



Friends Church

An Open & Affirming Congregation



*"Baptism and Leaving for the Wilderness"
Father George Saget, 1963*

January 8, 2023
9:00am & 11:00am

The Baptism of Christ

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: Psalm 29 (NRSV)

Ascribe to the Lord, O heavenly beings, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength. Ascribe to the Lord the glory of his name; worship the Lord in holy splendor. The voice of the Lord is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the Lord, over mighty waters. The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty. The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars; the Lord breaks the cedars of Lebanon. He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, and Sirion like a young wild ox. The voice of the Lord flashes forth flames of fire. The voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness; the Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh. The voice of the Lord causes the oaks to whirl, and strips the forest bare; and in his temple all say, "Glory!" The Lord sits enthroned over the flood; the Lord sits enthroned as king forever. May the Lord give strength to his people! May the Lord bless his people with peace!

QUOTE FOR MEDITATION:

"Still wet from his baptism, Jesus left the Jordan and went about God's business. Every crying person, every brokenhearted person, every hungry person, every diseased person, every alienated person, every suffering person was his business."

-Fred Craddock

CHIMING OF THE TRINITY

WORDS OF WELCOME

Brooke Dooley

PRELUDE & LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Kathy Yeager (9am)

Holly Scott (11am)

One: See, the former things have come to pass,

All: And new things God now declares;

One: Before they spring forth,

All: God speaks to us, now.

One: This is the Good News:

All: Jesus joins us in the tumultuous waters of our lives.

One: You are God's beloved children.

All: Come, Holy Spirit!

***OPENING HYMN: NCH #326 - Crashing Waters at Creation**

***INVOCATION**

Kathy Yeager (9am)

Holly Scott (11am)

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Trent Williams

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 "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)!

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

Trent Williams

One: The peace of Christ be with you all.

Many: And also with you!

HYMN OF RESPONSE: NCH #327 - Jesus Loves Me

HEBREW SCRIPTURE READING: Isaiah 42:1-9 (CEB)

Kathy Yeager (9am)

Holly Scott (11am)

But here is my servant, the one I uphold; my chosen, who brings me delight. I've put my spirit upon him; he will bring justice to the nations. He won't cry out or shout aloud, or make his voice heard in public. He won't break a bruised reed; he won't extinguish a faint wick, but he will surely bring justice. He won't be extinguished or broken until he has established justice in the land. The coastlands await his teaching. God the Lord says—the one who created the heavens, the one who stretched them out, the one who spread out the earth and its offspring, the one who gave breath to its people and life to those who walk on it—I, the Lord, have called you for a good reason. I will grasp your hand and guard you, and give you as a covenant to the people, as a light to the nations, to open blind eyes, to lead the prisoners from prison, and those who sit in darkness from the dungeon. I am the Lord; that is my name; I don't hand out my glory to others or my praise to idols. The things announced in the past—look—they've already happened, but I'm declaring new things. Before they even appear, I tell you about them.

SPECIAL MUSIC: The Work of Christmas - Dan Forrest (Chris Hoffman, tenor)

When the song of the angels is stilled, when the star in the sky is gone, when the kings and princes are home, when the shepherds are back with their flock, the work of Christmas begins: To find the lost, to heal the broken, to feed the hungry, to release the prisoner, to rebuild the nations; to bring peace among brothers, to make music from the heart.

Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom 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

Dan De Leon

MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

INVITATION TO SHARE

Kathy Yeager (9am)
Holly Scott (11am)

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 (UNISON)

God of the Oppressed, accompany us as we undo ways of harm within and without. Imagine with us a future of ease and interdependence. Fortify us for the work of change. Celebrate with us the ways radical compassion is already moving, and is already troubling waters of new life. Bless our offerings, our resources, and our gifts to abundant thriving. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Brooke Dooley

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Brooke Dooley

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

Trent Williams

*CLOSING HYMN: NCH 181 - You Are Salt for the Earth, O People

*BENEDICTION

Dan De Leon

POSTLUDE

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Instrumental Music:

- Prelude: Down to the River to Pray (with Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying) -
Traditional Spiritual and Ken Medema, arranged by Mary McDonald
- Offertory: Deep River - Traditional Spiritual, arranged by Larry Shackley
- Postlude: On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry - Music from the *Musikalisches Handbuch*

Scriptures for January 15, 2023: Psalm 91; Matthew 4:1-17

GETTING CONNECTED AT FRIENDS

NEW MEMBER SUNDAY: January 29 is New Member Sunday, when we welcome new members into the life of our community of faith. If you are interested in joining Friends Church on New Member Sunday, please contact Pastor Dan, Pastor Trent, or Pastor Brooke.

