

FRIENDS CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Third Sunday in Lent
March 3, 2024
9:00am



*An Open & Affirming
Congregation*

PSALM FOR MEDITATION: Psalm 19, NRSV

The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words; their voice is not heard; yet their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In the heavens he has set a tent for the sun, which comes out like a bridegroom from his wedding canopy, and like a strong man runs its course with joy. Its rising is from the end of the heavens, and its circuit to the end of them; and nothing is hid from its heat. The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul; the decrees of the Lord are sure, making wise the simple; the precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is clear, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever; the ordinances of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey, and drippings of the honeycomb. Moreover by them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward. But who can detect their errors? Clear me from hidden faults. Keep back your servant also from the insolent; do not let them have dominion over me. Then I shall be blameless, and innocent of great transgression. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to you, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.

QUOTE FOR MEDITATION:

“When we go to church, we don’t step into God’s presence; rather, we step into a community that, at its best, helps call our attention to the fact that God is present everywhere, that the body of Jesus and the movement of the Spirit are boundless, and so that the temple’s architecture must extend all the way out — all the way to the expanding edges of the cosmos.”

Rev. Matthew Myer Boulton

CHIMING OF THE TRINITY

WORDS OF WELCOME

Brooke Dooley

PRELUDE & LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

David Manuel

One: Into the house of God we are called to enter,

All: to worship and receive the gift of grace.

One: As we step towards this sacred space,

All: we acknowledge all that can distract or exploit.

One: God calls upon us to cleanse our houses
of all that does not find its source in God's love.

**All: Together we give ourselves in worship
and right relations with our neighbor. Let us worship God.**

***OPENING HYMN - Change My Heart, O God**

Tune: Change My Heart

Change my heart, O God; make it ev - er true.
Cám - bia - me, Se - ñor, con tu gran po - der.
 향 상 진 실 케 내 맘 바 꾸 사

Change my heart, O God; may I be like you.
Haz - me co - mo tú, tu yo quie - ro ser.
 주 님 의 모 습 님 게 하 소 서

You are the Pot - ter; I am the clay.
Tú el al - fa - re - ro, yo el ba - rro soy.
 주 는 토 기 장 이 나 는 진 흙

Mold me and make me; this is what I pray.
Só - lo a tu j - ma - gen, quie - ro siem - pre ser.
 날 빛 으 소 서 기 도 하 오 니

to Refrain / al Estribillo / 후렴

SERVICE OF DEDICATION FOR REESE ASHLEY NICHOLS

The Welcome

Pastor: They were bringing children to Jesus that Jesus might touch them; and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it, Jesus was indignant, and said to them...

All: Let the children come to me, do not hinder them; for to such belongs the realm of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the realm of God like a child shall not enter it.

Pastor: And Jesus took them in his arms and blessed them.

The Address

Questions for the Parents

Congregational Assent

Pastor: Jesus Christ offers us a simple invitation, one that all are invited to share: "Follow me." Do you, who witness and celebrate this dedication today, promise your love, support, and care to Reese Ashley Nichols, as she lives and grows in Christ, learning by your example how she might come to follow Jesus?

All: We promise our love, support and care.

Introduction of the Dedicated Child

Prayer for the Dedicated Child

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

Dan De Leon

One: The peace of Christ be with you all.

Many: And also with you.

GOSPEL READING

John 2:13-22, CEB

Dan De Leon

It was nearly time for the Jewish Passover, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. He found in the temple those who were selling cattle, sheep, and doves, as well as those involved in exchanging currency sitting there. He made a whip from ropes and chased them all out of the temple, including the cattle and the sheep. He scattered the coins and overturned the tables of those who exchanged currency. He said to the dove sellers, “Get these things out of here! Don’t make my Father’s house a place of business.” His disciples remembered that it is written, *Passion for your house consumes me.*

Then the Jewish leaders asked him, “By what authority are you doing these things? What miraculous sign will you show us?”

Jesus answered, “Destroy this temple and in three days I’ll raise it up.”

The Jewish leaders replied, “It took forty-six years to build this temple, and you will raise it up in three days?” But the temple Jesus was talking about was his body. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered what he had said, and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

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

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

THE MESSAGE

“To Love What God Loves”

Dan De Leon

SILENT REFLECTION & MEDITATION

One chime calls us into silence, and two chimes call us out of silence.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & LIGHTING OF CANDLES FOR INTERCESSIONS

Brooke Dooley

INVITATION TO SHARE

David Manuel

OFFERTORY

Secure online giving via Church Office Giving at bit.ly/givetofriends
Venmo to 979-307-8860 or @friendsucc

*DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that love has done;
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Brooke Dooley

O God, whose richness is not found at the tables of those willing to exchange goods for the sake of acquiring earthly riches, but rather is found at the table of extravagant love for neighbor, we entrust these gifts to your care that they may abound in your steadfast love for all persons. Use them for the building of your beloved community here on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

Brooke Dooley

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Brooke Dooley

Most compassionate Life-giver, may we honor and praise you:
may we work with you to establish your new order of justice, peace and love.
Give us what we need for growth, and help us, through forgiving others, to accept forgiveness.
Strengthen us in the time of testing, that we may resist all evil.
For all the tenderness, strength and love are yours, now and forever. Amen.

