



Friends Church
An Open & Affirming Congregation



Eve
Anna Lea Merritt (1885)

February 11, 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: Anne Nichols & Katy Stewart
Greeters: Kathy Yeager & Martha Newsome and Doug Lewis

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.

Transfiguration Sunday

The last Sunday of the Epiphany season, before we turn to the somber tones of Lent, we remember the Transfiguration of Jesus: a mystical mountaintop moment of perfect unity with God.

PRAISE SCRIPTURE FOR MEDITATION: Genesis 2:7

Then the Lord God formed the earthling from the earth and breathed into their nostrils the breath of life, and the earthling became a living being.

QUOTE FOR MEDITATION:

“The text says that ‘the Lord God formed adam [pronounced a-DAHM] from ha-adamah.’ In Hebrew that’s a pun. It’s very difficult to take a pun and translate it into another language. Traditionally the verse is translated, ‘the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground.’ You lose the pun when you do that. Furthermore...I find nothing in the story about human sexuality until God puts that creature [the earthling] to sleep and performs surgery on that creature and out of that creature comes two creatures. There is no word in the story about sexuality until the woman appears. It is when the woman (isha) appears that the man (ish) appears. Sexuality is simultaneous for male and female.”

-Dr. Phyllis Trible, biblical scholar

CHIMING OF THE TRINITY

WORDS OF WELCOME

Kyle Riley

PRELUDE & LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES

***CALL TO WORSHIP** from “A Service of Lament for Reproductive Justice,”
by Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay, Minister for Worship and Theology, United Church of
Christ (responsive)

Katy Stewart

One: God our Creator, we gather in awe.

**All: You have created us in your image
and given us agency over our own bodies.**

One: God our Comforter, we gather in sorrow.

**All: You call us to love our neighbor, but so often
we are met by attempts to control, marginalize, and oppress.**

One: God our Advocate, we gather in resolve.

**All: You call us into the work of realizing your kin-dom
and empower us as your body in the world.**

One: God our Liberator, we gather in hope.

**All: You have made us resurrection people,
and we press on, we persist, we endure.**

***OPENING HYMN #182** We Have Come at Christ’s Own Bidding

Tune: Hyfrydol

***INVOCATION**

Katy Stewart

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

Dan De Leon

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 (oh let it shine)!**

A LITANY FOR REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE, by Rev. Amy Johnson, UCC Minister for
Sexuality Education and Justice Amy Klinkovsky

One: Holy Mother God, Author of Life, Healer of all,
We come to you humbly in prayer.

We pray for all those who mother us, nurture us, believe in us,
and love us unconditionally.

All: We pray every one of your Beloved children knows that kind of love.

One: We pray for those who are pregnant, carrying:

Joy at the possibility of new life in their wombs,

Anxiety and fear of a pregnancy not planned or desired,

The weight of choice, the burden of no choice where there once was one,
and the terror of no bodily autonomy.

**All: We pray every one of your Beloved children
knows you are with them on their journey.**

One: We pray for those mothering and parenting others;

Who soothe cries, lose sleep, kiss wounds, sing lullabies...

Who make ends meet, go without, battle systems of oppression, sacrifice...

All: We pray every one of your Beloved children is cared for abundantly.

One: We pray for those in power, who make decisions about child care subsidies,
funding for food, affordable housing, health care, and access to education.

**All: We pray every one of your Beloved children has enough to eat,
safe places to live and learn,
and abundant care for their bodies, minds and spirits.**

One: God of Many Names, stir us into action to fight for these basic human rights,
to tell the stories and pierce the hearts of those whose privilege and greed
withhold equity and care for Your Beloved Children.

Annoy us, agitate us, accompany us in this holy and sacred work.

All: Amen.

SILENT REFLECTION & MEDITATION

One chime calls us into silence, and two chimes call us out of silence.

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

Amy Klinkovsky

One: The peace of Christ be with you all.

Many: And also with you!

***HYMN OF RESPONSE #388** Help Us Accept Each Other

Tune: Aurelia

INTRODUCTION OF PREACHER: Rev. Dr. Rebecca Todd Peters

Dan De Leon

HEBREW SCRIPTURE READING

Genesis 3: 1-7 (NRSV)

Trent Williams

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God say, ‘You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?’” The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.’” But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not die; for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

HANDBELL ANTHEM: Acclamation in G Minor - Karen Thompson

EPISTLE READING

1 Timothy 2:11-15 (NRSV)

Rebecca Todd Peters

Let a woman learn in silence with full submission. I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she is to keep silent. For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. Yet she will be saved through childbearing, provided they continue in faith and love and holiness, with modesty.

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

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

THE MESSAGE

“What to Do About the Disobedient Daughters of Eve?”

Rebecca Todd Peters

MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

INVITATION TO SHARE

Katy Stewart

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**

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 our 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

Kyle Riley, Trent Williams

***CLOSING HYMN #575 O for a World**

Tune: Azmon

***BENEDICTION**

Rebecca Todd Peters

POSTLUDE

Hymns reprinted with permission — One License #A-730489, CCLI #20046014
Instrumental Music:

Prelude: Love Divine, All Loves Excelling - Rowland H. Prichard, arranged by Joel Raney
Offertory: For the Beauty of the Earth - Conrad Kocher, arranged by Joel Raney
Postlude: Love Medley - Eugene Butler

Scriptures for First Sunday in Lent, February 18, 2024: Genesis 9:8-17; 1 Peter 3:18-22

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

CHANGING THE CONVERSATION: THE THEOLOGY OF REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE, 2/11: For many of us, reproductive freedom is not only a political concept, it is a religious one. Friends Church is hosting a speaker today, 2-4pm, who will help us explore the intersection of our faith and issues of reproductive justice. Plan to join us in person (registration encouraged) and to share this opportunity with your friends and colleagues. Register with the QR code below



“BROKEN”: REAL LIFE AND REAL FAITH, FEB 13: Join us for a special Lenten series centered around the 2017 BBC drama series “Broken,” beginning on Feb 13 at 6:30pm in the sanctuary. Over six weeks, we will watch an episode of the series and have conversation about how faith and real life intersect. Participants are encouraged to make each session if possible, since the series builds on each previous episode. Please be advised that the themes can be intense, including suicidal ideation and the intersection of race and police violence. Contact Pastor Trent if you have any questions.

