



Friends Church

An Open & Affirming Congregation



Baptism of Jesus
Lorenzo Scott (1987)

January 7, 2024

II:00am

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.

LEADING IN TODAY'S SERVICE:

Lay Leaders: Susan Fontaine & Diane Simpson
Communion Steward: Maura Ives & Mo Bertrand
Greeters: Kathy Yeager & Lanette and Rick Schulte

Next Sunday, January 14th:
Lay Leaders: Ann Wild & Jackie Womack
Greeters: Eli Vasquez

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.

COMMUNION ON REQUEST: While the sacrament of communion is observed in worship on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month at Friends, communion is available any Sunday on request. If you would like to receive communion on a 2nd, 4th, or 5th Sunday, please find one of our pastors to serve you at the conclusion of the worship service.

Baptism of Christ Sunday

This feast day celebrates the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River by John the Baptist. It is celebrated in western traditions on the Sunday following Epiphany, the Season of Light.

SCRIPTURE FOR MEDITATION: Galatians 3:27-28 (NRSV)

As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek; there is no longer slave or free; there is no longer male and female, for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.

QUOTE FOR MEDITATION:

“It is easy to believe in such moments that water was made primarily for blessing, and only secondarily for growing vegetables or doing the wash.”

–Marilynne Robinson

CHIMING OF THE TRINITY

WORDS OF WELCOME

Brooke Dooley

PRELUDE & LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES

CALL TO WORSHIP

Diane Simpson

One: In the beginning, God...

All: Swept over waters, spoke light into existence, created day and night and called it good.

One: As the days and nights of creation filled with life, God...

All: Made humanity out of the dirt to love and tend creation, to be loved and tended by God.

One: As we lost our way, God...

All: Sent Jesus, Love Incarnate, to show us the way back.

One: On the day Jesus came to the banks of the Jordan River to be baptized, God...

All: Declared, “You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.”

One: Let us, then, follow Jesus into the waters, remembering our baptism in which God...

All: Claims us as beloved children, the family of God.

*OPENING HYMN - Sing of God Made Manifest

1 Sing of God made man - i - fest in a child ro - bust and blest,
2 Sing of God made man - i - fest when at Jor - dan John con - fessed,
3 Sing of God made man - i - fest when Christ came as wed - ding guest
4 Sing of God made man - i - fest on the cloud - capped moun - tain's crest,

to whose home in Beth - le - hem where a star had guid - ed them,
"I should be bap - tized by you, but your bid - ding I will do."
and at Ca - na gave a sign, turn - ing wa - ter in - to wine;
where the law and proph - ets waned so that Christ a - lone re - mained:

ma - gi came and gifts un - bound, signs mys - te - rious and pro - found:
Then from heaven a dou - ble sign—dove - like Spir - it, voice di - vine—
fur - ther still was love re - vealed as he taught, for - gave, and healed,
glimpse of glo - ry, pledge of grace, given as Je - sus set his face

myrrh and frank - in - cense and gold grave and God and king fore - told.
hailed the true A - noint - ed One: "This is my be - lov - ed Son."
bring - ing light and life to all who would lis - ten to God's call.
towards the wait - ing cross and grave, sign of hope that God would save.

The musical score consists of four systems, each with a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are printed below the vocal lines.

*INVOCATION

Diane Simpson

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Tami Dudo

Children in the sanctuary are invited to come to the front, and children watching online are invited to get closer to their screen. All are invited to sing a verse of NCH #524 "This Little Light of Mine" to begin the children's message.

**This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine,
This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine,
This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine,
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine (oh let it shine)!**

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

Brooke Dooley

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Brooke Dooley

All: Gracious God, we confess that too often we live as though we are fearful, not faithful. When we encounter the waters of chaos and confusion, we don't easily pass through them, but we obsess about the height of the water instead of the sight of the other side. You promised to walk through the rivers with us. Help us believe. And help our unbelief.

