



Friends Church

An Open & Affirming Congregation



"Hawaiian Mother and Child"
Charles W. Bartlett, 1920

November 27, 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 Diane Simpson and Larry Napper (lay leaders); and Victoria Junek and Jodie Robinson (greeters).

Worship service volunteers for next Sunday, December 4, are Susan Fontaine and Holly Scott (lay leaders); Chris and Kate Abbott, and Becky and Charlie Burks (communion stewards); and Jacque Halverson 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.

First Sunday of Advent

Advent means 'Coming' in Latin. The four Sundays in Advent are observed in preparation for the coming nativity of Jesus, the Christ child. The Advent season is a time of expectant waiting for the celebration of Emanuel, 'God with us,' being born into the world at Christmas. It is also the beginning of the liturgical year in Western Christianity.

CHIMING OF THE TRINITY

WORDS OF WELCOME

Brooke Dooley

PRELUDE & LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES

*CALL TO WORSHIP (BASED ON ISAIAH 2:2-3, 5) & LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT

CANDLE OF HOPE

Diane Simpson (9am)

Amanda, Drew, Jordyn, X'Savier Bowen (11am)

One: In the days to come, the mountain of God's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains and shall be raised above the hills; all the nations shall stream to it. Many people shall come and say,

All: **"Come, let us go up the holy mountain, that we may learn God's ways and may walk in God's paths."**

One: O people, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord! Today we light the first candle of Advent, the Candle of Hope.

All: **May we become people of empowering hope. Come, Lord Jesus!**

****HYMN FOR LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE: Waiting for You**

♩=110

D A/D Gadd D

We are wait - ing for you, know-ing that you.

A/D Gadd D A/D Gadd

al-ways a-bide, we are wak - ing to your pres-ence

D A/D Gadd

and our hearts are o - pen wide,

A7sus D A/D Gadd A7sus D

o - pen wide. o - pen wide.

Detailed description: The image shows a musical score for a hymn. It consists of four staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 110. The lyrics are written below the notes. Chords are indicated above the staff: D, A/D, Gadd, and D for the first line; A/D, Gadd, D, A/D, Gadd for the second line; D, A/D, Gadd for the third line; and A7sus, D, A/D, Gadd, A7sus, D for the fourth line. The lyrics are: 'We are wait - ing for you, know-ing that you. al-ways a-bide, we are wak - ing to your pres-ence and our hearts are o - pen wide, o - pen wide. o - pen wide.'

****INVOCATION**

Diane Simpson (9am)
Larry Napper (11am)

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Tami Dudo

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**

Trent Williams

One: The peace of Christ be with you all.

Many: **And also with you!**

HYMN OF RESPONSE: NCH No. 104 - We Hail You God's Anointed

GOSPEL READING: Matthew 26:36-38, NIV

Diane Simpson (9am)

Larry Napper (11am)

Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. Then he said to them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me."

CHORAL ANTHEM: Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence - 17th Century French Melody, arranged by Joel Raney (Handbells: Dinah Anderson, Tami Dudo, Diane Simpson)

Let all mortal flesh keep silence, and with fear and trembling stand; ponder nothing earthly minded, for the blessing in his hand Christ our God to earth descendeth, our full homage born to demand.

King of kings yet born of Mary, as of old on earth he stood, Lord of lords, and human vesture, in the body and the blood, he will give to all the faithful his own self for heavenly food.

Rank on rank the host of heaven spreads its vanguard on the way, as the Light of light descendeth from the realms of endless day, that the powers of hell may vanish as the darkness clears away.

Let all mortal flesh keep silence.

The oracle that the prophet Habakkuk saw.

O Lord, how long shall I cry for help, and you will not listen? Or cry to you ‘Violence!’ and you will not save? Why do you make me see wrongdoing and look at trouble? Destruction and violence are before me; strife and contention arise. So the law becomes slack and justice never prevails. The wicked surround the righteous—therefore judgement comes forth perverted.

