

FRIENDS CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost
October 01, 2023
9:00am



*An Open & Affirming
Congregation*

PSALM FOR MEDITATION: Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16, NRSV

Give ear, O my people, to my teaching; incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings from of old, things that we have heard and known, that our ancestors have told us. We will not hide them from their children; we will tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his might, and the wonders that he has done. In the sight of their ancestors he worked marvels in the land of Egypt, in the fields of Zoan. He divided the sea and let them pass through it, and made the waters stand like a heap. In the daytime he led them with a cloud, and all night long with a fiery light. He split rocks open in the wilderness, and gave them drink abundantly as from the deep. He made streams come out of the rock, and caused waters to flow down like rivers.

QUOTES FOR MEDITATION

“In our world the assumption is that strangers are a potential danger and that it is up to them to disprove it.”

-Henri J.M. Nouwen

CHIMING OF THE TRINITY

WORDS OF WELCOME

Brooke Dooley

PRELUDE & LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES

*CALL TO WORSHIP (see “Litany of Wonder” on back of insert or screens)

Anne Wehrly

*OPENING HYMN No. 341 Great Spirit God

Tune: Lacquiparle

***INVOCATION**

Anne Wehrly

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

Brooke Dooley

One: The peace of Christ be with you all.

Many: **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

Brooke Dooley

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. 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.**

GOSPEL READING Matthew 21:23-32, FNV (First Nations Version)

Dan De Leon

When he arrived at the lodge, the head holy men were waiting for him. They and the ruling elders of the people came to him.

"By what right do you do these things?" they challenged. "Who gave you this right?"

"First you must answer one question from me," he challenged back, "and then I will tell you what gives me the right. The purification ceremony performed by Gift of Goodwill (John), was it from the spirit-world above, or did it come from human beings?"

They put their heads together and talked it over. “If we say it is from the spirit-world above, he will say to us, ‘Why then did you not believe him?’ But if we say it is from human beings, we fear what this crowd would do, for they are sure Gift of Goodwill (John) was a prophet.”

So they answered him, “We do not know.”

“So then,” Creator Sets Free (Jesus) said to them, “neither will I tell you what gives me the right to do these things.”

“How do you see it?” he asked them. “A man with two sons came to one of his sons and said, ‘Son, will you work in my vineyard today?’ At first the son told him ‘No,’ but later changed his mind and went to work. Then the man went to his other son and asked him the same. He told his father, ‘Yes. I will,’ but never went.” Creator Sets Free (Jesus) looked right at the spiritual leaders and asked, “Which of the two sons did what his father wanted?”

They said to him, “The first one.”

“I speak truth from my heart,” he said to them, “tribal tax collectors and those who sell sexual favors will find their way onto Creator’s good road ahead of you! Gift of Goodwill (John) came to show the good way, but you refused to hear him. You saw how the tribal tax collectors and those who sell sexual favors put their trust in him, but not even this changed your mind to believe him.”

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

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

THE MESSAGE

“What Gives You the Right?”

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 CANDLES FOR INTERCESSIONS

Brooke Dooley

INVITATION TO SHARE

Anne Wehrly

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)**

Brooke Dooley

**Holy One, throughout human history,
people in power have used authority to oppress and control.
Many have done so in your name.
As we continue to unlearn our own investment
in institutions and traditions that have done harm in this way,
we pray that our community can take a different shape,
where our power is shared, dispersed, recognized and respected
among and between us. May it be so. Amen.**

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

Dan De Leon, Brooke Dooley

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Brooke Dooley

**Our God of all creation, your name is soil, and water, and sun.
Your ways of justice come, the work of healing be done, so that we may know heaven.
May all your people be fed, and forgive us when others go hungry
As we forgive those who do not share the earth's gifts.
Guide us from the narrative of scarcity, and the sin of greed.
For thine is the harvest, and the table, and the communion of peace.
Forever and ever. Amen.**

***CLOSING HYMN NO. 402** De colores (Sing of Colors)

Tune: De colores

(Verse 1 in Spanish, then verses 1-2 in English)

***BENEDICTION**

Dan De Leon

POSTLUDE

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Instrumental Music:

Prelude: All Creatures of Our God and King - Eugene Butler

Offertory: Andante Cantabile - Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Communion: Bread of the World - Lani Smith

Postlude: To God Be the Glory - William H. Doane, arranged by John Sciveyner

Scripture for Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost, October 8, 2023: Genesis 1:26-27, 31; Psalm 19:1-14

GETTING CONNECTED AT FRIENDS

NIN MISSION OFFERING: In today's service, we are collecting for the UCC's Neighbors in Need (NIN) mission offering. NIN supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the US. A third of NIN funds support the Council for American Indian Ministry (caimucc.com) with the rest given to projects focusing on environmental justice. Leave a donation in the offering plate or give online at www.friends-ucc.org by selecting "One-time" donation under "Special Offerings" and putting "Neighbors in Need" in the Notes.

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.

COFFEE & KITCHEN HELP NEEDED: Volunteers are needed to prepare coffee before and to clean up the kitchen after Sunday services. A signup sheet is on the counter in the kitchen along with a description of duties. For more information contact fellowship@friends-ucc.org.

