



Friends Church

An Open & Affirming Congregation



Do Not Lose Heart
Trey Everett (2018)

September 8, 2024

II: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.

LEADING IN TODAY'S SERVICE:

Lay Leader: Becky Burks
Greeter: Sydney Zentell

Next Sunday, Sept 15
Lay Leaders: Dinah Anderson & Tyler Baker-Wilkinson
Communion Stewards: Kathy Yeager & Mary Johnson
Greeters: Carolyn Young & Peggy Vitek

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.

Sixteenth 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.

QUOTE FOR MEDITATION:

"Courage is more exhilarating than fear and in the long run it is easier. We do not have to become heroes overnight. Just one step at a time, meeting each thing that comes up, seeing it is not as dreadful as it appeared, discovering we have the strength to stare it down."
-Eleanor Roosevelt

CHIMING OF THE TRINITY

WORDS OF WELCOME

Dan De Leon

PRELUDE & LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Becky Burks

One: We have gathered in God's holy presence,
the One who etches grace on our hearts.

**All: This is the place where God
will transform us into disciples.**

One: We glorify our God, who yearns for justice,
not just for a favored few, but for the least of our world.

**All: This is the place where God
will write compassion on our souls.**

One: We give thanks to God for unceasing grace;
we remember God's persistence in loving us.

**All: This is the place where God
will breathe the Word into our lives.**

***OPENING HYMN** - No. 519 Not My Brother, nor My Sister (Standing in the Need of Prayer)

Tune: *Need of Prayer*

***INVOCATION**

Becky Burks

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.**

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

Kyle Riley

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (UNISON)

Kyle Riley

**Holy God, we confess that we sometimes struggle with your call,
and too often fail in our attempts to build community.
Holy One, forgive us. Take away whatever holds us back.
Show us the way to confidence and generosity,
so that we may be known as your people:
repairers of the broken places and restorers of streets to safety and peace.
O God, with your help we can change and bring you glory. Amen.**

ASSURANCE OF GRACE

Kyle Riley

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

Kyle Riley

One: The peace of Christ be with you all.
Many: And also with you!

***HYMN OF RESPONSE:** No. 444 We Are Often Tossed and Driven (We'll Understand It Better By and By)

Tune: *By and By*

HEBREW SCRIPTURE READING

Jeremiah 31:31-34, NRSV

Becky Burks

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, “Know the Lord,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

HANDBELL ANTHEM - Children of the Heavenly Father

Swedish Melody, arranged by Matthew Compton

GOSPEL READING

Luke 18:1-8, NRSV

Trent Williams

Then Jesus told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart. He said, “In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor had respect for people. In that city there was a widow who kept coming to him and saying, ‘Grant me justice against my opponent.’ For a while he refused; but later he said to himself, ‘Though I have no fear of God and no respect for anyone, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she may not wear me out by continually coming.’” And the Lord said, “Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long in helping them? I tell you, he will quickly grant justice to them. And yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?”

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

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

THE MESSAGE

“Nevertheless, We Persist”

Trent Williams

MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

FAITH IN ACTION MOMENT

“Family Promise”

Mary Howell

INVITATION TO SHARE

Becky Burks

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 & 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 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

Dan De Leon, Brooke Dooley

***CLOSING HYMN** - No. 442 I’m Pressing on the Upward Way (Higher Ground)

Tune: *Higher Ground*

***BENEDICTION**

Trent Williams

POSTLUDE

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Instrumental Music:

Prelude: 'Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus - William J. Kirkpatrick, arranged by Carol Tornquist
Offertory: My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less - John B. Dykes, arranged by Randall Hartsell
Postlude: In Christ Alone - Stuart Townend and Keith Getty, arranged by Larry Shackley

Scriptures for the Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost, September 15, 2024: Philippians 4:4-9; Genesis 22:1-14

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 8: After the 11pm service, 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 Becky Burks.

TACOS AL PASTORS, SEPT 12: Itching to ask our pastors some off-the-wall questions? Wanting to get to know more Friends Church people? Like tacos? Join us for “Tacos al Pastors” at La Bodega Baja Taco Bar, 1664 Greens Prairie Rd, in College Station, 6pm, Thurs., Sept. 12. Pastors Brooke, Trent, and Dan invite you to ask them and each other questions to help us get to know our church and one another better over one of God’s greatest gifts to us all: tacos.

