



Friends Church

An Open & Affirming Congregation



Baptism of Christ

January 12, 2025

11:00am

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: Dinah Anderson & Holly Scott
Greeters: Carolyn Young & Tim Scott

Next Sunday, January 19:
Lay Leaders: Becky Burks & Kathy Miller
Communion Stewards: Carolyn Young
Greeters: Doris Machinski

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.

QUOTE FOR MEDITATION:

To be able to say, 'I'm baptized' is not to claim an extra dignity, let alone a sort of privilege that keeps you separate from and superior to the rest of the human race, but to claim a new level of solidarity with other people.

—Rowan Williams

CHIMING OF THE TRINITY

WORDS OF WELCOME

Brooke Dooley

PRELUDE & LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES

*CALL TO WORSHIP (RESPONSIVE)

Holly Scott

One: Come, beloved of God, to remember who you are and whose you are.

All: **God in Christ, has named us all "Beloved."**

One: Yes, here and now, God's heaven of love is being poured out anew.

All: **May this motion of the Holy One, shape our hearts and minds.**

One: May it brighten the Epiphany light in us and the whole creation.

All: **And may it shape our words and work into good news for the world!**

***OPENING HYMN** - No.459 Come, O Fount of Every Blessing

Nettleton

***INVOCATION**

Holly Scott

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Brooke Dooley

Children in the sanctuary are invited to come to the front. 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.**

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

Trent Williams

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (RESPONSIVE)

Trent Williams

**Loving God, let me enter again Your baptismal river of grace.
Let it soak every stain attached to the fabric of my life and longings.
Yes, Holy One, submerge me in You again and again and again.
Cleanse every distracting impulse luring me away
from You who are my heart's deepest desire.
Let no urgency be more important than Your forgiving love, always transforming.
Today, help me choose you above every temptation
that lures me to worship lesser things.
By this of You, forgive me, renew me,
and grant me the grace promised by You in Jesus Christ.
Amen.**

ASSURANCE OF GRACE

Trent Williams

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

Trent Williams

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

***HYMN OF RESPONSE** - No. 354 God, When I Came into This Life

Land of Rest

EPISTLE READING

I Corinthians 6:19-20, NRSV

Holly Scott

Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body.

SPECIAL MUSIC: Deep River - Traditional Spiritual, arranged by Moses Hogan
(Chris Hoffman, tenor; Ruthie De Leon, piano)

GOSPEL READING

Luke 3:15-17, 21-22, NRSV

Trent Williams

As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. 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

FAITH IN ACTION MOMENT: JANE'S DUE PROCESS

Ceceilia Hawkins

INVITATION TO SHARE

Holly Scott

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 & 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

Brooke Dooley

***CLOSING HYMN - No. 82 Go, My Children, with My Blessing**

Ar Hyd Y Nos

POSTLUDE

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Instrumental Music:

Prelude: Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing - arranged by Becki Slagle Mayo
Offertory: On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry - Music from *Musikalisches Handbuch*
Postlude: Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart - arranged by John Innes

Scriptures for The Second Sunday after Epiphany, January 19, 2025: 1 Corinthians 12:1-11; John 2:1-11

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

YOUTH GROUP BACK-TO-SCHOOL LUNCH, JAN 12: The Youth Group will be gathering for a Back-to-School lunch at the Tower Point Blue Baker, Jan 12, 12pm. We will also be celebrating our December and January Youth Group birthdays.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MORNING MANNA SERIES: “THE WIDENING OF GOD’S MERCY: SEXUALITY WITHIN THE BIBLICAL STORY”: What happens when a prominent evangelical bible scholar changes his mind? Richard Hays wrote one of the most widely quoted defenses of the traditional non-affirming position on LGBT issues in the 1990s, but over time, grew to a new understanding of God’s welcome and inclusion. With his son Christopher, also a biblical scholar, he has written a book that explores the whole biblical narrative, showing how God’s mercy is always widening to greater and greater inclusion. Join us Sundays at 10am for this journey through the story of God’s widening mercy.

SENIOR PASTOR OUT OF THE OFFICE, JAN 12-18: Pastor Dan will be away from the church, Jan. 12-18, attending a retreat for senior pastors of multi-staff United Church of Christ congregations, and then taking a couple of vacation days. During that time, for any pastoral needs, please contact Pastor Trent or Pastor Brooke.

