

# FRIENDS CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Third Sunday in Lent  
March 23, 2025  
9:00am



*An Open & Affirming  
Congregation*

## **SCRIPTURE FOR MEDITATION:** Psalm 63:1-8, NRSV

O God, you are my God, I seek you, my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water. So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary, beholding your power and glory. Because your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise you. So I will bless you as long as I live; I will lift up my hands and call on your name. My soul is satisfied as with a rich feast, and my mouth praises you with joyful lips when I think of you on my bed, and meditate on you in the watches of the night; for you have been my help, and in the shadow of your wings I sing for joy. My soul clings to you; your right hand upholds me.

## **CHIMING OF THE TRINITY**

## **WORDS OF WELCOME**

Kyle Riley

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

## **\*CALL TO WORSHIP**

Kathy Yeager

One: You who are thirsty:

**All: Come to receive living water.**

One: You who are hungry:

**All: Taste the bread that satisfies.**

One: You who long for connection:

**All: Receive the fellowship of this community and of the Holy Spirit.**

One: You who search for love:

**All: Experience the love of Jesus  
expressed in music, prayer, community, word and action.**

One: May this time of worship fill and refresh you.

**All: Let us worship God together!**

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

**\*OPENING HYMN** - No. 23 There's a Wideness in God's Mercy

*In Babilone*

**\*INVOCATION**

Kathy Yeager

**CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

Kyle Riley

*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.**

**\*PASSING OF THE PEACE**

Dan De Leon

One: The peace of Christ be with you all.

Many: **And also with you.**

**GOSPEL READING**

Luke 13:1-9, CEB

Dan De Leon

Some who were present on that occasion told Jesus about the Galileans whom Pilate had killed while they were offering sacrifices. He replied, "Do you think the suffering of these Galileans proves that they were more sinful than all the other Galileans? No, I tell you, but unless you change your hearts and lives, you will die just as they did. What about those eighteen people who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them? Do you think that they were more guilty of wrongdoing than everyone else who lives in Jerusalem? No, I tell you, but unless you change your hearts and lives, you will die just as they did."

Jesus told this parable: "A man owned a fig tree planted in his vineyard. He came looking for fruit on it and found none. He said to his gardener, 'Look, I've come looking for fruit on this fig tree for the past three years, and I've never found any. Cut it down! Why should it continue depleting the soil's nutrients?' The gardener responded, 'Lord, give it one more year, and I will dig around it and give it fertilizer. Maybe it will produce fruit next year; if not, then you can cut it down.'"

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

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

**THE MESSAGE**

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**

Kyle Riley

**AFFIRMATION OF FAITH:** By Mary Luti, from *Stating Our Faith in Urgent Times*

Dan De Leon

**We believe in you, God beyond all names, Love unending.  
Everything comes from you. Nothing falls outside your care.  
You command justice and judge with mercy.  
Made in your image, we are your delight.  
We believe in you, Christ Jesus, Mary's child, one with God and us.  
You went through the world doing good.  
You loved the company of sinners and called us friends.  
You spoke truth to the mighty.  
We killed you on a cross. You pardoned us with your last breath.  
In deepest mystery, God gave you new life, the life we live when we follow you.  
We believe in you, Holy Spirit, wind and flame.  
You give us insight and dreams, bold words, resilience and courage for each day.  
You bind us in love. Your presence is joy. Your light leads us home.  
Claimed in the waters, fed at the table, surrounded by saints, we resist evil, love our  
neighbors, and forgive our enemies, so that the world might know that you are good:  
God beyond all names, Christ Jesus, Holy Spirit, one, loving, and just. Amen.**

