



Friends Church
An Open & Affirming Congregation



Abraham's Sacrifice
Peter Koeing (1970)

September 15, 2024
II: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: Dinah Anderson & Tyler Baker-Wilkinson
Communion Stewards: Kathy Yeager & Mary Johnson
Greeters: Carolyn Young & Peggy Vitek

Next Sunday, Sept 22
Lay Leaders: Sydney Zentell & Holly Scott
Greeters: Kathy Yeager & Dwight Roblyer

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.

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

The season after Pentecost is also considered Ordinary Time. It indicates the parts of the liturgical year that are not included in the major seasons of the church calendar. Ordinary Time can be understood in terms of the living out of Christian faith and the meaning of Christ's resurrection in ordinary life. It may be referred to as the "green season," as green is the liturgical color for this period of time in the church year.

SCRIPTURE FOR MEDITATION: Luke 6:20a & 21b, NRSV

Then he looked up at his disciples and said: "Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh."

QUOTE FOR MEDITATION:

"What a deadly religion if it has no humor—what a dreary life where that precious venture has not emerged. Thank God for humor!"

-Howard Thurman, *Meditations of the Heart*

CHIMING OF THE TRINITY

WORDS OF WELCOME

Trent Williams

PRELUDE & LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES

***CALL TO WORSHIP (RESPONSIVE)**

Tyler Baker-Wilkinson

One: Holy One, giver of joy and laughter, we thank you for giving us these gifts:

**All: for opportunities to laugh at ourselves,
for the belly laughs of children,
for those who have hope even when others think there is no hope.**

One: We thank you for the words of Jesus that defy our logical minds;

**All: for the absurdity of a camel trying to fit through the eye of a needle,
for tiny bits of faith that can move entire mountains,
for the reality that nothing can live unless it first dies.**

One: We thank you for the great reversal of the Gospel:

**All: that the last shall be made first,
that those who wish to become great must serve,
that when we are weak, your strength shines through us.**

***OPENING HYMN** - No. 55 Rejoice, You Pure in Heart

Marion

***INVOCATION**

Tyler Baker-Wilkinson

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Mary Howell

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.**

SERVICE FOR THE RECEIVING OF NEW MEMBERS

INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBERS

Jerod Neff; Charlie Hutto; Jennifer Hollaman; Olive Okoro; Hannah Joy Alexander

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

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

I joined his band to tra - vel
I came to you in - stead of
but now God's love gives me a
in Christ we all have found a

7

land and sea.
pas - sing by.
lar - ger view:
wel - come place.

And so we go
We gave, we took;
Be - fore the cross
The Spir - it binds,

to whom he sends,
our sto - ry ends...
my world ex - tends...
our voi - ces blend.

13

No long - er stran - gers,
we're sib - lings,
fam - 'ly,
friends.

*No. 391 In the Midst of New Dimensions

New Dimensions

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

Trent Williams

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

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

CHORAL ANTHEM - A Covenant Prayer - Dan Forrest

I am no longer my own, but Thine. Put me to what Thou wilt, rank me with whom Thou wilt. Put me to doing, put me to suffering, I am no longer my own, but Thine. Let me be employed for Thee or laid aside for Thee, let me be exalted for Thee, or brought low for Thee. Let me be full, let me be empty, let me have all things, let me have nothing. I freely and heartily yield all things to Thy pleasure, to Thy pleasure and disposal. And now, O glorious and blessed God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Thou art mine, and I am Thine. So be it. And the covenant which I have made on earth, let it be ratified in Heaven.
Amen.

HEBREW SCRIPTURE READING

Genesis 22:1-14, NRSV

Dan De Leon

After these things God tested Abraham. He said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." He said, "Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains that I shall show you."

So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac; he cut the wood for the burnt offering, and set out and went to the place in the distance that God had shown him. On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place far away. Then Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; the boy and I will go over there; we will worship, and then we will come back to you." Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife. So the two of them walked on together. Isaac said to his father Abraham, "Father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." He said, "The fire and the wood are here, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" Abraham said, "God

himself will provide the lamb for a burnt offering, my son.” So the two of them walked on together. When they came to the place that God had shown him, Abraham built an altar there and laid the wood in order. He bound his son Isaac, and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to kill his son.

But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven, and said, “Abraham, Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.” He said, “Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.” And Abraham looked up and saw a ram, caught in a thicket by its horns. Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. So Abraham called that place “The Lord will provide”; as it is said to this day, “On the mount of the Lord it shall be provided.”

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

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

THE MESSAGE “Laughter: Hope’s Last Weapon in the Holocaust” Dan De Leon

MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

INVITATION TO SHARE

Tyler Baker-Wilkinson

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**

Trent Williams

OBSERVANCE OF HOLY COMMUNION

Trent Williams

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

Dan De Leon

*CLOSING HYMN - I Danced in the Morning

Lord of the Dance

Capo 3: (D) (B m) (F#m) (B m)
F Dm Am Dm



1 I danced in the morn-ing when the world was be-gun, and I
2 I danced for the scribe and the Phar - i - see, but
3 I danced on the Sab - bath and I cured the lame. The
4 I danced on a Fri - day when the sky turned black. It's
5 They cut me down and I leapt up high. †

(E m) (A)
Gm C



danced in the moon and the stars and the sun, and I
they would not dance and they would not foll - ow me. I
ho - ly peo - ple said it was a shame. They
hard to dance with the dev - il on your back. They
I am the life that will nev - er, nev - er die. I'll

(D) (B m) (F#m) (B m)
F Dm Am Dm



came down from heav - en and I danced on the earth. At
danced for the fish - er - men, for James and John. They
whipped and they stripped and they hung me high, and
bur - ied my bod - y and they thought I'd gone, but
live in you if you'll live in me, ‡

(E m) (A7) (G) (D)
Gm C7 Bb F



Beth - le - hem I had my birth.
came with me and the dance went on.
left me there on a cross to die.
I am the dance and I still go on.
I am the Lord of the Dance, said he.

