

FRIENDS CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Reign of Christ Sunday
November 24, 2024
9:00am



*An Open & Affirming
Congregation*

QUOTE FOR MEDITATION:

Yes, Jesus' kingdom is not like the kingdoms of this world. It doesn't originate the same way or behave like the kingdoms of this world. But Jesus' kingdom is still for this world, for the benefit and blessing of this world, for the redemption and rescue of this world. If Jesus were an earthly king of this age, then there would be soldiers killing to bring about his kingdom, just as they do for every other earthly kingdom: victory through violence. Yet that's not how Jesus' kingdom will come. The kingdom will come rather through the imperial violence done to him on the cross and through the anti-imperial, death-reversing, justice-loving power of resurrection. Then the kingdom spreads, not through conquest, but through the spirit's life-giving and liberating power being experienced by more and more people and through their life-giving contributions to the world. This is conquest, but by love. This is power, but in weakness. This is kingship, but in self-giving suffering for others. This kingdom is not one that arises from within the world. But as it advances, as it spreads, it dispels and displaces the dark forces in the world."

-Bishop N.T. Wright, "Jesus and the Powers: Christian Political Witness in an Age of Totalitarian Terror and Dysfunctional Democracies"

CHIMING OF THE TRINITY

WORDS OF WELCOME

Trent Williams

PRELUDE & LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES

***CALL TO WORSHIP (RESPONSIVE)**

Susan Fontaine

One: We have chosen to be here, where God remembers us.

All: God comes to us, the One who was, and is, and is to come.

One: Like leaves skipping over the carpet of grass:

All: God comes to us, the One who was, and is, and is to come.

One: Like the first glimpses of the sun peeking over the horizon:

All: God comes to us, the One who was, and is, and is to come.

One: Like the moon lighting our way on a cloudless, autumn night:

All: God comes to us, the One who was, and is, and is to come.

***OPENING HYMN - No. 300 Jesus Shall Reign**

Duke Street

***INVOCATION**

Susan Fontaine

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.**

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

Trent Williams

One: The peace of Christ be with you all.

Many: **And also with you.**

EPISTLE READING

2 Corinthians 12:2-10, NRSV

Trent Williams

I know a person in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know; God knows. And I know that such a person—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know; God knows—was caught up into Paradise and heard things that are not to be told, that no mortal is permitted to repeat. On behalf of such a one I will boast, but on my own behalf I will not boast, except of my weaknesses. But if I wish to boast, I will not be a fool, for I will be speaking the truth. But I refrain from it, so that no one may think better of me than what is seen in me or heard from me, even considering the exceptional character of the revelations. Therefore, to keep me from being too elated, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me, to keep me from being too elated. Three times I appealed to the Lord about this, that it would leave me, but he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for

you, for power is made perfect in weakness.” So, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities for the sake of Christ; for whenever I am weak, then I am strong.

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

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

THE MESSAGE

Trent Williams

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

FAITH IN ACTION MOMENT

Festival of Giving & Angel Tree

Brooke Dooley

INVITATION TO SHARE

Susan Fontaine

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 & 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.**

*CLOSING HYMN - In Christ Alone

Capo 1: (D) (G) (D) (G) (A) (D)
 Eb Ab Eb Ab Bb Eb

1 In Christ a - lone my hope is found; he is my
 2 In Christ a - lone, who took on flesh— full - ness of
 3 There in the ground his bod - y lay, light of the
 4 No guilt in life, no fear in death, this is the

(G) (Em7) (A7) (D) (G) (D) (G)
 Ab Fm7 Bb7 Eb Ab Eb Ab

light, my strength, my song— this cor - ner-stone, this sol - id
 God in help - less babe! This gift of love and right-eous-
 world by cruel - ty slain; then burst - ing forth in glo - rious
 pow'r of Christ in me; from life's first cry to fi - nal

(A) (D) (G) (Em7) (A7) (D)
 Bb Eb Ab Fm7 Bb7 Eb

ground, firm through the fierc - est drought and storm.
 ness, scorned by the ones he came to save,
 day, up from the grave he rose a - gain!
 breath, Je - sus com - mands my des - ti - ny.

(G/B) (D/F#) (A) (D)
 Ab/C Eb/G Bb Eb
 What heights of love, what depths of peace, when fears are
 till on the cross as Je - sus died, the love of
 And as he stands in vic - to - ry, sin's curse has
 No pow'r of hell, no hu - man plan, can ev - er

(G) (D/F#) (A) (G) (D) (G)
 Ab Eb/G Bb Ab Eb Ab
 stilled, when striv - ings cease. My com - fort - er, my all in
 God was mag - ni - fied. My ev - 'ry sin on him was
 lost its grip on me; for I am his and he is
 pluck me from his hand; till he re - turns or calls me

(A) (D) (G) (Em7) (A7) (D)
 Bb Eb Ab F m7 Bb7 Eb
 all, here in the love of Christ I stand.
 laid; here in the death of Christ I live.
 mine, bought with the pre - cious blood of Christ.
 home, here in the pow'r of Christ I'll stand!

