

New Year's Message

F R O M T H E P A S T O R

"I never make New Year's Resolutions, anymore," the man told me, "I never keep them, anyway." I can remember all too many resolutions I've made and let slip away, too. But I believe New Year's resolutions are worth making. Let me tell you why.

First, we all need changes. Some we find very hard to admit to ourselves. I've heard people who say, "I have no regrets about my life. If I had it to do over, I'd do it the same way again." But that attitude is way too blind and self-serving so far as I'm concerned. There is great power in confession--to ourselves, to God, to others. Owning up to our failures is the first, painful step on the road to something better.

Second, when we change calendars is a good time for reassessment. How did last year go? What do I want to do differently this year? This time of year always reminds me of a passage of scripture, better understood by farmers than suburbanites: "Break up your unplowed ground, and do not sow among thorns" (Jer 4:3). It makes sense. The more land you put into production, the more prosperous you'll be. But some of us are stupid enough to try to sow seeds in land overrun by star thistle without breaking up the soil and taking care to root out the thorns as they come up. Call it laziness. Call it stupidity.

Let me ask you a serious question. What percentage of your life is producing something of value to God? How much "unplowed ground" do you have that ought to be broken up in this coming year and made useful? Reassessment. The brink of a new year is a good time for reassessment.

Third, New Year's is an excellent time for mid-course corrections. Sure, we might fail in what we set out to do, but if we fail to plan, the old saw goes, then we plan to fail. If you're so fearful of failure that you never set up your row of tin cans to shoot at, you're not very likely to hit any at all. Failure is not the end. For the person who determines to learn from it, failure is a friend.

One of my heroes in the Bible is the Apostle Paul. Talk about failure! Throughout his life he was opposed, persecuted, shipwrecked, stoned and left for dead, deserted

by trusted co-workers, slandered, and scorned. Sometimes it seemed that projects to which he had devoted years were turning to dust before his eyes. But during from one of his stints in prison, we can see from one of his letters an unwillingness to quit. "Forgetting what is behind," he wrote, "and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus" (Phil 3:13-14, NIV) No wonder he made a mark on his world. He stopped looking back, and looked forward instead. He didn't let the fear of failure keep him from trying again.

Fourth, New Year's is a time to learn to rely more heavily on the grace of God. Now I've met a few self-made men and women and so have you, but so often these people seem proud and driven. There is another way: beginning to trust in God's help. One more secret from the Apostle Paul: "I can do everything through Him who gives me strength," he said (Phil 4:13, NIV). And God's strength saw him through a lot--through pain, through joy, and through accomplishment.

If this last year, you didn't practice relying on the Lord as much as you should have, there is no time like the present to make a New Year's resolution. In fact, why don't you say a short prayer right now--use these words if you like: "Dear God, I want the new year to be different for me." Now spell out in prayer some of the changes you'd like to see. And close this way: "Lord Jesus, I know that I'm going to need a lot of help for this. So right now I place myself in your hands. Help me to receive Your strength. Amen." Good. Now you've got a much better chance of a Happy New Year. (By Dr. Ralph F. Wilson)

I read this and wanted to share it with you for the New Year.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Doug.



Seek the LORD
and his strength;
seek his presence
continually.
Psalm 105:4, NRSV

FROM OUR CHURCH RECORDS

Attendance for December:
Sunday School Worship

12/6	23	106
12/13	41	153
12/20	24	125
12/24	---	184
12/27	24	59

Funeral:

Joe Estes was born February 12, 1932, he died on December 8, 2015. His funeral was held December 12, 2016.

Newsletter articles are due on **January 17th**

You may:

- bring your articles to the office
- e-mail them to:

friedenscircuitrider@hotmail.com

- fax the article: 667-6006



CLOSING

Friedens UCC will soon be closing P.O. Box 211. Effective January 1, 2016, be sure to address all correspondence to 207 East Center Street, Troy, IL 62294.



