



FRIENDS CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

An Open & Affirming Congregation



Walk in the Light,
Carving in a stone from the old Manse in Townend, Kilmaurs, East Ayrshire, Scotland. Photo by Roger Griffith (Rosser).

April 18, 2021

11:00am

Outdoor

WELCOME

We are honored that you have chosen to spend your Sunday morning 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.

Eastertide

Easter is not just one day—it's a whole season. Throughout these 50 days, we celebrate and ponder the mystery of the resurrection and the promise of new life.

Words in **BOLD** are yours to speak out loud

****You are invited to stand**

Psalm for Meditation: Psalm 4 (NIV)

Answer me when I call to you, my righteous God.

*Give me relief from my distress; have mercy on me
and hear my prayer.*

Many, O God, are asking, "Who will bring us prosperity?"

How long will you people turn my glory into shame?

How long will you love delusions and seek false gods?

*Tremble and do not sin; when you are at your rest,
search your hearts and be silent.*

Offer the sacrifices of the righteous and trust in the Lord.

Let the light of your face shine on us.

In peace I will lie down and sleep,

for you alone, Lord, make me dwell in safety.

Quote for Meditation:

Be still, and know that I am God.

CHIMING OF THE TRINITY

WORDS OF WELCOME & INSTRUCTIONS FOR OUTDOOR WORSHIP

Trent Williams

PRELUDE & LIGHTING OF THE ALTER CANDLES

****CALL TO WORSHIP**

Kelly Wellman

One: God answers those who call... and God says, "Come!"

Many: God hears the pleas of the sincere!

*One: Whether we come with sorrow or praise, regret or exhaustion...
Whatever the state of our hearts...*

Many: To bring our whole selves—honest and authentic—

One: This is the desire of our Creator.

***Many: As children of God,
with confidence, we come!***

OPENING HYMN — Come, You Faithful, Raise the Strain - Tune: St. Kevin

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Kelly Wellman

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Tami Dudo

*Children are invited to come to the front facing the porch steps.
Please remain three feet apart for safety measures. Parents are welcome to join their children.*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Brooke Dooley

During the Prayers of the People, you are invited to share your prayers of joy and concern in the comments for the livestream of the worship service. Those shared prayers will be included in the church's email prayer chain this week.

PASSING OF THE PEACE

Brooke Dooley

*One: The peace of Christ be with you all.
Many: And also with you!*

INTRODUCTION OF ACTING SENIOR PASTOR

Kelly Wellman

EPISTLE READING — I John 3:1-7

Trent Williams

See what love Abba God has lavished on us in letting us be called God's children!

Yet that is in fact what we are.

The reason the world does not recognize us
is that it never recognized God.

My dear friends,
now we are God's children,
but it has not been revealed
what we are to become in the future.

We know that when it comes to light
we will be like God,
for we will see God
as God really is.

All who keep this hope keep themselves pure, just as Christ is pure.

Anyone who sins at all breaks the Law, because to sin is to break the Law. Now, you know that Christ, who is sinless, appeared to abolish sin. So everyone who lives in union with Christ does not continue to sin, but whoever continues to sin has never seen or known Christ.

Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray; to live a holy life is to be holy, just as Christ is holy.

CHORAL ANTHEM— Order My Steps (In Your Word) - Glenn Burleigh, arranged by Jack Schrader

GOSPEL READING — John 21:20-25

Trent Williams

Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them; he was the one who had reclined next to Jesus at the supper and had said, "Lord, who is it that is going to betray you?" When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, "Lord, what about him?" Jesus said to him, "If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? Follow me. So the rumor spread in the community that this disciple would not die. Yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but, "If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?"

This is the disciple who is testifying to these things and has written them, and we know that his testimony is true. But there are also many other things that Jesus did; if every one of them were written down, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.

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

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

THE MESSAGE

Christine Tata

MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

INVITATION TO SHARE

Kelly Wellman

OFFERTORY

Secure online giving via Church Office Giving at bit.ly/givetofriends

GivePlus Text to 833-421-0009

Venmo to 979-446-5746 or @friendsucc

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Trent Williams

THE OBSERVANCE OF HOLY COMMUNION

Christine Tata & Trent Williams

THE LORD'S PRAYER (*unison*)

Christine Tata

**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 — Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us - Tune: Bradbury

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Trent Williams

BENEDICTION

Christine Tata

POSTLUDE

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Instrumental Music:

- Prelude: O Worship the King (In the setting of G. F. Händel's *Allegro Maestoso* from *Water Music*) -
Attributed to Johann Michael Haydn, arranged by Marilyn Reimer
- Offertory: For the Beauty of the Earth - Conrad Kocher, arranged by Cindy Berry
- Communion: *Allemande* from *Suite in B-flat Major*, G. 30 - George Frideric Händel
- Postlude: Crown Him King (incorporating *Rejoice, the Lord Is King* and *Crown Him with Many Crowns*) -
Jolene Boyd

Scriptures for April 25, 2021: Psalm 28, Ezekiel 34:25-31, 1 Timothy 4:6-16, Luke 15:1-10

FIRST TIME AT FRIENDS? If you are visiting us today, please let us know. 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.

