



Friends Church

An Open & Affirming Congregation



Love is the Only Solution

May 5, 2024

11:00am

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: Diane Simpson & Dwight Roblyer
Communion Stewards: Mary Johnson & Lanette Schulte
Greeters: Dwight Baker & Eli Vasquez

Next Sunday, May 12

Lay Leaders: Dwight Baker & Kelly Wellman
Greeters: Sydney Zentell & 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.

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.

Eastertide - Sixth Sunday of Easter

Easter is not just one day—it's a whole season. Throughout these 50 days, we celebrate and ponder the mystery of the resurrection and the promise of new life.

QUOTE FOR MEDITATION:

“Isn't it amazing that we are all made in God's image, and yet there is so much diversity among his people?”

Desmond Tutu

CHIMING OF THE TRINITY

WORDS OF WELCOME

Brooke Dooley

PRELUDE & LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Dwight Roblyer

One: Christ gives us a new commandment:

All: “Love one another as I have loved you.”

One: When we love one another as Christ has loved us, we will live lives full of joy.

All: We will live with God's love deep in our hearts.

One: Let us worship the one who shows us how to love.

All: Let us worship with joy! Alleluia!

*OPENING HYMN - Here in This Place (Gather Us In)

Tune: Gather Us In



1 Here in this place the new light is stream-ing; now is the dark-ness
2 We are the young, our lives are a mys-tery. We are the old who
3 Not in the dark of build-ings con - fin - ing, not in some heav - en,



van - ished a - way; see in this space our fears and our dream-ings
yearn for your face. We have been sung through-out all of his - tory,
light years a - way: here in this place the new light is shin - ing;



brought here to you in the light of this day.
called to be light to the whole hu - man race.
now is the king dom, and now is the day.



Gath-er us in, the lost and for - sak - en; gath-er us in, the
Gath-er us in, the rich and the haugh-ty; gath-er us in, the
Gath-er us in and hold us for ev - er; gath-er us in and



blind and the lame; call to us now, and we shall a - wak - en;
proud and the strong; give us a heart, so meek and so low - ly;
make us your own; gath er us in, all peo - ples to-geth - er,



we shall a - rise at the sound of our name.
give us the cour - age to en - ter the song.
fire of love in our flesh and our bone.

*INVOCATION

Dwight Roblyer

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Brooke Dooley

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.**

STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

Tyler & Jarrett Baker-Wilkinson

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

Trent Williams

One: The peace of Christ be with you all.

Many: **And also with you!**

*HYMN OF RESPONSE - #553 There Is a Balm in Gilead

Tune: Balm in Gilead

GOSPEL READING

John 15:12-17, NRSV

Dwight Roblyer

"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.

CHORAL ANTHEM: Ubi caritas - Paul Mealor

Where charity and love are, God is there. Christ's love has gathered us into one. Let us rejoice and be pleased in Him. Let us fear, and let us love the living God. And may we love each other with a sincere heart.

READING FROM THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Acts 10:1-17, 34-48, NRSV

Trent Williams

In Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion of the Italian Cohort, as it was called. He was a devout man who feared God with all his household; he gave alms generously to the people and prayed constantly to God. One afternoon at about three o'clock he had a vision in which he clearly saw an angel of God coming in and saying to him, "Cornelius." He stared at him in terror and said, "What is it, Lord?" He answered, "Your prayers and your alms have ascended as a memorial before God. Now send men to Joppa for a certain Simon who is called Peter; he is lodging with Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the seaside." When the angel who spoke to him had left, he called two of his slaves and a devout soldier from the ranks of those who served him, and after telling them everything, he sent them to Joppa.

About noon the next day, as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the roof to pray. He became hungry and wanted something to eat; and while it was being prepared, he fell into a trance. He saw the heaven opened and something like a large sheet coming down, being lowered to the ground by its four corners. In it were all kinds of four-footed creatures and reptiles and birds of the air. Then he heard a voice saying, "Get up, Peter; kill and eat." But Peter said, "By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is profane or unclean." The voice said to him again, a second time, "What God has made clean, you must not call profane." This happened three times, and the thing was suddenly taken up to heaven. Now while Peter was greatly puzzled about what to make of the vision that he had seen, suddenly the men sent by Cornelius appeared. They were asking for Simon's house and were standing by the gate.

Then Peter began to speak to them: "I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the word. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles, for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter said, “Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?” So he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they invited him to stay for several days.

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

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

THE MESSAGE

Trent Williams

MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

INVITATION TO SHARE

Dwight Roblyer

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**

Brooke Dooley

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

Trent Williams, Brooke Dooley

***SUNG COMMUNION RESPONSE**

O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder
consider all the worlds thy hands have made,
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder,
thy power throughout the universe displayed:

Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee:
How great thou art! How great thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee:
How great thou art! How great thou art!

