

FRIENDS CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



The Fourth Sunday in Lent  
March 19, 2023  
9:00am

An Open & Affirming  
Congregation

Scripture for Meditation: 1 Samuel 16:7 (Common English Bible)

*But the Lord said to Samuel, "Have no regard for his appearance or stature...God doesn't look at things like humans do. Humans see only what is visible to the eyes, but the Lord sees into the heart."*

CHIMING OF THE TRINITY

WORDS OF WELCOME

Trent Williams

PRELUDE & LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES

\*CALL TO WORSHIP

Jacque Halverson

One: Creator of the cosmos, of eternity and time;

**All: Be with us in this time.**

One: Savior of the world, healer of the nations;

**All: Be with us in this place.**

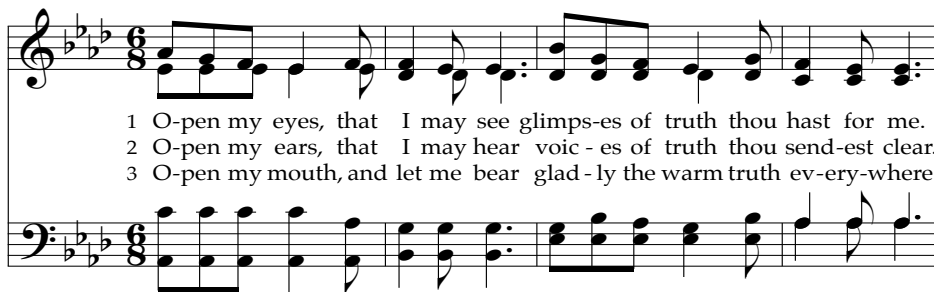
One: Breath of all that lives, of people near and far:

**All: Stir within our lives.**

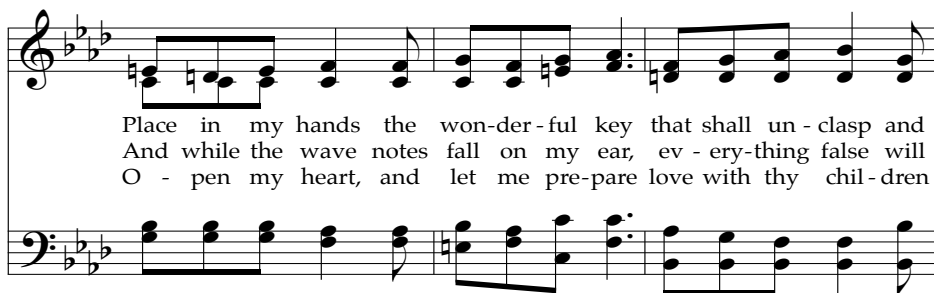
One: Holy One, God of here and now:

**All: Be present in our worship, that we may find new ways to be present in your world.**

# \*OPENING SONG: Open My Eyes That I May See



1 O - pen my eyes, that I may see glimps - es of truth thou hast for me.  
2 O - pen my ears, that I may hear voic - es of truth thou send - est clear.  
3 O - pen my mouth, and let me bear glad - ly the warm truth ev - ery - where.



Place in my hands the won - der - ful key that shall un - clasp and  
And while the wave notes fall on my ear, ev - ery - thing false will  
O - pen my heart, and let me pre - pare love with thy chil - dren



set me free. Si - lent - ly now I wait for thee, read - y, my God, thy  
dis - ap - pear. Si - lent - ly now I wait for thee, read - y, my God, thy  
thus to share. Si - lent - ly now I wait for thee, read - y, my God, thy



will to see. O - pen my eyes; il - lu - mine me, Spir - it di - vine!  
will to see. O - pen my ears; il - lu - mine me, Spir - it di - vine!  
will to see. O - pen my heart; il - lu - mine me, Spir - it di - vine!

CALL TO CONFESSION

Brooke Dooley

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Brooke Dooley

**All:** God our Creator, your kindness has brought us the gift of a new morning.  
Help us to leave yesterday, and not to covet tomorrow,  
but to accept the uniqueness of today.  
By your love, take from us what we need to carry no longer,  
so that we may be free again to choose to serve you.

*silent prayer and meditation*

SONG OF RESPONSE NO. 409: Give Me Jesus (verse 4)

**In the morning when I rise, in the morning when I rise,  
In the morning when I rise, give me Jesus.  
Give me Jesus, give me Jesus,  
You may have all this world, give me Jesus.**

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Brooke Dooley

PASSING THE PEACE

Brooke Dooley

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dan De Leon

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

Dan De Leon

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Dan De Leon

*Children are invited to come to the front as we sing a verse of "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.**

## RESPONSIVE PSALM: “Shepherd Me, O God” (Psalm 23)

Refrain

Shep - herd me, O God, be - yond my wants, be -  
yond my fears, from death in - to life.

