

December Dates to Remember

We will be distributing **Christmas Food Baskets** to families in need in our area 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 7. Baskets will be delivered by deacons on December 20-21.

The **Celebration Choir** invites you to a special **Christmas presentation** on **Sunday, December 7 at 6:00 p.m.**

Music selections will feature:

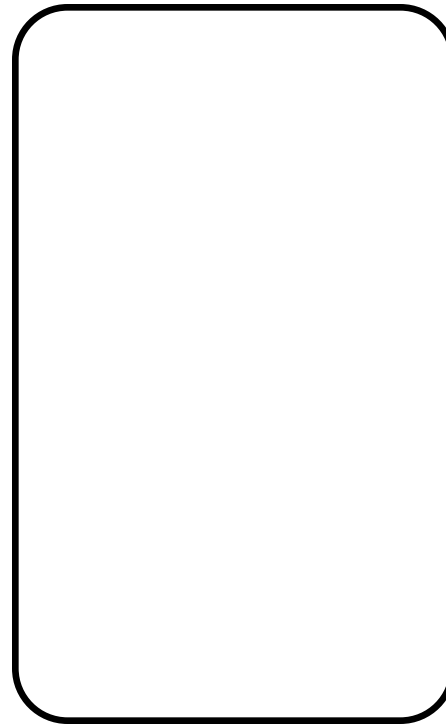
- Christ is Born
- The Greatest Story Ever Told
- This Little Child
- Is He Worthy?
- Glory
- Glad Tidings
- The Little Village of Bethlehem

Through powerful songs and moving solos, this program will focus on the true reason for the season – a celebration of the birth of Christ.

Bring your family and friends and join us for a **wonderful evening of worship through song** as we begin the Christmas season together!



Sunday School Class Fellowships – There will be no evening services on December 14 to allow SS classes an opportunity to have class fellowships for Christmas.



Weekly Activities

SUNDAY

Sunday School - 9:30 am
Worship - 8:15 am & 10:45 am
Evening Worship - 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

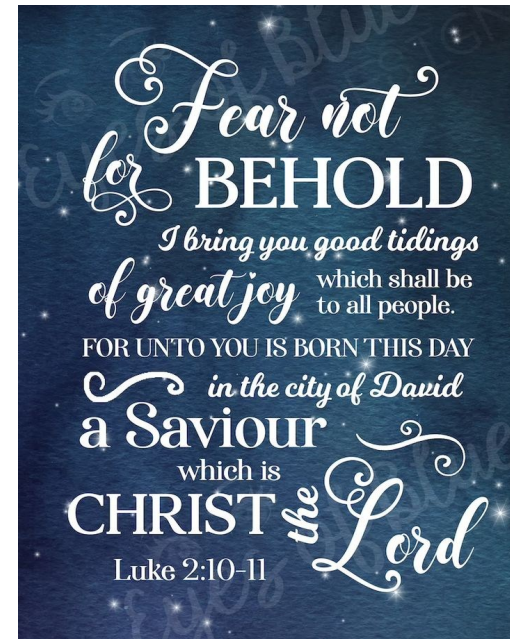
December 7
Kelly Dixon

December 21
Beth Simmons

Church Library

We are in the process of closing the church library. Free books are available outside the library and on the marked shelves. Please feel free to take any items you would like.

If you know of an organization or location that could benefit from a donation of books, please contact Kay Hutcheson.



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

Budget Receipts

Required to Date: \$ 493,673
Received to Date: \$ 481,639

Nursery Volunteers

December 7

8:15 am: Billie Stuber
10:45 am: Spencer & Melissa Hawkins (BB)
Christi Hughes & Miranda Scott (T)

December 14

8:15 am: Tori Ramsdell
10:45 am: Vicky Fox & Carrie Childers (BB)
Rhonda Holt (T)

