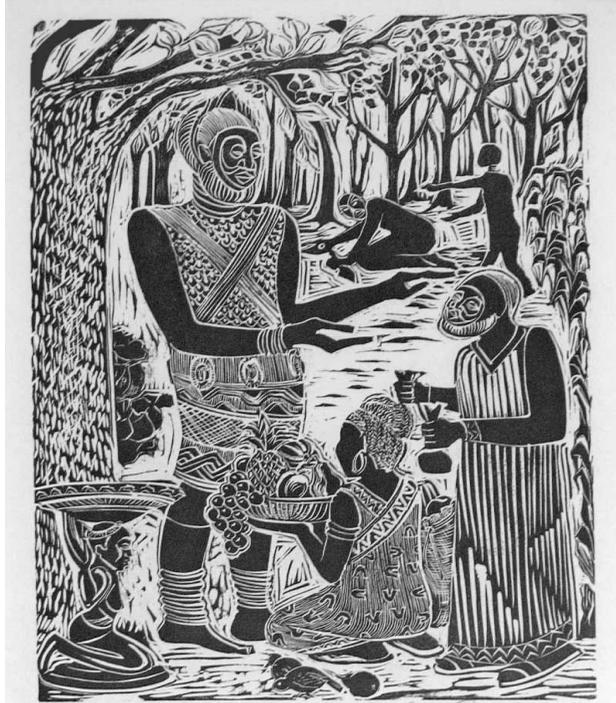




Friends Church

An Open & Affirming Congregation



“Parable of the Talents”

Annette Gandy Fortt, Maryland, 1390

November 13, 2022

9:00am & 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.

NOTE OF GRATITUDE: The volunteers helping with today's worship services are Kate Abbott and Becky Burks (lay leaders); and Victoria Junek and Abby Diaz DeLeon (greeters).

Worship service volunteers for next Sunday, November 20, are Dinah Anderson and Linda Fitzwater (lay leaders); Megan Yeager and Charity Stokes (communion steward); and Megan Yeager and Tim Scott (greeters).

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.

The Twenty-Third Sunday after Pentecost

The season after Pentecost is also considered Ordinary Time. It indicates the parts of the liturgical year that are not included in the major seasons of the church calendar. Ordinary Time can be understood in terms of the living out of Christian faith and the meaning of Christ's resurrection in ordinary life. It may be referred to as the "green season," as green is the liturgical color for this period of time in the church year.

QUOTE FOR MEDITATION:

"Do all the good you can,
By all the means you can,
In all the ways you can,
In all the places you can,
At all the times you can,
To all the people you can,
As long as ever you can."

-John Wesley

CHIMING OF THE TRINITY

WORDS OF WELCOME

Dan De Leon

PRELUDE & LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES

**CALL TO WORSHIP

Kate Abbott (9:00)
Becky Burks (11:00)

One: When we are unsure of where to go,

All: We turn to you, God of Clarity, for guidance.

One: When we feel stuck in between this and that,

All: We wait for your nudge, Gentle Christ.

One: When we are overwhelmed by the enormity of the work of healing,

All: You, Wise Spirit, reveal the next stepping stone.

One: Meet us in this place, Discerning God.

All: We come to meet with You.

****OPENING HYMN:** NCH #565 God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending

Tune: Austrian Hymn

****INVOCATION**

Kate Abbott (9:00)

Becky Burks (11:00)

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

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 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**

Brooke Dooley

One: The peace of Christ be with you all.

Many: **And also with you!**

HYMN OF RESPONSE: Jesus, Be The Center

Verses

BE THE CENTER Irregular

1 Je - sus, be the cen - ter, be my source,
 2 Je - sus, be the cen - ter, be my hope,
 3 Je - sus, be my vi - sion, be my path,
 4 Je - sus, be the cen - ter, be my source,

be my light, Je - sus.
 be my song, Je - sus.
 be my guide, Je - sus.
 be my light, Je - sus.

Refrain

Be the fire in my heart. Be the wind
 in these sails. Be the rea - son that I live,
 Je - sus, Je - sus.

Coda

Be my source, be my light, Je - sus.
 Je - sus. Je - sus.

