



September 7, 2025
11:00am
Youth-Led Service

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.

LEADING IN TODAY'S SERVICE:

Lay Leaders: Diane Simpson & Friends Youth
Communion Stewards: Carolyn Young & Holly Scott
Greeters: Megan Alvear & Friends Youth

Next Sunday, September 14:
Lay Leaders: Cathy Hansen & Dwight Baker
Greeters: Kathy Yeager & ???

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.

COMMUNION ON REQUEST: While the sacrament of communion is observed in worship on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month at Friends, communion is available any Sunday on request. If you would like to receive communion on a 2nd, 4th, or 5th Sunday, please find one of our pastors to serve you at the conclusion of the worship service.

Thirteenth 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.

A WORD ABOUT TODAY'S WORSHIP SERVICE:

Last July, the Friends Church Youth Group traveled to Denver where they learned about environmental justice. Today they will share what they learned, and how they plan to put that knowledge into practice back home.

QUOTE FOR MEDITATION:

Do you know sometimes when gathering nectar bees fall asleep in flowers? Do you fish are so sensitive, snowflakes sound like fireworks when they land on the water? Do you know sea otters hold hands when they sleep so they don't drift apart? Do you know whales will follow their injured friends to shore, often taking their own lives so as not to let a loved one be alone when he dies? None of this is poetry. It is just the earth being who she is, in spite of us putting barcodes on the sea.

– Andrea Gibson

CHIMING OF THE TRINITY

WORDS OF WELCOME

Ruthie De Leon

PRELUDE & LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES

An asterisk indicates that the congregation is invited to stand in body or spirit.*

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Lucas Meade

One: A world where hunger and homelessness and history, and everyone has what they need to thrive

All: let love shout: that world is possible.

One: A world where refugees and immigrants are welcome with open arms

All: let love shout: that world is possible.

One: A world where no one is oppressed or discriminated against based on skin color, where they are born, what language they speak, how they identify, or who they love

All: let love shout: that world is possible

One: A world where rivers flow with clean water, the air is breathable for all, and God's good creation is cared for fully

All: let love shout: that world is possible

One: Let's go out, beloveds of God, seeking justice and love for all for all our neighbors, because when we do

All: love will get the loudest and last word. Thanks be to God.

*OPENING HYMN - No. 563 We Cannot Own the Sunlit Sky

Endless Song

*INVOCATION

Chloe Gutierrez

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Declyn Leopold, Dan De Leon

Children in the sanctuary are invited to come to the front. All are invited to sing a verse of NCH #524 "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.**

A SUMMARY OF THE 2025 SUMMER MISSION TRIP

Ruthie De Leon, Declyn Leopold, Henry Ballweg, Oliver Beer, Trinity Youth

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

Declyn Leopold

One: The peace of Christ be with you all.

Many: And also with you!

FIRST READING

Genesis 1:26-28, CEB

Lucas Meade

Then God said, “Let us make humanity in our image to resemble us so that they may take charge of the fish of the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the earth, and all the crawling things on earth.”

God created humanity in God’s own image,
in the divine image God created them,
male and female God created them.

God blessed them and said to them, “Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and master it. Take charge of the fish of the sea, the birds in the sky, and everything crawling on the ground.”

CHORAL ANTHEM - Salmo 150 - Ernesto Aguiar

Praise the Lord in his sacred places, praise him in the firmament of his power. Praise him for his mighty acts, praise him according to his excellent greatness. Praise him with the sound of the trumpet, praise him with the psaltery and the harp. Praise him with the timbrel and the dance, praise him with strings and pipes. Praise him with high-sounding cymbals, praise him with cymbals of joy. Let everything that has breath praise the Lord!

SECOND READING

Isaiah 58:6-9a NRSV

Ian Beer

Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke?

Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them and not to hide yourself from your own kin?

Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly; your vindicator shall go before you; the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.

Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry for help, and he will say, “Here I am.” If you remove the yoke from among you, the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil, if you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday.

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

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

THE MESSAGE: Q&A with the Youth Group Missioners

SLIDE SHOW PRESENTATION FROM 2025 MISSION TRIP

INVITATION TO SHARE

Henry Ballweg

OFFERTORY

Secure online giving via Realm Giving at bit.ly/givetofriendsucc
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)

Lucas Maede

Creator of the universe, you were there at the beginning of all things, shaping our world and preparing it for us. You have provided mountains and trees, the waters, and the earth. Help us to be caretakers of your gifts, protecting the land from abuse, and ready to share with all in need. May all that we share be lifegiving, and deepen our awareness of the interconnectedness of all creation, so that everything might flourish and bloom. Amen.

