



Friends Church

An Open & Affirming Congregation



Healing Mural
in Ecuador (1970)

April 14, 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: David Manuel & Tyler Baker-Wilkinson
Greeters: Carolyn Young & Adrian Capetilo

Next Sunday, April 21
Lay Leaders: Diane Simpson & Katy Stewart
Communion Stewards: Susan Fontaine & Grace Jackson
Greeters: Carol Wilson & Jan Hibbitts

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 - Third 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:

"Somebody crowd me with love. Somebody force me to care. Somebody make me come through. I'll always be there, as frightened as you, to help us survive being alive."

Stephen Sondheim, *Company*

CHIMING OF THE TRINITY

WORDS OF WELCOME

Trent Williams

PRELUDE & LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Tyler Baker-Wilkinson

One: With friends and strangers,
with family and neighbors, we gather:

**All: Come among us, Healing God,
with that love which never ends.**

One: With faith reaching out to touch,
with hearts straining to trust, we hope:

**All: Come among us, Friend of the broken,
with your compassion which makes us whole.**

One: With word and wonder,
with silence and song, we wait:

**All: Come among us, Dryer of our tears,
to lift us to our feet to follow you.**

***OPENING HYMN - #304** All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name

Tune: Coronation

***INVOCATION**

Tyler Baker-Wilkinson

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Lanette Schulte

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

Trent Williams

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Trent Williams

**God of Mercy and Grace,
you come to us in Jesus of Nazareth
to break down the dividing walls of hostility between us:
Yet we maintain walls that separate and isolate.**

**You give us the ministry of reconciliation:
Yet we nurse our wounds and withhold mercy and forgiveness.
You ask us to acknowledge and share our wealth:
Yet we refuse to recognize and relieve the poverty around us.**

**You bless our lives with boundless love:
Yet we fail to witness to that love,
and so keep others from knowing you.**

**Forgive our selfishness, we pray.
Transform us by your Spirit and your Word
into that which pleases you,
the image of Christ. Amen.**

ASSURANCE OF GRACE

Trent Williams

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

Trent Williams

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

***HYMN OF RESPONSE #256** We Live by Faith and Not by Sight Tune: Dunlap's Creek

EPISTLE READING

Romans 12:3-8, NRSV

Tyler Baker-Wilkinson

For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

HANDBELL ANTHEM: I Know That My Redeemer Lives (Jesus Shall Reign) - arranged by Cynthia Dobrinski

READING FROM THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Acts 3:1-10, NRSV

Brooke Dooley

One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, at three o'clock in the afternoon. And a man lame from birth was being carried in. People would lay him daily at the gate of the temple called the Beautiful Gate so that he could ask for alms from those entering the temple. When he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked them for alms. Peter looked intently at him, as did John, and said, "Look at us." And he fixed his attention on them, expecting to receive something from them. But Peter said, "I have no silver or gold, but what I have I give you; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, stand up and walk." And he took him by the right hand and raised him up; and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong. Jumping up, he stood and began to walk, and he entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God. All the people saw him walking and praising God, and they recognized him as the one who used to sit and ask for alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him. up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

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

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

THE MESSAGE

Brooke Dooley

MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

INVITATION TO SHARE

Tyler Baker-Wilkinson

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 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 - #42 O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing**

Tune: Azmon

POSTLUDE

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Instrumental Music:

- Prelude: All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name! - Oliver Holden, arranged by Marianne Kim
Offertory: O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing - Carl G. Gläser
Postlude: Leaning on the Everlasting Arms - Anthony J. Showalter, arranged by Marianne Kim

Scriptures for Fourth Sunday of Easter, April 21, 2024: Revelation 1:4-8; Acts 5:17-32

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

LGBTQ+ YOUTH MINI GOLF AT BIG SHOTS, APRIL 14: Pride Community Center would like to invite LGBTQ+ youth and allies to miniature golf at Big Shots Golf for an evening of fun and socializing. Participants will need to register in advance so as to help us in budgeting who to cover. Parents are welcome. Youth younger than 7th grade are welcome with a guardian. Participants must sign up here: <https://bit.ly/PCCYouthMiniGolf>. Contact Katy Stewart info@prideecc.org for more information

GENDER AFFIRMING SUPPORT GROUP, APRIL 15: Gender Affirming Support Group that normally meets on the second Monday of the month will be meeting on April 15th for this month due to scheduling conflicts (and the big eclipse). See you Monday, April 15th at 6pm in the educational classroom.

