

FRIENDS CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



Easter Sunday
March 31, 2024
9:00am

*An Open & Affirming
Congregation*

SCRIPTURE FOR MEDITATION: Isaiah 25:6-9, CEB

On this mountain, the Lord of heavenly forces will prepare for all peoples a rich feast, a feast of choice wines, of select foods rich in flavor, of choice wines well refined. He will swallow up on this mountain the veil that is veiling all peoples, the shroud enshrouding all nations. He will swallow up death forever. The Lord God will wipe tears from every face; he will remove his people's disgrace from off the whole earth, for the Lord has spoken. They will say on that day, "Look! This is our God, for whom we have waited—and he has saved us! This is the Lord, for whom we have waited; let's be glad and rejoice in his salvation!"

QUOTE FOR MEDITATION:

"Those who live victoriously, though they wait in great hope and expectation for the final triumph of God's grace, live even more in present experience of what that grace in Christ can do in their lives here and now."

-Howard Hageman

CHIMING OF THE TRINITY

WORDS OF WELCOME

Trent Williams

PRELUDE, REDRESSING OF THE ALTAR, AND LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Kathy Yeager

One: Shake off your grave clothes of despair,
roll away your stones of resignation,
tear down the middle your veil of your fear!

All: Jesus rises in the lives of those who live like him—Alleluia!

One: Challenge normalized violence,
widen the margins of belonging,
live simply, and offer healing!

All: Jesus rises in the lives of those who live like him—Alleluia!

One: Among death-dealing systems,
we follow Christ through our living.

All: Let us worship God. Alleluia!

***OPENING HYMN - #233** “Christ the Lord Is Risen Today”

Tune: Easter Hymn

***INVOCATION**

Kathy Yeager

SERVICE OF DEDICATION FOR SAGE MICHELLE JONES BROWN

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 Sage Michelle Jones Brown, 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.**

EPISTLE READING:

1 Corinthians 15:1-11, NRSV

Kathy Yeager

Now I would remind you, brothers and sisters, of the good news that I proclaimed to you, which you in turn received, in which also you stand, through which also you are being saved, if you hold firmly to the message that I proclaimed to you—unless you have come to believe in vain. For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. For I am the least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me has not been in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them—though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. Whether then it was I or they, so we proclaim and so you have come to believe.

CHORAL ANTHEM: Alleluia - Ralph Manuel

GOSPEL READING

John 20:1-18, CEB

Dan De Leon

Early in the morning of the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. She ran to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said, “They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don’t know where they’ve put him.” Peter and the other disciple left to go to the tomb. They were running together, but the other disciple ran faster than Peter and was the first to arrive at the tomb. Bending down to take a look, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he didn’t go in. Following him, Simon Peter entered the tomb and saw the linen cloths lying there. He also saw the face cloth that had been on Jesus’ head. It wasn’t with the other clothes but was folded up in its own place. Then the other disciple, the one who arrived at the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed. They didn’t yet understand the scripture that Jesus must rise from the dead. 10 Then the disciples returned to the place where they were staying. Mary stood outside near the tomb, crying. As she cried, she bent down to look into the tomb. She saw two angels dressed in white, seated where the body of Jesus had been, one at the head and one at the foot. The angels asked her, “Woman, why are you crying?” She replied, “They have taken away my Lord, and I don’t know where they’ve put him.” As soon as she had said

this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she didn't know it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who are you looking for?" Thinking he was the gardener, she replied, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him and I will get him." Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned and said to him in Aramaic, "Rabbouni" (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, "Don't hold on to me, for I haven't yet gone up to my Father. Go to my brothers and sisters and tell them, 'I'm going up to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" Mary Magdalene left and announced to the disciples, "I've seen the Lord." Then she told them what he said to her.

