

An Open & Affirming Congregation



A Parable - The Lost Coin Cara B. Hochhalter (2019)

September 14, 2025 11:00am New Member Sunday

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: Cathy Hansen & Dwight Baker Greeters: Kathy Yeager & Dwight Roblyer

Next Sunday, September 21:

Lay Leaders: Becky Burks & Kathy Miller Communion Stewards: Mary Johnson & ?? Greeters: Carolyn Young & Dwight Roblyer

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.

Fourteenth 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.

SCRIPTURE FOR MEDITATION: Psalm 51:1-10, NRSV

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you alone, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment. Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when my mother conceived me. You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have crushed rejoice. Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.

QUOTE FOR MEDITATION:

"Have we not come to such an impasse in the modern world that we must love our enemies—or else?"

—Martin Luther King, Jr.

CHIMING OF THE TRINITY

WORDS OF WELCOME

Kyle Riley

PRELUDE & LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Dwight Baker

One: Come alive, people of God! Let your hearts burn with passion.

All: Shake off what dulls the spirit

Welcome grief and anger Welcome sorrow and joy

One: Love animates our ability to be present:

All: To each other, near and far

To the movement of the Spirit

To the labors of love to which we are called

One: Beloved children of God, listen!

All: The world is groaning for liberation.

An asterisk* indicates that the congregation is invited to stand in body or spirit.

*Invocation Dwight Baker

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Tami Dudo

Children in the sanctuary are invited to come to the front. 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.

SERVICE FOR THE RECEIVING OF NEW MEMBERS

Introduction of New Members

Ann Rome, Monica Shields, Michael Shields, Charlie Shields, Elliot Shields, Gaye Webb

QUESTIONS OF THE CANDIDATES

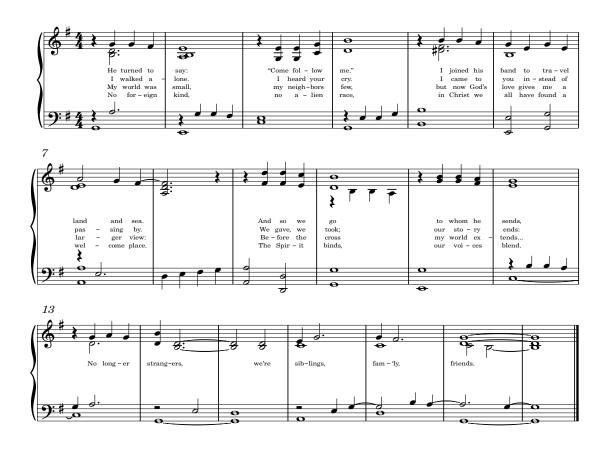
FRIENDS CHURCH COVENANT (UNISON)

We recognize that we were strangers, that we came from diverse backgrounds, that we share a longing for acceptance and a need for mutual support — we need to celebrate our love of God with joy, enthusiasm, and faith. In faith we gather as Friends Congregational Church to experience community, to celebrate old traditions, and to affirm our new creations. Looking outward, we recognize the need to embrace the world and to invite others to share mutual gifts. Our spiritual journey is sustained by the God of Biblical history as expressed by Abraham, Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, and most clearly by Jesus of Nazareth. We celebrate the continuity of our faith and live in its mystery.

**Welcome & Reception of New Members (Unison)

We welcome you with joy into the common life of this church. We promise you our friendship and prayers as we share the hopes and labors of the church of Jesus the Christ. By the power of the Holy Spirit may we continue to grow together in God's knowledge and love and be witnesses of our risen savior.

*HYMNS - No Longer Strangers



*No. 391 In the Midst of New Dimensions

New Dimensions

*Passing of the Peace

Trent Williams

One: The peace of Christ be with you all.

Many: And also with you!

GOSPEL READING

Luke 15:1-10, CEB

Brooke Dooley

All the tax collectors and sinners were gathering around Jesus to listen to him. The Pharisees and legal experts were grumbling, saying, "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them."