(F#m) (Bm) (F#m) (Bm) (D) (Bm)
 Refrain Am Dm Am Dm F Dm

Dance, then, wher-ev - er you may be; I am the Lord of the

(Em) (A) (D) (Bm) (D) (A7) (D)
 Gm C F Dm F C7 F

Dance, said he, and I'll lead you all, wher - ev - er you may be,

(Em) (A7) (D) (G) (D)
 Gm C7 F Bb F

and I'll lead you all in the dance, said he.

*CHORAL BENEDICTION - The Lord Bless You and Keep You

POSTLUDE

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 Instrumental Music:

- Prelude: For the Beauty of the Earth - Conrad Kocher, arranged by Joel Raney
- Offertory: Lift High the Cross - Sydney H. Nicholson, arranged by Larry Shackley
- Communion: Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee - John B. Dykes, arranged by Marilynn Ham
- Postlude: Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart - Arthur H. Messiter, arranged by Cindy Berry

Scriptures for the Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost, September 22, 2024: Matthew 25:14-30; Exodus 25:1-9

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

FRIENDS DISTRIBUTES FOOD, SEPT 20: Now that you have heard all about our food distribution, how about giving it a try next Friday Sept. 20th. With a tinge of fall in the air, it should be nice outside. Become a part of our “food team” and make some new friends. Join us any time between 2:30 PM-6PM to distribute food in the Peace Lutheran parking lot. Come for an hour or more. Contact Anne Wehrly (awehrly@suddenlink.net) if you have questions.

NAACP BRAZOS COUNTY BRANCH BANQUET, SEPT 21: NAACP Brazos County Branch is having a Freedom Fund Banquet September 21, 2024, at 7:00 pm at the Brazos Center. Churches can sponsor a table for \$600. If you would like to help Friends sponsor a table, contact Dan DeLeon at pastor@friends-ucc.org. If you would like more information about the event or to purchase tickets for yourself, contact brazoscountynaacp@gmail.com

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FRIENDS GREETERS NEEDED: Join our Friends Church greeter team! We are in need of additional folks to help welcome people on Sunday mornings and make our worship services flow smoothly. If you are interested in learning more, reach out to Worship Committee chair Charity Stokes at worship@friends-ucc.org. You can also sign up online here: bit.ly/FriendsGreeter.

“SCRIPTURE & AMERICAN SACRED TEXTS”: MORNING MANNA SUNDAY SCHOOL SERIES: In conjunction with our September sermon series “Untaught History,” join us on Sunday mornings at 10:00am from August 25 through September 29 for a series that will explore historic American works in conversation with scripture.

September 15: Declaration of Rights and Sentiments & Biblical Women

September 22: The Byrds’ “Turn, Turn, Turn” & Ecclesiastes/Biblical Wisdom Writings

September 29: Martin Luther King’s “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” & Paul’s Prison Epistles

SEPTEMBER SERMON SERIES: This month, our preachers are offering a special sermon series: “Untaught History: Reparations, Resoluteness, Resistance, and Redemption.” Our former school days of selective history lessons that left out countless stories and altered others, and these present days of banned books and whitewashed curriculums beckon us to learn some of that untaught history as a testament to our faith in Jesus’ insistence that “you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.” Pastor Brooke, Pastor Trent, and Pastor Dan will explore stories from the post-Reconstruction era, the Holocaust, the civil rights and gay rights movements, and how God is still speaking through that largely untaught history. Here’s a snapshot of the remaining Sundays...

Sept 15, Pastor Dan: “Laughter: Hope’s Last Weapon in the Holocaust,” Genesis 22:1-14

Sept 22, Pastor Trent: “Building the Future Together,” Exodus 25:1-9

Sept 29, Pastor Brooke: “The Bridge Which Christ Had Built,” Genesis 32: 24-32

So, bring a friend and join us every Sunday in September for some “Untaught History.”

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: Do you enjoy having coffee/hot beverages available at Sunday morning services? Signup via sheet on counter in kitchen, or Realm (link provided in Friday church email) or by contacting 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

LINDA COATS BOOK CLUB, SEPT 26: For September, the book club will be reading Matthew Desmond's *Poverty, By America*. Join us for discussion at 6:30pm.

FAMILY PROMISE, SEPT 29: Family Promise of Bryan-College Station (FPBCS), a ministry of Friends Church since 2008, has as its mission "to help homeless children and their families achieve sustainable independence." Friends Church will be hosting two families at the Family Promise Center for a week starting Sunday, September 29th. You can be a part of this vital ministry. Options for helping: prepare a meal, provide breakfast & lunch food, or spend the night at the Family Promise Center. Learn more about Family Promise and sign up on Sunday morning in the fellowship area after worship. Direct questions or offers to volunteer to Mary Howell mhowell61@gmail.com or Sally Manthei manthei_sally@aol.com.

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*)
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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*)
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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.