

# FRIENDS CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



First Sunday in Lent  
March 9, 2025  
9:00am

*An Open & Affirming  
Congregation*

## **SCRIPTURE FOR MEDITATION:** Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16, NRSV

You who live in the shelter of the Most High, who abide in the shadow of the Almighty, will say to the Lord, “My refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust.” Because you have made the Lord your refuge, the Most High your dwelling place, no evil shall befall you, no scourge come near your tent. For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways. On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone. You will tread on the lion and the adder, the young lion and the serpent you will trample under foot. Those who love me, I will deliver; I will protect those who know my name. When they call to me, I will answer them; I will be with them in trouble, I will rescue them and honor them. With long life I will satisfy them, and show them my salvation.

## **CHIMING OF THE TRINITY**

### **WORDS OF WELCOME**

Trent Williams

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

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

Jodie Robinson

One: We cry out to the God of our ancestors:

**All: Deliver us from the ways of evil and set us on your path of Love.**

One: For God is our refuge, the One in whom we find our freedom.

**All: She companions us through grief.**

One: She leads us through valleys of despair.

**All: She rises up when oppression bears down.**

One: God will see us through the wilderness

**All: and lead us together to life abundant.**

### **\*OPENING HYMN - No. 205 Forty Days and Forty Nights**

*Heinlein*

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

## \*INVOCATION

Jodie Robinson

## \*PASSING OF THE PEACE

Trent Williams

One: The peace of Christ be with you all.

Many: **And also with you.**

## PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

Trent Williams

## CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Kathy Miller

*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.**

## GOSPEL READING

Luke 4:1-13, NRSV

Brooke Dooley

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished. The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread." Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone.'" Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And the devil said to him, "To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours." Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'" Then the devil took him to Jerusalem, and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'" Jesus answered him, "It is said, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time.

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

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

## THE MESSAGE

Brooke Dooley

## 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

Brooke Dooley

## AFFIRMATION OF FAITH: UCC STATEMENT OF FAITH (UNISON) Trent Williams

**We believe in you, O God, Eternal Spirit, God of our Savior Jesus Christ and our God, and to your deeds we testify:**

**You call the worlds into being, create persons in your own image, and set before each one the ways of life and death.**

**You seek in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.**

**You judge people and nations by your righteous will declared through prophets and apostles.**

**In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Savior, you have come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the world to yourself.**

**You bestow upon us your Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.**

**You call us into your church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be your servants in the service of others, to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil, to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table, to join him in his passion and victory.**

**You promise to all who trust you forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, your presence in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in your realm which has no end.**

**Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto you. Amen.**

## INVITATION TO SHARE

Jodie Robinson

## 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 (UNISON)

Trent Williams

God who accompanies, God who delivers, God who promises renewal, here we are. We bring all of who we are and all of what we have to the work of your Love. May your Spirit receive these gifts and work in us to set your Justice in motion. Amen.

## 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 - No. 489 I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say

*Evan*

## \*BENEDICTION

Brooke Dooley

## POSTLUDE

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*Instrumental Music:*

Prelude: Forty Days and Forty Nights (Aus der Tiefe Rufe Dich) - Music attributed to Martin Herbst  
Offertory: What Wondrous Love Is This - Arranged by John Carter  
Postlude: Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days - Music from Day's *Psalter*

Scriptures for the Second Sunday in Lent, March 16, 2025: Luke 13:31-35

## 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

**FAMILIES OF ADOPTED AND FOSTER CARE CHILDREN INFORMATIONAL SESSION, MARCH 9:** To all our Friends Church families who have foster and/or adopted children, we are currently in the process of establishing a support group for those who understand the unique experiences and challenges that these children and families face. If you are interested in being part of this ministry, there will be an informational session following the 11am service on 3/9 in the double classroom. This is a great opportunity to share your ideas for how to support one another and your hopes for this ministry.

**NO SUNDAY SCHOOL, MARCH 9:** Due to spring break, no Sunday school today (March 9th). See everyone back on the 16th!

**WALL OF GIVING - YOUTH MISSION TRIP FUNDRAISER, MARCH 9:** As you may know, the Friends Youth Group will travel to Denver, CO this summer for a mission trip with Be The Neighbor to focus on "Environmental Justice." On this trip, participants will immerse themselves in the concept of environmental justice through a range of interactive and reflective activities. The Denver trip offers an in-depth exploration of environmental justice, giving participants the chance to actively contribute to local initiatives while also reflecting on their own role in creating a more sustainable and equitable world. It's going to be a great trip, but we need your help raising money to cover the cost of our chaperones' registration, travel expenses for all youth and chaperones, and scholarships for those who need assistance to attend.