CHURCH DATABASE & DIRECTORY UPDATE: As we shared in our recent congregational meetings, we are migrating to a new church database and directory system called Realm. You should be receiving an email soon, if you haven't already, from Realm inviting you to login and claim your profile. This is a legitimate message, so feel free to follow the link. Once you've set up your password and login, you can edit your profile and access the church directory. There is also an app for your phone or mobile device that will use the same login as the desktop version. The app is called Realm Connect, developed by ACS Technologies Group. We will share more details about how to edit your profile soon, and if you have any questions in the meantime, reach out to Pastor Trent at pastortrent@friends-ucc.org.

A NOTE OF GRATITUDE ON BEHALF OF THE CHURCH STAFF: Friends Church family, words cannot express how grateful I am for the kind recognition of the church staff and me in the 11am worship service on December 18, and for the generous gifts presented to us all. As senior pastor for our whole team, it means more to me than you know that you support each and every one of them with gracious appreciation. On behalf of the entire staff, I thank you for your graciousness, thoughtfulness, and support. I'm also personally thankful for your gift, as it honored my family and me during the holidays and the New Year. May we continue to be blessings to one another in kindness, generosity, and support. Thank you.

PASTOR DAN OUT OF THE OFFICE: From the afternoon of January 8 through January 15, Pastor Dan will be attending a conference for United Church of Christ senior pastors of multi-staff congregations and celebrating Stacy's and his 20th anniversary. For pastoral needs during that time, contact Pastor Trent or Pastor Brooke.

PASTOR DAN LEADS MLK BOOK STUDY AT LINCOLN CENTER: Coretta Scott King wrote that “if there is one book [my husband] Martin Luther King, Jr. has written that people consistently tell me has changed their lives, it is Strength to Love.” At 6:30pm on the Wednesday evening after MLK Day, January 18, the Lincoln Center offers an informal study of Dr. King’s 1963 book that Coretta Scott King says, “best explains the central element of [his] philosophy of nonviolence: His belief in a divine, loving presence that binds all life.” Our own Pastor Dan will lead the book study and discussion that is free and open to the public. Copies of Strength to Love are available to purchase at the Lincoln Center, 1000 Eleanor Street in College Station, for \$12.

PREPARING FOR THE VOTE: SHOULD FRIENDS CHURCH BECOME A REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM CONGREGATION?: Over the last two months, Friends Church has engaged in information sessions and presentations exploring this question. At the January 29th congregational meeting after the 11am service, we will vote on whether to become a Reproductive Freedom Congregation, a designation recognized by Just Texas. To learn more about what this decision might mean for our congregation, please see your Jan. 6 edition of This Week at Friends (TW@F) and visit Texas Freedom Network’s “Just Texas Reproductive Freedom Initiative” website at <https://justtx.org/rfc/>.

FRIENDS CHURCH FOOD DISTRIBUTION: Pondering a resolution for 2023? Try getting involved with our weekly food distribution. Meet and serve your neighbors on Friday afternoons as a team of Friends folk hand out produce from the Brazos Valley Food Bank. To be a part of this outreach effort, join us for an hour or two in the parking lot at Peace Lutheran Church this Friday (and every Friday) between 2:30 and 6pm to assist in the distribution. For more info, contact Anne Wehrly at awehrly@suddenlink.net.

ORDINATION & INSTALLATION SERVICE FOR BROOKE DOOLEY: At 3pm on Sunday, January 22, Brooke Dooley will be ordained a minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and installed as Associate Pastor to Youth & Young Adults at Friends Congregational Church. Rev. Dr. Jo Hudson, a former pastor of Friends Church, will offer the sermon. Our friends throughout the Heart of Texas Association and South Central Conference of the United Church of Christ are invited, and all are welcome to attend the ordination and installation service. A reception in Brooke’s honor will follow.

JANUARY THEOLOGY ON TAP: The first Theology on Tap 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. Our informal discussions revolve around faith and spirituality, and 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. There are non-alcoholic beverages, minors are welcome, as are four-leggeds, and there is a wood-fired pizza food truck onsite.

FRIENDS CHURCH BOOK CLUB: 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. February's book will be *Brother to a Dragonfly* by Will D. Campbell. All are welcome. For questions or information, contact the Spiritual Life Committee at spirit_develop@friends-ucc.org.

MORNING MANNA SPRING STUDY: In this new year, you're invited to join us in the Morning Manna room on Sundays at 10:00am for a new study on the story of David. We'll be reading through I & II Samuel and exploring the literary and theological masterpiece that tells the story of King David. And if you're a fan of graphic novels, the Brick Bible might make an appearance, so you don't want to miss this! Contact Pastor Trent with any questions.

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*)
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Executive Pastor

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

Associate Pastor to Youth & Young Adults

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