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"We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were entreating us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God." (II Corinthians 5:20)

As we noted a couple of weeks ago, to be reconciled means to be made friendly again. In other words, God wants to be your friend.

That thought really excited my grandson Carter. After last week's sermon he could hardly wait to tell me how much he liked the idea of being God's friend. I hope it excites you as well.

It's one thing to note that Abraham was called the friend of God, (James 2:23) and that the Lord used to speak to Moses face to face, just as a man speaks to his friend. (Exodus 33:11) It's another thing to actually hear Jesus say, "You are My friends." (John 15:14)

Are you a friend of God? Do you talk with Him as friend to friend? Do you think of the One who laid down His life for His friends as your friend?

The Apostle Paul tells us in Philippians 2 that although Jesus existed in the form of God He emptied Himself to be made in the likeness of men, and that He did so in order to become obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Jesus became a man in order to become our Savior. That's the good news of great joy that the angel shared with the shepherds. But He also became a man so we could relate to God as friend with friend.

While we may not find that message on Christmas cards, it's an important part of the good news of great joy. God wants to be your friend. And the Prince of Peace not only wants there to be peace on earth, He begs you to be reconciled to God. He begs you to become friends with your Creator. In fact, He became a man, and died, to make that possible.

While I long to hear, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Lord", I want even more than that. When I get to heaven I want to be welcomed as a friend of God. And that's my Christmas wish for you as well.

God Bless, Rick



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50th Annual Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service



Our 50th Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service will feature special music, the Christmas story, the Lord's Supper, and the lighting of candles.

To minimize possible exposure to the covid virus, communion will have been previously placed in the pews, and candles will be lit as we exit the sanctuary.

The singing of Silent Night will conclude the service outside.



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Sunday Worship Service 9:15 AM
Bible School 10:45 AM

STATISTICS

Worship	11/29	72
Offering		\$3,217.65
Worship	12/6	92
Offering		\$5,812.65

Let Us Pray For...

- Lee Zimmerman who tested positive for COVID but has not had any serious complications.
- Carmen Karhliker's father-in-law on a ventilator with COVID.
- Matt Luedtke's family friend with COVID.
- Karen Mann who needed to have a stent inserted in her heart.
- Bonnie Ruebush as she continues infusion treatment.
- Jamella as she continues therapy.

The children's Christmas musical is set to be presented this Sunday morning at 9:15. Due to the expected increase in attendance we once again want to encourage those coming to maintain distance between family groups, and to wear masks. There will be no nurseries or Sunday School classes this week. Treats will be served under the carport instead of the fellowship hall, and people will be encouraged to congratulate the children in the parking lot.

CHRISTMAS CAROLING

We are still planning to go caroling on the Sunday before Christmas, but we'll need to reduce the size of groups traveling together. Those who wish to go are asked to meet at the church on the 20th at 6:00, and we will divide into family units or small groups before venturing out. Sadly there will be no party after caroling this year.

Holiday Scheduling

Due to the holidays, we'll not be offering Wednesday night Bible study on Dec. 23 or 30, nor Sunday night adult study and youth groups on Dec. 27 and Jan. 3.

ELDERS AND FINANCIAL PROJECTION AFFIRMED

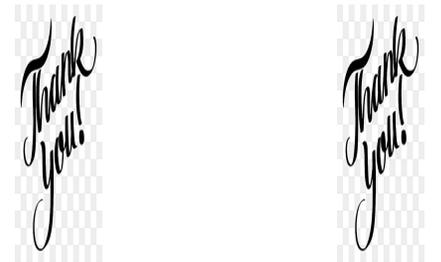
We are pleased to announce that Casey Blakley, Paul Hunley, Chris Luzio, and Jonathan Sperry were all affirmed by the congregation to continue serving as elders of Chatham Christian Church for next year. The financial projection of \$282,200, which was slightly lower than last year's projection, was also affirmed to be in keeping with good stewardship. An average weekly offering of \$5,427 will enable us to meet the projection for 2021.



Junior & Senior High School

During our youth group time on Sunday evening, we are going to have our annual gift exchange for Christmas. Most of you know the rules, but in case you don't, they are very simple. Don't go out and buy anything! Look in your closet, around the house or in the garage for that item that has been laying around taking up space for years and wrap it up! Some junk is more appealing than other junk, so there will be a chance to steal gifts as the exchange progresses.

Then, we will have our traditional saranwrap ball filled with tons of prizes to try and unravel. For a few fortunate individuals, you will find a prize to put a little gas in your car or help you purchase a little something to eat while holiday shopping this year. See you on Sunday!



Judy and I wanted to thank all the kids who came out last Saturday to help out with our service project. Between her house and the church, we ended up raking enough leaves for 42 bags! It was great to see everyone laughing and joking while working together. Our lunch at Sangamo was well deserved! Thanks again and I am thankful for the servant's heart evident in our kids.

On a normal year, our annual Amazing Race would be coming up soon. Last year we had a great race with around 40 kids participating, but this year it will have to be postponed at least until Spring. But, it will open up some new opportunities as we race around Springfield.

We are somewhat limited when we have it in December every year, so warmer weather will allow us to plan some of the race outside. I am expecting the restaurants will be open by then, so our traditional eating challenge will be worked into the schedule. Also, by that time, I am hopeful there will be nothing holding us back for our annual broomball game at the Nelson Center. I stinks we have to postpone it, but be patient as I hope all our lives can get back to normal soon.

Due to COVID restrictions we'll not be able to celebrate New Year's Eve as usual this year, but we do want to wish everyone a Happy New Year. And it is our prayer that 2021 will be a happy new year, with the pandemic coming to an end so our times together in worship, study, and fellowship can return to normal.