Thank you to all of my friends at Friedens UCC for the cards, visits, phone calls and emails after my recent surgery and during my recuperation for hip replacement. I appreciated every single word from all of you.

Judy Nowlin

Thank you to all the musicians who helped to make our Christmas worship truly beautiful. Ringers, singers, instrumentalists, sheep, shepherds, and Hobby Bee "ear-makers", you all helped tell the story of Christ's birth. Thank you!

FRIEDENS'
quarterly →
MISSION

One Great Hour of Sharing

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS



Ushers

Jan. 3	Pat Ruger Tom Fischer Kenny Grotefendt Swiss Kamm
Jan. 10	Amy Schroeter Deb Spears Emily Toennies Danielle Overby
Jan. 17	Gladys Skeens Sandy Harbison Sue Hanks Gloria Mannz
Jan. 24	Bill & Marla Brown Dave & Pat Edgar
Jan. 31	Ron & Sandy Harbison Jim & Claudia Galaske
Feb. 7	Doug & Deb Brendel Dave & Pat Edgar

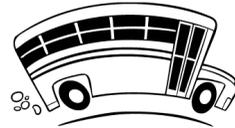
If you cannot be present on your day,
please call Yvonne, 667-8409.

Liturgists

Jan. 3	Marla Brown
Jan. 10	Jenny Ruger
Jan. 17	Andrea Deloney
Jan. 24	Jeff Estes
Jan. 31	Rick Smith
Feb. 7	Virginia Bailey

Bus Drivers/Helpers

Jan. 3	Dennis & Cindy Westfall
Jan. 10	Doug & Deb Brendel
Jan. 17	Jim & Claudia Galaske
Jan. 24	Tom Fischer, Laura Lally
Jan. 31	Roy & Fay McMillin
Feb. 7	Mike & Debbie Byrd



What's for dinner?
Look in your freezer
and find made-ahead
freezer meals to
choose from. Starting
Tuesday, January 12th
at 6:30 p.m. in the
church kitchen there
will be a class on
make-ahead freezer

meals. Contact Katie Carver at 978-0600
(text or phone call) or email me at
katiecarver@msn.com to sign up for the
class. Shopping list and recipe
instructions will be given out for each
class. Hope to see you there.



January

- 4 Jeffery Seymore, II
- 6 Aaron Jaconis
- 7 Aidan Johnson
- 9 Crystal Deichmann
Fred Keil
- 10 Zoe Ann Willimann
- 11 Georgia Wilkins
- 12 Debbie Kniser
Kristin Lally
Lukas Skalisius
- 13 Rebecca Morton
- 16 Kathy Raymond
- 17 Jenny Brown
Margaret Lee
Tony Pereira
- 22 Eric Miller
- 24 Kayla Haller
- 25 Brett Grotfendt
Damon Willis
- 27 LaVerne Buehrer
- 28 Katie Barker
- 30 Judy Weder
- 31 David Hoppes



The meeting was called to order for 11 ladies in attendance on November 17, 2015. Our devotions were given by a few ladies that remembered the Christmas ornament. Secretary and Treasurer reports were given and approved as read. Committee reports were given and taken care of. Old business and new business was brought up, discussed, and taken care of.

We voted to have our Christmas Auction money divided between Hitz and Hoyleton.

We are looking forward to seeing all of you at the Christmas Banquet. Call the office and make your reservation by December 1, 2015.

Don't forget Ministries Unlimited and their list of canned fruit, jelly, peanut butter, cereal, and toilet tissue.

God bless each and everyone and hope to see you at the Christmas Banquet.