*BENEDICTION

Trent Williams

POSTLUDE

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Instrumental Music:

- Prelude: Crown Him with Many Crowns - Lloyd Larson
- Offertory: In Christ Alone - Stuart Townend and Keith Getty, arranged by Larry Shackley
- Postlude: Soon and Very Soon - Andraé Crouch, arranged by Jack Schrader

Scriptures for the First Sunday of Advent, December 1, 2024: Psalm 25:1-10; 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13; Luke 21:25-36

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 ANGEL TREE, NOV 24: Sign up to sponsor a child for the Angel Tree. See Anne Wehrly after the service, or contact her at awehrly@suddenlink.net with questions. Sign up online on the Friends Church homepage on Monday, Nov 25.

FRIENDSGIVING, NOV 24: Friendsgiving Dinner will begin at 5:30pm in the sanctuary. Please join us!

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT SIGNUP, NOV 24: December is just around the corner and we’ve already started planning the Friends’ Christmas Pageant. Please let us know we can count on your child/youth for the Friends Church Christmas Pageant by completing this survey by 11/24/2024 using the link: <https://tinyurl.com/2024Pageant>.

ADVENT MEDITATION, NOV 26: On Tuesdays during Advent, you are invited to the Friends Church sanctuary to start your morning with centering meditation. At 7:30am on Tuesdays, Nov. 26, Dec. 3, 10, & 17, 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 the coming of Emanuel, God-With-Us, on Christmas. All are welcome.

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.

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.

ADVENT DEVOTIONALS ARE HERE: Advent begins Sunday 12/3! Copies of the UCC's Daily Devotionals booklet for Advent, THE MESS IN THE MESSIAH, are available for pickup in the narthex; one per household, please. The electronic version (pdf) may be purchased individually at thepilgrimpress.com.

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.

SAVE THE DATE

HELP PREP THE CHURCH FOR ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS, NOV 30: It's almost time to hang the greens, put up the purple, and deck the halls! On Saturday November 30, at 10am, the Worship Committee invites you to help set up and decorate the sanctuary and narthex for Advent and Christmas. We are changing the banners, hanging wreaths, setting up the angel trees, and putting out the Advent candles. Chris Hoffman will crank out carols on the piano to put us in the spirit as we work and enjoy holiday treats. RSVP to help by emailing worship@friends-ucc.org.

SOCIAL JUSTICE CLASS IN DECEMBER - "NAMES FOR THE MESSIAH", DEC 1: For the four Sundays of Advent, Dec. 1, 8, 15, and 22, the Social Justice Class invites you to participate in conversations based on Walter Bruegemann's Names for the Messiah: An Advent Study. Pastor Dan will lead this class, inviting us into weekly discussions that look at the names for Christ, and the implications they have on our faith in today's world: Week 1, Wonderful Counselor; Week 2, Mighty God; Week 3, Everlasting Father; Week 4, Prince of Peace. All are welcome. (Note: The Social Justice Class will not meet on Dec. 29.)

FAA-LA-LA, DEC 4: FAA-LA-LA at the Advent Recital on Wednesday, December 4. Our Fabulous at Any Age group (which includes EVERYONE) is having a Christmas Singalong! Singing begins at noon. Let's meet at 11:30 for BYO lunch.

MIDWEEK ADVENT RECITALS ARE BACK, DEC 4: Needing time to pause and surround yourself by the sounds of the season? If so, join us each Wednesday in December (4th, 11th, and 18th) for a brown-bag lunch followed by a short musical program. Gather for food and fellowship at 11:30, and then stay for a 30-minute Recital of holiday music at noon, featuring the musical talents of our Friends Church musicians. We hope you can join us!

FAA - BRAZOS GLASSWORK CHRISTMAS ACTIVITY, DEC 5: Fabulous at Any Age (that's EVERYONE!) will be making glass ornaments at Brazos Glasswork on Thursday, December 5 at 2:00 p.m. No special art talent is needed! Please sign-up by November 27 so that we can arrange for supplies. Link: <https://bit.ly/BrazosGlassworks>. Contact Kristen Harper at kristinsharper@outlook.com.

FAIR TRADE CRAFT SALE, DEC 7 & 8: Get a jump on your Christmas shopping Saturday and Sunday (Dec. 7 & 8). Visit our annual Guatemalan Craft Sale held in the blue tent in the parking lot at Friends Church. UPAVIM (United for a Better Life) exports beautiful Fair Trade handmade gifts and crafts all around the world. Your purchases support educational and medical programs in the impoverished community of La Esperanza in Guatemala City. Come on Saturday Dec 7th from 10-2 or before or after church on Sunday Dec. 8th. In the event of inclement weather, the craft sale will move inside the church building.

ANGEL TREE GIFT DEADLINE, DEC 8: Please drop off your gifts for the Angel Tree by Monday, Dec 8 by 7:00pm. We will continue to collect gift cards and you can leave them in the gift card box under the tree or with Michael in the church office.

Friends Church Staff

Senior Pastor

The Rev. Dr. Dan De Leon (*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.