m. — Vickie Turley & Cheryl Tyler

The LINK

Friendship Baptist Church

146 S. Friendship Rd.
Paducah KY 42003

Volume 23

DECEMBER 2023

Number 12



4:00 PM
Worship With Us
Christmas Eve



**“For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form.”
(Colossians 2:9)**

The Guinness World Record for the longest bridge in the world is the Danyang-Kushan Grand Bridge in China. Opened in 2011, it extends 102 miles over rice paddies and rivers. One section runs 5.6 miles over a lake! Sections of land once divided by water are now joined together.

Our world needs a spiritual bridge to span the gap between us and God. Because of sin, our relationship with our Creator is broken. No amount of human wisdom can fix this separation. Only the bridge of Jesus Christ can effectively restore our relationship with God. Through Christ, God makes you alive and forgives your sin. Through Him, God cancels the charge of our legal indebtedness, which separates us from God.

Jesus alone is able to bring forgiveness and life, because in Christ, all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form. Because Jesus is both God and man, He is the connecting bridge between God and us. In Him, what had been separated by sin, is joined together.

The Christmas season is celebrated with gifts. Families across the world will gather to open packages big and small. Children love to peek into their stockings or rip the wrapping paper to discover what new toy or treasure or candy might be inside. The greatest gift any of us has been given is God-in-flesh, Jesus, who came to reconcile us to Himself.

Some people try to connect with God through their own efforts, while others refuse to believe He is ever accessible. This Christmas, share the joyful news of freedom in Christ. He makes it possible for us to know God, and He frees us from the bondage of sin and guilt. Give thanks that Jesus has bridged the gap between God and us!

I hope you will make it a priority to participate in the many opportunities at Friendship this month to worship the One who came to reconcile us to Himself for He alone is worthy of our praise!

God is good! All the time!

Jason

Operation Christmas Child Mission Team — a 10-member team from Friendship will serve at the OCC Processing Center in Atlanta, December 5-7. Please pray for our team as they travel and serve.

2024 Contribution Envelopes — Are available in the worship center. If you do not find yours or would like a box, please contact the church office.

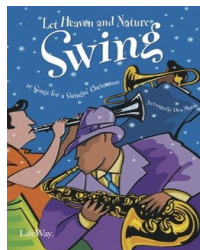


- 3 6:00 p.m. — Celebration Choir Christmas Program
7:00 p.m. — Women on Mission Supper
- 4 6:00 p.m. — Ladies Christmas Fellowship
- 5 6:00 p.m. — Operation Andrew, Team 2
- 5-7 OCC Processing Center, Atlanta
- 10 SS Christmas Fellowships (no evening services)
- 11 10:30 a.m. — Women on Mission
- 12 11:00 a.m. — JOY Club @ Patti's
6:00 p.m. — Operation Andrew, Team 3
- 19 6:00 p.m. — Operation Andrew, Team 1
- 20 5:30 p.m. — Finance Team
6:30 p.m. — Business Mtg.
- 24 4:00 p.m. — Christmas Eve Worship
- 25 Christmas Day
- 26 6:00 p.m. — Operation Andrew, Team 2

Weekly Events:

- Tuesday @ 6:30 a.m. — Men's Prayer Group
- Saturday @ 8:00 a.m. — Men's Prayer Group

Women on Mission — Will sponsor a light supper on December 3, following the Adult Christmas presentation. Chili & Hot Dogs will be served on a donation basis with all proceeds going to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions. There will also be a silent auction of craft items and baked goods.



Let Heaven & Nature Swing — Join us at 6:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 3 for the Celebration Choir Presentation of "Let Heaven & Nature Swing". From high-energy "fast swing" to slow, smooth "jazz waltz," you'll really love this Christmas collection that boasts of your favorite Christmas hymns.



Ladies Christmas Fellowship — You are invited to intentionally make space to seek Jesus amid the Christmas season and attend "Prepare Him Room", a virtual event with Kristi McLelland on December 4 at Friendship. It all starts with refreshments in the fellowship hall at 6:00 p.m. The virtual event begins at 7:00 p.m. in the worship center with worship music by Laura Cooksey. Mark your calendar now and invite your friends to attend. Sign up in the worship center.

WEEK OF PRAYER
for international missions

During the Week of Prayer for International Missions December 3-10, Southern Baptists pray for IMB missionaries, their ministries and the unreached people and places they serve. Every year, Southern Baptist churches collect an offering, "Lottie Moon Christmas Offering", to send and support missionaries to be steadfastly present among those who have never heard the Gospel. Prayer guides & envelopes will be available in the bulletin December 3.



One of the most famous, modern Christmas songs which can be heard on radio stations throughout December was written in Lynchburg, Virginia. The song is "Mary, Did You Know?"

In 1984, as preparations were being made for that year's Living Christmas Tree, Dr. Jerry Falwell asked one of his church members to write the program. The virtually unknown singer-songwriter was none other than Mark Lowry.

In his efforts to write a memorable Living Christmas Tree program, Lowry took popular Christmas carols and hymns and interspersed them with play-like dialogue. While he was struggling to capture the wonder and amazement of that first Christmas, it was his mother, Bev, who gave him the spark of that original idea. In a casual conversation, one day, she simply commented to Mark, "You know, if anyone knew [Jesus] was virgin born, it was Mary...and her silence at the cross is proof, I think, that her story was indeed true." That simple observation, from his own mother, unleashed a torrent of questions and thoughts in Lowry's mind about Jesus' mother. In his own words, Lowry remembers the song's beginnings like this:

Lowry pitched the lyrics to a gospel music songwriter, Buddy Greene. Greene was well-known as an expert harmonica player but also as a staple of the Southern Gospel music scene. He had an ear for timeless tunes. According to Lowry, he shared the song idea with Greene while riding cross-country in a tour bus. He wrote the lyrics down on a piece of paper and gave them to Greene on a weekend. Monday morning, Lowry's phone rang. It was Buddy. In just about 30 minute's time, he had crafted a tune, which he sang to Mark over the phone, which fit the lyrics perfectly. As soon as he heard it, Lowry was hooked and began to make plans to produce the song.

While so many modern Christmas songs focus on "the season," Lowry's timeless work is a refreshing reminder of its "reason." Surely, there are many things which Mary did not know. Yet, in her own song, Mary did, at least, know this:

"My soul exalts the Lord, And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior...For the Mighty One has done great things for me...The Lord has given help to Israel so that we remember His mercy." (Luke 1:46)

Taken from: <https://www.forestbaptistchurch.org/the-story-behind-the-carol-mary-did-you-know/>

Under the Master's Baton,
Bro. Chad

End of Year Contributions — in order for contributions to be credited to 2023 contribution statements, funds must be received by Sunday, December 24. Online gifts must be received by noon on Tuesday, December 28.



Family Night Supper No Family Night Supper for December. Suppers will resume in January 2024.



We will be distributing Christmas Food Baskets to families in need in our area again this year. If you know of someone who could use a basket, please contact the church office with their name, address, phone number, and number in family. The deadline is Sunday, December 10. Baskets will be delivered by deacons on December 16 & 17.

Sunday School Class Fellowships — There will be no evening services on December 10 to allow SS classes an opportunity to have class fellowships for Christmas.