PICNIC ON THE GROUNDS, today immediately following Worship: The fellowship committee would like to invite you to grab lunch (or bring a picnic) after the 11:00 church service this Sunday. Then, join us back at church for a safe and socially distanced get together. We will plan on eating after the service is over and you have had time to get some food and get back to church (sometime around 12:15-12:30).

PARENTING SMALL GROUP, today 12:30pm: Calling all parents of young children and youth! The Parenting Small Group is meeting Sunday, April 18, at 12:30 p.m. At our first meeting last Sunday, we chose the book, Parenting Forward: How to Raise Children with Justice, Mercy, and Kindness, as our focus of study. Please join us for study, conversation, and support. For more information, please contact Brian Gilson at gilson.brian@gmail.com.

FRIENDS BOOK CLUB, Thursday, April 29, 6:30pm: The next Friends Book Club is *Thursday, April 29, at 6:30pm* by Zoom. Rev. Ron Petty will lead us in discussing the book, *Rabbi Jesus*, by Bruce Chilton. Please join us for a fun and informative discussion.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION , FRIDAY 3 pm: Friends Church and our neighbor church Peace Lutheran are working together to feed hungry folks from our community every Friday. Start 2021 off by volunteering to assist. Share an hour or more of your time between 3:00 and 6:30 pm. Let Anne Wehrly know when you would like to volunteer by emailing awehrly@suddenlink.net. Come to the Peace Lutheran parking lot where the distribution is happening. Wear your mask and prepare to make a tangible difference in the lives of those we are serving. Hope to see you there!

DONATIONS & VOLUNTEERS WELCOME TO PROVIDE FOOD FOR UNHOUSED NEIGHBORS: When the pandemic began, those who were involved with our Pilgrims in the Park ministry helped move those of our unhoused friends into a local motel for shelter. Friends Church stepped up to provide weekly food. We are unsure how long this ministry will continue. Currently, we have six friends for whom we are providing meals. How it works: Each week, we pack a selection of groceries and pick up donations at the food pantry at Peace Lutheran Church, then deliver them on Saturday. Anyone is welcome and encouraged to go with us to deliver! The more people who go, the more comfortable our friends will be.

How you can help: Food can be donated/delivered either to Charity Stokes or to Marisa Winking. Contact Charity at charityk.martin@gmail.com or 832-557-0085 for details. Please remember that our friends have limited fridge and room space to store food (mini-fridge) and only a microwave to heat food.

SOUL FRIENDS SMALL GROUPS: New small groups have begun, and there is still time to join one. Our small groups offer an opportunity for connection, building relationships, and deepening your spiritual growth. We currently have four groups available:

- Women's Group (for all women-identified persons)
- Men's Group (for all men-identified persons)
- Parent's Group
- LGBTQ+ Group

Contact Pastor Trent (pastortrent@friends-ucc.org) for more information. You can also indicate your interest here: bit.ly/soulfriendsgroups.

PLEASE JOIN US IN WELCOMING REV. DR. CHRISTINE TATA: As many of you will remember, our beloved Senior Pastor, Dan, took 1-month of his 3-months of earned sabbatical leave last summer. Since the remaining 2-months of this leave must be taken before September 1st, Senior Pastoral Relations has been working with Pastor Dan to make sure he gets this time of rest and renewal. We are excited to announce that during the two-month period of April 16th – June 16th Pastor Dan will be able to take sabbatical leave. A sabbatical is our gift to Dan to help care for him with as much depth and love as he cares for us.

Senior Pastor Relations is equally excited to introduce to you Rev. Dr. Christine Tata (pronounced Tāta) as the Acting Senior Pastor who will help shepherd our congregation with Pastor Trent during this time. Rev Tata comes to us from San Marcos and holds standing in the Heart of Texas Association of the South Central Conference. Her passions are closely aligned with Friends Church's core vision, mission, and values, including living daily in the real presence of God, building intentional small group ministries, and justice. Please help us welcome her with the extravagant hospitality we cherish.

The Rev. Dr. Christine Tata is a United Church of Christ minister who has served congregations in Denver, Dallas, and California. Most recently, she has been preaching virtually, delivering online services for progressive congregations to help them create sacred virtual spaces to meet the challenges of this pandemic year. Her years of ministry have been spread throughout a varied career that also includes the helping professions of human resources, education, and health care, and is rooted in her early love of the sacred spaces of theater—where the spoken and performative word mirrors the drama of the Word for humanity. With training in transitional ministry, she is pleased to be able to come over from her home in San Marcos to sojourn with Friends during this sabbatical time.

