



**Friends Church**  
*An Open & Affirming Congregation*



*Christ Before Pilate Again*  
Duccio di Buoninsegna (1308-1311)

March 24, 2024  
11:00am  
New Member Sunday

## 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: Susan Fontaine & Tom Vogel  
Greeters: Victoria Junek & Jacque Halverson

Next Sunday, March 31  
Lay Leaders: Kathy Yeager & Becky Burks  
Greeters: Lanette and Rick Schulte  
Communion Stewards: Holly Scott & Doris Machinski

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](mailto: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.

## *Sixth Sunday in Lent: Palm/Passion Sunday*

Once observed on the Fifth and Sixth Sundays in Lent respectively, Passion Sunday and Palm Sunday are now observed together on the Sixth Sunday in Lent: Palm/Passion Sunday. The Palm Sunday narrative commemorates Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem with a procession of palms, where worshipers wave palm branches or twigs from local trees in the air. The Passion describes the suffering endured by Jesus during the last few days of his life, especially the crucifixion.

### **PSALM FOR MEDITATION:** Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29, NRSV

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his steadfast love endures forever! Let Israel say, "His steadfast love endures forever." Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter through them and give thanks to the Lord. This is the gate of the Lord; the righteous shall enter through it. I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation. The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. Save us, we beseech you, O Lord! O Lord, we beseech you, give us success! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. We bless you from the house of the Lord. The Lord is God, and he has given us light. Bind the festal procession with branches, up to the horns of the altar. You are my God, and I will give thanks to you; you are my God, I will extol you. O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever.

### **CHIMING OF THE TRINITY**

### **WORDS OF WELCOME**

Brooke Dooley

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

### **\*CALL TO WORSHIP**

Tom Vogel

One: People of God, do not be afraid, for your Savior is coming,  
All: **riding on a donkey, daring to raise the branches of liberation.**  
One: Shout your hosannas in the street and in the sanctuary.  
All: **Hosanna in the highest! Our Savior has come to set us free!**  
One: Palm branches and praise mark this day with hope.  
All: **Hosanna, come and save us!**

**\*PALM SUNDAY PROCESSION & OPENING HYMN - #213** "Hosanna, Loud Hosanna"  
Tune: Ellacombe

## \*INVOCATION

Tom Vogel

## CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Sue Ambrus

*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 #525 "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.**

## SERVICE FOR THE RECEIVING OF NEW MEMBERS

### INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBERS

Abby Diaz DeLeon; Kim Dooley; Larry Dooley; Courtney Fitzpatrick;  
Margaret Martin; Jessica Beck-Guerrero

### QUESTIONS OF THE CANDIDATES

### FRIENDS CHURCH COVENANT (UNISON)

**We recognize that we were strangers, that we came from diverse backgrounds, that we share a longing for acceptance and a need for mutual support — we need to celebrate our love of God with joy, enthusiasm, and faith. In faith we gather as Friends Congregational Church to experience community, to celebrate old traditions, and to affirm our new creations. Looking outward, we recognize the need to embrace the world and to invite others to share mutual gifts. Our spiritual journey is sustained by the God of Biblical history as expressed by Abraham, Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, and most clearly by Jesus of Nazareth. We celebrate the continuity of our faith and live in its mystery.**

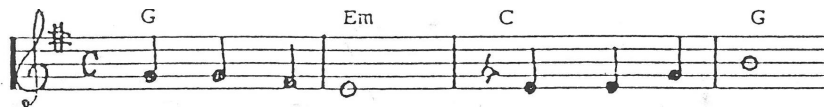
### \*\*WELCOME & RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS (UNISON)

**We welcome you with joy into the common life of this church. We promise you our friendship and prayers as we share the hopes and labors of the church of Jesus the Christ. By the power of the Holy Spirit may we continue to grow together in God's knowledge and love and be witnesses of our risen savior.**

## \*\*SIGNING OF THE MEMBERSHIP BOOK

### \*\*HYMNS

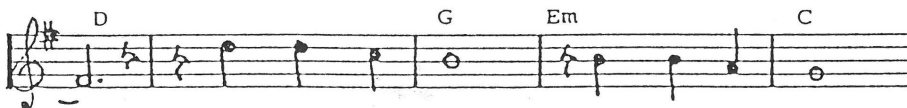
#### No Longer Strangers



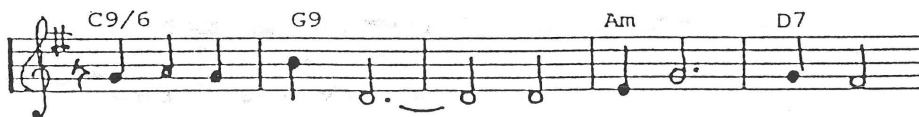
1. He turned to say: "Come fol-low me."
2. I walked a-lone. I heard your cry.
3. My world was small, my neigh-bors few,
4. No for-eign kind, no 'al--ien race,



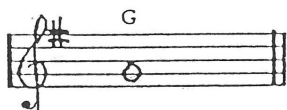
1. I joined his band to trav-el land and sea.
2. I came to you in--stead of pass--ing by.
3. But now God's love gives me a larg--er view:
4. In Christ we all have found a wel--come place.