ASSURANCE OF GRACE

Brooke Dooley

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

Brooke Dooley

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

FIRST GOSPEL READING

Matthew 2:13-23, NRSV

Diane Simpson

Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called my son."

When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah: “A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.”

When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child’s life are dead.” Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, “He will be called a Nazorean.”

SPECIAL MUSIC: The Shepherd’s Carol - Bob Chilcott (Cathy Hansen, soprano)

SECOND GOSPEL READING

Mark 1:4-II (NRSV)

Trent Williams

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, “You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.”

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

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

THE MESSAGE

Trent Williams

MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

INVITATION TO SHARE

Diane Simpson

OFFERTORY

Secure online giving via Realm Giving at bit.ly/givetofriendsucc
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**

Brooke Dooley

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

Brooke Dooley, Trent Williams

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 our 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

Brooke Dooley

***CLOSING HYMN #164** Arise, Your Light Is Come

Tune: Festal Song

***BENEDICTION**

Trent Williams

POSTLUDE

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Instrumental Music:

Prelude: We Three Kings - John Henry Hopkins, Jr., arranged by Bethany K. Smith
Offertory: On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry - Music from *Musikalisches Handbuch*
Communion: The First Noel - arranged by John Carter
Postlude: Songs of Thankfulness and Praise - Melody by Jakob Hintze, harmonized by
Johann Sebastian Bach

Scriptures for Second Sunday after Epiphany, January 14, 2024: 1 Samuel 3:1-10; John 1:43-51

GETTING CONNECTED AT FRIENDS

GET CONNECTED! On Fridays we email out a newsletter called “This Week at Friends” that shares important information and all of the activities and events going on at Friends. Subscribe by contacting office@friends-ucc.org.

EVENTS THIS WEEK

GUYZ BREAKFAST 1/13: Guyz Breakfast brings together fellowship, fun and great food. Join us at the church on the second Saturday of the month 9:00 to 10:30 a.m. Bring your favorite breakfast food or drink to share. Pancakes and coffee are provided.

WONDERFUL WEDNESDAY WITH WOMEN 1/10: Wonderful Wednesdays with Women will gather on January 10 from 5:00 to 7:00 PM at Downtown Uncorked Wine Bar in College Station (1551 Greens Prairie Rd Suite 102). All are welcome at this informal, come-and-go activity where we enjoy getting to know one another in a relaxed, social environment.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

VOLUNTEER VOICES NEEDED FOR FRIENDS CHURCH PODCAST: Our new weekly podcast, featuring the messages from Sunday worship services, is introduced by Friends Church members giving a brief testimony of what Friends Church means to them. To volunteer to introduce an episode, contact A/V Tech Jeremy Dudo at av@friends-ucc.org.

SENIOR PASTOR OUT OF THE OFFICE: Pastor Dan will be away from the church Jan. 7-11 attending the Conversations retreat for United Church of Christ senior pastors of multi-staff congregations. If you have a pastoral need during that time, please contact Pastor Brooke or Pastor Trent.

CONFIRMATION ANNOUNCEMENT: For the past few weeks there has been an interest request for Spring 2024 Confirmation. Confirmation at Friends Church is an opportunity for youth grades 6-12 to engage in lessons related to the Christian tradition, Bible studies, mentorship, and field trips to local faith communities. Confirmation runs from early January to Pentecost Sunday in May. It is not a requirement to be baptized in order to pursue the rite of Confirmation, rather, it is a chance for our youth to say “yes” to where they are on their faith journey, and for the congregation to reiterate our support as they grow and learn in their faith. We are planning to postpone classes until Spring 2025. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Brooke.

GIVING STATEMENTS 2023: Giving statements for 2023 will be available for pick up by Sunday, January 21. This year, since we transitioned systems, there will be two statements: one for January to June from Church Office Online, and one for July to December, from Realm. Thank you for your generosity and support of the mission and ministry of Friends Church in 2023!

OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE AND SHARE

CROCKETT ELEMENTARY BOOK FAIR: Last year our free Book Fair at Crockett Elementary School in Bryan was a great success. Each child received three books to keep. Even the teachers were able to pick two books for themselves. We are doing it again this spring, so it's time to collect books! You can donate books by placing them in the box outside the office, or you can donate gift cards or money, and we will buy books with your donations. If you have questions, please contact Jodie Robinson (jocelinbrune@gmail.com) or Pam Engler (penglertx@gmail.com). Thank you!

SHARE YOUR TIME AND TALENTS: There are plenty of opportunities for you to share your time and talents both here at the church and in the community.

Greeters and Communion Stewards Needed: If you can help with a 9am Sunday service or two, please contact Worship Committee Chair Ryan Womack: worship@friends-ucc.org.

Youth Group Looking for Extra Help: We are still looking for volunteers to help with remaining Youth Group events for the fall, including lessons, and a Christmas party. Contact Pastor Brooke at pastorbrooke@friend-ucc.org.

Sunday School Teachers Needed: Are you feeling called to teach our children or youth? Contact Pastor Dan for more information: pastor@friends-ucc.org.

Coffee Crew/Kitchen Angel: Volunteer once or multiple times to prepare the coffee for the 9am or the 11am service. Contact fellowship@friends-ucc.org.

Be a Curbside Steward: Recycling occurs once every two weeks early on Fridays and trash pick-up is weekly, early on Mondays. Bins need to be placed at the curb the afternoon or evening before the scheduled pick up day and returned to the side of the church after pick-up. Contact Property@Friends-ucc.org

Serve the Community: Help out at the Brazos Church Food Pantry, the Friday food distribution at Peace Lutheran, or Brazos Interfaith Immigration Network (BIIN) as an English or citizenship class tutor. And more! Visit the Friends Church website (Friends-ucc.org) ▶ **Get Involved** ▶ **Volunteer** or email office@friends-ucc.org for more information or to volunteer.

SAVE THE DATE

28TH ANNUAL MLK FREEDOM MARCH & PROGRAM: The Brazos Valley Area Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. will host their 28th Annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Freedom March on Monday, January 15, 2024. The march will allow our communities to join together in walking for world peace, as well as recognizing the life and contributions of Dr. King. The Delta Sigma Theta Sorority invites you and your organization to wear your logos or carry your organization's banner and join them as we walk for peace and unity. The march will begin at 10am at Sadie Thomas Park, 129 Moss Street, and conclude at Kemp Carver Elementary School, 750 Bruin Trace, Bryan. This year's guest speaker is Minister Donnie Nelson, local musician, educator, and youth advocate.

PLANNED GIVING WORKSHOP: You are invited to join us for a Planned Giving Workshop after the 11:00 worship service on February 4. Lunch will be provided, and we will learn about how to remember the church in your will or estate plans, ways to make use of retirement assets, and answer your questions. All are welcome--even if you're not at retirement age yet, this can be valuable learning as you think about planning for the future. You can sign up to let us know you'll be coming here: <https://bit.ly/friendsplannedgiving>.

THEOLOGY ON TAP, 1/18: At 6pm on January 18th, Theology on Tap (T.o.T.) is held at Kinder-Hill Brew Lab, 800 S. Bryan Ave. T.o.T.'s informal discussions bring our lives more in tune with God's will and way as we get to know each other better beyond church walls. The venue has an assortment of great beers on tap. You don't need to be fond of beer to join us, nor do you have to be 21 or older. Non-alcoholic beverages are available, and minors are welcome, as are four-leggeds.

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*)
pastor@friends-ucc.org

Director of Music Ministries

Chris Hoffman (*he, him*)
choir@friends-ucc.org

Executive Pastor

The Rev. Trent Williams (*he, him*)
pastortrent@friends-ucc.org

Associate Pastor to Youth & Young Adults

The Rev. Brooke Dooley (*she, her, they, them*)
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