Jesus told them this parable: "Suppose someone among you had one hundred sheep and lost one of them. Wouldn't he leave the other ninety-nine in the pasture and search for the lost one until he finds it? And when he finds it, he is thrilled and places it on his shoulders. When he arrives home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, 'Celebrate with me because I've found my lost sheep.' In the same way, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who changes both heart and life than over ninety-nine righteous people who have no need to change their hearts and lives. "Or what woman, if she owns ten silver coins and loses one of them, won't light a lamp and sweep the house, searching her home carefully until she finds it? When she finds it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Celebrate with me because I've found my lost coin.' In the same way, I tell you, joy breaks out in the presence of God's angels over one sinner who changes both heart and life."

HANDBELL ANTHEM - I've Got Peace Like a River - Arranged by Linda R. Lamb

EPISTLE READING

1 Timothy 1:12-17, CEB

Dan De Leon

I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength because he considered me faithful. So he appointed me to ministry even though I used to speak against him, attack his people, and I was proud. But I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and without faith. Our Lord's favor poured all over me along with the faithfulness and love that are in Christ Jesus. This saying is reliable and deserves full acceptance: "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners"—and I'm the biggest sinner of all. But this is why I was shown mercy, so that Christ Jesus could show his endless patience to me first of all. So I'm an example for those who are going to believe in him for eternal life. Now to the king of the ages, to the immortal, invisible, and only God, may honor and glory be given to him forever and always! Amen.

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

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

THE MESSAGE

"Critiquing Cruelty"

Dan De Leon

MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

Invitation to Share

Dwight Baker

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 uplifits, Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit, Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

*Prayer of Dedication (unison)

Kyle Riley

Gracious and loving God, we thank you for these gifts and ask that they be used to help those in need in our community and throughout the world. As we offer you these gifts, we offer ourselves as well, that together we might transform the world through your grace, mercy, and love. Amen.

*THE LORD'S PRAYER

Kyle Riley

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

Kyle Riley

*CLOSING HYMN - No. 403 My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less

Solid Rock

*Benediction

Dan De Leon

***SUNG RESPONSE** - No. 181 You Are Salt for the Earth, O People (Verse 2 only)

Bring Forth

POSTLUDE

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

Prelude: A Shelter in the Time of Storm - Ira D. Sankey, arranged by Melody Bober

Offertory: Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee - John Bacchus Dykes, arranged by Randall Hartsell

Postlude: Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise - Traditional Welsh Melody,

arranged by Larry Shackley

Scriptures for The Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost, September 21, 2025: Philippians 2:1-5; Isaiah 6:1-8; Luke 4:16-26

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

FAMILIES OF ADOPTION & FOSTER CARE, SEPT 14: A support group for parents with adopted or foster care children. This group meets every second Sunday of the month in the Double Classroom, following the II:am worship service. For the remainder of this year, we will keep an eye on our own children while we visit. If possible, bring a dish to share with the group. Food can be stored in the kitchen during the service. For details, contact Ann Rome: **ann.rome@yahoo.com**.

YOUTH GROUP LUNCH AT BLUE BAKER, SEPT 14: Now that we've officially welcomed our new 6th graders, the Friends Youth Group will be meeting for lunch at Blue Baker on Mills Park Cir after the 11am service on 9/14. This is a chance for the new members of the youth to learn more and connect with the older members of the group. For more information, reach out to Pastor Brooke: pastorbrooke@friends-ucc.org.

HEART OF TEXAS FALL MEETING, SEPT 20: The Heart of Texas Association Fall Meeting will be Saturday, September 20th at Trinity Church of Austin, 4001 Speedway, Austin, TX 78751. Check in begins at 9:30 am, and the meeting will be from 10:00 am to 1:30 pm with lunch provided. RSVP using: https://tinyurl.com/2025FallHOTA.

