



Messenger

love all • live spiritually
rejoice in hope • show hospitality



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Lincoln, NE 68508
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Church Website: fcllincoln.org

Volume 69, No. 22

December 12, 2019

Church E-mail: info@fcllincoln.org

Celebrate the Holidays With First Christian Church



A Festival of Lessons & Carols
Sunday December 15th, 2019 10:30 am
Sanctuary

Participate with us in a journey toward
Christmas through scripture and
music.

Disciples Women's Bake Sale
Sunday December 15th, 2019
In parlor after worship

Christmas Eve Worship
Tuesday December 24th, 2019
6:00 pm Sanctuary

Christmas Hymn Sing
Sunday December 29th, 2019
10:30 am Sanctuary

Advent Decorations



Thank you to everyone who came to
decorate the Sanctuary Saturday,
November 30th.



Pastor's Corner

The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

Isaiah 11:6-9

The season of Advent seems to be flying by all too quickly. It's hard to believe that Christmas Eve is less than 2 weeks away and that the year 2019 will draw to a close in just 3 weeks. As we move through this season and prepare for the New Year, we are invited to look at the world and our lives differently. The prophet Isaiah shared a vision of God's reign that lifted up the dream of a harmony and peace that encompasses the entire created order. As we move through Advent towards the beginning of 2020, we too are invited to ponder such a world. How would our lives and our world be different if we looked at things from the perspective of God's glory? How might we invite this vision of harmony and peace into our lives, our homes, and our congregation?

In my sermon on the 2nd Sunday of Advent, I cited a study entitled "How We Gather." Jill Duffield, editor of Presbyterian Outlook, mentioned this study and shared an internet link (<https://sacred.design/insights>) if you want to learn more. Thurston and ter Kuile, the creators of this study, discovered six consistent themes in places where Millennials often gather. I would synthesize this list down to 5:

Community
Personal and Social Transformation
Purpose Finding
Creativity
Accountability

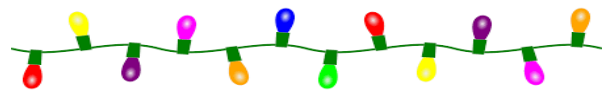
I would like to suggest that we explore these 5 themes as a congregation. Any of these themes would have describe the Church at one time and, I

believe, they could be descriptions of the Church once again. Creating a culture in which these themes are encouraged and developed will lead to the realization of the vision shared by the prophet Isaiah. As we develop and nurture these 5 qualities, we will be led closer to the harmony and peace lifted up in this holy season.

May God strengthen and guide us as we nurture these qualities in our own lives, in our community and in our congregation. May the harmony and peace of this season fill your lives, your homes, and our world.

In peace and love,

Pastor Karen



**Christmas is right around the corner!
Order SCRIP**

Gift cards make great stocking stuffers, secret Santa exchanges, or gifts for special teachers. When you order SCRIP from local businesses, you help your community AND First Christian Church's ministries. It's a win-win! See Donna after church any Sunday to order SCRIP.

Stocking Stuffer Specials

The following businesses are offering small denomination gift cards for the holidays - available while supplies last!

Amazon \$10
Applebee's \$10
Barnes & Noble \$5
CVS \$10
Cheddar's / Olive Garden \$10
Home Depot \$10
IHOP \$10
Outback Steakhouse \$10
Panera Bread \$5
Red Lobster \$10
Starbucks \$5
Wal-Mart \$10



**Save the Date
Sunday January 12, 2020**

Financial Literacy with FCC Foundation
Learn more about the FCC Foundation and planning your finances and estate.

Box Tops Are Changing Now There's An App For That!



As of December 1, 2019, our Outreach Team is no longer collecting Box Tops for Education for McPhee Elementary because they have gone digital!

Going forward, instead of clipping, sorting, and mailing the tops, McPhee Elementary can still earn money from the Box Tops when each of us download the app, select McPhee Elementary, and scan our shopping receipts when we see this label on a product:



HEAVY

A worship service for those that might not feel merry and bright. **Saturday, December 14th, 5:00 pm.**

Southpointe Christian Church
7010 Helen Witt Dr.
Lincoln, NE 68516
402-420-2750



January 2020 Act of Kindness

Again this January, our Act of Kindness Collection Barrel will support **Cedars Street Outreach & Youth Opportunity Center**, located at 318 S. 13th Street.