The youth group will hold a Wall of Giving fundraiser for four consecutive Sundays starting on February 16th (before & after both services) in the fellowship area of the sanctuary. The Wall of Giving is a display with 100 envelopes marked with dollar amounts from \$1 to \$100. Those who wish to participate in the fundraiser will select an envelope based on the amount they want to contribute. That amount can be paid either with cash, check or via Venmo (to 979.307.8860 or @friendsucc) with a note that specifies that the money is for the 'Youth Mission Trip.' Inside the envelopes, and in exchange for the contribution, the youth are offering 'I Owe You's' (Ex. One postcard from the mission trip or one selfie from the mission trip). As always, thank you for your support of our youth group!

**LENTEN MEDITATION, MARCH 11:** On Tuesdays during Lent, you are invited to the Friends Church sanctuary to start your morning with centering meditation. At 7:30am on Tuesdays, Mar. 11th, 18th, 25th, April 1st, 8th and 15th, 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.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**DEVOTIONAL BOOKS FOR LENT ARE HERE!:** Devotional books for lent! Lent begins Ash Wednesday, March 5th, 2024. Copies of the UCC's Lenten Daily Devotional booklet, INTO THE DEEP, are available for pickup in the Narthex; one per household, please. The electronic version (pdf) may be purchased individually at [thepilgrimpress.com](http://thepilgrimpress.com).

**MEET RHAG--A NEW PROGRAM OF JUSTICE AND MISSION:** The Justice & Mission Committee of Friends Church is announcing the formation of a new program called the Reproductive Health Access Group—or RHAG for short!

Since our church became a Reproductive Freedom Congregation in January of 2023, we have been working to fulfill that commitment, sponsoring a legislative bill watch, hosting a speaker on the theology of reproductive justice, and serving as a pick up point for emergency contraceptives. Now RHAG wants to explore ways our congregation can increase access to reproductive health information, services and products locally, especially for those in our community who may not have the means or ability to find these resources on their own.

If you would like to learn more, email [justice-mission@friends-ucc.org](mailto:justice-mission@friends-ucc.org) or see Kristin Harper or Holly Scott. And if you'd like to join us in the work, mark your calendars for Sunday, March 30 at 2:00 pm in the double classroom and plan to attend our next meeting.

**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](http://bit.ly/0900worship) 11am Service [bit.ly/1100worship](http://bit.ly/1100worship)

**SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS NEEDED:** We have all the Sunday school classes covered but are still looking for volunteers who could be called when teachers are out of town to be substitutes. Please let Pastor Dan or Abby Burley, [Christian\\_ed@friends-ucc.org](mailto:Christian_ed@friends-ucc.org), know if we can add you to our list.

## 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. 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 [podcast@friends-ucc.org](mailto:podcast@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](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 school year. Contact Pastor Brooke at [pastorbrooke@friend-ucc.org](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://bit.ly/friendschurchcoffee) or email Jan at [Fellowship@friends-ucc.org](mailto: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](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

**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY FOR ENGLISH-ONLY SPEAKERS: “KNOW YOUR RIGHTS” TRAINING, MARCH 17:** On Monday, March 17, 6:30 - 7:30 pm at Friends: Know Your Rights Training for English-speakers to disseminate information to local employers. Sign up at <https://bit.ly/KnowYourRights17>.

The Migrant Justice Network supports the idea that educating immigrant workers and their employers about their rights is the best way we have to protect both and ensure they are all treated fairly. In this training, you will learn about the rights both employers and workers have in case ICE approaches their place of business. You'll be given packets of KYR information and a list of local businesses--hotels, restaurants and other small businesses--to visit and offer this information to the managers or employers. Contact us at [migrantjusticenetwork@gmail.com](mailto:migrantjusticenetwork@gmail.com) if you have questions or problems accessing the sign-up. Try to respond by Wednesday, March 12 so we can adequately prepare.

**LINDA COATS BOOK CLUB, MARCH 27:** Linda Coats Book Club will meet on Thursday, March 27th at 6:30pm. Our book will be Run by Ann Patchett. Contact Becky Burks at [Spirit\\_develop@friends-ucc.org](mailto:spirit_develop@friends-ucc.org) for more details.

### Friends Church Staff

#### Senior Pastor

The Rev. Dr. Dan De Leon (*he, him*)  
[pastor@friends-ucc.org](mailto:pastor@friends-ucc.org)

#### Director of Music Ministries

Chris Hoffman (*he, him*)  
[choir@friends-ucc.org](mailto:choir@friends-ucc.org)

#### Executive Pastor

The Rev. Trent Williams (*he, him*)  
[pastortrent@friends-ucc.org](mailto:pastortrent@friends-ucc.org)

#### Associate Pastor to Youth & Young Adults

The Rev. Brooke Dooley (*she, her, they, them*)  
[pastorbrooke@friends-ucc.org](mailto:pastorbrooke@friends-ucc.org)

#### Administrative Assistant

Michael Rangel (*he, him*)  
[office@friends-ucc.org](mailto:office@friends-ucc.org)

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[www.friends-ucc.org](http://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.