## **INVITATION TO SHARE**

Kathy Yeager

## **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**

Kyle Riley

**\*THE LORD'S PRAYER**

Kyle Riley

**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.**

**ANOUNCEMENTS**

Kyle Riley

**\*CLOSING HYMN** - No. 476 My Life Flows on in Endless Song (How Can I Keep from Singing) *Endless Song*

**\*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: My Shepherd Will Supply My Need - American Folk Tune, arranged by John Carter  
Offertory: Allemande (from *French Suite No. 2 in c minor*, BWV 813) - Johann Sebastian Bach  
Postlude: In the Cross of Christ I Glory - Ithamar Conkey

Scriptures for the Fourth Sunday in Lent, March 30, 2025: Psalm 32; Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

**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

**FRIENDS YOUTH GROUP SPRING LUNCH, MARCH 23:** The Friends Youth Group will be celebrating the arrival of spring by joining for lunch together following the 11am service, 3/23. Youth and their families are invited to meet at Freebirds on Longmire for food and fellowship. Contact Pastor Brooke for details: [pastorbrooke@friends-ucc.org](mailto:pastorbrooke@friends-ucc.org)

**LENTEN MEDITATION, MARCH 25:** For our Lenten meditation, we will be walking the labyrinth, weather permitting, at 7:30am. 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.

**TIME CHANGE: TUESDAY MENTAL HEALTH WALKS, MARCH 25:** With the longer days and warmer weather, the Mental Health Walks with Pastor Brooke will be moving to 5:30pm. We meet every Tuesday at Wolf Pen Creek Park. Reach out to Pastor Brooke for more information: [pastorbrooke@friends.ucc.org](mailto:pastorbrooke@friends.ucc.org).

**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.

**CATAN TOURNAMENT, MARCH 29:** Tiny Hope Village is hosting a fundraiser on Saturday, March 29 to end homelessness. Join them from 10:00am - 4:00pm at Peace Lutheran Church. Tickets are \$25. Purchase them ahead with the QR Code below. All ages are welcomed. For more info, contact [email@tinyhopevillage.org](mailto:email@tinyhopevillage.org).



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**MORNING MANNA CLASS: REVELATION AND RESISTANCE:** The Book of Revelation is often seen as frightening, strange, or just plain confusing. For some people, it's all about the end of the world and a story that condemns most of humanity to judgement. But Revelation really isn't about the end of the world--it's about living faithfully as God's people even when the world seems to be falling apart. Join us on Sundays during Lent at 10am for exploration of this powerful book. Contact Pastor Trent with any questions.

**SOCIAL JUSTICE CLASS: "HOW TO END CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM":** At 10am on Sundays, March 23, 30, April 6, 13, the Social Justice Class (SJC) will look at the topic "How to End Christian Nationalism," based on a book of the same title by Amanda Tyler, Exec. Dir. of the Baptist Joint Committee on Religious Freedom and Founder of Christians Against Christian Nationalism. You do not have to read the book to participate in the class. The SJC meets on the left side of the double classroom across from the gender-assigned restrooms. Pastor Dan will be our facilitator. All are welcome.

**RHAG MEETING:** If you would like to learn more about the Reproductive Health Access Group—or RHAG, 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](https://bit.ly/0900worship) 11am Service [bit.ly/1100worship](https://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](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

**FIRST FRIDAY WITH FRIENDS, APRIL 4:** 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.

**WONDERFUL WEDNESDAY WITH WOMEN, APRIL 9:** Wonderful Wednesday with Women will meet on April 9 at 5pm at The Owl Pub & Grill at 315 S Main St. in Bryan. This is a casual, come-and-go event. All are welcome! Contact Stacy De Leon ([stacybdeleon@gmail.com](mailto:stacybdeleon@gmail.com)) for more information.

**GUYZ BREAKFAST, APRIL 12:** 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.

**PALM SUNDAY PROCESSION, APRIL 13:** Calling all children & youth! Meet in the narthex before the 11am service to help pass out palm branches in recognition of Jesus' triumphant return to Jerusalem!

**LINDA COATS BOOK CLUB, APRIL 24:** Linda Coats Book Club will meet on Thursday, April 24th at 6:30pm. Our book will be **Small Things Like These** by **Claire Keegan**. 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.