

FRIENDS CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Fifth Sunday of Easter
May 18, 2025
9:00am



*An Open & Affirming
Congregation*

SCRIPTURE FOR MEDITATION: Isaiah 43:18-19a, NRSV

Do not remember the former things or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth; do you not perceive it?

QUOTE FOR MEDITATION:

“Saying yes to ‘What is’ ironically sets us up for ‘What if?’”

—Richard Rohr, “This is an Apocalypse,” in *The Call to Unite: Voices of Hope and Awakening*

CHIMING OF THE TRINITY

WORDS OF WELCOME

Kyle Riley

PRELUDE & LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Dinah Anderson

One: Come all who are weary

All: of wealth, of poverty, of power, of struggle, of division.

One: Come all who are heavy-laden

All: with too much, with too little, with anxiety, with fear, with anger.

One: Come all who have hope

All: for liberation, for peace, for freedom, for the kin-dom.

One: Hear these words:

All: “See, I am making all things new.”

An asterisk indicates that the congregation is invited to stand in body or spirit.*

*OPENING HYMN - Here, O Our Lord, We See You

Morecambe

1 Here, O our Lord, we see you face to face.
2 Here would we feed up - on the bread of God,
3 This is the hour of ban - quet and of song;
4 Too soon we rise; the sym - bols dis - ap - pear.
5 Feast af - ter feast thus comes and pass - es by,

Here would we touch and han - dle things un - seen,
here drink with you the roy - al cup of heaven;
this is the heaven - ly ta - ble for us spread.
The feast, though not the love, is past and gone;
yet, pass - ing, points to that glad feast a - bove,

here grasp with firm - er hand e - ter - nal grace,
here would we lay a - side each earth - ly load,
Here let us feast and, feast - ing, still pro - long
the bread and wine re - move, but you are here,
giv - ing sweet fore - taste of the fes - tal joy,

and all our wea - ri - ness up - on you lean.
and taste a - fresh the calm of sin for - given.
the fel - low - ship of liv - ing wine and bread.
near - er than ev - er, still our shield and sun.
the Lamb's great brid - al feast of bliss and love.

*INVOCATION

Dinah Anderson

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Amanda & Drew Bowen

Children in the sanctuary are invited to come to the front. 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.

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

Kyle Riley

One: The peace of Christ be with you all.

Many: **And also with you.**

SCRIPTURE READING

Revelation 21:1-6, NRSV

Dan De Leon

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,

“See, the home of God is among mortals.

He will dwell with them;

they will be his peoples,

and God himself will be with them and be their God;

he will wipe every tear from their eyes.

Death will be no more;

mourning and crying and pain will be no more,

for the first things have passed away.”

And the one who was seated on the throne said, “See, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.” Then he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life.

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

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

THE MESSAGE

“Look Harder”

Dan De Leon

SILENT PRAYER & MEDITATION

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

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND LIGHTING OF CANDLES FOR INTERCESSIONS

Kyle Riley

STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

Martha Newsome

INVITATION TO SHARE

Dinah Anderson

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**

Kyle Riley

Collective Creator we thank you for the gifts of the people – from our ancestors to our elders to those who have still yet to come, we share what we have so that all can flourish and follow you. Amen.

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

Dan De Leon, Kyle Riley

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 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** - No. 597 Shall We Gather at the River

Hanson Place

***BENEDICTION**

Dan De Leon

***SUNG RESPONSE** - No. 181 You Are Salt for the Earth, O People (Verse 2 only)

Bring Forth

POSTLUDE

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Instrumental Music:

Prelude: Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah - John Hughes
Offertory: Great Is Thy Faithfulness - William M. Runyan, arranged by Larry Shackley
Communion: Shall We Gather at the River? - Robert Lowry, arranged by Joel Raney
Postlude: Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee - Ludwig van Beethoven, arranged by Joel Raney

Scriptures for Sixth Sunday of Easter, May 25, 2025: Acts 1:1-11; Revelation 21:10, 22-22:5

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

OFFERING OF LETTERS TODAY: Friends Church is participating in Bread for the World’s Offering of Letters campaign. This Christian organization advocates for policies and programs to end global hunger. You can write a letter today after our 9am and 11am services to our congressional representative, Michael McCaul, telling him to use his power to fight against funding cuts to hunger relief programs. Letter-writing materials, sample letters, and guidelines will be provided. Alternatively, you may bring a prepared letter to Friends Church by June 1. See bread.org for examples and videos that explain how to write an effective letter and why letters can be a powerful force for change. Our letters will be combined with those from other local churches and delivered to Rep. McCaul’s College Station office.

LAST DAY FOR K-12 SUNDAY SCHOOL, MAY 18: This Sunday is the last for K-12 Sunday School before we take a break for the summer. We want to thank all of our wonderful Sunday school teachers for the time and dedication they’ve devoted to Friends children and youth this year.