THEOLOGY ON TAP, APRIL 18: After April, our gracious hosts at the KinderHill Brewlab are moving to a new spot. Theology on Tap on April 18 will be our last chance to gather at their current location, 800 S. Bryan Ave in Bryan. While we await an official reopening date at the new digs, T.o.T. will take a break. So, join us at 6pm on Apr. 18 for a farewell T.o.T. at a setting that has provided us with hospitable space for good conversations and great fellowship for the last two years. We call it “Theology on Tap” because the informal discussions revolve around faith and spirituality, bringing our lives more in tune with God’s will and way, and 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. There are non-alcoholic beverages, minors are welcome, as are four-leggeds, and there is a food truck onsite.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FINANCIAL UPDATE: For those who are interested in a follow-up from the Congregational Meeting in December, please read the letter from Moderator Jackie Womack at <https://bit.ly/43atksE>

SABBATICAL FOR SENIOR PASTOR, APRIL 1 – JULY 15: Pastor Dan began his three-and-a-half-month sabbatical. As a congregation, we can support Pastor Dan during this sabbatical by praying for his well-being and continuing to engage with and support the ministries of Friends Church, while eagerly anticipating the wisdom and inspiration he'll bring back to us. With hope, this intentional season of rest will bear fruit for years to come.

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. Contact Jodie Robinson (jocelin-brune@gmail.com) or Pam Engler (penglertx@gmail.com). Thank you!

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.

FRIENDS CHURCH FOOD DISTRIBUTION: Would you consider stepping in for an hour or two on Friday afternoon to distribute fresh fruits and vegetables to our B-CS neighbors? Join folks from Friends in the parking lot at Peace Lutheran next Friday, April 19 between 2:30 and 6:00 pm to assist in the distribution of food from the Brazos Valley Food Bank. Become part of our very enthusiastic “food team” and make some new friends. Feel free to just show up! Send any questions you may have to Anne at awehrly@suddenlink.net or text 979-220-0714.

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.

SAVE THE DATE

PERIOD CARE PRODUCT DRIVE FOR BRAZOS CHURCH PANTRY, APRIL 5-21: Friends' quarterly Period Care Product Drive STARTS on Sunday, April 5th, and ends on April 21st. Friends UCC will again be collecting period care products for distribution at Brazos Church Pantry. Smaller packages for individual distribution are preferred, with an emphasis on pads and tampons. You can drop them in the collection bins in the narthex or by the office. NO TIME TO SHOP??? Visit our Wish list online at <https://amzn.to/3U2kmtJ> or you can find the QR code on the donation bins. For more information, email Pam Engler at penglertx@gmail.com. Thank you!

BACK BAY MISSION HYGIENE KIT COLLECTION, APRIL 21: From Sunday, April 21 to May 19th the Justice & Mission Committee will be sponsoring a collection of hygiene kit items for Back Bay Mission. All of the United Church of Christ congregations in the South Central Conference are invited to provide these hygiene kits. Items needed for the hygiene kits will "go live" on Amazon Sunday April 21.

LINDA COATS BOOK CLUB, APRIL 25: For April, the book club will be reading Shane Claiborne's *Beating Guns: Hope for People Who Are Weary of Violence*. Join us for discussion at 6:30pm.

SPRING CLEANING WORKDAY, APRIL 27: Clean up around the children's playground and labyrinth, trim bushes around the parking lot, minor tree trimming, among other projects. Contact Steve Robinson at sraggie@gmail.com if you would like to participate. Rakes, leaf blowers, hedge trimmers, etc. will be provided. Need willing volunteers to supply labor of love from 8am - noon.

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*)
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Executive Pastor

The Rev. Trent Williams (*he, him*)
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The Rev. Brooke Dooley (*she, her, they, them*)
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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.