*THE LORD'S PRAYER FOR YOUTH-LED SUNDAY

Ruthie De Leon

Our Mother, which art the earth, nurturing are thy ways.
Thy web of life be woven, thy way be found within, as it is all around.
Thank you this day for our daily bread and work;
and forgive us our misuse of you, as we forgive others their misuse of us.
And lead us not into exploitation, But deliver us from lording it over you,
and over each other, and over all our other fellow creatures.
For thine are the waters of life,
The hills, valleys and plains of home,
The breeding, seeding, feeding ground,
For now, and for as close to forever as we will ever come.
Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dan De Leon

RECOGNITION OF ADULT CHAPERONES

Brooke Dooley

INTRODUCTION OF NEW YOUTH

Brooke Dooley

***CLOSING HYMN** - No. 569 Touch the Earth Lightly

Tenderness

***BENEDICTION (RESPONSIVE)**

Chloe Gutierrez

One: When it seems like hate has the microphone

All: let love be louder.

One: When everywhere you turn you hear people echoing “Be afraid”

All: let love be louder.

One: When greed and money seem to be driving every decision

All: let love be louder.

One: When apathy seems easy and hope seems foolish, when they call you naive for trying for a better way

All: let love be louder.

One: Our faith shows us again and again that in God’s world love and life always get the loudest and last word

All: let love be louder.

***SUNG RESPONSE** - No. 181 You Are Salt for the Earth, O People (Verse 2 only)

Bring Forth

POSTLUDE

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

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Instrumental Music:

Prelude: Allegretto Fantasia - Sextus Miskow (Oliver Beer, clarinet; Ian Beer, piano)

Offertory: Blessed Quietness - W. S. Marshall, arranged by Melody Bober

Communion: Hymns of Commitment - Arranged by Phillip Keveren

Postlude: Etude in C Major - Stephen Heller (Ruthie De Leon, piano)

Scriptures for The Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost, September 14, 2025: Psalm 51: 1-10; Luke 15:1-10; 1 Timothy 1:12-17

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

INQUIRE + CONNECT, SEPT 7: After the 11am service on Sept 7th, join us at the Inquire Class you will learn about Friends—our history, our community, our opportunities for engagement—from church members and one of our pastors. The Inquire Class concludes with an invitation to participate in an optional follow-up Connect Class offered in the home of a church member. In the Connect Class you will learn more about the vision and mission of Friends Church, and how you can “connect” with our various opportunities for nurturing your spirituality, seeking social justice, and getting more involved in the life of our community of faith. For more information and to sign up for Inquire + Connect, contact Jodie Robinson at spirit_devlop@friends-ucc.org.

WONDERFUL WEDNESDAY WITH WOMEN, SEPT 10: Wonderful Wednesdays with Women will meet on Sept 10 at 5pm at Downtown Uncorked at 1551 Greens Prairie Rd Suite 102, College Station. This is a casual, come-and-go event. All are welcome! Contact Stacy De Leon (stacybdeleon@gmail.com) for more information.

JOYFUL NOISE, SEPT 12: A Joyful Noise – Friends Children’s Choir (ages 5–12) will sing during the 11:00 a.m. service on Children’s Sabbath Sunday, October 19th. We’re asking families to commit to three rehearsals before that date. Use this link, <https://bit.ly/JoyfullNoiseRehearsals>, to choose the option that works best for you and your child(ren). Please respond by September 12th.

GUYZ BREAKFAST, SEPT 13: 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.

CHOIR FUNDRAISER DONATIONS, SEPT 13: The Friends Choir has been invited to travel to Italy in June of 2026 to perform in a series of concerts. We are raising funds to cover expenses for travel needs and other incidental costs and will have a special silent auction on the night of our Fundraiser Concert, Sunday, October 5th, at 7:30 pm. It is that time of the year to buy gifts and we are inviting you to donate items. If you have any unopened beauty products, lotions, soaps, teas, cups, books, coffees, crosses, caps, hair accessories, earrings, or other items you would like to donate that will help us, please feel free to Clarissa Kennedy know. Items should be in original packaging and unexpired. If possible, we need to have your items by September 13th. You can leave them with Clarissa at the church or a pickup can be arranged. We are happy that you would consider helping us represent our church in Italy.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SUPPORT THE FRIENDS YOUTH GROUP GARDEN PROJECT: Following their environmental justice trip to Denver, the Friends Youth Group decided they wanted to bring what they learned back home and create a community garden. We're starting with a small bed so they can learn basic gardening practices, and sustainability measures such as rainwater collection, composting, and use of recycled materials. Here is where we need your help. Do you have knowledge of compost maintenance, water collection, or gardening? Are there materials you have at your home such as gloves, spades, and sheers that you'd like to donate? Be part of this great opportunity to help out the Youth Group by signing up at <https://bit.ly/FriendsYouthGarden>, or reaching out directly to Pastor Brooke (pastorbrooke@friends-ucc.org)

RHAG'S NEW WEBSITE: The Reproductive Health Access Group (RHAG) is proud to present our new website (<https://www.friends-ucc.org/rhag>) and introduce our first major project--providing FREE three-month supply of birth control (Opill)--contactless with no strings attached--available to those who for any reason are not able to purchase over-the-counter contraceptives. The "RHAG Bags" are located in the new brown cabinet in the all-gender restroom. Each Bag contains the Opill supply, a few condoms, two pregnancy tests and an info sheet explaining how to continue to receive free birth control after the first three months.

