

# FRIENDS CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Fifth Sunday of Easter  
April 28, 2024  
9:00am



*An Open & Affirming  
Congregation*

## 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

Sydney Zentell

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

Sydney Zentell

## \*PASSING OF THE PEACE

Brooke Dooley

One: The peace of Christ be with you all.

Many: And also with you.

## STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

Mary Howell

## PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

Brooke Dooley

## 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.**

## READING FROM THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Acts 9:1-20, NRSV  
Trent Williams

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!**

## **THE MESSAGE**

Trent Williams

## **SILENT PRAYER & MEDITATION**

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

## **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & LIGHTING OF CANDLES FOR INTERCESSIONS**

Brooke Dooley

## **INVITATION TO SHARE**

Sydney Zentell

## **OFFERTORY**

Secure online giving via Church Office Giving at [bit.ly/givetofriends](https://bit.ly/givetofriends)  
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.**

# \*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 vocal line (treble clef) and a bass line (bass clef). 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: 1 I have de - cid - ed to fol - low Je - sus; I have de - cid - ed to fol - low Je - sus; I have de - cid - ed to fol - low Je - sus; 2 Though none go with me, still I will fol - low; though none go with me, still I will fol - low; though none go with me, still I will fol - low; 3 The world be - hind me, the cross be - fore me; the world be - hind me, the cross be - fore me; the world be - hind me, the cross be - fore me; 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://Friends-ucc.org)) ▶ Get **Involved** ▶ **Volunteer** or email [office@friends-ucc.org](mailto:office@friends-ucc.org) for more information or to volunteer.

## 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](mailto:katherinemiller59@gmail.com)).

### Friends Church Staff

#### Senior Pastor

The Rev. Dr. Dan De Leon (*he, him*)  
[pastor@friends-ucc.org](mailto:pastor@friends-ucc.org)

#### Director of Music Ministries

Chris Hoffman (*he, him*)  
[choir@friends-ucc.org](mailto:choir@friends-ucc.org)

#### Executive Pastor

The Rev. Trent Williams (*he, him*)  
[pastortrent@friends-ucc.org](mailto:pastortrent@friends-ucc.org)

#### Associate Pastor to Youth & Young Adults

The Rev. Brooke Dooley (*she, her, they, them*)  
[pastorbrooke@friends-ucc.org](mailto:pastorbrooke@friends-ucc.org)

#### Administrative Assistant

Michael Rangel (*he, him*)  
[office@friends-ucc.org](mailto:office@friends-ucc.org)

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[www.friends-ucc.org](http://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.