FRIENDS COVID DECISION METER, YELLOW: With a consistent trajectory of lower positivity rates, less hospitalizations, etc. locally, the church's Decision Meter, which determines our safety measures and protocols related to the pandemic, has gone down to yellow, which allows for us to have group gatherings onsite outdoors at Friends Church. Click [here](#) for more information on how yellow and the other color levels affect personal safety protocols, drop-in visitors, staff, etc.

OUTDOOR AND VIRTUAL SERVICES AT FRIENDS CHURCH: As more of our church members congregation and the wider community become fully vaccinated and covid cases continue going down in the coming months, we will be phasing into regathering in the sanctuary. As we remain vigilant in the meantime—loving one another and our neighbors by adhering to safety protocols—the worship services at Friends Church will be offered in two formats from week to week: outdoors and online. On the first and third Sundays of the month, outdoor services will be offered at 11am. Those outdoor services will also be livestreamed for online attendees. On all other Sundays (second, fourth, fifth), the worship services will be online only, streaming at 11am on the [Friends Church website](#), [Facebook](#), and [YouTube](#). **Note:** outdoor services depend on the weather, of course, and on the [Friends Church Decision Meter](#) being on “orange” or better.

SOCIAL JUSTICE CLASS, 10:00AM SUNDAY: The Social Justice Class at Friends Church has concluded its special study and will resume meeting at the regular time of 10am. For more information, please contact Jackie (jackiejowomack@gmail.com).

MORNING MANNA 10AM SUNDAY: Join us for our adult Bible study on Sunday morning at 10:00am on Zoom, Please follow the link, below. We will gather to reconnect, check in with each other, and bring ideas for what we'll study over the coming weeks. All are welcome. If you have any questions, contact Pastor Trent. <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82444908275?pwd=VUxnK0tYV2EzRzJhYkkveFo3NFFDdz09>.

CHURCH DIRECTORY ONLINE (ChMS): Need a Friends Church online directory? Download the free Church Office Online app and contact the Church office for the domain name and password. It's an easy way to have quick access to the names and contact info for Friends Church people, as well as birthdays and anniversaries! Don't see your info in the online directory? Give us your updated information: office@friends-ucc.org.

FRIENDS CHURCH CARES FUND (FCCF): Friends Church recently received a donation of \$10,000 for the purpose of helping those suffering financial hardships resulting from COVID-19 measures. Friends Church members needing financial assistance are encouraged to request one-time assistance for up to \$1,500 from the FCCF. The FCCF request form can be found on the church's website (www.friends-ucc.org) or by contacting Church Council Vice Moderator Cathy Hansen at vice-moderator@friends-ucc.org. Requests are kept in discretion between the requester and the Vice Moderator, Treasurer, and Senior Pastor.

FRIENDS CHURCH CRISIS FUND: While the FCCF is set aside exclusively to assist with COVID-19-related hardships, the Crisis Fund, established several years ago, is designated to help Friends Church members in financial need for any reason. Should the FCCF run out, our congregation has this fund to further help one another. To contribute to the Crisis Fund, contact Treasurer Theresa Walker at treasurer@friends-ucc.org. To request Crisis Fund assistance, contact the pastors at pastor@friends-ucc.org or pastortrent@friends-ucc.org. Requests remain confidential between the requester and members of Church Council.

STAY CONNECTED WITH WHAT'S HAPPENING AT FRIENDS!: Subscribe to This Week at Friends published every Friday to your email address, and the E-Connection Newsletter published monthly to your email address. You can sign up on our website: www.friends-ucc.org or email the church office: office@friends-ucc.org. Please add e-connection@friends-ucc.org and office@friends-ucc.org to you email address book to ensure delivery.

UPDATE CONTACT INFORMATION: If you are not currently receiving Church email correspondence, and would like to, please send a message to the Church office with your name and email address: office@friends-ucc.org, and add e-connection@friends-ucc.org and office@friends-ucc.org to you email address book to ensure delivery.

FRIENDS CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Our Vision:

Rooted in the way of Christ, we strive to be a community of God's radical inclusion and extravagant welcome.

Our Mission:

United by the example of Jesus, we live faithfully, love limitlessly, and serve boldly.

SUNDAY WORSHIP

Online at 11:00am

FRIENDS CHURCH STAFF

The Rev. Dr. Dan De Leon, *Senior Pastor*

pastor@friends-ucc.org

The Rev. Trent Williams, *Associate Pastor*

pastortrent@friends-ucc.org

Chris Hoffman, *Director of Music Ministries*

choir@friends-ucc.org

Kathy Robbins, *Pianist*

pianist@friends-ucc.org

Kate Rabe, *Administrative Assistant*

office@friends-ucc.org

2200 Southwood Drive
College Station, Texas 77845
979-693-7021

Office Hours: 9:00am—1:00pm, M—F
office@friends-ucc.org
www.friends-ucc.org