Look at the nations, and see! Be astonished! Be astounded! For a work is being done in your days that you would not believe if you were told. For I am rousing the Chaldeans, that fierce and impetuous nation, who march through the breadth of the earth to seize dwellings not their own. Dread and fearsome are they; their justice and dignity proceed from themselves.

I will stand at my watch-post, and station myself on the rampart; I will keep watch to see what he will say to me, and what he will answer concerning my complaint. Then the Lord answered me and said: Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so that a runner may read it. For there is still a vision for the appointed time; it speaks of the end, and does not lie. If it seems to tarry, wait for it; it will surely come, it will not delay. Look at the proud! Their spirit is not right in them, but the righteous live by their faith.

Though the fig tree does not blossom, and no fruit is on the vines; though the produce of the olive fails and the fields yield no food; though the flock is cut off from the fold and there is no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will exult in the God of my salvation. God, the Lord, is my strength; he makes my feet like the feet of a deer, and makes me tread upon the heights.

To the leader: with stringed instruments.

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

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

THE MESSAGE

Dan De Leon

MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

WHERE I SAW GOD THIS WEEK & INVITATION TO SHARE

Diane Simpson (9am)

Larry Napper (11am)

OFFERTORY

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

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

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 (UNISON)**

Dan De Leon

Emanuel, God-With-Us, root our gifts in the Way of Love. When we feel distracted, focus our hearts on the everyday practice of the fruits of the spirit. When we scramble for hope, ease our bodies into the flow of your grace. Ground our offerings in these intentions, that all manner of things may be well. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & 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 & INVITATION TO JOIN FRIENDS CHURCH

Trent Williams

****CLOSING HYMN:** NCH #112 Keep Awake, Be Always Ready

Tune: Wachet Auf

****BENEDICTION**

Dan De Leon

POSTLUDE

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Instrumental Music:

Prelude: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel - Plainsong, arranged by Melody Bober

Offertory: Ding Dong! Merrily On High (Inspired by J.S. Bach's "Invention No. 8 in F Major")
- Traditional French Carol, arranged by Faye López

Postlude: "Sleepers, Wake!" A Voice Astounds Us - Philipp Nicolai (Harmonized by Johann Sebastian Bach), arranged by Gilbert M. Martin

Scriptures for Dec 4: Esther 4:1-17; Matt 5:13-16

GETTING CONNECTED AT FRIENDS

"ADVENT CONSPIRACY" SERIES, MIDWEEK NIGHTS IN ADVENT: The word 'Advent' means "coming" in Latin, as in the coming nativity of Jesus. While the word 'conspiracy' might sound cringey given the state of our world, it actually derives from the Latin word 'conspirare,' which means "to breathe together." To conspire, by constructive definition, is "to act in harmony toward a common end." On midweek nights in Advent, we gather at Friends Church toward the common end of preparing for Jesus' birth. The Advent Conspiracy movement was started in 2006 by three pastors who were tired of coming to the end of yet another Advent season exhausted and sensing that they'd missed it: "the awe-inducing, soul-satisfying mystery of the incarnation." They came up with the Advent Conspiracy and gave it four tenets: Worship Fully, Spend Less, Give More, Love All. From those pastors: "Advent Conspiracy is about the entire body of Christ at work in the world. As we worship fully, spend less, give more, and love all, something begins to happen that is greater than any single person, church, or denomination. As the Church, we are telling the story of Jesus to the watching world." In a four-week series of gatherings at 6:30pm on Wednesdays, Nov. 30, Dec. 7 & 14, and Tuesday, Dec. 20, we will watch a brief video and then have conversation around each evening's topic—Worship Fully, 11/30; Spend Less, 12/7; Give More, 12/14; Love All, 12/20—followed by a time of prayer. For more information, contact Pastor Dan: pastor@friends-ucc.org.

PASTOR DAN LEADS MLK BOOK STUDY AT LINCOLN CENTER: Coretta Scott King wrote that “if there is one book [my husband] Martin Luther King, Jr. has written that people consistently tell me has changed their lives, it is Strength to Love.” At 6:30pm on the Wednesday evening after MLK Day, January 18, 2023, the Lincoln Center offers an informal study of Dr. King’s 1963 book, Strength to Love, that Coretta Scott King says, “best explains the central element of [his] philosophy of nonviolence: His belief in a divine, loving presence that binds all life.” Our own Pastor Dan will lead the book study and discussion that is free and open to the public. Copies of Strength to Love are available to purchase at the Lincoln Center, 1000 Eleanor Street in College Station, for \$12.