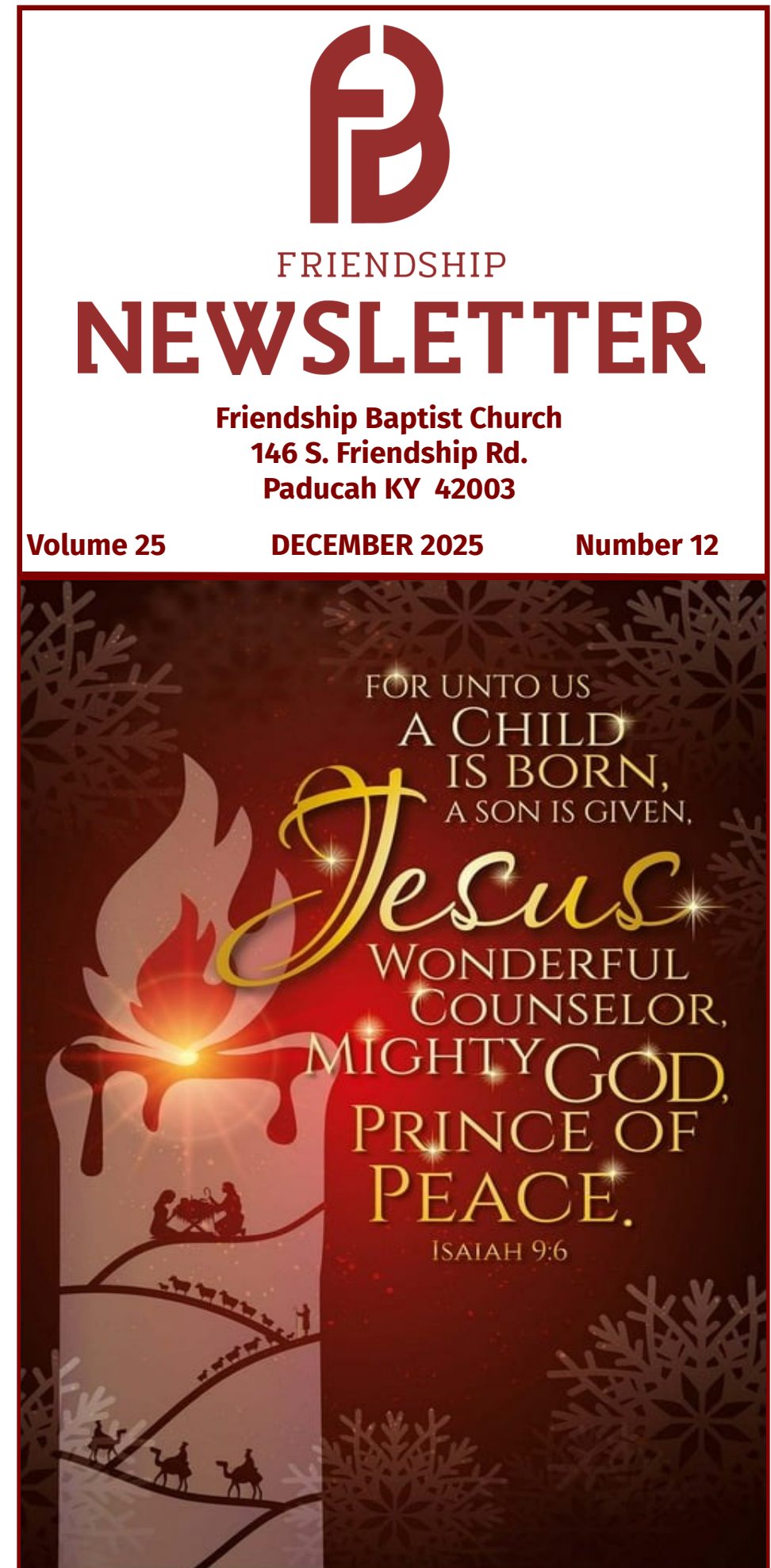
December 21

8:15 am: Amanda Triplett
10:45 am: Gene & Deborah Reaney (BB)
Leah & JP Tilley (T)

December 28

8:15 am: Masami Smith
10:45 am: Pam Samuels & Vickie Turley (BB)
Laura Hughes & Lynette Nelson (T)

BB - Bed Babies
T - Toddlers





**“Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign:
Behold, a virgin will be with child
and bear a son,
and she will call His name Immanuel.”
(Isaiah 7:14)**



Every year, as Christmas approaches, we are surrounded by familiar sights and sounds - twinkling lights, carols echoing through the air, and the joyful anticipation of time with family and friends. Yet, beyond the traditions and the celebrations lies a deeper truth that has not changed for over two thousand years: Christmas is about God’s incredible love revealed through the birth of His Son, Jesus Christ.

In a humble stable in Bethlehem, the Creator of the universe entered our world - not in power or wealth, but in humility and grace. Wrapped in swaddling cloths and laid in a manger, Jesus came as the fulfillment of God’s promise. Isaiah prophesied that God’s son would be called Immanuel - which means God with us. Those three words, God with us, capture the very heart of Christmas. They remind us that God did not remain distant or detached from His creation. Instead, He stepped into our story, to bring redemption and hope. The child born that night would grow to heal the broken, forgive the sinner, and offer eternal life to all who believe.

As we celebrate this season, it’s easy to get swept up in the busyness of shopping, decorating, and planning gatherings. But let’s take time to pause and reflect on the miracle of that first Christmas night. The manger reminds us that God’s ways are not our ways. He chose the simple and the small to reveal His glory, and He continues to do the same today.

Perhaps this year finds you in a season of struggle or uncertainty. Remember, the same God who came to Bethlehem still comes near to us now. Jesus is Immanuel – God with us - in every moment, offering peace that surpasses understanding and joy that no circumstance can take away.

As we gather with loved ones and celebrate the birth of our Savior, let’s also share His light with others. A kind word, a helping hand, or a simple act of generosity can reflect the love of Christ to those who need it most. May this Christmas fill your heart with love, your home with peace, and your life with the unshakable joy of knowing that God is truly with us.