1. And so we go to whom he sends,
2. We gave, we took; our sto-ry ends:
3. Be--fore the cross my world ex--tends...
4. The Spi--rit binds, our voic-es blend.



No long-er strang-ers, we're sis-ters, broth-ers,



friends.

#### \*HYMN #391: In the Midst of New Dimensions

*New Dimensions*

#### \*PASSING OF THE PEACE

Dan De Leon

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

**GOSPEL READING**

Mark 15:1-15, CEB

Brooke Dooley

At daybreak, the chief priests—with the elders, legal experts, and the whole Sanhedrin—formed a plan. They bound Jesus, led him away, and turned him over to Pilate. Pilate questioned him, “Are you the king of the Jews?” Jesus replied, “That’s what you say.” The chief priests were accusing him of many things. Pilate asked him again, “Aren’t you going to answer? What about all these accusations?” But Jesus gave no more answers, so that Pilate marveled. During the festival, Pilate released one prisoner to them, whomever they requested. A man named Barabbas was locked up with the rebels who had committed murder during an uprising. The crowd pushed forward and asked Pilate to release someone, as he regularly did. Pilate answered them, “Do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews?” He knew that the chief priests had handed him over because of jealousy. But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release Barabbas to them instead. Pilate replied, “Then what do you want me to do with the one you call king of the Jews?” They shouted back, “Crucify him!” Pilate said to them, “Why? What wrong has he done?” They shouted even louder, “Crucify him!” Pilate wanted to satisfy the crowd, so he released Barabbas to them. He had Jesus whipped, then handed him over to be crucified.

**CHORAL ANTHEM:** Lamentations of Jeremiah (Lamentaciones de Jeremias) - Z. Randall Stroope

O you people, who pass this way, look and see if there exists any sorrow (agony), like unto  
my sorrow.

Remember, Lord, consider and notice our humiliation and disgrace!

**GOSPEL READING**

Mark 15: 25-39, NRSV

Dan De Leon

It was nine o’clock in the morning when they crucified him. The inscription of the charge against him read, “The King of the Jews.” And with him they crucified two bandits, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying, “Aha! You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself, and come down from the cross!” In the same way the chief priests, along with the scribes, were also mocking him among themselves and saying, “He saved others; he cannot save himself. Let the Messiah, the King of Israel, come down from the cross now, so that we may see and believe.” Those who were crucified with him also taunted him.

When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. At three o’clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?” which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, “Listen, he is calling for Elijah.” And someone ran, filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink, saying, “Wait, let us see whether

Elijah will come to take him down.” Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. Now when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, “Truly this man was God’s Son!”

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

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

## **THE MESSAGE**

Dan De Leon

## **MOMENT FOR REFLECTION**

## **INVITATION TO SHARE**

Tom Vogel

## **OFFERTORY**

Secure online giving via Realm Giving at [bit.ly/givetofriendsucc](https://bit.ly/givetofriendsucc)  
Venmo to 979-307-8860 or @friendsucc

## **\*DOXOLOGY**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below;  
Praise God for all that love has done;  
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen**

## **\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Trent Williams

## **THE LORD’S PRAYER** (for Women’s History Month)

Trent Williams

**Our Mother, which art the earth, nurturing are thy ways.  
Thy web of life be woven, thy way be found within, as it is all around.  
Thank you this day for our daily bread and work;  
and forgive us our misuse of you, as we forgive others their misuse of us.  
And lead us not into exploitation, but deliver us from lording it over you,  
and over each other, and over all our other fellow creatures.  
For thine are the waters of life,  
the hills, valleys and plains of home,  
the breeding, seeding, feeding ground,  
for now, and for as close to forever as we will ever come.  
Amen.**

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Trent Williams

\***CLOSING HYMN #223** - What Wondrous Love Is This

Tune: Wondrous Love (Christopher)

\***BENEDICTION**

Trent Williams

## POSTLUDE

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### Instrumental Music:

Prelude: Triumphal Entry - Joel Raney

Offertory: When I Survey the Wondrous Cross - Lowell Mason

Postlude: Darkest Hour - Joel Raney

Scriptures for Easter Sunday, March 31, 2024: Isaiah 25:6-9; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11; John 20:1-18

## 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

**TRANSGENDER DAY OF VISIBILITY POTLUCK, MARCH 24:** Pride Community Center, Trans Joy Project, and the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Brazos Valley invite gender diverse family and allies to a joint celebration of Transgender Day of Visibility on Sunday, March 24th from 3-6 pm at the UUCBV, 1719 E 29th Street. This is a potluck event, so bring something to eat and something to share. Please contact our own Katy Stewart for more details at [info@pridecc.org](mailto:info@pridecc.org).

