



"A Community Of Many Faithing Communities Where All Belong!"

Living Waters Contemplative Life Center | Divine Intervention Ministry to the Homeless
Tippecanoe just.good.food Garden | Food Justice Site PCUSA
Arts and Science Literacy Camps for Children

Welcome To Worship

March 6, 2022

9:30 a.m.

Freeing Jesus



Welcome to this time of being with God and each other.

TODAY'S WORSHIP
First Sunday of Lent

Preparing to Worship...



“Freeing Jesus”

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✧ **Prelude: Zo Trembly**

✧ **Welcome and community news**

✧ **Readying Ourselves for Worship**

***Surely God is in this place, Holy Ground!***  
***Surely God is in this place,***  
***Holy Ground!***

Today is a momentous day here at Tippe, as we resume in-person worship, we also enter the Lenten season, and I finally get to gather with members of our faithing community here in this beloved space.

Let us be mindful of the gift of relationships and of community, of the many ways that we are present to one another, and the myriad ways that we experience and understand the Divine in our midst. On this first Sunday of Lent, we will look through the lens of friendship as we reflect on our relationship with Jesus, with ourselves, and with one another. We begin by listening to the words of poet, John O’Donohue, who lifts up the gift of the “soul friend,” or in Gaelic, our *anam cara*.

## *A Friendship Blessing*

May you be blessed with good friends.  
May you learn to be a good friend to yourself.  
May you be able to journey to that place in your soul where  
there is great love, warmth, feeling, and forgiveness.  
May this change you.  
May it transfigure that which is negative, distant, or cold in you.  
May you be brought in to the real passion, kinship, and affinity of belonging.  
May you treasure your friends.  
May you be good to them and may you be there for them;  
may they bring you all the blessing, challenges, truth,  
and light that you need for your journey.  
May you never be isolated.  
May you always be in the gentle nest of belonging with your *anam cara*.

~ John O'Donohue, *Anam Cara: A Book of Celtic Wisdom*



### ✧ **Becoming Present to God and Each Other...Our Check-in:**

How Are You as You Arrive...how is it with your spirit?

### ~The Joy of Passing the Peace~

### ✧ **Gathering as God's People: Our Theme**

As we enter the Lenten season, I am basing the theme we will be exploring on a book written by Diana Butler Bass, entitled, "Freeing Jesus: Rediscovering Jesus as Friend, Teacher, Savior, Lord, Way, and Presence."

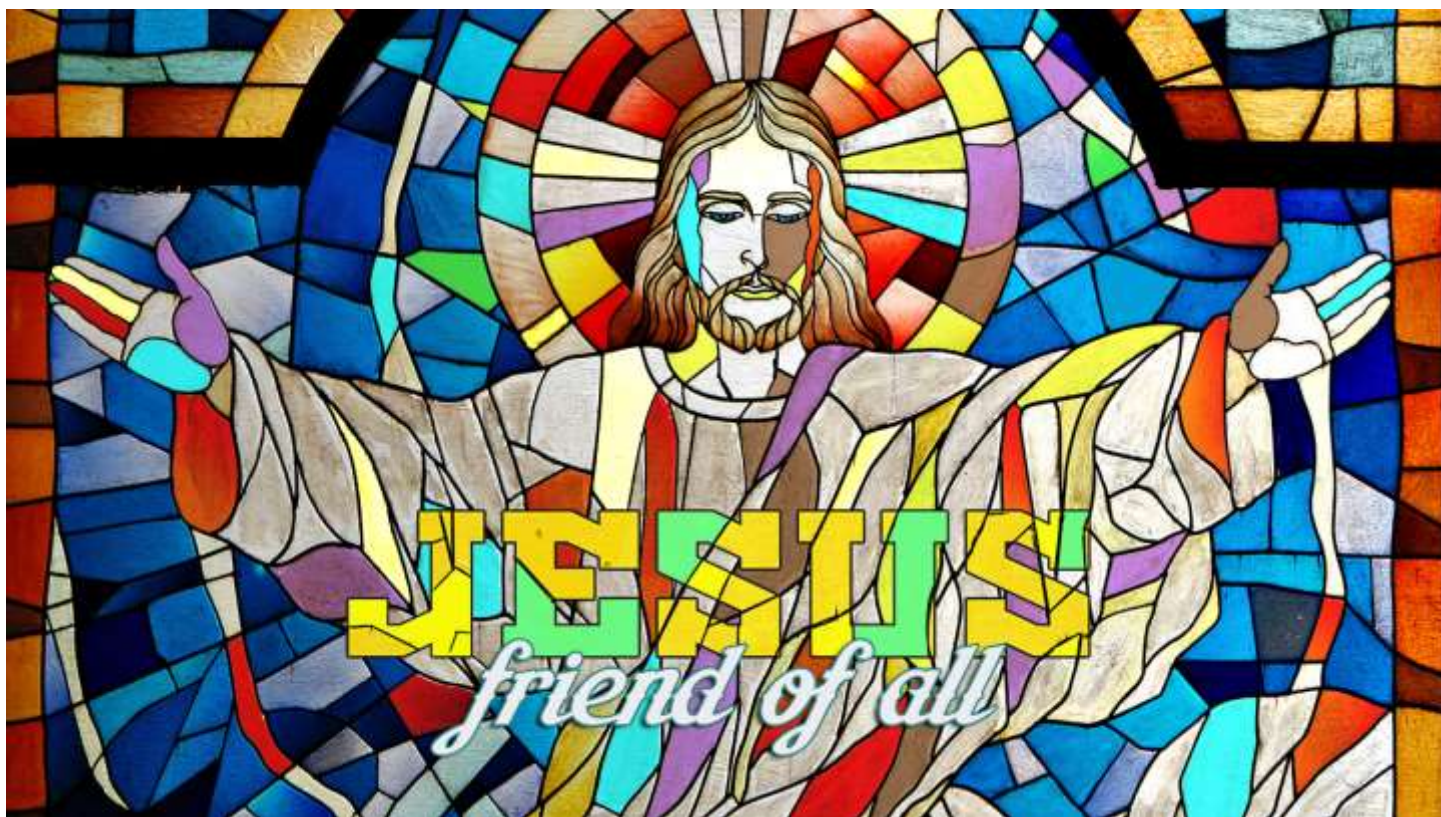
Through her text, the Bible Wisdom teachings, and our journey together, we will consider: how has your experience of Jesus changed over time? Most of us have a specific understanding or particular view of Jesus, and that can become constricting.