FRIENDS WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: Join our Friends Church worship team! We are in need of additional folks to help on Sunday mornings to serve as greeters, lay leaders and communion stewards to make our worship services flow smoothly. Sign up with these links.
9am Service bit.ly/0900worship 11am Service bit.ly/1100worship

TEACHING SUPPORT NEEDED FOR GRADES 3-5 CLASS: The 2025-26 Sunday School year is off to a great start with classes for Grades K-2, 3-5, and 6-12, co-led by two teachers for each class. However, our stellar teachers for the Grades 3-5 Class, need some help to assure we have consistent support for them and the children in their care. Our Grades 3-5 Class teachers having several Sundays coming up where one of them will need to be absent, so having an additional co-teacher is a must, and a few substitutes as needed will be very helpful. Feeling called to co-teach Sunday School? Please contact Christian Education Committee Chair Loretta Mendez: christian_ed@friends-ucc.org.

OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE AND SHARE: SIGN CHANGERS: Our church sign is prime real estate for spreading love, hope, and maybe even a holy chuckle. If you've got a creative spark (or a pun or two), help us reimagine our message to the world. Let's make passersby know that we are united by the example of Jesus, we live faithfully, love limitlessly, and serve boldly. Interested? Sign up to help change the sign—literally! Connect with Megan Alvear at evangelism@friends-ucc.org.

OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE AND SHARE

SUPPORT OUR PODCAST: Help us spread the good word! Share this week's sermon with those you love with our "Friends Congregational Church Sermons" podcast, available wherever you can find podcasts! Easily access and publicize our mission to follow the model of Jesus: to live faithfully, love limitlessly, and serve boldly. With over 100 episodes published (since Advent of last year) we've expanded (since Eastertide this year) our efforts to include the wider library of sermons offered before this podcast kicked off. We would love to have your support by either showing this podcast to friends and loved ones, and/or contributing your voice to introduce an episode. Volunteers can reach out to av@friends-ucc.org (Jeremy) if interested, or you might get approached after service. Recording takes less than 10 minutes and is almost entirely scripted.

Be a Greeter and Communion Steward: To help in the 9am and 11am services, please contact Worship Committee Chair Charity Stokes: worship@friends-ucc.org.

Be an Acolyte: All children aged 8 and up are welcome to join us in assisting in church services, bringing light and spirit to our worship. Children younger than 8 can participate with an adult partner. Sign up via the sheet in the narthex, <https://bit.ly/FriendsAcolytes>

Youth Group Looking for Extra Help: We are still looking for volunteers to help with the Youth Group events for the new school year. 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: "All I need is coffee; all we need are volunteers to make it!"

Sign up via sheet on kitchen counter, at bit.ly/friendschurchcoffee or email Marisa at Fellowship@friends-ucc.org.

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

NEW MEMBER SUNDAY, SEPT 14: On Sept 14, we welcome our newest members into the life of Friends Congregational Church. If you are interested in joining Friends Church on New Member Sunday, please contact Senior Pastor Dan De Leon (pastor@friends-ucc.org), Executive Pastor Trent Williams (pastortrent@friends-ucc.org), or Associate Pastor Brooke Dooley (pastorbrooke@friends-ucc.org).

FAMILIES OF ADOPTION & FOSTER CARE, SEPT 14: A support group for parents with adopted or foster care children. This group meets every second Sunday of the month in the Double Classroom, following the 11:am worship service. For the remainder of this year, we will keep an eye on our own children while we visit. If possible, bring a dish to share with the group. Food can be stored in the kitchen during the service. For details, contact Ann Rome: ann.rome@yahoo.com.

HEART OF TEXAS FALL MEETING, SEPT 20: The Heart of Texas Association Fall Meeting will be Saturday, September 20th at Trinity Church of Austin, 4001 Speedway, Austin, TX 78751. Check in begins at 9:30 am, and the meeting will be from 10:00 am to 1:30 pm with lunch provided. RSVP using: <https://tinyurl.com/2025FallHOTA>.

20TH ANNIVERSARY PARTY, SEPT. 20: To celebrate 20 years of Pastor Dan serving Friends Congregational Church, we are having a party! Join us Saturday evening, September 20th, 6-8pm, at Friends Church for hors d'oeuvres, live music from local artist Joey McGee, and a good time with great friends.

LINDA COATS BOOK CLUB, SEPT 25: Linda Coats Book Club will meet on Thursday, Sept 25th at 6:30pm. Our book will be 1984 by George Orwell. Contact Jodie Robinson (spirit_develop@friends-ucc.org) for more details.

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

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

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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.