



## *Friedens Church of Washington, UCC*

*“A Country Church with a New Spirit”  
Open Doors and Open Hearts*

Grace to you and peace in the name of Jesus Christ,

It is good to be on this side of Easter! It is amazing what God does in our lives—what God has done, is doing, and will always do—bring love and mercy, justice and peace, hope and new life. It is good to be on this side of Easter!

And yet, we must not forget the path of the cross, to realize that sometimes life is hard, full of burdens and struggles, yet we are able to make it through because of God’s constant presence in our lives, trusting in the Lord’s promises. Jesus even asks us to pick up our own cross, and thus claim the life he calls us to—to find eternal life in a life of service to God and neighbor. Even so, it is good to be on this side of Easter, and to live the resurrected life, full of joy and hope and peace, the kind of peace only our Lord can provide.

We’ve had a busy month in March, from the inspirational music of Tena Rae to the Vision presentation and recommitment to our church, to the wonderful, joy-filled Easter Cantata, to the celebration of new life on Easter! It is a blessing to serve a living God!

God is doing wonderful things at Friedens, and I invite you to come and be a part of the Lord’s ministry. We have a vision before us, a vision of a church that is vibrant with life—life grounded in the resurrected life of Jesus Christ—a *Living Church* which has been called by our *Living God* to share the *Living Word* of Jesus Christ in our community and world. Truly, we are to let our light shine for all the world to see, to be that light on the hill.

During Lent, I came across a devotional called “The I-Am-ness of God,” by Ron Buford, which talks about serving a Living God. I was so moved by his words, I decided to include it in this newsletter, as I believe it speaks to the vision God has placed before our congregation, about moving forward and claiming that which God wants us to be, about serving our resurrected Savior.

From the vision report, there are four areas we need to work on initially:

- ❖ Improve our Sunday School and Youth Program
- ❖ Increase our involvement in the community through community events like the Octoberfest
- ❖ Help folks grow closer to the Lord and get more involved in our church
- ❖ Let people know about the great work God is doing at Friedens

[www.friedenschurch.com](http://www.friedenschurch.com)  
P.O. Box 306 • Washington, Texas 77880-0306  
Phone: (936)878-2523 • Parsonage: (936)878-2155  
Email: [pastor@friedenschurch.com](mailto:pastor@friedenschurch.com)

# *Friedens Church of Washington, UCC*

*“A Country Church with a New Spirit”  
Open Doors and Open Hearts*

We need your help! You are a real asset to our church, and we need you! There is a stewardship survey that will help you identify some of your passions. Filling this out simply indicates an interest in an area of ministry; we'll get back to you and talk to you more about ways you can serve and what kind of time commitment is involved.

I also invite you to sign a covenant of recommitment to our church, which is based upon the essence of our faith—loving God and neighbor and being a part of God's work here at Friedens—and also upon our mission statement and duties outlined in our constitution and bylaws. It is simply a way to show your love for God and this wonderful church, renewing your commitment to Jesus Christ and your church.

During Holy week, I visited with one of our homebound members, Emma Jean Roese. Although she is not able to drive to church on Sundays, she still continues to support our church and pray for our ministry. She told me how good it felt to be called and invited to church and then she offered her own services to call others in the future. She said that was a simple thing that she could do, and one of the ways she could help. But more than that, this was one of the gifts God had given her, and she felt blessed to be able to offer it to the glory of our Lord and Savior.

Sometimes we think of service in grandiose terms and huge time commitments and hours of committee work, but the truth is there are so many ways to serve, and you can be a part of the Lord's ministry just by calling a few neighbors and inviting them to church. Help us to help you identify your gifts and passions, strengthen your gifts, and use them to God's glory.

It is good to be on this side of Easter! We serve a living God—a God of hope and joy, a God of resurrected life! Let us give thanks to God for the gift of new life!

Blessings and Peace,  
Pastor Ron