



Friends Church

An Open & Affirming Congregation



Christ Healing Peter's Mother-in-Law
Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn (17th century)

February 4, 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: Ann Wild & Kathy Miller
Communion Stewards: Mary Johnson & Holly Scott
Greeters: Eli Vasquez & Lanette & Rick Schulte

Next Sunday, February 11:
Lay Leaders: Katy Stewart
Greeters:

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.

Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

Epiphany is the Season of Light, when we remember the revelation of Jesus as the beloved Child of God, while recognizing the lengthening of the days and the growing of the light.

PSALM FOR MEDITATION: Psalm 147:1-11, CEB

Praise the Lord! Because it is good to sing praise to our God! Because it is a pleasure to make beautiful praise! The Lord rebuilds Jerusalem, gathering up Israel's exiles. God heals the brokenhearted and bandages their wounds. God counts the stars by number, giving each one a name. Our Lord is great and so strong! God's knowledge can't be grasped! The Lord helps the poor, but throws the wicked down on the dirt! Sing to the Lord with thanks; sing praises to our God with a lyre! God covers the skies with clouds; God makes rain for the earth; God makes the mountains sprout green grass. God gives food to the animals—even to the baby ravens when they cry out. God doesn't prize the strength of a horse; God doesn't treasure the legs of a runner. No. The Lord treasures the people who honor him, the people who wait for his faithful love.

CHIMING OF THE TRINITY

WORDS OF WELCOME

Brooke Dooley

PRELUDE & LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Kathy Miller

One: Gather us in, the brokenhearted and the joyful.

All: Gather us in, the weak and the strong.

One: Gather us in, the fearful and the courageous.

All: Gather us in, the young and the old.

One: Gather us in, to sing of God's works.

All: Gather us in, to praise Jesus Christ.

One: Gather us in, to worship and wonder.

All: Gather us in, to know of God's love.

*OPENING HYMN - Let Us Build a House (All Are Welcome)

Tune: Two Oaks

Capo 3: (A7) (D) (A) (D) (G) (A) (Bm)
 C7 F C F B^b C Dm

1 Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can
 2 Let us build a house where proph - ets speak, and words are
 3 Let us build a house where love is found in wa - ter,
 4 Let us build a house where hands will reach be - yond the
 5 Let us build a house where all are named, their songs and

(D) (A) (D) (Bm7) (Em) (A)
 F C F Dm7 Gm C

safe - ly live, a place where saints and chil - dren tell
 strong and true, where all God's chil - dren dare to seek
 wine, and wheat; a ban - quet hall on ho - ly ground
 wood and stone to heal and strength-en, serve and teach,
 vi - sions heard and loved and trea-sured, taught and claimed

(Em) (A7) (G) (D) (F#m) (Bm)
 Gm C7 B^b F Am Dm

how hearts learn to for - give. Built of hopes and dreams and
 to dream God's reign a - new. Here the cross shall stand as
 where peace and jus - tice meet. Here the love of God, through
 and live the Word they've known. Here the out - cast and the
 as words with - in the Word. Built of tears and cries and

(Em) (A) (D) (G)
 Gm C F B^b

vi - sions, rock of faith and vault of grace; here the
 wit - ness, and as sym - bol of God's grace; here as
 Je - sus, is re - vealed in time and space; as we
 strang - er bear the im - age of God's face; let us
 laugh - ter, prayers of faith and songs of grace; let this

(D) (G) (F#7) (Bm) (Em) (Bm)
 F B^b A7 Dm Gm Dm

love of Christ shall end di - vi - sions:
 one we claim the faith of Je - sus:
 share in Christ the feast that frees us: all are wel - come;
 bring an end to fear and dan - ger:
 house pro-claim from floor to raf - ter:

(F#m) (Em) (D) (Em) (A7) (D) (G) (D)
 Am Gm F Gm C7 F B^b F

all are wel - come; all are wel - come in this place.

***INVOCATION**

Kathy Miller

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 (oh let it shine)!**

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

Brooke Dooley

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (RESPONSIVE)

Brooke Dooley

One: God invites us to come to worship as our whole selves
and offers us a new beginning, day by day and week by week.
Trusting in God, we pray for transformation and new life:

**All: Holy One, we hope in your steadfast love,
bringing our broken hearts and our wounded spirits.
Make aware of the hearts we break, the spirits we wound,
of those we treat as outcasts, of those we tread down.
Renew us in your grace, renew us in your strength. Amen.**

ASSURANCE OF GRACE (RESPONSIVE)

Brooke Dooley

One: Have you not known? Have you not heard?
God does not grow weary with us, but loves, forgives, and renews us.
Go with renewed strength in your walk of faith.

All: Alleluia! Amen!