CROCKETT ELEMENTARY BOOK FAIR COLLECTION, MAY 22: We have a date! Our book fair at Crockett will be Thursday, May 22 from 8:30 am to 2:30 pm. On Wednesday, May 21, we will be meeting at the church in the double rooms to separate books at 9:00 am until done. We need volunteers for both days! The day of the Fair, we will have three 2-hour shifts for volunteers. Please continue to donate new or gently used books for Pre-K to 4th grade and place them in the box outside of the office. For questions or to volunteer, please contact Pam Engler or Jodie Robinson. Book fair shifts on May 22. 8:30-10:30 10:30-12:30 12:30-2:30

FRIENDS-PEACE FOOD DISTRIBUTION, MAY 23: Friends-Peace food distribution needs you! Come to the Peace Lutheran parking lot any time between 2:30 to 6:00 on Friday and meet some of your neighbors. Our Friday Friends team will be there May 23 giving out fresh fruits and vegetables and maybe some desserts. Enjoy some camaraderie and put your faith into action. Direct any questions to Anne Wehrly.

NEW MEMBER SUNDAY, MAY 25: On May 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).

FINAL FRIENDS YOUTH CONFIRMATION CLASS, #7, MAY 25: The seventh and final confirmation class for the Youth Group will be Sunday, May 25, at 2pm. This class will be led by Pastor Dan, and will cover Statements of Faith. Confirmands will share how they will affirm their faith by writing their own statement. These classes are open to all youth, whether or not they are part of the confirmation class. Reach out to Pastor Brooke for questions: pastorbrooke@friends-ucc.org.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

RECORD YOUR VIDEO HONORING PASTOR JO HUDSON: The Rev. Dr. Jo Gayle Hudson, pastor of Friends Church from 1997 to 2004, and current pastor of New Church, UCC, Dallas, is retiring after 30 years of ministry. To honor Pastor Jo, a video montage of gratitude and well-wishes will be shown in her last service presiding at New Church on June 1st. Friends Church faithful are invited to contribute a brief message for that video. See A/V Tech Sean Dudo after the worship services on May 18 or 25 to record your on-camera message honoring Rev. Hudson. Thank you.

FRIENDS WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: Join our Friends Church worship team! We are in need of additional folks to help on Sunday mornings to serve as greeters, lay leaders and communion stewards to make our worship services flow smoothly. Sign up with these links.
9am Service bit.ly/0900worship 11am Service bit.ly/1100worship

OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE AND SHARE

SUPPORT OUR PODCAST: Help us spread the good word! Share this week's sermon with those you love with our "Friends Congregational Church Sermons" podcast, available wherever you can find podcasts! Easily access and publicize our mission to follow the model of Jesus: to live faithfully, love limitlessly, and serve boldly. With over 100 episodes published (since Advent of last year) we've expanded (since Eastertide this year) our efforts to include the wider library of sermons offered before this podcast kicked off. We would love to have your support by either showing this podcast to friends and loved ones, and/or contributing your voice to introduce an episode. Volunteers can reach out to av@friends-ucc.org (Jeremy) if interested, or you might get approached after service. Recording takes less than 10 minutes and is almost entirely scripted.

Be a Greeter and Communion Steward: To help in the 9am and 11am services, please contact Worship Committee Chair Charity Stokes: 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 school year. 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: "All I need is coffee; all we need are volunteers to make it!"

Sign up via sheet on kitchen counter, at bit.ly/friendschurchcoffee or email Jan at Fellowship@friends-ucc.org.

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

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED, MAY 26: The church office will be closed on Monday, May 26 for Memorial Day. Normal business hours resume on Tuesday, May 27.

LINDA COATS BOOK CLUB, MAY 29: Linda Coats Book Club will meet on Thursday, May 29th at 6:30pm. Our book will be *Beloved* by Toni Morrison. Contact Becky Burks for more details.

ALL ABOARD! JOINING ON GOD'S JOURNEY – VBS REGISTRATION DUE MAY 30: Please fill out the registration by May 30 if you intend for you PreK - 5th grade child(ren) to attend Vacation Bible School (VBS) June 9-13 from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm with a light meal provided at 5:30 each evening. Use the the link: <https://tinyurl.com/2025FriendsVBS>.

FIRST FRIDAY WITH FRIENDS, JUNE 6: 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 5:30-7:30 timeframe. Some folks stay at Blackwater all evening and others stop by on their way to or from dining and playing in downtown Bryan.

CONFIRMATION SUNDAY, JUNE 8: Join us in the 11am service on Pentecost Sunday, June 8, as we confirm our confirmands. They have spent the last few months learning about theology, church history, and spiritual practices, as well as visiting other faith communities in B/CS. Through the guidance of their teachers and mentors, they have been tasked with writing their own statements of faith, and to put into words what it is they are saying "yes" to on their faith journey. We hope to see you on Confirmation Sunday!

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

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Associate Pastor to Youth & Young Adults

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