**LENTEN MORNING MEDITATION, MARCH 26:** On Tuesdays during Lent, you are invited to the Friends Church sanctuary to start your morning with centering meditation. At 7:30am on Tuesday, Mar. 26th, we gather for a brief introduction, followed by silent meditation, and follow-up conversation as time permits. Start to finish, this lasts between 35 and 45 minutes, hopefully allowing for those of us with work, school, and other obligations to get where we need to be on time. We are excited about this series of morning meditations that will bring us together in self- and community-preparation for Easter.

**“BROKEN”: REAL LIFE AND REAL FAITH, MARCH 26:** On March 19th, we will gather in the sanctuary at 6:30pm to watch episode 6 of the 2017 BBC drama series “Broken” and have conversation about how faith and real life intersect. Even if you can’t make every week, you are welcome to attend, and can view the episodes you might have missed on Amazon Prime or Britbox. Please be advised that the themes can be intense, including suicidal ideation and the intersection of race and police violence. Contact Pastor Trent if you have any questions.



**HISTORY IN HEARNE TRIP, MARCH 28:** Visit the Hearne Railroad Depot and Museum, lunch at local restaurant and then on to tour Camp Hearne WWII Historic Site and Exhibit on March 28 from 10:30-4:00. What else do I need to know? Meet at church and carpool; Lunch is on-your-own; museum and exhibits are free but donations are welcome. For assistance with transportation or lunch costs, contact Kristin Harper. RSVP by March 25.



## 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>

**FROM THE SENIOR PASTORAL RELATIONS TEAM: SABBATICAL FOR SENIOR PASTOR, APRIL 1 – JULY 15:** The day after Easter, Pastor Dan will begin a three-and-a-half-month sabbatical. During this time of intentional rest, reflection, and renewal, he will step away from all pastoral duties to travel, recharge, grow, and gain fresh perspectives. Pastor Dan's absence will also create space for Pastors Trent and Brooke to grow and flourish as they take on some of his responsibilities for a time. This sabbatical also demonstrates the importance of rest and self-care for all of us. 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](mailto:jocelin-brune@gmail.com)) or Pam Engler ([penglertx@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://Friends-ucc.org)) ▶ **Get Involved** ▶ **Volunteer** or email [office@friends-ucc.org](mailto:office@friends-ucc.org) for more information or to volunteer.

## SAVE THE DATE

**MAUNDY THURSDAY, MARCH 28:** Maundy Thursday is the day in Holy Week when we remember the new command Jesus gives his followers, to “love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.” It is traditionally observed with foot- or hand-washing, and communion may also be observed. Instead of a formal worship service, the sanctuary will be open for two hours that evening with the pastors present to offer foot- or hand-washing as well as communion, and to pray with those who come to the church during that time. Chris Hoffman will offer piano music to carry us into that upper room with the disciples where Jesus shared a final meal with them before washing their feet. We hope you will come by to join in this special, come-and-go observance of Maundy Thursday any time between 6 and 8pm

**GOOD FRIDAY, MARCH 29:** On Good Friday, March 29, at 7:30 pm, the Friends Choir will be joined by a Chamber Orchestra, performing Paul Mealor’s “Stabat Mater.” The evening will begin with Scripture and Prayer, and will conclude with this incredibly moving Masterwork, which is a hymn to the Virgin Mary that portrays her suffering during the crucifixion of Jesus. Paul Mealor is a Welsh composer who had been commissioned to write music for the Royal Wedding of Prince William and Princess Catherine, and most recently for the Coronation of Charles III and Camilla...and has agreed to write an anthem for the Friends Choir in honor of Chris Hoffman’s upcoming 20th anniversary (June 2026). All are welcome to attend this Worship Service and be immersed in this musical experience.

**EASTER EGG HUNT, MARCH 31:** After the 11am service, Christian Ed will host the Easter Egg Hunt at the church. Please meet up in the double classroom with a basket. A potluck will follow after the egg hunt.

**EASTER FINGER FOOD POTLUCK, MARCH 31:** Please join us in the sanctuary following the 11am Easter service for a finger food potluck. We ask that donated food is able to be eaten without requiring flatware. Drinks will be provided. Direct any questions to Fellowship@friends-ucc.org.

**FIRST FRIDAY WITH FRIENDS, APRIL 5:** 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.

**FABULOUS AT ANY AGE "SOLAR ECLIPSE PARTY AND POTLUCK", MARCH 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.

# Friends Congregational Church United Church of Christ

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## 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*)  
office@friends-ucc.org

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2200 Southwood Drive College Station, Texas 77845  
979-693-7021 • office@friends-ucc.org  
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.