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

Brooke Dooley

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

*HYMN OF RESPONSE - Seek Ye First

Tune: Lafferty

*1.
1. Seek ye first the king - dom of God
2. Ask, and it shall be giv - en un - to you,
3. You do not live by bread a - lone,
and seek, his and right - eous shall - ness,
but by ev - 'ry find, word
and all these things shall be add - ed un - to you;
and knock, and the door shall be o - pened un - to you;
that comes forth from the mouth of God;
Al - le - lu, al - le - lu - ia.

HEBREW SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 40:21-31 (NRSV)

Kathy Miller

Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth? It is he who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers; who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them like a tent to live in; who brings princes to naught, and makes the rulers of the earth as nothing. Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown, scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth, when he blows upon them, and they wither, and the tempest carries them off like stubble. To whom then will you compare me, or who is my equal? says the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high and see: Who created these? He who brings out their host and numbers them, calling them all by name; because he is great in strength, mighty in power, not one is missing. Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel, "My way is hidden from the Lord, and my right is disregarded by my God"? Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless. Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted; but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

CHORAL ANTHEM: Many Will Come - Thomas Keesecker

East and west, north and south, many will come, come.

Many will come, from east and west, from the north and south, and will eat in the kingdom of God. Oh, blessed are they who eat bread in the kingdom of God.

GOSPEL READING

Mark 1:29-39 (CEB)

Dan De Leon

After leaving the synagogue, Jesus, James, and John went home with Simon and Andrew. Simon's mother-in-law was in bed, sick with a fever, and they told Jesus about her at once. He went to her, took her by the hand, and raised her up. The fever left her, and she served them.

That evening, at sunset, people brought to Jesus those who were sick or demon-possessed. The whole town gathered near the door. He healed many who were sick with all kinds of diseases, and he threw out many demons. But he didn't let the demons speak, because they recognized him.

Early in the morning, well before sunrise, Jesus rose and went to a deserted place where he could be alone in prayer. Simon and those with him tracked him down. When they found him, they told him, "Everyone's looking for you!"

He replied, "Let's head in the other direction, to the nearby villages, so that I can preach there too. That's why I've come." He traveled throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and throwing out demons.

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

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

THE MESSAGE

Dan De Leon

MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

INVITATION TO SHARE

Kathy Miller

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 (UNISON)**

Trent Williams

Holy One, we bring our gifts and pray that they may be
for the building up and lifting up of your people,
for the binding of wounds and the healing of hearts,
for shelter and for covering and clothing for those in need.
With these gifts we offer our praise as we hope in your steadfast love. Amen.

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

Brooke Dooley

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

Brooke Dooley, Trent Williams

***CLOSING HYMN #181 You Are Salt for the Earth, O People**

Tune: Bring Forth

***BENEDICTION**

Dan De Leon

POSTLUDE

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Instrumental Music:

Prelude: Give Me Jesus - Traditional Spiritual, arranged by Mary McDonald
Offertory: 'Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus - William J. Kirkpatrick, arranged by Randall Hartsell
Communion: Living Hope - Phil Wickham and Brian Johnson, arranged by Phillip Keveren
Postlude: I'm Gonna Sing/Ain't-a That Good News? - Traditional Spirituals, arranged by
Larry Shackley

Scriptures for Transfiguration Sunday, February 11, 2024: Genesis 3:1-7; 1 Timothy 2:11-15

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

LEAVING A LEGACY: PLANNED GIVING WORKSHOP: You are invited to join us for a Planned Giving Workshop after today’s 11:00am service. Lunch will be provided, and we will learn about how to remember the church in your will or estate plans, ways to make use of retirement assets, and answer your questions. All are welcome--even if you’re not at retirement age yet, this can be valuable learning as you think about planning for the future. You can sign up to let us know you’ll be coming here: <https://bit.ly/friendsplannedgiving>.



DEADLINE TO SIGN UP FOR SPRING BREAK MISSION TRIP, FEB 5: It’s not too late. You can still join our group of Friends headed to the Texas/Mexico border March 10 - 13. Plans are underway to visit immigration court, interact with Border Patrol agents, volunteer at a respite center, and visit an outdoor encampment for asylum seekers in Matamoros--all with the intent to bear witness to the realities beneath the rhetoric. If you would like to participate, contact Cecelia at programs@friends-ucc.org.

GUYZ BREAKFAST, FEB 10: Guyz Breakfast brings together fellowship, fun and great food. Join us at the church on the second Saturday of the month 9:00 to 10:30 a.m. Bring your favorite breakfast food or drink to share. Pancakes and coffee are provided.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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 Yous' (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!

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.

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. 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

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 on February 11 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.” Over six weeks, we will watch an episode of the series and have conversation about how faith and real life intersect. 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: The Ash Wednesday service will be held on Feb 14. There will be a 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!

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!

INQUIRE CLASS, FEB 18: Are you wanting to learn more about Friends Church? 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. For more information and to sign up for Inquire, 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).

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*)
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