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE, FEB 14: Ash Wednesday services with the imposition of ashes will be offered in the sanctuary on Feb 14 with a brief morning service at 7:30am, and an evening service at 6:30pm.

FABULOUS AT ANY AGE BREAKFAST, FEB 14: Fabulous at Any Age will meet for breakfast AFTER 7:30 a.m. Ash Wednesday Service. Join us at Coco Loco (1804 Welsh, CS) for delicious breakfast and wonderful fellowship. All are welcome!

SOUP SUPPER BEFORE EVENING ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE, FEB 14: Soup's on at 5:45pm on Ash Wednesday evening, Feb. 14th, in the sanctuary. All are welcome to join us for this modest meal to start our Lenten journey. If you would like to provide soup or bread, or to volunteer to help with set-up or clean-up, contact Fellowship Committee Chair Jan Paterson: fellowship@friends-ucc.org.

THEOLOGY ON TAP, FEB 15: At 6pm on February 15th, Theology on Tap (T.o.T.) is held at KinderHill Brew Lab, 800 S. Bryan Ave. T.o.T.'s informal discussions bring our lives more in tune with God's will and way as we get to know each other better beyond church walls. The venue has an assortment of great beers on tap. You don't need to be fond of beer to join us, nor do you have to be 21 or older. Non-alcoholic beverages are available, and minors are welcome, as are four-leggeds. Cheers, and amen!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PASTOR BROOKE IS AWAY FEBRUARY 7-29: Pastor Brooke will be out of the country February 7-29. If you have a pastoral need you can reach out to Pastor Trent or Pastor Dan.

GIVING STATEMENTS 2023: The giving statements for 2023 are available now for pick up. This year, since we transitioned systems, there will be two statements: one for January to June from Church Office Online, and one for July to December, from Realm. Thank you for your generosity and support of the mission and ministry of Friends Church in 2023!

DEVOTIONAL BOOKS FOR LENT ARE HERE!: LENT begins Ash Wednesday, February 14th, 2024. Copies of the UCC's Lenten Daily Devotional booklet, BEND, are available for pickup in the Narthex; one per household, please. The electronic version (pdf) may be purchased individually at thepilgrimpress.com.

WALL OF GIVING: The youth group will hold a Wall of Giving fundraiser every Sunday in February (before & after both services) in the fellowship area of the sanctuary. The Wall of Giving is a display with 100 envelopes marked with dollar amounts from \$1 to \$100. Those who wish to participate in the fundraiser will select an envelope based on the amount they want to contribute. That amount can be paid either with cash, check or via Venmo (to 979.307.8860 or @friendsucc) with a note that specifies that the money is for the 'Youth Mission Trip.' Inside the envelopes, and in exchange for the contribution, the youth are offering 'I Owe You' (Ex. One postcard from the mission trip or one selfie from the mission trip). As always, thank you for your support of our youth group!

REALM UPDATES: We have successfully moved all membership and giving data to our new directory system in Realm. If you haven't yet logged in, just reach out to the church office and we'll send you login information. Next week, an automated email will be going out notifying you about a privacy setting change. This simply means that the church directory is now accessible and viewable by church members and active participants. It is the same setting that was in place with Church Office Online, our previous directory. Your information is secure and accessible only within the Friends Church database behind a login. For more information, see the Realm user guide on the Church Directory page of the church website under the Resources tab or reach out to the church office.

OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE AND SHARE

CROCKETT ELEMENTARY BOOK FAIR: Last year our free Book Fair at Crockett Elementary School in Bryan was a great success. Each child received three books to keep. Even the teachers were able to pick two books for themselves. We are doing it again this spring, so it's time to collect books! You can donate books by placing them in the box outside the office, or you can donate gift cards or money, and we will buy books with your donations. If you have questions, please contact Jodie Robinson (jocelinbrune@gmail.com) or Pam Engler (penglertx@gmail.com). Thank you!

VOLUNTEER VOICES NEEDED FOR FRIENDS CHURCH PODCAST: Our new weekly podcast, featuring the messages from Sunday worship services, is introduced by Friends Church members giving a brief testimony of what Friends Church means to them. To volunteer to introduce an episode, contact A/V Tech Jeremy Dudo at 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.

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.

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 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 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

SAVE THE DATE

INQUIRE + CONNECT CLASS: Are you wanting to learn more about Friends Church? Inquire + Connect is for you! Join us after the worship service on February 18th for the Inquire Class with lunch provided. 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, email Spiritual Life Chair Becky Burks at spirit_develop@friends-ucc.org

NEW MEMBER SUNDAY: On February 25, 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).

LENTEN MIDDAY RECITAL SERIES: Join us for a series of Lenten Midday Recitals, featuring the talents of our wonderful musicians of Friends Church! Bring your own lunch for fellowship beginning at 11:30 am, and stay for a 20-30 minute program, beginning at 12:00, of music selected by our gifted musicians. A variety of music - sacred, musical theatre, classical, and pop - will be performed each week. Recital dates include February 21 and 28, and March 6, 13, and 20. We hope you can take time out from these busy weeks to relax and enjoy great music.

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