

FRIENDS CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost
November 19, 2023
9:00am



*An Open & Affirming
Congregation*

QUOTE FOR MEDITATION:

“We are all so connected, it’s like our lifelines are braided. Never underestimate the value of your existence. Your existence is a gift to this world in ways that won’t always be obvious to you, especially when you’re in pain. But our impact is rarely obvious to us. We save each other’s lives every single day.”

Andrea Gibson

CHIMING OF THE TRINITY

WORDS OF WELCOME

Dan De Leon

PRELUDE & LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Dinah Anderson

One: The time for harvest is close at hand. What have you done with the gifts God has given you?

All: We have brought our gifts to the house of the Lord.

One: Praise God for the gifts and for opportunities for service that they represent.

All: We praise God for all the ways in which our lives have been blessed.

One: Generous God, accept our gifts and our lives this day.

All: Loving God, accept our praise and gratitude. Amen.

***OPENING SONG** from Taizé - Live in Charity

Lento $\text{♩} = 72$ F C Dm B \flat D G C ,

U - bi ca - ri - tas et a - stead mor,
Live in char - i - ty and stead - fast love,

A

F C Dm Gm C 3 F

u - bi ca - ri - tas De - us i - bi est.
live in char - i - ty; God will dwell with you.

***INVOCATION**

Dinah Anderson

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

Dan De Leon

One: The peace of Christ be with you all.

Many: **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

Brooke Dooley

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Dan De Leon

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

Matthew 25:14-30 NRSV

Brooke Dooley

“For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' But his master replied, 'You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'”

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

THE MESSAGE

Brooke Dooley

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

Dan De Leon

INVITATION TO SHARE

Dinah Anderson

OFFERTORY

Secure online giving via Church Office Giving at 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)

Dan De Leon

God whose giving knows no ending, we offer up the treasure that you have entrusted to us. We offer up the skills and time that you have graciously given to us; we offer up ourselves in service and praise. Receive these gifts by your grace. Multiply and use them through the power of the Holy Spirit to accomplish Christ's work of love in the world. Amen.

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

Dan De Leon

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 #448** Take My Life, God, Let It Be

Tune: Vienna

***BENEDICTION**

Brooke Dooley

POSTLUDE

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Instrumental Music:

Prelude: The Solid Rock - arranged by Robert W. Thygerson
Offertory: Come, Ye Thankful People, Come - arranged by Joshua Evanovich
Communion: Give Thanks/Now Thank We All Our God - arranged by Joel Raney
Postlude: For the Fruit of All Creation - Welsh Melody, arranged by Jane Holstein

Scripture for Twenty-Sixth Sunday after Pentecost, November 26, 2023: Ephesians 1:15-23; Matthew 25:31-46

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

TODAY!! FRIENDSGIVING 2023: Our Annual Friendsgiving Dinner will be held today, Sunday, November 19, in the church sanctuary beginning with worship at 5:30 p.m. This year's dinner is a potluck, and plenty of folks have signed up to bring turkey, ham, and all the sides and desserts. All are welcome.

FRIENDS CHURCH CHRISTMAS PAGEANT SURVEY DUE NOV 22: Please let us know we can count on your child/youth for the Friends Church Christmas Pageant by completing this survey, by November 22nd, using the link: <https://tinyurl.com/2023PageantParts> or see the Pageant article in TW@F.

TRANS DAY OF REMEMBRANCE VIGIL Nov. 22: Pride Community Center invites all to remember the lives of those lost to anti-transgender violence and hate from this past year. The Transgender Day of Remembrance vigil will be held on November 20th, 2023 at Sue Haswell park, pavilion A at 6pm. Name readers and other volunteers are welcome. Sign up at <https://www.volunteersignup.org/KAJXL>

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PASTORS AWAY FOR THANKSGIVING HOLIDAYS: Pastor Dan and Pastor Brooke will be away from the church office Nov. 22-24. Should you have a pastoral emergency during that time, contact Pastor Dan: pastor@friends-ucc.org.

CLOSED FOR THANKSGIVING: The church office will be closed for the Thanksgiving holiday Nov. 23 & 24.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING ANNOUNCED - Dec 3. Sunday, December 3rd after the 11:00 service, join us for a congregational meeting to discuss important issues about church finances. This informational meeting will not require any voting.

