

# FRIENDS CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany  
January 28, 2024  
9:00am



*An Open & Affirming  
Congregation*

## **PSALM FOR MEDITATION:** Psalm III, NRSV

Praise the Lord! I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart, in the company of the upright, in the congregation. Great are the works of the Lord, studied by all who delight in them. Full of honor and majesty is his work, and his righteousness endures forever. He has gained renown by his wonderful deeds; the Lord is gracious and merciful. He provides food for those who fear him; he is ever mindful of his covenant. He has shown his people the power of his works, in giving them the heritage of the nations. The works of his hands are faithful and just; all his precepts are trustworthy. They are established forever and ever, to be performed with faithfulness and uprightness. He sent redemption to his people; he has commanded his covenant forever. Holy and awesome is his name. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding. His praise endures forever.

## **CHIMING OF THE TRINITY**

## **WORDS OF WELCOME**

Trent Williams

## **PRELUDE & LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES**

## **CALL TO WORSHIP**

Susan Fontaine

One: We come to worship...

**All: Giving thanks with whole hearts  
in the company of this congregation.**

One: We worship the One who is gracious and merciful...

**All: Holy and awesome is God's name!  
Let us worship God together!**

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

Tune: Coronation

**\*INVOCATION**

Susan Fontaine

**\*PASSING OF THE PEACE**

Trent Williams

One: The peace of Christ be with you all.

Many: And also with you.

**PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION**

Dan De Leon

**CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

Trent Williams

*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.**

## **GOSPEL READING**

Mark1:21-28 (CEB)

Dan De Leon

Jesus and his followers went into Capernaum. Immediately on the Sabbath Jesus entered the synagogue and started teaching. The people were amazed by his teaching, for he was teaching them with authority, not like the legal experts. Suddenly, there in the synagogue, a person with an evil spirit screamed, “What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are. You are the holy one from God.”

“Silence!” Jesus said, speaking harshly to the demon. “Come out of him!” The unclean spirit shook him and screamed, then it came out.

Everyone was shaken and questioned among themselves, “What’s this? A new teaching with authority! He even commands unclean spirits and they obey him!” Right away the news about him spread throughout the entire region of Galilee.

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

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

## **THE MESSAGE**

Dan De Leon

## **SILENT REFLECTION & MEDITATION**

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

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

Trent Williams

## **INVITATION TO SHARE**

Susan Fontaine

## **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 (UNISON)**

Trent Williams

Protecting God, may our lives mirror the story of Jesus,  
who demanded a destructive spirit flee from a suffering person's body.  
Bless the ways we undo harmful stories in our bodies,  
in our minds and in our communities.  
Companion us as we make room for the Way of Love to flow. Amen.

## **\*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

Dan De Leon, Trent Williams

**\*CLOSING HYMN #303** Rejoice, Give Thanks and Sing

Tune: Darwall's 148th

**\*BENEDICTION**

Dan De Leon

## POSTLUDE

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*Instrumental Music:*

Prelude: All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name! - Oliver Holden, arranged by Marianne Kim

Offertory: Jesus, Name Above All Names - Naida Hearn, arranged by John F. Wilson

Postlude: Brethren, We Have Met to Worship - arranged by Joel Raney

Scriptures for Fifth Sunday after Epiphany, February 4, 2024: Psalm 147:1-11; Mark 1:29-39

## 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

**FIRST FRIDAY WITH FRIENDS:** The next First Friday with Friends is February 2nd. 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 5-7pm timeframe. Some folks stay at Blackwater all evening and others stop by on their way to or from dining and playing in downtown Bryan.

**OWL (OUR WHOLE LIVES) SEXUALITY EDUCATION TRAINING THIS WEEKEND!:** This weekend, January 26-28, Friends Church will be hosting a training for Our Whole Lives. OWL is a comprehensive sexuality education program developed by the UCC and the Unitarian Universalist Association. OWL empowers students with age-appropriate information related to human development, relationships, personal skills, sexual behavior, sexual health, society and culture. As a collaborative effort between Friends, the UU Church of the BV, and community leaders, this training will prepare facilitators to teach 7th-9th and 10th-12th grade students. As a congregation dedicated to reproductive justice, accessibility to all, and being open and affirming to all gender and sexual identities, OWL is a great opportunity to support our youth. There is a lot that goes into planning a training, and we are still in need of funds to make this great program happen. If you would like to support the B/CS OWL initiative, follow the QR code below. Reach out to Pastor Brooke for more information.



## 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](http://thepilgrimpress.com).

**LEAVING A LEGACY: PLANNED GIVING WORKSHOP:** You are invited to join us for a Planned Giving Workshop after the 11:00 worship service on February 4. 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>.



## 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

**DEADLINE TO SIGN UP FOR SPRING BREAK MISSION TRIP:** 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](mailto:programs@friends-ucc.org).

**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



### Friends Church Staff

#### Senior Pastor

The Rev. Dr. Dan De Leon (*he, him*)  
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#### Director of Music Ministries

Chris Hoffman (*he, him*)  
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#### Executive Pastor

The Rev. Trent Williams (*he, him*)  
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#### Associate Pastor to Youth & Young Adults

The Rev. Brooke Dooley (*she, her, they, them*)  
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#### Administrative Assistant

Michael Rangel (*he, him*)  
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[www.friends-ucc.org](http://www.friends-ucc.org) • Office Hours: Monday–Friday, 9:00–3:00