



Friends Church

An Open & Affirming Congregation



*"Joy to the World!"
Joyeux Noël*

December 25, 2022

11:00am

Christmas Day

WELCOME TO FRIENDS CHURCH!

We are honored that you have chosen to spend your Sunday morning with us. Friends Congregational Church is an **Open & Affirming** congregation of the United Church of Christ. We welcome all people into the full life and ministry of our church—people of all ages, races, sexual orientations, gender identities, and abilities. No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

FIRST TIME AT FRIENDS? If you are a guest with us today, please let us know. Welcome cards are located in the chair backs to fill out and leave in the offering plate during today's offertory. If you are joining us online for today's service, you will find an Online Visitor Card at <https://www.friends-ucc.org/your-first-visit>. We are so glad you are here, so please let us know if there is anything we can do for you.

CHILDCARE: We invite children to participate fully in our community and worship life. Children of all ages are welcome in worship or you may choose childcare, offered for ages 1-5 in the nursery down the hall through the piano side double doors. We currently have Covid Protocols in place, which you can find posted outside the nursery door.

WiFi: To access church WiFi, please use this login information,
WiFi – The Promised LAN
Password: stillspeaking

RESTROOMS are located through the double doors on the piano side of the sanctuary. Gender assigned restrooms are straight down at the end of the hall, and a gender neutral restroom is to the immediate right.

NOTE OF GRATITUDE: The volunteers helping with today's worship services are Kelly Wellman (lay leader); and Peggy Vitek (greeter)

Worship service volunteers for next Sunday, January 1, are David Manuel (lay leader); Holly Scott, (communion steward); and Doris Machiniski (greeter).

We give God thanks for our volunteers sharing their gifts. To volunteer for a Sunday as a lay leader, communion steward, or greeter, email worship@friends-ucc.org.

Christmas Day

Christmas is not just a day; it is a season! Christmas Day is the festival commemorating the birth of the Christ Child, observed primarily on December 25 among billions of people around the world. The 12 days that follow are known as the Christmas season or Christmastide.

PSALM FOR MEDITATION: Psalm 95:6-7, NRSV

O come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker!

For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. O that today you would listen to his voice!

CHIMING OF THE TRINITY

WORDS OF WELCOME

Dan De Leon

PRELUDE & LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

***CALL TO WORSHIP (BASED ON ISAIAH 52: 7, 9)**

Kelly Wellman

One: How beautiful upon the mountains
are the feet of one who brings good tidings.

**All: We receive good tidings of joy, words of peace,
a message of salvation.**

One: Break forth into singing, for God has comforted the people,
brought bloom to the wasteland, shown strength in all the nations.

All: Word of the infant born in Bethlehem is our good news.

One: Christ is born. The prophet's hopes are made flesh,
and all our longings are made human in joy.

All: Rejoice and be glad, for Christ is born today!

***OPENING HYMN: Glory to God #133 O Come, All Ye Faithful** Tune: Adeste Fideles

1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant; O come
2 True God from true God, Light from light e - ter - nal, born
3 Sing, choirs of an - gels; sing in ex - ul - ta - tion; sing,
4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing; Je -

ye; O come ye to Beth - le - hem! Come, and be - hold him,
of a vir - gin, a mor - tal he comes; ver - y God, be -
all ye cit - i - zens of heaven a - bove! Glo - ry to God, all
sus, to thee be all glo - ry given; Word of the Fa - ther,

Refrain

born the King of an - gels!
 got - ten, not cre - at - ed! O come, let us a - dore him; O come, let
 glo - ry in the high - est!
 now in flesh ap - pear - ing!

us a - dore him; O come, let us a - dore him, Christ, the Lord!

*INVOCATION

Kelly Wellman

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Dan De Leon

Children in the sanctuary are invited to come to the front, and children watching online are invited to get closer to their screen for the children's message. All are invited to sing the first verse of "Away in a Manger" (NCH #124) to begin the children's message.

**Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
 The stars in the sky looked down where he lay, the little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.**

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

Brooke Dooley

LITANY OF CONFESSION (RESPONSIVE)

One: Emmanuel, we affirm that you are God-with-us
 Christmas morning and all the days of the year.

