



Friends Church

An Open & Affirming Congregation



Holding Hands
Liz Valente (2021)

April 7, 2024
II: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: Dinah Anderson & Kathy Miller
Communion Stewards: Mary Johnson & Charity Stokes
Greeters: Eli Vasquez & Alex Cannon

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

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 - Second 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.

PSALM FOR MEDITATION: Psalm 133, NRSV

How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity! It is like the precious oil on the head, running down upon the beard, on the beard of Aaron, running down over the collar of his robes. It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains of Zion. For there the Lord ordained his blessing, life forevermore.

CHIMING OF THE TRINITY

WORDS OF WELCOME

Kyle Riley

PRELUDE & LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Kathy Miller

One: This is a new day.

All: The day of the risen Christ!

One: Christ lives in our hearts and in our world.

All: Christ lives. Let us love our neighbors!

One: Christ lives. Let us share God's abundance.

All: Christ lives. Let us care for God's creation!

One: Christ lives. Let us rejoice!

All: Christ lives. Let us worship God! Alleluia! Thanks be to God.

***OPENING HYMN - #257 Alleluia! Gracious Jesus!**

Tune: Hyfrydol

***INVOCATION**

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Kyle Riley

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

Brooke Dooley

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Brooke Dooley

Loving God,
we confess that at times we do not share in the joy of the resurrection,
but are caught in the worries of the world.
We confess that we do not always live in the spirit of new life
but remain discontent, grumbling and anxious.
Forgive us for not sharing in the Good News.
Forgive us when we find it more comfortable to worry and complain
than to risk the joy and encouragement of new life in Christ.
Call us back to Your ways, O God,
to seek hope and reconciliation, restoration and peace.
In the name of the Risen Christ, we pray. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF GRACE

Brooke Dooley

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

Brooke Dooley

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

*HYMN OF RESPONSE Soon and Very Soon

Tune: Soon and Very Soon

1 Soon and ver - y soon we are going to see the King.
2 No more cry - ing there: we are going to see the King.
3 No more dy - ing there: we are going to see the King.
4 Soon and ver - y soon we are going to see the King.

Soon and ver - y soon we are going to see the King.
No more cry - ing there: we are going to see the King.
No more dy - ing there: we are going to see the King.
Soon and ver - y soon we are going to see the King.

Soon and ver - y soon we are going to see the King.
No more cry - ing there: we are going to see the King.
No more dy - ing there: we are going to see the King.
Soon and ver - y soon we are going to see the King.

Hal - le - lu - jah, hal - le - lu - jah, we're going to see the King!

I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

SPECIAL MUSIC: The trumpet shall sound (from *Messiah*) - George Frideric Handel
(Tom Vogel, baritone)

READING FROM THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Acts 1:1-14 (NRSV)
Trent Williams

In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. "This," he said, "is what you have heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?" He replied, "It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven." Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away. When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying, Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

One: The Word of God for the people of God.
All: God is still speaking. Thanks be to God!

THE MESSAGE

Trent Williams

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

Brooke Dooley

All: God of life, take these gifts and multiply them, wherever there is need of hope and new life. We offer them as a witness to your love that makes our joy complete! Amen.

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

Trent Williams, Kyle Riley

SUNG COMMUNION RESPONSE

O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder
consider all the worlds thy hands have made,
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder,
thy power throughout the universe displayed:

Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee:
How great thou art! How great thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee:
How great thou art! How great thou art!

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

Brooke Dooley

*CLOSING HYMN - Thine Is the Glory

Tune: Judas Maccabeus

1 Thine is the glo - ry, ris - en, con- quering Son; end - less is
2 Lo! Je - sus meets us, ris - en from the tomb; lov - ing - ly
3 No more we doubt thee, glo - rious Prince of life! Life is naught

the vic - tory thou o'er death hast won. An - gels in bright rai - ment
he greets us, scat - ters fear and gloom. Let the church with glad - ness
with - out thee; aid us in our strife. Make us more than con-querors

rolled the stone a - way, kept the fold - ed grave - clothes
hymns of tri - umph sing, for the Lord now liv - eth;
through thy death - less love; bring us safe through Jor - dan

Refrain

where thy bod - y lay.
death hath lost its sting. Thine is the glo - ry, ris - en, con- quering
to thy home a - bove.

Son; end - less is the vic - tory thou o'er death hast won.

*BENEDICTION

Trent Williams

POSTLUDE

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Instrumental Music:

- Prelude: All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name - Oliver Holden
 Offretory: Look, Ye Saints, the Sight Is Glorious - William Owen
 Communion: Alleluia! Sing to Jesus - Rowland Hugh Prichard
 Postlude: Crown Him with Many Crowns - George Job Elvey

Scriptures for Third Sunday of Easter, April 14, 2024: Romans 12:3-8; Acts 3:1-10

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

CHURCH DIRECTORY PICTURES: Get your picture taken for the church directory! To make our directory as usable as possible, we want to be sure your photo is included. Throughout the month of April, we are offering an opportunity for you to have your picture taken by our AV team for our online church directory, Realm. We will also assist you in downloading the app to your phone if you would like. Just stay after the 11:00 service and we'll get you set up.

FABULOUS AT ANY AGE “SOLAR ECLIPSE PARTY AND POTLUCK”, APRIL 8: On April 8, a total solar eclipse will cross North America passing over FRIENDS CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH! Don't miss out on this experience! Bring your favorite potluck dish to the church at noon and join your friends for this AMAZING event! Solar glasses will be provided.

WONDERFUL WEDNESDAY WITH WOMEN, APRIL 10: Wonderful Wednesday with Women will meet at the Rooftop Bar at the Hilton on 801 University Dr. E from 5:00 - 7:00pm.

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.

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!

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@pridecc.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.

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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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.