

FRIENDS CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



Transfiguration Sunday
March 2, 2025
9:00am

*An Open & Affirming
Congregation*

SCRIPTURE FOR MEDITATION: Psalm 46, The Message

God is a safe place to hide, ready to help when we need Them. We stand fearless at the cliff-edge of doom, courageous in seastorm and earthquake, before the rush and roar of oceans, the tremors that shift mountains. Jacob-wrestling God fights for us, God-of-Angel-Armies protects us. River fountains splash joy, cooling God's city, this sacred haunt of the Most High. God lives here, the streets are safe, God at your service from crack of dawn. Godless nations rant and rave, kings and kingdoms threaten, but Earth does anything God says. Jacob-wrestling God fights for us, God-of-Angel-Armies protects us. Attention, all! See the marvels of God! God plants flowers and trees all over the earth, bans war from pole to pole, breaks all the weapons across Their knee. "Step out of the traffic! Take a long, loving look at me, your High God, above politics, above everything." Jacob-wrestling God fights for us, God-of-Angel-Armies protects us.

QUOTE FOR MEDITATION:

"Prayer is not only the participation in communication with God in the encounter of religious experience, it is also the readying of the spirit for such communication. It is the total process of quieting down and to that extent must not be separated from meditation. Perhaps, as important as prayer itself, is the readying of the spirit for the experience."

—Howard Thurman, *The Creative Encounter*

CHIMING OF THE TRINITY

WORDS OF WELCOME

Brooke Dooley

PRELUDE & LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES

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

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Jodie Robinson

One: The call of the Holy One has brought us together.

All: **We have been called to pray and to praise.**

One: We are called to worship and to holy wonder.

All: **May the light of Love burn brightly in us.**

One: May it transfigure and transform our hearts and minds.

All: **May it become a beacon of hope for all.**

*OPENING HYMN - No. 182 We Have Come at Christ's Own Bidding

Hyfrydol

*INVOCATION

Jodie Robinson

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

Brooke Dooley

One: The peace of Christ be with you all.

Many: **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

Dan De Leon

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Brooke Dooley

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 9:28-36, CEB

Dan De Leon

About eight days after Jesus said these things, he took Peter, John, and James, and went up on a mountain to pray. As he was praying, the appearance of his face changed and his clothes flashed white like lightning. Two men, Moses and Elijah, were talking with him. They were clothed with heavenly splendor and spoke about Jesus' departure, which he would achieve in Jerusalem. Peter and those with him were almost overcome by sleep, but they managed to stay awake and saw his glory as well as the two men with him.

As the two men were about to leave Jesus, Peter said to him, "Master, it's good that we're here. We should construct three shrines: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah"—but he didn't know what he was saying. Peter was still speaking when a cloud overshadowed them. As they entered the cloud, they were overcome with awe.

Then a voice from the cloud said, “This is my Son, my chosen one. Listen to him!” Even as the voice spoke, Jesus was found alone. They were speechless and at the time told no one what they had seen.

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

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

THE MESSAGE

“Listen to Jesus”

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

Brooke Dooley

INVITATION TO SHARE

Jodie Robinson

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 (UNISON)**

Dan De Leon

May these gifts we freely share be put to work in God’s gracious kin-dom so that no child is born into oppressive systems that devalue their humanity and sacredness.

OBSERVANCE OF HOLY COMMUNION

Dan De Leon, Brooke Dooley

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Brooke Dooley

**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. 278 Creator God, Creating Still

St. Anne

***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: Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart - Frederick C. Atkinson, arranged by Lloyd Larson
Offertory: All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name! - Oliver Holden, arranged by Marianne Kim
Communion: Dank sei dir, Herr (Thanks Be to Thee) - George Frideric Handel
Postlude: Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise - Traditional Welsh melody, arranged
by Larry Shackley

Scriptures for the First Sunday in Lent, March 9, 2025: Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16; Deuteronomy 26: 1-11; Luke 4:1-13

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

GREETER TRAINING POSTPONED: Our Greeter Training scheduled for Sunday after the 11am service will be rescheduled for a later date, to better accommodate our busy schedules and give us additional time to update some protocols. Stay tuned for details on the new date soon.

FAA ASH WEDNESDAY BREAKFAST, MARCH 5: Since we are all FABULOUS AT ANY AGE, let's get together for breakfast on Wednesday, March 5, following the 7:30 a.m. ash distribution service. Where? Coco Loco (1804 Welsh, CS). Everyone is welcome!

WALL OF GIVING - YOUTH MISSION TRIP FUNDRAISER, MARCH 2 & 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!

FRIENDS YOUTH CONFIRMATION CLASS #1, MARCH 2: This Sunday, 3/2, the first 2025 Confirmation Class will begin. We will meet in the double classroom, 1-2:30pm to learn about the Bible and the history of the church from Antioch to Friends UCC. 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.

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICES, MARCH 5: Ash Wednesday services with the imposition of ashes will be offered in the sanctuary on March 5 with a morning service at 7:30am, and an evening service at 6:30pm. The evening service is preceded by a supper of soup and bread starting at 5:45pm.

ASH WEDNESDAY SOUP SUPPER, MARCH 5: Simple Soup Supper on March 5 beginning at 5:45 p.m. prior to Ash Wednesday Service. Sign up to donate soup or bread on the buffet table in the sanctuary.

FIRST FRIDAY WITH FRIENDS, MARCH 7: 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.

GUYZ BREAKFAST, MARCH 8: 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

DEVOTIONAL BOOKS FOR LENT ARE HERE!: Devotional books for lent are here! 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.

COMBINED ADULT CLASS: THE WIDENING OF GOD'S MERCY: What happens when a prominent evangelical bible scholar changes his mind? Richard Hays wrote one of the most widely quoted defenses of the traditional non-affirming position on LGBT issues in the 1990s, but over time, grew to a new understanding of God's welcome and inclusion. With his son Christopher, also a biblical scholar, he has written a book that explores the whole biblical narrative, showing how God's mercy is always widening to greater and greater inclusion. Join us Sundays at 10am in the double classroom.

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 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 11am Service 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, 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 (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

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.

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.

Friends Church Staff

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Pastor Dan's weekday off is Friday. Pastor Trent's weekday off is Monday.