**All: Emmanuel, we confess that we need
 both the tender words of the comforter
 and the shouted challenge of the herald.**

One: Emmanuel, we believe that you are the shepherd of our lives;
 we come to be nurtured for strength;

All: We come to be collected from the fragmentation of hurried days;

One: We come to be led or carried through pain, sorrow, and fear;
All: We come to be gently led into new paths of service
as we become, by your strength, shepherds for one another.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Brooke Dooley

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

Brooke Dooley

One: The peace of Christ be with you all.
Many: And also with you!

*HYMN OF RESPONSE: Glory to God #147 - The First Nowell Tune: The First Nowell

1 The first Now-ell the an-gel did say was to cer-tain poor
2 They look-ed up and saw a star shin-ing in the
3 And by the light of that same star three wise men
4 This star drew nigh to the north-west; o'er Beth - le -

shep-herds in fields as they lay, in fields where they lay keep-ing
east be-yond them far; and to the earth it gave
came from coun - try far; to seek for a king was their
hem it took its rest, and there it did both stop

their sheep, on a cold win-ter's night that was so deep.
great light, and so it con - tin - ued both day and night.
in - tent, and to fol - low the star wher - ev - er it went.
and stay, right o - ver the place where Je - sus lay.

Refrain
Now - ell, Now - ell, Now - ell, Now - ell,

SERVICE OF BAPTISM FOR SAIGE TORRES

At this time, the children are invited to come to the front for a closer view of the baptism

The Welcome

Pastor: They were bringing children to Jesus that Jesus might touch them; and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it, Jesus was indignant, and said to them...

All: Let the children come to me, do not hinder them; for to such belongs the realm of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the realm of God like a child shall not enter it.

Pastor: And Jesus took them in his arms and blessed them.

The Address

Questions for the Parents

Congregational Assent

Pastor: Jesus Christ calls us to make disciples of all nations and to offer them the gift of grace in baptism. Do you, who witness and celebrate this sacrament, promise your love, support, and care to the one about to be baptized, as he lives and grows in Christ?

All: We promise our love, support and care.

Prayer of Baptism

Act of Baptism

Prayer for the Baptized

SERVICE OF BAPTISM FOR TONY TORRES

Invitation

Welcome

One: Dear friends, as we come to this font of living water, let us recall the meaning of baptism. For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.

All: For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

One: Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

Address

Questions of the Candidate

Congregational Assent

One: Jesus Christ calls us to make disciples of all nations and to offer them the gift of grace in baptism. Do you, who witness and celebrate this sacrament, promise your love, support, and care to the one about to be baptized?

All: We promise our love, support, and care.

Prayer of Baptism

Act of Baptism

Song of Praise No. 759

**Glory to the Creator, the Christ, the Holy Spirit, Three in One;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
World without end. Amen. Amen.**

Prayer for the Baptized

HEBREW SCRIPTURE READING: Isaiah 52:7-10 (NRSV)

Brooke Dooley

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, “Your God reigns.” Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices, together they sing for joy; for in plain sight they see the return of the Lord to Zion. Break forth together into singing, you ruins of Jerusalem; for the Lord has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

EPISTLE READING: Hebrews 1:1-4 (CEB)

Trent Williams

In the past, God spoke through the prophets to our ancestors in many times and many ways. In these final days, though, he spoke to us through a Son. God made his Son the heir of everything and created the world through him. The Son is the light of God’s glory and the imprint of God’s being. He maintains everything with his powerful message. After he carried out the cleansing of people from their sins, he sat down at the right side of the highest majesty. And the Son became so much greater than the other messengers, such as angels, that he received a more important title than theirs.

GOSPEL READING: Luke 2:8-20 (NRSV)

Dan De Leon

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!” When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

One: The Word of God for the people of God.

All: **God is still speaking. Thanks be to God!**

MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

INVITATION TO SHARE

Kelly Wellman

OFFERTORY

Secure online giving via Church Office Giving at bit.ly/givetofriends

Text to give: Text **Friends** to 979-500-2523

Venmo to 979-307-8860 or @friendsucc

*DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise God all creatures here below: alleluia, alleluia!
Praise God the source of all our gifts,
Praise Jesus Christ whose power uplifts,
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit,
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION & THE LORD'S PRAYER

Trent Williams

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name;
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & INVITATION TO JOIN FRIENDS CHURCH

Brooke Dooley

*CLOSING HYMN: Glory to God #119 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Tune: Mendelssohn

1 Hark! The her - ald an-gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born king.
2 Christ, by high - est heaven a-dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
3 Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the sun of righ-teous-ness!

