



Friends Church

An Open & Affirming Congregation



Love One Another
(2011)

April 28, 2024
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.

LEADING IN TODAY'S SERVICE:

Lay Leaders: Sydney Zentell & Tom Vogel
Greeters: Megan Alevar & Kristen Hibbits

Next Sunday, May 5
Lay Leaders: Diane Simpson & Dwight Roblyer
Communion Stewards: Mary Johnson & Lanette Schulte
Greeters: Dwight Baker & Eli Vasquez

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.

Eastertide - Fifth Sunday of Easter

Easter is not just one day—it's a whole season. Throughout these 50 days, we celebrate and ponder the mystery of the resurrection and the promise of new life.

QUOTE FOR MEDITATION:

“Conversion isn’t, after all, a moment: It’s a process, and it keeps happening, with cycles of acceptance and resistance, epiphany and doubt.”

–Sara Miles

CHIMING OF THE TRINITY

WORDS OF WELCOME

Trent Williams

PRELUDE & LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Tom Vogel

One: We come to this place, where God pours out love on us;

All: We join our voices in praise, as our fears are left behind.

One: We gather with these people, those who seek to follow Jesus,

All: So we might walk the paths of service, hand in hand.

One: We open our hearts to the gifts of the Spirit,

All: So that grace and peace might be the fruit we bear.

*OPENING HYMN - #495 Called as Partners in Christ's Service

Tune: Beecher

*INVOCATION

Tom Vogel

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.**

STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

Mary Howell

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

Brooke Dooley

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

***HYMN OF RESPONSE #526** Siyahamb' ekukhanyen' kwenkhos' (We Are Marching in the Light of God)

Tune: Siyahamba (first time in Zulu, second time in English)

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.

And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.

Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. We love because he first loved us. Those who say, "I love God," and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

CHORAL ANTHEM: Come, Christians, Join to Sing! - B. Carr, D. Evans; arranged by Thearon Landrum

Come, Christians, join to sing Alleluia! Amen! Loud praise to Christ our King; Alleluia! Amen! Let all with heart and voice, before His throne rejoice; praise is His gracious choice. Alleluia! Amen!

Come, lift your hearts on high, Alleluia! Amen! Let praise fill the sky. Alleluia! Amen! He is our guide and friend, to us He'll condescend; His love shall never end: Alleluia! Amen!

Alleluia! Say "Amen!" Come, Christians, join to sing loud praise to Christ our King.

Praise yet our Christ again: Alleluia! Amen! Life shall not end the strain; Alleluia! Amen! On heaven's blissful shore His goodness we'll adore, singing forevermore, "Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia." Say "Amen!" Amen!

Meanwhile Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. Now as he was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" He asked, "Who are you, Lord?" The reply came, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But get up and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do." The men who were traveling with him stood speechless because they heard the voice but saw no one. Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; so they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. For three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

Now there was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." He answered, "Here I am, Lord." The Lord said to him, "Get up and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul. At this moment he is praying, and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight." But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints in Jerusalem; and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who invoke your name." But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is an instrument whom I have chosen to bring my name before Gentiles and kings and before the people of Israel; I myself will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name." So Ananias went and entered the house. He laid his hands on Saul and said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on your way here, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and his sight was restored. Then he got up and was baptized, and after taking some food, he regained his strength. For several days he was with the disciples in Damascus, and immediately he began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues, saying, "He is the Son of God."

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

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

MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

INVITATION TO SHARE

Tom Vogel

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**

Brooke Dooley

All: Gracious God, you have given us so much. As a gesture of our gratitude and stewardship for all of your wonderful gifts, we return a portion back to you. We ask your blessing upon this morning's offering, that it may enrich the lives of those it benefits, that it may strengthen this church, and that it may inspire our faith. Amen.

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

Brooke Dooley

*CLOSING HYMN - I Have Decided to Follow Jesus

Tune: Assam

The musical score is written in 4/4 time and consists of three systems. Each system has a treble and bass staff. The first system starts with a C chord and ends with a C7 chord. The second system starts with an F chord and ends with a C chord. The third system starts with a C chord, has a G7 chord in the middle, and ends with a C chord. The lyrics are printed below the treble staff.