20TH ANNIVERSARY PARTY, SEPT. 20: To celebrate 20 years of Pastor Dan serving Friends Congregational Church, we are having a party! Join us Saturday evening, September 20th, 6-8pm, at Friends Church for hors d'oeuvres, live music from local artist Joey McGee, and a good time with great friends.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SUPPORT THE FRIENDS YOUTH GROUP GARDEN PROJECT: Following their environmental justice trip to Denver, the Friends Youth Group decided they wanted to bring what they learned back home and create a community garden. We're starting with a small bed so they can learn basic gardening practices, and sustainability measures such as rainwater collection, composting, and use of recycled materials. Here is where we need your help. Do you have knowledge of compost maintenance, water collection, or gardening? Are there materials you have at your home such as gloves, spades, and sheers that you'd like to donate? Be part of this great opportunity to help out the Youth Group by signing up at https://bit.ly/FriendsYouthGarden, or reaching out directly to Pastor Brooke (pastorbrooke@friends-ucc.org)

FRIENDS WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: Join our Friends Church worship team! We are in need of additional folks to help on Sunday mornings to serve as greeters, lay leaders and communion stewards to make our worship services flow smoothly. Sign up with these links.

9am Service bit.ly/1000worship

11am Service bit.ly/1100worship

TEACHING SUPPORT NEEDED FOR GRADES 3-5 CLASS: The 2025-26 Sunday School year is off to a great start with classes for Grades K-2, 3-5, and 6-12, co-led by two teachers for each class. However, our stellar teachers for the Grades 3-5 Class, need some help to assure we have consistent support for them and the children in their care. Our Grades 3-5 Class teachers having several Sundays coming up where one of them will need to be absent, so having an additional co-teacher is a must, and a few substitutes as needed will be very helpful. Feeling called to co-teach Sunday School? Please contact Christian Education Committee Chair Loretta Mendez: christian_ed@ friends-ucc.org.

OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE AND SHARE: SIGN CHANGERS: Our church sign is prime real estate for spreading love, hope, and maybe even a holy chuckle. If you've got a creative spark (or a pun or two), help us reimagine our message to the world. Let's make passersby know that we are united by the example of Jesus, we live faithfully, love limitlessly, and serve boldly. Interested? Sign up to help change the sign—literally! Connect with Megan Alvear at evangelism@friends-ucc.org.

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 Charity Stokes: worship@friends-ucc.org.

Be an Acolyte: All children aged 8 and up are welcome to join us in assisting in church services, bringing light and spirit to our worship. Children younger than 8 can participate with an adult partner. Sign up via the sheet in the narthex, https://bit.ly/FriendsAcolytes

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: "All I need is coffee; all we need are volunteers to make it!" Sign up via sheet on kitchen counter, at bit.ly/friendschurchcoffee or email Marisa at Fellowship@ friends-ucc.org.

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

LINDA COATS BOOK CLUB, SEPT 25: Linda Coats Book Club will meet on Thursday, Sept 25th at 6:30pm. Our book will be 1984 by George Orwell. Contact Jodie Robinson (spirit_develop@friends-ucc.org) for more details.

FAMILY PROMISE HOST WEEK, SEPT 28: Family Promise of Bryan-College Station a ministry of Friends Church since 2008, has as its mission "to help homeless children and their families achieve sustainable independence." Friends Church will be hosting three families at the Family Promise Center for a week starting Sunday, September 28. You can be a part of this vital ministry. Options for helping include preparing a meal or providing food from a grocery list. Learn more about Family Promise and sign up on Sunday morning in the fellowship area after worship starting September 21. Direct questions or offers to volunteer to Mary Howell mhowell61@gmail.com or Sally Manthei manthei_sally@aol.com.

FIRST FRIDAY WITH FRIENDS, OCT 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.

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

Executive Pastor
The Rev. Trent Williams (*he, him*)
pastortrent@friends-ucc.org

Director of Music Ministries Chris Hoffman (he, him) choir@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