WONDERFUL WEDNESDAY WITH WOMEN, SEPT 11: Wonderful Wednesdays with Women will meet at Downtown Uncorked at 1551 Greens Prairie Rd on Wednesday, August 14th from 5:00 to 7:00 PM. This is a casual, come-and-go event. All are welcome! Contact Stacy De Leon if you need more information

GUYZ BREAKFAST, SEPT 14: 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.

NEW MEMBER SUNDAY, SEPT 15: On September 15, 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 (pastor-brooke@friends-ucc.org).

VOTER REGISTRATION AND INFORMATION, SEPT 15: Voter Registration and information table in front of church, September 15 and October 6, 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Volunteer Deputy Registrations will be staffing the table to register voters and answer all your questions about upcoming elections and deadlines. For those new to Brazos County, if you sleep in Brazos County you can vote in Brazos County. But you must be registered in Brazos County by October 7.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS NEEDED: We have all the Sunday school classes covered but are still looking for volunteers who could be called when teachers are out of town to be substitutes. Please let Pastor Dan or Abby Burley, Christian_ed@friends-ucc.org, know if we can add you to our list.

FRIENDS GREETERS NEEDED: Join our Friends Church greeter team! We are in need of additional folks to help welcome people on Sunday mornings and make our worship services flow smoothly. If you are interested in learning more, reach out to Worship Committee chair Charity Stokes at worship@friends-ucc.org. You can also sign up online here: bit.ly/friendsgreeter.

“SCRIPTURE & AMERICAN SACRED TEXTS”: MORNING MANNA SUNDAY SCHOOL SERIES: In conjunction with our September sermon series “Untaught History,” join us on Sunday mornings at 10:00am from August 25 through September 29 for a series that will explore historic American works in conversation with scripture.

September 8: No Sunday School

September 15: Declaration of Rights and Sentiments & Biblical Women

September 22: The Byrds’ “Turn, Turn, Turn” & Ecclesiastes/Biblical Wisdom Writings

September 29: Martin Luther King’s “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” & Paul’s Prison Epistles

SEPTEMBER SERMON SERIES: This month, our preachers are offering a special sermon series: “Untaught History: Reparations, Resoluteness, Resistance, and Redemption.” Our former school days of selective history lessons that left out countless stories and altered others, and these present days of banned books and whitewashed curriculums beckon us to learn some of that untaught history as a testament to our faith in Jesus’ insistence that “you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.” Pastor Brooke, Pastor Trent, and Pastor Dan will explore stories from the post-Reconstruction era, the Holocaust, the civil rights and gay rights movements, and how God is still speaking through that largely untaught history. Here’s a snapshot of the remaining Sundays...

Sept 8, Pastor Trent: “Nevertheless, We Persist,” Luke 18:1-8

Sept 15, Pastor Dan: “Laughter: Hope’s Last Weapon in the Holocaust,” Genesis 22:1-14

Sept 22, Pastor Trent: “Building the Future Together,” Exodus 25:1-9

Sept 29, Pastor Brooke: “The Bridge Which Christ Had Built,” Genesis 32: 24-32

So, bring a friend and join us every Sunday in September for some “Untaught History.”

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 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 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: Do you enjoy having coffee/hot beverages available at Sunday morning services? Signup via sheet on counter in kitchen, or Realm (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

NAACP BRAZOS COUNTY BRANCH BANQUET, SEPT 21: NAACP Brazos County Branch is having a Freedom Fund Banquet September 21, 2024, at 7:00 pm at the Brazos Center. Churches can sponsor a table for \$600. If you would like to help Friends sponsor a table, contact Dan DeLeon at pastor@friends-ucc.org. If you would like more information about the event or to purchase tickets for yourself, contact brazoscountynaacp@gmail.com

LINDA COATS BOOK CLUB, SEPT 26: For September, the book club will be reading Matthew Desmond's *Poverty, By America*. Join us for discussion at 6:30pm

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*)
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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.