Peace on earth and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!"
late in time be - hold him come, off-spring of the vir-gin's womb.
Light and life to all he brings, risen with heal - ing in his wings.

Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise; join the tri-umph of the skies;
Veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail the in-car - nate de - i - ty,
Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,

with the an-gel - ic host pro-claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
pleased in flesh with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em-man - u - el.
born to raise us from the earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.

*BENEDICTION

Brooke Dooley

POSTLUDE

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Instrumental Music:

Prelude: Hark! the Herald Angels Sing with Angels We Have Heard On High - arranged by Bernadine Johnson

Offertory: Carol of the Birds - Ancient French Melody, arranged by Chip Davis

Postlude: Go, Tell It on the Mountain - Spiritual, arranged by Melody Bober

Scriptures for January 01, 2023: Isaiah 63:7-9; Hebrews 2:10-18; Matthew 2:13-23

CHRISTMAS FUND: The last of our UCC special offerings for the year is the Christmas Fund, which supports ministerial assistance through the Pension Boards for retired and active clergy in financial need. We hope that you will give generously to support those who have given so much of their lives in service to the church. You can give on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day during the offertory, or online by selecting Special Offerings and the Christmas Fund in the drop-down menu. Thank you!

JANUARY THEOLOGY ON TAP: The first Theology on Tap (T.o.T.) of 2023 will meet on the third Thursday of the month, January 19, at 6pm. T.o.T. gathers at KinderHill Brew Lab, 800 S. Bryan Ave in Bryan. There are non-alcoholic beverages, minors are welcome, as are four-leggeds, and there is a wood-fired pizza food truck onsite. So, let's support local business and gather for Friends Church's next T.o.T., 1/19, at 6pm. Cheers and amen!

FRIENDS CHURCH BOOK CLUB WILL RESUME IN JANUARY: The Linda Coats Book Club meets on the last Thursday of every month. In 2023, the theme will be "spiritual memoirs", with our first book being Take This Bread by Sara Miles. For questions or information, contact the Spiritual Life Committee at spirit_develop@friends-ucc.org.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION UPDATE: New Years Week Food Distribution at Peace Lutheran Church will be on **Wednesday, December 28** rather than our usual Friday. Come and join our enthusiastic food distribution team on Dec. 28st any time between 2:00 and 6:00. Meet us in the Peace Lutheran parking lot. It will definitely put you in the spirit of sharing! Contact Anne with any questions awehrly@suddenlink.net.

HOLIDAY BREAK: Sunday school for children and youth will take a break for the holidays. We won't meet from December 18th-January 1st, and classes will resume on January 8th. Merry Christmas, and we're looking forward to the new Sunday school year!

NEW MEMBER SUNDAY: January 29 is New Member Sunday, when we welcome our newest members into the life of Friends Congregational Church. If you are interested in joining Friends Church on New Member Sunday, please contact Senior Pastor Dan De Leon (pastor@friends-ucc.org), Executive Pastor Trent Williams (pastortrent@friends-ucc.org), or Associate Pastor Brooke Dooley (pastorbrooke@friends-ucc.org).

FAMILY PROMISE UPDATE: These families are in need of furnishings like queen and twin size beds, kitchen table and chairs, and bedding as well. Our rotation at the Family Promise Center is scheduled for Jan 1 – 8, 2023 but it is probable that the third family currently in the Center will be moving between Dec 26-30. Therefore, we will only ask for help if it is needed. If you have donations of furnishings or if you have any questions, please contact Mary Howell at mhowell61@gmail.com or at 979-219-8007.

Friends Congregational Church United Church of Christ

Vision:

Rooted in the way of Christ, we strive to be a community of God's radical inclusion and extravagant welcome.

Mission:

United by the example of Jesus, we live faithfully, love limitlessly, and serve boldly.

Friends Church Staff

Senior Pastor

The Rev. Dr. Dan De Leon (*he, him*)
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Director of Music Ministries

Chris Hoffman (*he, him*)
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Executive Pastor

The Rev. Trent Williams (*he, him*)
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