



Friends Church

An Open & Affirming Congregation



"Ash"

Mike Moyers (2016)

March 5, 2025

6:30 pm

Ash Wednesday Service & Imposition of Ashes

WELCOME TO FRIENDS CHURCH!

We are honored that you have chosen to spend your Wednesday evening 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.

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.

SCRIPTURE FOR MEDITATION: 1 Corinthians 15:45-49, CEB

So it is also written, The first human, Adam, became a living person, and the last Adam became a spirit that gives life. But the physical body comes first, not the spiritual one—the spiritual body comes afterward. The first human was from the earth made from dust; the second human is from heaven. The nature of the person made of dust is shared by people who are made of dust, and the nature of the heavenly person is shared by heavenly people. We will look like the heavenly person in the same way as we have looked like the person made from dust.

PROCLAMATION Joel 2:1, 12-17, 21-22, NRSV Dan De Leon, Amy Klinkovsky

Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the Lord is coming, it is near—
Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing. Who knows whether he will not turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind him, a grain offering and a drink offering for the Lord, your God? Blow the trumpet in Zion; sanctify a fast; call a solemn assembly; gather the people. Sanctify the congregation; assemble the aged; gather the children, even infants at the breast. Let the bridegroom leave his room, and the bride her canopy. Between the vestibule and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep. Let them say, “Spare your people, O Lord, and do not make your heritage a mockery, a byword among the nations. Why should it be said among the peoples, ‘Where is their God?’” Do not fear, O soil; be glad and rejoice, for the Lord has done great things! Do not fear, you animals of the field, for the pastures of the wilderness are green; the tree bears its fruit, the fig tree and vine give their full yield.

WORDS OF WELCOME

Dan De Leon

***CALL TO WORSHIP** (inspired by Joel 2:12)

Amy Klinkovsky

One: Turn away from the calls of worldly success

All: Repent, and turn back to God.

One: Turn away from the desire to have what everyone else has

All: Repent, and turn back to God.

One: Turn away from greed and the race for power

All: Repent, and turn back to God.

One: As we enter Lent, may we turn back to God

All: May we seek forgiveness, may we seek healing, may we seek wholeness.

May our hearts be renewed in this time of worship.

***OPENING SONG FROM TAIZÉ: “Bless the Lord”**

**Bless the Lord, my soul, and bless God’s holy name.
Bless the Lord, my soul, who leads me into life.**

***INVOCATION**

Sally-Kate Humphries

PSALM READING

Psalm 90:1-10, 12, NRSV

Sally-Kate Humphries

Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God. You turn us back to dust, and say, “Turn back, you mortals.” For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past, or like a watch in the night. You sweep them away; they are like a dream, like grass that is renewed in the morning; in the morning it flourishes and is renewed; in the evening it fades and withers. For we are consumed by your anger; by your wrath we are overwhelmed. You have set our iniquities before you, our secret sins in the light of your countenance. For all our days pass away under your wrath; our years come to an end like a sigh. The days of our life are seventy years, or perhaps eighty, if we are strong; even then their span is only toil and trouble; they are soon gone, and we fly away. So teach us to count our days that we may gain a wise heart.

GOSPEL READING

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18, The Message; 6:19-21, FNV

Brooke Dooley

“Be especially careful when you are trying to be good so that you don’t make a performance out of it. It might be good theater, but the God who made you won’t be applauding. When you do something for someone else, don’t call attention to yourself. You’ve seen them in action, I’m sure—‘playactors’ I call them—treating prayer meeting and street corner alike as a stage, acting compassionate as long as someone is watching, playing to the crowds. They get applause, true, but that’s all they get. When you help someone out, don’t think about how it looks. Just do it—quietly and unobtrusively. That is the way your God, who conceived you in love, working behind the scenes, helps you out.

“And when you come before God, don’t turn that into a theatrical production either. All these people making a regular show out of their prayers, hoping for fifteen minutes of fame! Do you think God sits in a box seat? Here’s what I want you to do: Find a quiet, secluded place so you won’t be tempted to role-play before God. Just be there as simply and honestly as you can manage. The focus will shift from you to God, and you will begin to sense his grace.

“When you practice some appetite-denying discipline to better concentrate on God, don’t make a production out of it. It might turn you into a small-time celebrity but it won’t make you a saint. If you ‘go into training’ inwardly, act normal outwardly. Shampoo and comb your hair, brush your teeth, wash your face. God doesn’t require attention-getting devices. He won’t overlook what you are doing; he’ll reward you well.”

“Take care not to store up possessions on earth that can be spoiled by worms, eaten by moths, or stolen by thieves. Instead, give away your possessions to the ones in need, and then you will be storing up great possessions in the spirit-world above, where nothing can be lost or stolen. For where you store your valued possessions is where your heart will be.”

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

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

INTERCESSORY PRAYERS AND LIGHTING OF CANDLES

Dan De Leon

PASTORAL PRAYER

Dan De Leon

THE LORD’S PRAYER (based on Matthew 6:9-13, CEB)

Dan De Leon

Our Parent who is in heaven, uphold the holiness of your name. Bring in your kingdom so that your will is done on earth as it’s done in heaven.

Give us the bread we need for today. Forgive us for the ways we have wronged you, just as we also forgive those who have wronged us. And don’t lead us into temptation, but rescue us from the evil one.

For yours is the kin-dom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

PRAYER FOR GUIDANCE: Lord Listen to Your Children Praying

Lord, lis-ten to your chil-dren pray - ing. Lord, send your

The first system of music consists of two staves. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and a 4/4 time signature. It begins with a whole chord, followed by a series of eighth notes and quarter notes, and ends with a quarter rest. The bottom staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature. It starts with a whole chord, followed by a series of eighth notes and quarter notes, and ends with a quarter rest.

Spir - it in this place. Lord, lis - ten to your chil - dren

The second system of music consists of two staves. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of two flats and a 4/4 time signature. It begins with a quarter rest, followed by a series of eighth notes and quarter notes, and ends with a quarter rest. The bottom staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature. It starts with a quarter rest, followed by a series of eighth notes and quarter notes, and ends with a quarter rest.

pray - ing. Send us love; send us power; send us grace.

The third system of music consists of two staves. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of two flats and a 4/4 time signature. It begins with a quarter rest, followed by a series of eighth notes and quarter notes, and ends with a quarter rest. The bottom staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature. It starts with a quarter rest, followed by a series of eighth notes and quarter notes, and ends with a quarter rest.

LITANY OF CONFESSION

Trent Williams

One: O God of Grace, may we not have received you in vain.

When we pray because we desire others' good opinion,

All: Forgive us, Lord.

One: When we give our gifts for others' approval,

All: Forgive us, O God.

One: When we deny ourselves to get others' admiration,

All: Forgive us, Merciful One.

One: When we fail to do unto others as we would like them to do unto us,

All: Forgive us, Spirit of Love.

One: When we put our privileged selves first,

before the poor and needy and disadvantaged of this world,

All: Forgive us, Creator of Truth.

One: When we keep for ourselves more than what we need,

All: Forgive us, Freely-Giving God.

One: Forgive us our sins and trespasses and debts.

All: Only then can our souls be washed clean and spotless.

Only then can we be your true servants.

Only then will we reach the pure heart of the matter.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Trent Williams

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE IMPOSITION OF ASHES

Trent Williams

PRAYER FOR THE IMPOSITION OF ASHES

Trent Williams

*IMPOSITION OF ASHES

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

Brooke Dooley

*HYMN OF RESPONSE: No. 163 - Many Are the Lightbeams

*BENEDICTION

Amy Klinkovsky

(DEPART IN SILENCE)

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*)
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