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

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

THE MESSAGE

"All the Proof People Need to Know"

Dan De Leon

MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

INVITATION TO SHARE

Kathy Yeager

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: 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**

Trent Williams

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

Trent Williams

CONGREGATIONAL SINGING FOR COMMUNION

I Danced in the Morning

Tune: Lord of the Dance



1 I danced in the morn-ing when the world was be-gun, and I
 2 I danced for the scribe and the Phar - i - see, but
 3 I danced on the Sab-bath and I cured the lame. The
 4 I danced on a Fri-day when the sky turned black. It's
 5 They cut me down and I leapt up high. †



danced in the moon and the stars and the sun, and I
 they would not dance and they would not foll - ow me. I
 ho - ly peo - ple said it was a shame. They
 hard - to dance with the dev - il on your back. They
 I am the life that will nev - er, nev - er die. I'll



came down from heav - en and I danced on the earth. At
 danced for the fish - er - men, for James and the John. They
 whipped and they stripped and they hung me high, and
 bur - ied my bod - y and they thought I'd gone, but
 live in you if you'll live in me, ?



Beth - le - hem I had my birth.
 came with me and the dance went on.
 left me there on a cross to die.
 I am the dance and I still go on.
 I am the Lord of the Dance, said he.

Refrain



Dance, then, wher-ev - er you may be; I am the Lord of the



Dance, said he, and I'll lead you all, wher-ev - er you may be,



and I'll lead you all in the dance, said he.

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 our 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.

*CLOSING HYMN - In Christ Alone

IN CHRIST ALONE LMD

Capo 1: (D) (G) (D) (G) (A) (D)
 Eb Ab Eb Ab Bb Eb

1 In Christ a-lone my hope is found; he is my
 2 In Christ a-lone, who took on flesh— full-ness of
 3 There in the ground his bod-y lay, light of the
 4 No guilt in life, no fear in death, this is the

(G) (Em7) (A7) (D) (G) (D) (G)
 Ab Fm7 Bb7 Eb Ab Eb Ab

light, my strength, my song— this cor-ner-stone, this sol-id
 God in help-less babe! This gift of love and right-eous-
 world by cruel-ty slain; then burst-ing forth in glo-rious
 pow'r of Christ in me; from life's first cry to fi-nal

(A) (D) (G) (Em7) (A7) (D)
 Bb Eb Ab Fm7 Bb7 Eb

ground, firm through the fierc-est drought and storm.
 ness, scorned by the ones he came to save,
 day, up from the grave he rose a-gain!
 breath, Je-sus com-mands my des-ti-ny.

(G/B) (D/F#) (A) (D)
Ab/C Eb/G Bb Eb

What heights of love, what depths of peace, when fears are
till on the cross as Je - sus died, the love of
And as he stands in vic - to - ry, sin's curse has
No pow'r of hell, no hu - man plan, can ev - er

(G) (D/F#) (A) (G) (D) (G)
Ab Eb/G Bb Ab Eb Ab

stilled, when striv - ings cease. My com - fort - er, my all in
God was mag - ni - fied. My ev - 'ry sin on him was
lost its grip on me; for I am his and he is
pluck me from his hand; till he re - turns or calls me

(A) (D) (G) (Em7) (A7) (D)
Bb Eb Ab Fm7 Bb7 Eb

all, here in the love of Christ I stand.
laid; here in the death of Christ I live.
mine, bought with the pre - cious blood of Christ.
home, here in the pow'r of Christ I'll stand!

*BENEDICTION

Dan De Leon

POSTLUDE

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Instrumental Music:

- Prelude: Fanfare for Easter - Based on the hymn tune *Victory*, and a theme from the second movement of *Symphony* No. 3 by Camille Saint-Saëns, arranged by Sondra Tucker (Handbell Choir and Ruthie De Leon, organ)
- Offertory: The Great Gate of Kiev (from *Pictures at an Exhibition*) - Modest Mussorgsky, arranged by Douglas E. Wagner (Handbell Choir)
- Postlude: Thine Is the Glory (from *Judas Maccabeus*) - George Frideric Handel

Scriptures for Sunday, April 7, 2024: Psalm 133; Ephesians 1:15-23; Acts 1:1-14

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

2200 Southwood Drive College Station, Texas 77845

979-693-7021 • office@friends-ucc.org

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.