TRANSPORTATION HELP: We are putting together a Transportation Team to help church members who need assistance getting to church on Sunday. With enough help, this will be a once/quarter commitment. To join the team, send an email to Nurture@friends-ucc.org.

GREETERS & COMMUNION STEWARDS NEEDED: Several of our regular volunteers for greeting and for setting up and serving communion in the 9am worship services are not available this scheduling cycle. If you can help with a 9am Sunday service or two in their absence, please contact Worship Committee Chair Ryan Womack: worship@friends-ucc.org.

CHILDCARE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: Volunteers are needed in the childcare room when one of our paid workers is unavailable. Having two adults in the room is required for liability and safety reasons. Volunteers must have a background check, provided by and done through the church office. Volunteers will not be called upon frequently, nor will they be in charge; one of our highly skilled, paid workers will be the point person. Contact Jackie Womack at moderator@friends-ucc.org for more info.

MORNING MANNA IN OCTOBER: In our continued study of the book of Genesis, we will use video clips and a book from renowned journalist Bill Moyers' PBS special, "Genesis: A Living Conversation" to guide our discussions. Moyers brings together writers, theologians, artists, and thinkers from across faith traditions to engage in lively conversations about these stories' ultimate message: what it means to be human. The Morning Manna class meets at 10am on Sundays in the room at the end of the kitchen-side hallway. For more information, contact Pastor Dan: pastor@friends-ucc.org.

SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS NEEDED: Are you feeling called to teach our children or youth? We need one substitute teacher for Grades 3-5, two teachers for Grades 6-8, and one teacher for Grades 9-12. Right now, we have classes with at least one teacher for Grades K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12 at 10am at Friends Church. We hope to start a class for our Pre K children, but we need volunteers to make this happen. One of our current Sunday School teachers would like to start the PreK class, but needs someone(s) to replace them in their current role. Contact Pastor Dan for more information: pastor@friends-ucc.org.

ADULT MISSION TRIP TO THE TEXAS-MEXICO BORDER: January 7 - 10, 2024
Are you interested in learning more? Courts & Ports is a 2-day immersion experience designed to build understanding of the many challenges facing migrants and public servants at the Texas-Mexico border. Plan to accompany Pastor Brooke on this adult mission trip to the Rio Grande Valley in January to bear witness and then come home prepared to share how our congregation can advocate for and support the work for just immigration policies. To indicate your interest and hear more about the experience first-hand from Tim and Holly Scott either Wednesday evening, Oct. 11 or Sunday, Oct. 15 after worship, please review information in TW@F and sign up using the link provided there. Or visit the Friends Church website at <https://www.friends-ucc.org>.

A JOYFUL NOISE RETURNS! A Joyful Noise, Friends Church's children's choir, is officially back! Designed for kids in Kindergarten through fifth grade, Joyful Noise will be singing for Children's Sabbath Sunday, October 15, during the 11am service. Rehearsals of their song "Clap Your Hands" will be on Sundays, October 1, 8, and 15, starting promptly at 10am (during Sunday School time), and lasting only 20 minutes. If you have any questions, please contact Director of Music Ministries Chris Hoffman: choir@friends-ucc.org. We hope to have your child be part of this fun musical opportunity.

MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR DIANNA ASHLEY: Our friend Dianna Ashley, a member of Friends Church, moved to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, during the pandemic. She died in late-May of this year from a gastric ulcer. Dianna loved the prayer labyrinth at the back of our church grounds. It was there during a guided meditation service that she felt one of her strongest connections with our faith community and God; and it is there, at the labyrinth, that we will gather to grieve the loss of Dianna and to celebrate her life on Sunday afternoon, October 1, at 3pm.

VOLUNTEER WITH THE YOUTH GROUP: The Youth Group, grades 6-12, will be getting together throughout the fall for lessons and discussion, service projects, and social gatherings. We're looking for folks who might be interested in co-facilitating lessons and chaperoning when they are off-site. We're also looking for meal providers for one of the Youth's gatherings. Reach out to Pastor Brooke with questions: pastorbrooke@friends-ucc.org. Sign up to volunteer at <https://tinyurl.com/fccyouthvolunteer> and to provide meals at <https://tinyurl.com/fccyouthmeals>.

PAGEANT DATE POLL OF PARENTS: As we plan our annual children- and youth-led Christmas pageant, we need you, parents of our children and youth, to choose the date for this cherished event. Your input is important to us, and we want to make sure as many families as possible can participate. Scan the QR code or go to <http://tinyurl.com/friendspageant> and complete a short survey to help us decide between two dates for the pageant: Dec. 10 or 17. The pageant will be offered in the 11am service.



PERIOD CARE PRODUCT DRIVE & AND MENSTRUAL JUSTICE: Friends' quarterly Period Care Product Drive for Brazos Church Pantry begins this week. Please consider donating some products. No time to shop? Use the QR Code below or on the donation bins to access the Wish List from which you can order. Bins are available in the narthex and by the office to bring donations to the church. Thank you! For more information, contact Becky Burks, beckyburks4@gmail.com.



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