DEVOTIONAL BOOKLET FOR ADVENT NOW AVAILABLE: Advent begins Sunday, December 3. Copies of the UCC's Daily Devotionals booklet for Advent, GLOW are available for pickup in the narthex; one per household, please. The electronic version (pdf) may be purchased individually at thepilgrimpress.com.

FRIENDS CHURCH PODCAST: "Friends Congregational Church Sermons" has launched! Our 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. Look for it on Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, Spotify, Amazon Music/Audible, iHeartRadio, PlayerFM, Listen Notes, Samsung, Podchaser, or Boomplay; and spread the word!

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!

FOOD DISTRIBUTION AT PEACE LUTHERAN: No volunteers are needed this Friday (Nov 24th). Please join us again on Dec. 1st. Contact Anne Wehrly with questions at awehrly@suddenlink.net.

FRIENDS CHURCH ANGEL TREE: The Friends Church Angel Tree is back this year! This is a way that Friends can bring joy to children from around Brazos County. The Justice and Mission committee has been in touch with the Brazos County Child Welfare Board to find 64 children for Friends folk to sponsor. These are all children and youth who are in foster care or receiving other support services. You may choose your sponsored child in person TODAY after worship, at Friendsgiving this evening, or sign up virtually on the Friends website beginning Monday. We will also be accepting food and gas cards for our pastors to distribute to those in need in our community. Gift cards can be mailed to the church or put in the Gift Card box that will appear under the Christmas trees in the narthex. Contact awehrly@suddenlink.net with questions.

SHARE YOUR TIME AND TALENTS: There are plenty of opportunities for you to share your time and talents both here at the church and in the community.

Greeters and Communion Stewards Needed: If you can help with a 9am Sunday service or two, 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 remaining Youth Group events for the fall, including lessons, and a Christmas party. Contact Pastor Brooke at pastorbrooke@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: Volunteer once or multiple times to prepare the coffee for the 9am or the 11am service. Contact fellowship@friends-ucc.org.

Childcare Room Volunteers Needed: We need volunteers for the childcare room for the occasions when one of our two paid workers is unavailable. Contact Jackie Womack at moderator@friends-ucc.org for more information.

Recruiting Fellowship Committee members: The Fellowship Committee at Friends is reforming and needs members. Two ways to participate: help plan church fellowship events or volunteer for individual events. Contact Jan Paterson at Fellowship@Friends-UCC.org with questions or to sign up.

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

FIRST FRIDAY WITH FRIENDS - DEC. 1: Jon Taute will be at Blackwater Draw, 701 N Main St, Bryan beginning at 5:30 pm to grab some tables and greet Friends folks. Good fellowship, good beer and of course non-alcoholic options available. There will be a food truck starting around 6pm as well.

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

HELP PREP THE CHURCH FOR ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS-DEC. 2: It's almost time to hang the greens, put up the purple, and deck the halls! On Saturday December 2nd, at 10am, the Worship Committee invites you to help set up and decorate the sanctuary and narthex for Advent and Christmas. We are changing the banners, hanging wreaths, setting up the angel trees, and putting out the Advent candles. Chris Hoffman will crank out carols on the piano to put us in the spirit as we work and enjoy hot cocoa, cider, and holiday treats. RSVP to help by emailing worship@friends-ucc.org.

FAIR TRADE CRAFT SALE- Dec. 2 & 3: Get a jump on your Christmas shopping Saturday and Sunday (Dec. 2 & 3). Visit our annual Guatemalan Craft Sale held in the blue tent in the parking lot at Friends Church. UPAVIM (United for a Better Life) exports beautiful Fair Trade handmade gifts and crafts all around the world. Your purchases support educational and medical programs in the impoverished community of La Esperanza in Guatemala City. Come on Saturday 10-2 or before or after church on Dec. 3rd. In the event of inclement weather, the sale will move inside the church.

MORNING MEDITATIONS FOR ADVENT BEGIN- Dec. 5: On Tuesdays during Advent, you are invited to the Friends Church sanctuary to start your morning with centering meditation. At 7:30am on Tuesdays, Dec. 5, 12, & 19, we gather for a brief introduction, followed by silent meditation, and follow-up conversation as time permits. We are excited about this series of morning meditations that will bring us together in self- and community-preparation for the coming of Emanuel, God-With-Us, on Christmas. All are welcome.

Friends Church Staff

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