EPISTLE READING: James 1:17-27 (NRSV)

Kate Abbott (9:00)

Becky Burks (11:00)

Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. In fulfillment of his own purpose he gave us birth by the word of truth, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures.

You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger; for your anger does not produce God's righteousness. Therefore rid yourselves of all sordidness and rank growth of wickedness, and welcome with meekness the implanted word that has the power to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like. But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act—they will be blessed in their doing. If any think they are religious, and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless. Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

HANDBELL ANTHEM: Prayer for the Innocents (A Prayer for Hope and Love) - Michael Helman

(Written in memory of the 49 people killed in Orlando, Florida, and for the families and loved ones of all those who have lost their lives because of hate, intolerance, and violence.)

GOSPEL READING: Matthew 25:14-30 (NRSV)

Trent Williams

'For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, "Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents." His master said to him, "Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in

charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.” And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, “Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.” His master said to him, “Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.” Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, “Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.” But his master replied, “You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

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

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

THE MESSAGE

Trent Williams

GENEROSITY TESTIMONY & INVITATION TO SHARE

Kate Abbott (9:00)

Becky Burks (11:00)

OFFERTORY

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

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

Venmo to 979-446-5746 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)**

Brooke Dooley

God, whose giving knows no ending, we offer up the treasure that you have entrusted to us; we offer up the skills and time that you have graciously given to us; we offer up ourselves in service and praise. Receive these gifts by your grace. Multiply and use them through the power of the Holy Spirit to accomplish Christ's work of love in the world. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & PASTORAL PRAYER

Dan De Leon

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Dan De Leon

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

Dan De Leon

****CLOSING HYMN: NCH #423 Great Is Your Faithfulness**

Tune: Faithfulness

****BENEDICTION**

Trent Williams

POSTLUDE

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Instrumental Music:

Prelude: Come, Christians, Join to Sing - Traditional Spanish Melody, "Madrid," arranged by Becki Slagle Mayo

Offertory: Blessed Assurance - Fanny J. Crosby, arranged by Randall Hartsell

Postlude: Great Is Thy Faithfulness - William M. Runyan, arranged by Joel Raney

Scriptures for Nov 20: Hebrews 1:1-9; Matthew 27: 11-14, 27-37

GETTING CONNECTED AT FRIENDS

PLANNED GIVING WORKSHOP: POSTPONED: We are postponing the planned giving workshop originally scheduled for today after the 11:00 service. We're a busy church this month, so we will reschedule for a time that is better for our staff and members. In the meantime, watch for more information about planned giving at Friends Church, and we'll be making available some written information soon about ways to incorporate planned giving into your stewardship plans.

BRAZOS VALLEY JOURNEY COMMUNITY GATHERING TODAY: Join the Brazos Valley Journey Community for our next Community Gathering! The Brazos Valley Journey Community will be gathering today, Sunday, November 13, 4-6 pm at PJ Ellison's home "Buffalo Moon Rising" 2900 Peach Creek Lane, Brenham. Interested in carpooling? We will leave from Friends about 3:15 pm. Please bring either a snack (Last names A-P) or a drink (Last names Q-Z) to share. Wear your Journey (or other cursillo) cross and name tag. We will hear a Fourth Day talk, share in the Feast of Holy Communion and welcome the new pilgrims from NTJ17 to the community. For more information, please contact Laura Wimberley l.a.wimberley@gmail.com.

BIG GAY BBQ: Join Pride Community Center for our annual BBQ, held in the cooler temps of fall again this year, at KinderHill Brew Lab for free BBQ and fixins from 2pm to 6pm on November 13th. This is a family friendly event. Entertainment will include live music from Roo & the Preacher Dad (Ruthie De Leon & Pastor Dan), live drag performers, activities and games. Volunteers are needed, please email volunteer@pridecc.org. Sponsors are also needed, please email richard.burgess@pridecc.org. Finally, if your organization would like to have an info table at our event, please contact info@pridecc.org.