Merry Christmas!

Jason

- 2-4 OCC Processing Center
- 2 11:30 a.m. — JOY Club
6:00 p.m. — Operation Andrew, Team 2
- 3 5:00 p.m. — Family Night Supper
- 7 9:00 a.m. — Coffee & Donuts in Fellowship Hall
6:00 p.m. — Adult Choir Presentation
7:00 p.m. — Women on Mission Missions Dinner
- 9 6:00 p.m. — Operation Andrew, Team 3
6:00 p.m. — Ladies Christmas Fellowship
- 13 6:00 p.m. — Kids Movie Night
- 14 Sunday School Class Fellowship (no evening activities)
- 16 10:00 a.m. — Women on Mission
6:00 p.m. — Operation Andrew, Team 4
- 17 5:30 p.m. — Finance Team
6:30 p.m. — Business Mtg.
- 20-21 Christmas Food Basket Delivery
- 21 7:00 p.m. — Deacons
- 23 6:00 p.m. — Operation Andrew, Team 1
- 24 4:00 p.m. — Christmas Eve Worship
- 25 MERRY CHRISTMAS!
- 31 No Evening Activities

*Tuesdays @ 6:30 a.m. — Men’s Prayer Group
Thursdays @ 9:30 a.m. & 6:00 p.m. — Ladies Bible Study*



Lottie Moon Dinner & Auction — Join us for this church wide fellowship on December 7, following the Adult Choir 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 dessert auction. Lottie Moon was sent as a Southern Baptist missionary to China from 1873 to 1912. She saw firsthand the world’s greatest problem — LOSTNESS. She pleaded for increased prayer and financial support to send and sustain more missionaries. One hundred percent of your gifts support International Missions.



JOY Club — The JOY Club will go to MLC’s restaurant at 3333 Irvin Cobb Dr. on Tuesday, December 2. Meet at the restaurant at 11:30 a.m.

Family Night Supper — Wednesday, December 3 at 5:00 p.m. The menu is: Chicken Tacos, Spanish Rice, Beans, Fixins, and Chocolate Brownie Sundae. Sign up in the worship center or call the church office by noon on Tuesday, December 2 if you plan to attend. Suggested price is: Adults - \$6, Children under 10 - \$4.

Peace seems impossible when suffering surrounds us. The Christmas bells ring out their message of hope, yet our hearts often struggle to believe. Such was the case for Henry Wadsworth Longfellow when he penned one of Christianity’s most poignant Christmas carols – a hymn born from the depths of personal tragedy and national strife.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was already one of America’s most celebrated poets when tragedy began to shape his greatest hymn. He had successful career and a loving family in Cambridge, Massachusetts ... his beloved wife Fanny Elizabeth Appleton, and their six children. Together they raised Charles (their eldest, born June 9, 1844), Ernest, and four daughters.

The first blow came in July 1861. Fanny was sealing envelopes with hot wax when her dress caught fire. Henry, awakened from a nap, rushed to help. He desperately tried to extinguish the flames, first with a rug and then with his own body, but the damage was already done. Fanny died the next morning, July 10, 1861. Henry’s burns were so severe he couldn’t even attend his wife’s funeral. At times, his grief was so overwhelming that he feared being sent to an asylum.

As if personal loss wasn’t enough, the nation was tearing itself apart in Civil War. Then in March 1863, Longfellow’s oldest son Charles – “Charley” to his family – quietly slipped away from home at age eighteen, boarding a train bound for Washington, D.C. to join the Union Army... The young lieutenant’s early military career was marked by both close calls and setbacks. During a skirmish in the Mine Run Campaign on November 27, 1863, Charles was shot through the left shoulder.

It was against this backdrop of personal pain and national division that Longfellow sat alone on Christmas Day 1864, a 57-year-old widowed father of six, his eldest son still healing from near-paralysis as his nation bled. The bells of Cambridge rang out their yearly message of “peace on earth, good will to men,” but the words seemed to mock the reality of his world. Yet as he listened, something profound began to stir in his poet’s heart. The resulting verses would move from despair to defiant hope:

*“I heard the bells on Christmas day, Their old familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet the words repeat
Of peace on earth, good will to men.”*

*“And in despair I bowed my head, There is no peace on earth,” I said,
“For hate is strong and mocks the song,
Of peace on earth, good will to men.”*

*“Then pealed the bells more loud and deep: “God is not dead,
nor doth He sleep; The wrong shall fail, the right prevail,
With peace on earth, good will to men.”*

“I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day” endures because it speaks honestly to the human struggle between faith and doubt. When the world seems darkest, when peace seems furthest away, the bells still ring out their defiant message of hope.

Taken from: <https://www.hymncharts.com/the-story-behind-i-heard-the-bells-on-christmas-day/>

Under the Master’s Baton,
Chad