1 I have de - cid - ed to fol - low Je - sus; I have de -
2 Though none go with me, still I will fol - low; though none go
3 The world be - hind me, the cross be - fore me; the world be -

cid - ed to fol - low Je - sus; I have de - cid - ed to fol - low
with me, still I will fol - low; though none go with me, still I will
hind me, the cross be - fore me, the world be - hind me, the cross be -

Je - sus;
fol - low; no turn - ing back, no turn - ing back.
fore me;

*BENEDICTION

Trent Williams

POSTLUDE

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Instrumental Music:

- Prelude: Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee - Ludwig van Beethoven, arranged by Edward Hodges
- Offertory: Be Thou My Vision - Irish Melody, arranged by Joel Raney
- Postlude: I Sing the Mighty Power of God - arranged by Carol Tornquist

Scriptures for Sixth Sunday of Easter, May 5, 2024: John 15:12-17; Acts 10:1-17, 34-48

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

BACK BAY MISSION HYGIENE KIT COLLECTION, APRIL 21-MAY 18: Friends Church is collecting items for hygiene kits to be delivered to Back Bay Mission, a ministry of the United Church of Christ serving individuals and families facing homelessness and poverty. Follow the link <https://amzn.to/4boqwBk> and decide what you would like to purchase to get us to our goal of 102 hygiene kits. Items will be shipped directly to the church. If you would rather just write a check, make the check out to Friends Church and put Hygiene kits in memo line. Funds will be used to purchase needed supplies. All items need to be received at the church by May 18. Please direct any questions to Anne at awehrly@suddenlink.net.

STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN, APRIL 28: This Sunday, we kick off our Spring stewardship campaign as we prepare for our new fiscal year. Each week in worship, we will hear a testimony from a church member about why they give to support Friends Church, and invite you to consider making a pledge for this upcoming year. Our theme this year is “For Such a Time as This,” calling us to remember that God has called us to this unique time and place to live out our mission of living faithfully, loving limitlessly, and serving boldly. Next week, be on the lookout for a mailing that will have a letter inviting you to consider what you might be able to give in the year ahead, a pledge card, and a narrative budget describing how your support makes the ministries of Friends Church possible. We hope you will join us in worship on May 19th for Pledge Sunday as we bring and dedicate our pledges for the upcoming year. Thank you for your ongoing generous support of Friends!

FIRST FRIDAY WITH FRIENDS, MAY 3: First Friday with Friends is held in conjunction with Downtown Bryan’s First Friday activities. We have a meet up at Blackwater Draw and always have a few people there for the 5:30-7:30 timeframe. Some folks stay at Blackwater all evening and others stop by on their way to or from dining and playing in downtown Bryan.

ASSEMBLING TEACHER APPRECIATION BAGS FOR CROCKETT ELEMENTARY, MAY 5: Please help us assemble treat bags to be delivered to staff at Crockett on Wednesday of that week to show our appreciation.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHURCH “ESTATE SALE” CANCELED APRIL 28: The Estate Sale planned for Sunday, April 28 has been canceled. Most items will have found a new home soon. A few items unique to Friends will be available for you to select and take home in a few weeks. Watch this space for that announcement. Special thanks to everyone who helped in the “Great Spring Cleanout!” Our church is better organized and more attractive, space is used more efficiently, and every program has a designated bit of storage. “A place for everything and everything in its place!”

OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE AND SHARE

SIGN UP TO HELP WITH CROCKETT BOOK FAIR MAY 22: We have a date for the Crockett Book Fair! On Wednesday, May 22, we will be helping students pick out their books to take home. We could use lots of help. The fair is scheduled from 8:30 am to 2:30 pm. Helpers can take two hour shifts (and sign up for as many shifts as you like!). **SIGN UP HERE: <https://bit.ly/3UzXPpB>** We will continue to collect books until Sunday, May 19. Please place them in the bin outside of the office door. Thank you for all of your generous support of these children.

SUPPORT OUR PODCAST: The “Friends Congregational Church Sermons” podcast is getting downloads across the country and even overseas! Each episode, featuring a sermon and introduced by a different church member, is an evangelism and outreach tool for all of us at Friends. Support the podcast by sharing it widely. So far the record number of downloads for an episode is 69. With your help we can hit at least 100 every week! You can also support the podcast by lending your voice to it. Contact A/V Tech Jeremy Dudo to record the intro for an episode: av@friends-ucc.org.

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 year, including the June Mission Trip. Contact Pastor Brooke at pastor-brooke@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 Sign-up Genius (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.

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SAVE THE DATE

WONDERFUL WEDNESDAYS WITH WOMEN, MAY 8: Wonderful Wednesdays with Women will meet on Wednesday, May 8th from 5:00 to 7:00 PM at Kristin Harper's house at 2065 Carter Lake Dr., College Station, TX 77845. Snacks and beverages will be provided. \$5 to \$10 contributions are welcome. This is a casual, come-and-go event. All are welcome! Contact Stacy De Leon if you need more information at 512.289.5290.

HYPERBOLE BOOK STORE BOOK SALE FOR CROCKETT BOOK FAIR, MAY 12: Our school book fair for the children of Crockett Elementary ends on May 22nd. As always, you can donate books by placing them in the box outside the office. In addition, to provide a final push for the drive, Hyperbole Bookstore will be at the church on Sunday, May 12, to sell appropriately-aged kids' books (in both English and Spanish) that can be donated on the spot. Hyperbole will donate a portion of sale proceeds to our Christian Education program. If you have questions, you can contact Kathy Miller (katherinemiller59@gmail.com).

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.