BV FOOD PANTRY THANKS FRIENDS CHURCH YOUTH GROUP: Last Saturday, Nov. 19, four of our church’s youth spent nearly three hours volunteering outside on a rainy, 39-degree day in service to our neighbors in need. From the Brazos Valley Mobile Food Pantry: “Thank you for your perseverance on such a cold and rainy day. You helped to serve 398 Brazos County families.”

FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN: We want to be together! 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 (literally, one minute) to respond to the survey at <https://forms.gle/94Uecmt4Huut-niRW6>.

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>.

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.

REQUEST A NEW NAME TAG: Our new name tags are available and can be picked up in the narthex. If you haven't yet had a chance to request an updated version, you can do that here: bit.ly/friendsnametags.

FRIENDS CHURCH ANGEL TREE: The Angel Tree brings joy to children throughout the Brazos Valley. In communication with the Brazos County Child Welfare Board, we have found 65 children for Friends folk to sponsor. These are all children who have been removed from their homes and are in foster care at this time, making it an especially sad time to be apart from family. You may choose your sponsored child in person on Sunday after worship. You will receive a wish list for each child as well as instructions **You can sign up for the children virtually**. We will also be accepting food and gas cards for our pastors to distribute to those in need in our community. Gift cards can be mailed to the church or put in the Gift Card box that will appear under the Christmas trees in the narthex. **Contact awehrly@suddenlink.net with questions.**

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING, DEC. 4: Please plan to stay following the December 4th 11am worship service for an important Congregational Meeting.

PRIDE CENTER PARENT GROUP: Pride Community Center facilitates a newly formed support group for parents of LGBTQ+ individuals on December 5th from 6-7pm. Parents, family, friends, and significant others are welcome to join in discussion on how to support each other and provide safe and affirming space for the LGBTQ+ people in our lives. Future sessions will be the first Monday of every month. Please send an email to info@pridecc.org or call 979.217.1324 for location information.

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MORNING MEDITATIONS FOR ADVENT: On Tuesdays during the four weeks of Advent, you are invited to the Friends Church sanctuary to start your morning with centering meditation. At 7:30am on Tuesdays, Nov. 29, Dec. 6, 13, & 20, 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 the coming of Emanuel, God-With-Us, on Christmas. All are welcome.

THEOLOGY ON TAP RESUMES IN 2023: Theology on Tap, our monthly gathering beyond church walls at KinderHill Brew Lab for fellowship and informal theological conversation, is taking a break for December. T.o.T. will resume on Thursday evening, January 19, 2023, at 6pm. Mark your calendar, and we'll see you in the New Year!

A NIGHT FOR REJOICING: AN EVENING WITH THE OUTSTANDING FRIENDS CHOIR: Mark your calendars for Thursday, December 8, 7:30 pm, and join the Friends Choir and Chamber Orchestra for this year's Christmas Cantata. These ensembles will collaborate to perform "A Night for Rejoicing" by Lee Dengler and Susan Naus Dengler. The evening will feature a variety of holiday tunes: Christmas favorites, familiar tunes with new words, as well as some completely new melodies. There will even be opportunities for the congregation to sing along. Come and enjoy the sounds of the season, and stay for a festive reception following the evening's performance. See you there!

READERS NEEDED FOR CHRISTMAS CANTATA: At 7:30pm on December 8th, Friends Church's chancel choir and a chamber orchestra will be performing "A Night for Rejoicing." To support this worship experience, volunteers are needed to offer some prepared readings from the pulpit telling the Christmas story between some of the pieces in the cantata. If you would like to serve as a reader for the cantata, contact Pastor Dan: pastor@friends-ucc.org.

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*)
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Michael Rangel (*he, him*)
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