*CLOSING HYMN #198 Lift High the Cross

Tune: Crucifer

*BENEDICTION

Dan De Leon

POSTLUDE

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Instrumental Music:

Prelude: God of Ages, History's Maker - Gaelic Melody, arranged by Faye López
Offertory: Beneath the Cross of Jesus - Frederick Charles Maker
Communion: Let Us Break Bread Together - Traditional Spiritual, arranged by Sharon Elery Rogers
Postlude: Violin Concerto in G Minor, Op. 26; First Movement, Allegro moderato -
Max Bruch (Weihsueh Chiu, violin)

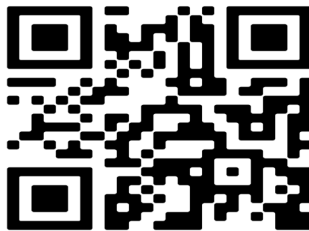
Scriptures for Fourth Sunday in Lent, March 10, 2024:

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

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING, MARCH 3: Today, Friends Church will celebrate One Great Hour of Sharing, one of four special mission offerings of the United Church of Christ. This Lenten offering supports the disaster, refugee, and development ministries of the United Church of Christ within Wider Church Ministries. Scan the QR Code for more details. Please bring a donation to the service on this date or give online through our website (select “Giving”, “Make a Donation”, and choose “SCC One Great Hour of Sharing” in the “Fund” drop-down menu). Join us as we Share the Light with our global community!



LENTEN MORNING MEDITATION, MARCH 5: On Tuesdays during Lent, you are invited to the Friends Church sanctuary to start your morning with centering meditation. At 7:30am on Tuesdays, Mar. 5th, 12th, 19th and 26th, we gather for a brief introduction, followed by silent meditation, and follow-up conversation as time permits. Start to finish, this lasts between 35 and 45 minutes, hopefully allowing for those of us with work, school, and other obligations to get where we need to be on time. We are excited about this series of morning meditations that will bring us together in self- and community-preparation for Easter.

REPRO KIT ASSEMBLY PARTY!, MARCH 5: We’ll be hosting a “repro kit assembly party” on March 5th at Friends, and we’d love for you to join us as part of our support for reproductive rights. Our church is a pick-up point for the kits—we have 5 or 6 visitors a month who come for a private, no-questions-asked safe space to pick up a kit. **TIME:** 6:00 pm till done (probably an hour)
REFRESHMENTS: likely

“BROKEN”: REAL LIFE AND REAL FAITH, MARCH 5: On Tuesdays during Lent, we will gather in the sanctuary at 6:30pm to watch episode 4 of the 2017 BBC drama series “Broken” and have conversation about how faith and real life intersect. Even if you can’t make every week, you are welcome to attend, and can view the episodes you might have missed on Amazon Prime or Brit-box. Please be advised that the themes can be intense, including suicidal ideation and the intersection of race and police violence. This week we will view episode 4. Contact Pastor Trent if you have any questions.

LENTEN MIDDAY RECITAL SERIES, MARCH 6: Join us for a series of Lenten Midday Recitals, featuring the talents of our wonderful musicians of Friends Church! Bring your own lunch for fellowship beginning at 11:30 am, and stay for a 20-30 minute program, beginning at 12:00, of music selected by our gifted musicians. A variety of music - sacred, musical theatre, classical, and pop - will be performed each week. Recital dates include March 6, 13, and 20. We hope you can take time out from these busy weeks to relax and enjoy great music.

GUYZ BREAKFAST, MARCH 9: 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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

REALM UPDATES: We have successfully moved all membership and giving data to our new directory system in Realm. If you haven't yet logged in, just reach out to the church office and we'll send you login information. Next week, an automated email will be going out notifying you about a privacy setting change. This simply means that the church directory is now accessible and viewable by church members and active participants. It is the same setting that was in place with Church Office Online, our previous directory. Your information is secure and accessible only within the Friends Church database behind a login. For more information, see the Realm user guide on the Church Directory page of the church website under the Resources tab or reach out to the church office.

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!

SUPPORT OUR PODCAST: The "Friends Congregational Church Sermons" podcast is getting downloads across the country and even overseas! Each episode, featuring a sermon and introduced by a different church member, is an evangelism and outreach tool for all of us at Friends. Support the podcast by sharing it widely. So far the record number of downloads for an episode is 69. With your help we can hit at least 100 every week! You can also support the podcast by lending your voice to it. Contact A/V Tech Jeremy Dudo to record the intro for an episode: av@friends-ucc.org.

Be a Greeter and Communion Steward: To help in the 9am and 11am services, 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 the Youth Group events for the new year, including the June Mission Trip. 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: Do you enjoy having coffee/hot beverages available at Sunday morning services? Signup via sheet on counter in kitchen, or Sign-up Genius (link provided in Friday church email) or by contacting [Fellowship@ friends-ucc.org](mailto:Fellowship@friends-ucc.org). Training available by request.

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

THEOLOGY ON TAP, MARCH 18: At 6pm on March 18th, Theology on Tap (T.o.T.) is held at KinderHill 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. Cheers, and amen!

Friends Church Staff

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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.