TRANSGENDER DAY OF REMEMBRANCE VIGIL: Pride Community Center and Friends Congregational Church, UCC with supportive LGBTQ+ inclusive organizations of the Brazos Valley invite the public to a vigil of remembrance for all of those in the past 12 months who have lost their lives due to anti-transgender violence. This event is open to all ages. This is a safe-space event for members of the LGBTQ+ community. Volunteers are needed. For more information, email info@pridecc.org.

FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN: We can't wait to find ways to connect all of our wonderful families with young children! In the past, this group provided support and companionship for both parents and children. The Nurture Committee developed a survey to use to plan how and when to gather. Please take a moment to respond to the survey at <https://forms.gle/94Uecmt4HuutniRW6>.

GETTING CONNECTED AT FRIENDS

THIS WEEK WITH NURTURE!

- 20s and 30s – November 13, after 11:00 worship service; Potluck lunch at the Harper House (2065 Carter Lake Dr., CS).
- FAA (Fabulous At Any Age) – November 16, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.. Brown Bag Lunch at the church (double classroom).
- Wonderful Wednesdays with Women – November 16, 5-7 p.m., Downtown Uncorked Wine Bar (note new location: 1551 Greens Prairie Rd., Suite 102, CS). Not limited to women!

THE CHRISTMAS PAGEANT IS COMING!: December is just around the corner and we've already started planning Friends' Christmas Pageant. Please let us know we can count on your child/youth for the pageant by completing this survey using the link:

<https://forms.gle/A2CkPBfzFekXTRzp6>.

ADVENT IS AROUND THE CORNER: We will be ordering the UCC Advent Daily Devotional books for the season. To receive one, you are invited to sign-up in the narthex or electronically here <https://forms.gle/y9k52HQPAHoeiLkF9>, by November 25th. Limit is one per family, please.

SHARE FEEDBACK WITH YOUR CONGREGATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES: Did you know that there are two congregational representatives for Friends Church that serve on Church Council as a voice for members of the Congregation? These representatives are available for you to bring questions, comments, issues, and ideas to Church Council. The representatives are Jacque Halverson and Christine Gravelle. You can either catch them at church or you can email them at congregationalrep@friends-ucc.org.

YOUTH GROUP BAKE SALE: The Friends Youth Group is getting a jump on raising funds for their summer mission trip to Tulsa, OK. Join us for a Thanksgiving bake sale before and after the 11:00 AM worship service on **Sunday, November 20th!** Cash, check and online donations in any amount will be welcomed. And calling all bakers! You can also contribute to the goods – either whole cakes and pies or individually wrapped baked goods – by baking at home and then dropping off the morning of the bake sale. **NOTE:** The Friends Thanksgiving Fellowship will be held that same evening, so cakes and pies may be purchased and then brought to share at the fellowship event.

GETTING CONNECTED AT FRIENDS

HELP PREP THE CHURCH FOR ADVENT & CHRISTMAS: It's almost time to hang the greens, put up the purple, and deck the halls! On the Saturday after Thanksgiving, November 26, at 10am, the Worship Committee invites you to help set up and decorate the sanctuary and narthex for Advent and Christmas. We are changing the banners, hanging wreaths, setting up the angel trees, and putting out the Advent candles. Chris Hoffman will crank out carols on the piano to put us in the spirit as we work and enjoy hot cocoa, cider, and holiday treats. RSVP to help with us by emailing worship@friends-ucc.org.

FRIENDSGIVING WORSHIP & DINNER, NOV. 20: Friends Church's annual Friendsgiving at Stephen C. Beachy Central Park, 1000 Krenek Tap Rd, CS, is scheduled for Sunday evening, November 20th. We gather at 5:30pm for a brief time of worship and then enjoy a potluck meal together. The Fellowship Committee is seeking additional help with transporting items from the church to the park before the event, and then transporting them back afterwards. Additionally, in anticipation of another great turnout this year we are looking for some generous members who would be interested in contributing a brisket, turkey, or ham for the dinner. We have people to cook them if that is not your strong suit. We look forward to gathering and giving thanks for all the blessings we enjoy!

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

Pastoral Intern

Brooke Dooley (*she, her, they, them*)
pastoralintern@friends-ucc.org

Administrative Assistant

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