Church office will be closed
January 1 and 18





*Show Them
You!
Care!*

Items collected for Ministries Unlimited
in November were:

- 24 boxes bread and muffin mix
- 63 packages Ramen noodles
- 2 cans pumpkin
- 2 cans pie filling
- 4 boxes pie crust mix
- 2 jars peanut butter
- 2 boxes Stove Top stuffing
- 2 bags mashed potatoes
- 17 cans vegetables
- 10 large cans soup
- 3 bottles pancake mix
- 1 box cereal
- 1 large box macaroni & cheese
- 17 bars soap
- 1 tube hand cream

Thank you for your donation! The
items for **January** are: **canned meat,
cereal, soup, and toilet tissue.**



**Martin
Luther
King Jr.
Day**

January 18



Yoga

After 15 years of teaching yoga at
Friedens I will no longer be holding
classes on Monday nights beginning
January. I have had some very
regular students for years and I will
miss them dearly, but life
circumstances have led to this
decision (aging parents and other
obligations).

I want to thank the church for allowing
me the space in my 'Yoga Hall' to hold
class.

I am thankful for my many blessings.

Namaste

Kay L. Friederich

**Congregational
Meeting**



Congregational Meeting and lunch
January 24 right after worship service



Are you a Facebook user?

Are you involved in an upcoming event?

Do you have pictures from an activity/event you want to share?

If you do, the church Facebook page is available for you to use!

The only thing we ask if you only post items pertaining to Friedens.

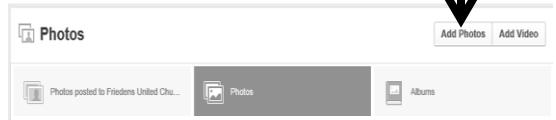
Items posted that the Administrators feel are not appropriate will be removed.

When adding multiple pictures from your computer, please follow these procedures. This will keep your pictures from that activity in one folder so they can be easy found.

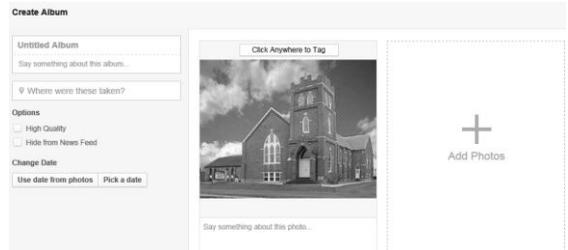
1. Find our Facebook page. "Friedens United Church of Christ Troy"
- 2.



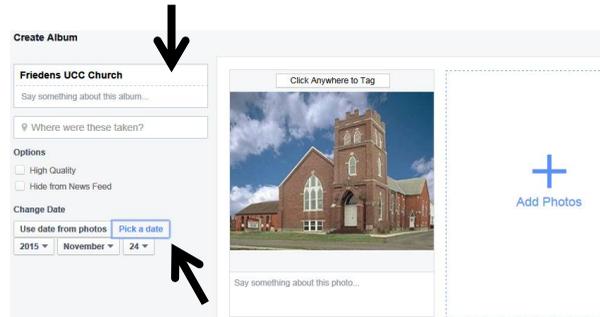
3. Click on the **Photo** tab under the picture of the kids.
4. The following will appear. Click on the **Add Photos** button



5. Select your picture. After selecting your first picture it will appear in the first box. This is where you can begin to add the other photos and fill out the album information



6. Fill out the UNTITLED ALBUM area with the name of your event.
7. Fille out the date of the event from the pick a date area on the bottom



Don't forget to hit **like** on all of activites that are posted. When you hit **like** you are sharing and promoting an event/activity will all of your Facebook friends.

Youth

There will be a meeting about the National Youth Event on January 24, in the theater after church.

This is a mandatory meeting for all youth attending this trip along with one parent. The first payment is due and we will be registering for the trip. All youth attending this trip are required to work the Trivia night.



Our winter classes begin January 10th, at 9:00 a.m.



JANUARY 29TH

**DOORS OPEN AT
6:30 P.M.**

**TEAMS OF 8
\$10.00 PER PERSON**

FAMILY FUN EVENT

**All proceeds go to and stay
with our youth.**

**Call the office to sign up
If you don't have a team we
will help you find one!
667-6535**

Babysitting available