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 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

Brooke Dooley

***CLOSING HYMN - #395** In Christ There Is No East or West

Tune: St. Peter

***BENEDICTION**

Trent Williams

POSTLUDE

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Instrumental Music:

Prelude:	Gather Us In - Marty Haugen, arranged by Jeanne Cotter
Offertory:	As the Deer - Martin Nystrom, arranged by Douglas E. Wagner
Communion:	There Is a Balm in Gilead - Traditional American Spiritual, arranged by Melody Bober
Postlude:	Praise to the Lord, the Almighty - arranged by Joel Raney

Scriptures for Seventh Sunday of Easter, May 12, 2024: John 14:23-29; Acts 16:6-15

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

BACK BAY MISSION HYGIENE KIT COLLECTION, APRIL 21-MAY 18: Friends Church is collecting items for hygiene kits to be delivered to Back Bay Mission, a ministry of the United Church of Christ serving individuals and families facing homelessness and poverty. Follow the link <https://amzn.to/4boqwBk> and decide what you would like to purchase to get us to our goal of 102 hygiene kits. Items will be shipped directly to the church. If you would rather just write a check, make the check out to Friends Church and put Hygiene kits in memo line. Funds will be used to purchase needed supplies. All items need to be received at the church by May 18. Please direct any questions to Anne at awehrly@suddenlink.net.

ASSEMBLING TEACHER APPRECIATION BAGS FOR CROCKETT ELEMENTARY, MAY 5: Please help us assemble treat bags to be delivered to staff at Crockett on Wednesday of that week to show our appreciation.

WONDERFUL WEDNESDAYS WITH WOMEN, MAY 8: Wonderful Wednesdays with Women will meet on Wednesday, May 8th from 5:00 to 7:00 PM at Kristin Harper’s house at 2065 Carter Lake Dr., College Station, TX 77845. Snacks and beverages will be provided. \$5 to \$10 contributions are welcome. This is a casual, come-and-go event. All are welcome! Contact Stacy De Leon if you need more information at 512.289.5290.

GUYZ BREAKFAST, MAY 11: Guyz Breakfast brings together fellowship, fun and great food. Join us at the church on the second Saturday of the month 9:00 to 10:30 a.m. Bring your favorite breakfast food or drink to share. Pancakes and coffee are provided.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN UNDERWAY: Last Sunday, we kicked off our Spring stewardship campaign, “For Such a Time as This,” focusing on our calling in this unique time and place to live out our mission of living faithfully, loving limitlessly, and serving boldly. Many of you should have received a mailing this week inviting you to consider what you might be able to give in the year ahead, along with a pledge card and a narrative budget describing how your support makes the ministries of Friends Church possible. If you didn’t receive that mailing you can access those documents on our website’s giving page at www.friends-ucc.org/stewardship. You will also find an online pledge card link there, or you can follow the QR code below. We hope you will join us in worship on May 19th for Pledge Sunday as we bring and dedicate our pledges for the upcoming year. Thank you for your ongoing generous support of Friends!



OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE AND SHARE

SIGN UP TO HELP WITH CROCKETT BOOK FAIR MAY 22: We have a date for the Crockett Book Fair! On Wednesday, May 22, we will be helping students pick out their books to take home. We could use lots of help. The fair is scheduled from 8:30 am to 2:30 pm. Helpers can take two hour shifts (and sign up for as many shifts as you like!). SIGN UP HERE: <https://bit.ly/3UzXPpB> We will continue to collect books until Sunday, May 19. Please place them in the bin outside of the office door. Thank you for all of your generous support of these children.

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.

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? Sign up 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

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

HYPERBOLE BOOK STORE BOOK SALE FOR CROCKETT BOOK FAIR, MAY 12: Our school book fair for the children of Crockett Elementary ends on May 22nd. As always, you can donate books by placing them in the box outside the office. In addition, to provide a final push for the drive, Hyperbole Bookstore will be at the church on Sunday, May 12, to sell appropriately-aged kids' books (in both English and Spanish) that can be donated on the spot. Hyperbole will donate a portion of sale proceeds to our Christian Education program. If you have questions, you can contact Kathy Miller (katherinemiller59@gmail.com).

FABULOUS AT ANY AGE "TEXAS BLOOMING", MAY 15: Enjoy another beautiful spring day in Texas with a trip to the Antique Rose Emporium and then lunch at Martha's Bloomers. We'll leave the church at 10:00 and return by 3:00. Let us know if you can come! Send an email to Nurture@friends-ucc.org For transportation to the church and lunch sponsor, contact Nurture@friends-ucc.org

LINDA COATS BOOK CLUB, MAY 30: For May, the book club will be reading Sue Monk Kidd's *The Dance of the Dissident Daughter*. Join us for discussion at 6:30pm.

Friends Congregational Church United Church of Christ

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*)
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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.