We end up putting Jesus in a container, and don't allow our understanding or experience of Jesus to evolve over time. Yet, as in any relationship, change happens. If we are seeking an authentic, intimate, evolving relationship with the Divine, then as Christians, we need to be intentional about the way we describe and talk about and envision Jesus. For that matter, we need to be intentional about how we interact and engage with Jesus - we shape the nature of our relationship because Jesus is already attentive to us - it is up to us to turn toward Jesus and choose to connect.

Diana Butler Bass chose six particular words, or lenses, through which to reflect on our understanding of Jesus: *Friend, Teacher, Savior, Lord, Way, and Presence*. She writes, "Let these words free you to embrace the prismatic nature of Jesus and renew your hope in the Jesus you have known, the one you know now, and the one who will meet you ahead on the road."

May we walk together on the path to better understand who Jesus is, and in turn, gain insight into who we are.

✧ **Gathering Hymn: "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" #465**



✧ **Opening Ourselves to God's Grace**

**All: Holy One, let my soul rise up to meet you  
as the day rises to meet the sun.**

**Glory to God, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen**

✧ **Sharing our Innermost Lives with God**

God of Light and Love, thank you for all that you reveal to us. Thank you for being present to us and making transformation possible for each one of us. As we come to understand Jesus as our friend, help us turn toward your Son's invitation for connection. And guide us, as we strive to accompany one another and as we open our hearts to the risk and vulnerability of true relationship. Amen.



As we sit alongside one another in this space, we know that the Divine Presence is within us, among us, and surrounding us. Let us reflect on our relationships – those that are life-giving, those that are challenging, those that are broken. Open your heart to God and ask for guidance on the journey toward loving connection.

✧ **Short period of silent reflection**

Holy Spirit, may we hear and take in deeply your precious word for us today. May we grow in wisdom, strength, and love as we open our ears, our minds, and our hearts to the transformative message you have in store for each of us. Amen.

✧ **Bible Wisdom Teachings**

Exodus 33:7-11a

✧ **Reflection Questions**

How might I deepen my relationship with Jesus? What experiences of Jesus have I had that reveal the possibility of intimacy? What hinders that intimacy?

John 15: 10-17

✧ **Reflection Questions**

How might my experiences and relationships shift if I recognize that the only “command” is love? When have I experienced a hand lifting me up and when have I offered my hand to someone else? What might “bearing fruit” look like in my life?

One: May we hear anew the origin stories of our faith and draw from the roots of our tradition.

All: **Thanks be to our God.**

✧ **Message**

***“Freeing Jesus: Our Friend”***

Rev. Trish Eckert



✧ **Special Music: “Freeing Jesus” by Betsy Gonwa**

✧ **Sharing Our Wisdom**

✧ **Affirming Our Faith with Intention...Our Prayer**

**All: We are striving to be...**

**Relevant and Responsive, Open and Affirming,  
Engaged and Engaging.**

**Informal and Radically Traditional in the Ways of Jesus.  
Welcoming All.**

**Honoring The Sacred Masculine and The Sacred Feminine,  
Embracing The Mystic Within, We Are Of One Spirit...  
not necessarily of one mind.**

**Mission Bound, Educationally engaged,  
Children and Teens show us “the way.”**

**Elders honored. Visitors Expected.**

**Full of gratitude and seeking grace!**

✧ **A Moment of Quiet for Everyone**

✧ **Community Prayers, Pastoral Prayer, and The Lord’s Prayer**



✧ **Preparation of the Table**

**Great Prayer of Thanksgiving**

Pastor: In this season of Lent, a time of reflection, preparation, and renewal, let us come to the table with open hearts.

**All: We are hungry for the gift of friendship and connection that Jesus lovingly offers in all times and in all places and to all people. We are grateful to God for sending Jesus to walk among us. We are grateful to the Holy Spirit for nourishing and strengthening us for the journey we are called to walk.**

Pastor: As we partake of the bread of life and the juice of the grape, we are made into a new creation.

**✧Words of Invitation and the Breaking of the Bread  
Communion of the People**



**✧Benediction**

We leave this gathered community,  
But we don't leave our connection,  
Our concerns, our care for each other.  
Our service to each other, to the world, and to our faith continues.  
Until we are together again, friends,  
Be strong, be well, be true, be loving.

*Now that the worship has ended, may the service truly begin.*

**✧Our Response...*Holy One, now we your servants go in peace. Your word lives on in us.***

Postlude: Zo Trembly





*Hear this service presented on Tippe Talk podcast, link on our website & Facebook.*

<http://www.tippechurch.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/TippecanoeChurch>