MENTAL HEALTH WALKS W/ PASTOR BROOKE ON WINTER BREAK: Pastor Brooke will be taking a break from the weekly Mental Health Walks for the Winter Break, but we will return to our usual 4:30pm walks at Wolf Pen Creek Park on January 14, 2025.

FRIENDS GREETERS NEEDED: Join our Friends Church greeter team! We are in need of additional folks to help welcome people on Sunday mornings and make our worship services flow smoothly. If you are interested in learning more, reach out to Worship Committee chair Charity Stokes at worship@friends-ucc.org. You can also sign up online here: bit.ly/FriendsGreeter.

SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS NEEDED: We have all the Sunday school classes covered but are still looking for volunteers who could be called when teachers are out of town to be substitutes. Please let Pastor Dan or Abby Burley, Christian_ed@friends-ucc.org, know if we can add you to our list.

MIGRANT JUSTICE NETWORK FORMING IN BCS: The Brazos Sanctuary Coalition (BSC), formed by Friends Church and other churches, non-profits and individuals in 2017, is re-organizing as the Migrant Justice Network (MJN) in preparation for the challenges the community may face in the coming months. The MJN is an interfaith group standing publicly in solidarity with members of our community at risk for detention and deportation. We will serve as witness to the injustices of the immigration system by accompanying and supporting our immigrant brothers and sisters and working to keep families safe and together. If you would like to be informed and updated on our plans and opportunities for you to contribute and participate, beginning in January 2025, please email migrantjusticenetwork@gmail.com and we will add you to the announcements list.

OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE AND SHARE

SUPPORT OUR PODCAST: Help us spread the good word! Share this week's sermon with those you love with our "Friends Congregational Church Sermons" podcast, available wherever you can find podcasts! Easily access and publicize our mission to follow the model of Jesus: to live faithfully, love limitlessly, and serve boldly. With over 100 episodes published (since Advent of last year) we've expanded (since Eastertide this year) our efforts to include the wider library of sermons offered before this podcast kicked off. We would love to have your support by either showing this podcast to friends and loved ones, and/or contributing your voice to introduce an episode. Volunteers can reach out to av@friends-ucc.org (Jeremy) if interested, or you might get approached after service. Recording takes less than 10 minutes and is almost entirely scripted.

Be a Greeter and Communion Steward: To help in the 9am and 11am services, please contact Worship Committee Chair Charity Stokes: worship@friends-ucc.org.

Youth Group Looking for Extra Help: We are still looking for volunteers to help with the Youth Group events for the new school year. 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: "All I need is coffee; all we need are volunteers to make it!"

Sign up via sheet on kitchen counter, at bit.ly/friendschurchcoffee or email Jan at 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

YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID TRAINING, JAN 25: NAMI Brazos Valley (National Alliance on Mental Illness) will be offering a Mental Health First Aid Training focused on youth. This training is for parents/guardians of youth, or anyone who works with youth regularly. It will cover topics such as anxiety, depression, substance use, psychosis related disorders, neurodivergence, eating disorders, suicide prevention, and self-care. The training will be held in the double classroom on Saturday, January 25, 8:30am-5:00pm. Scan the QR Code to register, or contact Pastor Brooke for questions: pastorbrooke@friends-ucc.org.



LINDA COATS BOOK CLUB, JAN 27: Linda Coats Book Club will resume meeting in 2025 on Thursday, January 30th at 6:30pm. Our book will be *The Sun Does Shine* by Anthony Ray Hinton, a compelling story of a man falsely imprisoned on death row for 30 years before being exonerated, and how he maintained his faith. "An amazing and heartwarming story, it restores our faith in the inherent goodness of humanity" says Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Come join us for great discussion!!

FAMILY PROMISE SAVE THE DATE, JAN 31: The 16th Annual Family Promise Comfort Food Cook-off is set for Friday, January 31 at 6:00 pm. This is a great way to gather with Friends and enjoy lots of good food as well as support Family Promise. Ticket information and complete details are coming soon.

SERVICE OF ORDINATION FOR KYLE RILEY, FEB 2: At 3pm on Sunday, February 2, at Friends Church, Kyle Riley, who completed his “member in discernment of a call” process with us at Friends, will be ordained a minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. 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 service.

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*)
pastorbrooke@friends-ucc.org

Administrative Assistant

Michael Rangel (*he, him*)
office@friends-ucc.org

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www.friends-ucc.org • Office Hours: Monday–Friday, 9:00–3:00
Pastor Dan's weekday off is Friday. Pastor Trent's weekday off is Monday.