Verses

1. God is my shepherd, so nothing shall I want,  
I rest in the meadows of faithfulness and love,  
I walk by the quiet waters of peace.
2. Gently you raise me and heal my weary soul,  
you lead me by pathways of righteousness and truth,  
my spirit shall sing the music of your name.
3. Though I should wander the valley of death,  
I fear no evil, for you are at my side, your rod and your staff,  
my comfort and my hope.
4. You have set me a banquet of love in the face of hatred,  
crowning me with love beyond my pow'r to hold.
5. Surely your kindness and mercy follow me all the days of my life;  
I will dwell in the house of my God for evermore.

## GOSPEL READING: John 9:1-41 (NRSV)

Trent Williams

As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man’s eyes, saying to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see.

The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, “Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?” Some were saying, “It is he.” Others were saying, “No, but it is someone like him.” He kept saying, “I am the man.” But they kept asking him, “Then how were your eyes opened?” He answered, “The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ Then I went and washed and received my sight.” They said to him, “Where is he?” He said, “I do not know.”

They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, “He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see.” Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath.” But others said, “How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?” And they were divided.

So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened." He said, "He is a prophet." The Judeans did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." His parents said this because they were afraid of the Judeans; for the Judeans had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner." He answered, "Your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." His parents said this because they were afraid of the Judeans; for the Judeans had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him." So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner." He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?" Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." The man answered, "Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?" And they drove him out.

Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" He answered, "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him." Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." He said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped him.

Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind." Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, "Surely we are not blind, are we?" Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains.

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

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

## **THE MESSAGE**

Trent Williams

## **SILENT REFLECTION**

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

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

Brooke Dooley

## INVITATION TO SHARE

Jacque Halverson

## OFFERTORY

Secure online giving via Church Office Giving at [bit.ly/givetofriends](https://bit.ly/givetofriends)  
Text to give: Text **Friends** to 979-500-2523  
Venmo to 979-307-8860 or @friendsucc

## \*DOXOLOGY

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Christ the Word in flesh born low;  
Praise Holy Spirit evermore:  
One God, Triune, whom we adore. Amen.**

## \*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Trent Williams

## THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Trent Williams

One: The Lord be with you.

**Many: And also with you.**

One: Lift up your hearts.

**Many: We lift them up to the Lord.**

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**Many: It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Eucharistic Prayer

Sharing Bread and Cup

The Lord's Prayer

Dan De Leon

**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.**

**\*CLOSING HYMN: “Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus”**

1. O soul, are you wea - ry and trou - bled? No light in the  
 2. Thro' death in - to life ev - er - last - ing He passed, and we  
 3. His word shall not fail you — He prom - ised; Be - lieve Him, and

dark - ness you see? There's light for a look at the Sav - ior, And  
 fol - low Him there; O - ver us sin no more hath do - min - ion — For  
 all will be well: Then go to a world that is dy - ing, His

life more a - bun - dant and free!  
 more than con - q'rors we are! Turn your eyes up - on Je - sus,  
 per - fect sal - va - tion to tell!

Look full in His won - der - ful face, And the things of

earth will grow strange - ly dim In the light of His glo - ry and grace.

**\*BENEDICTION**

Trent Williams

**POSTLUDE**

*Instrumental Music:*

- Prelude: Near the Cross - Text by Fanny J. Crosby, Music by William H. Diane, arranged by Stan Pethel
- Offertory: Be thou my vision - Early Irish text, Music by Bob Chilcott - Cathy Hansen, soprano
- Communion: His Eye Is on the Sparrow - Charles H. Gabriel, arranged by Melody Bober
- Postlude: Turn Your Eyes upon Jesus - Helen H. Lemmel, arranged by Marilyn Thompson

**GETTING CONNECTED AT FRIENDS**

**20/30 SOMETHING POTLUCK:** Do you ever wonder how Jesus had so many close friends in his 30s? Are you in your 20s or 30s and think often about having a social life? You're not alone. All 20/30 somethings are invited for a potluck at Brooke Dooley's home. The potluck will be on Sunday, March 19 at 5pm, 16861 Calumet Trl in College Station. Bring your favorite dish or beverage, or just show up and grab a plate. All are welcome. Contact Pastor Brooke for more details at [pastorbrooke@friends-ucc.org](mailto:pastorbrooke@friends-ucc.org).

**MORNING MEDITATION:** Are you looking for quiet time during Lent? Please join us for morning meditation on Tuesdays during Lent at 7:30 am in the sanctuary. We will share readings and spend time in silence. Please join us for this special time.

**FABULOUS AT ANY AGE!** (An informal group that includes everyone interested in getting together) is planning a trip to the Chappell Hill Lavender Farm on Thursday, March 23. We'll leave from the church at 10:00 a.m. and return by 3:00. ALL ARE WELCOME! Sign-up with Kristin Harper at 979-676-3808 or [kristinsharper@outlook.com](mailto:kristinsharper@outlook.com) OR IN THE NARTHEX TODAY. It's a "Bring your own Lunch" event. Drivers are needed.

**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)

---

2200 Southwood Drive • College Station, Texas 77845  
979-693-7021 • [office@friends-ucc.org](mailto:office@friends-ucc.org)  
[www.friends-ucc.org](http://www.friends-ucc.org) • Office Hours: Monday–Friday, 9:00–3:00