This program seeks out runaway, homeless, and at-risk youth, ages 13-21, in our city. When they locate someone under a bridge, searching in a dumpster, or wandering the streets, they offer them a backpack full of items such as bottled water, non-perishable food items, personal hygiene products, blankets, and a safe place to get a hot meal during the week at the brick and mortar location.

Your Outreach Team has offered to collect **hats, scarves, gloves, mittens, socks, and hand/feet warmer packets** during the month of January. The director of the Street Outreach program was ecstatic to hear this, as last February, when the items we collected in January were delivered, it was one of the coldest days of the winter. The Opportunity Center turned into a 48-hour warming station for at-risk youth and Cedars put every item we donated to excellent use within four hours!

So, as you are finishing up your Christmas shopping, or out scouring the after Christmas sales, please pick up one or two of the items listed above and put them in the collection barrel in January.

Thank you for your generous support of our Acts of Kindness throughout 2018 and 2019! I have no doubt that in 2020, First Christian Church will continue to fulfill our mission of "Loving and Serving GOD by Loving and Serving Our Neighbors" through our monthly Act of Kindness.

Your Outreach Team Leader,
Elaine Parman



First Christian Church Notes from the Board

The **Annual Congregational Meeting** was held on December 8th, 2019, after worship in the Sanctuary. The issues discussed were: 1) changes to the FCC bylaws, 2) 2020 service nominations, and 3) the 2020 budget. All three issues on the agenda were approved. Other areas of conversation covered the budget shortfall in 2019, the proposed budget deficit for 2020, and community invitations to worship. There are extra meeting packets available in the First Christian office, or you can contact Kelly Tyrrell for an electronic copy of the materials. A heartfelt thank you to everyone who participated - YOU are the church! Here's to a successful 2020!

2020 Budget

Receipts:	<u>2020 Budget</u>
Current Pledges	\$152,000.00
Foundation Pledge	\$19,800.00
Gifts	\$10,000.00
Prior Year Pledges	\$250.00
Loose Offering	\$1,000.00
Sunday School Offering	\$75.00
Miscellaneous Income	\$50.00
Building Use Contributions	\$20,000.00
General Fund Interest Earned	\$500.00
SCRIP	<u>\$3,000.00</u>
Total Receipts	\$206,675.00
Deficit	<u>\$39,886.00</u>
	\$246,561.00

Expenditures:	<u>2020 Budget</u>
Staff Salary & Benefits	\$160,311.00
General Expenses	\$7,500.00
Finance	\$275.00
Property	\$65,000.00
Communications	\$3,000.00
Education	\$2,500.00
Hospitality/Kitchen	\$750.00
Membership	\$250.00
Care Ministry	\$250.00
Stephen Ministry	\$500.00
Worship	\$3,825.00
Outreach – Fixed Amt.	- \$0.00 -
Outreach – Percentages	\$1,200.00
Disciples Mission Fund	\$1,200.00
Total Expenditures	\$246,561.00

Proposed Bylaw Changes

- Revised date (pg. 1)
- 2. "If possible" language on deacon and elder membership (pg. 5)
- 3. Addition of sentence, "If the deacons or elders do not elect representatives, they will not be counted toward the quorum." (pg. 6)
- 4. Deleting grades 9-12 on youth deacons (pg. 6)
- 5. Addition of "if possible language for elders and deacons (pg. 7)
- 6. Changing 4 to 2 deacons and 3 to 2 members (pg. 8)

2020 Board Positions

Chair
Geoff Putney

Vice Chair
Jim Blosser

Secretary
Carla Pinneo

Treasurer
Donna Ruhl

Financial Secretary

Susan Pallas Duncan

Foundation Rep

Rich Calver

2020 New Elders & Deacons

Elders

Jim Blosser
Monte Dietrick
Wayne Duncan

Deacons

Karl Ahrendsen
Kristi & Keaton Bowker
Elaine Parman
Carla Pinneo



FINANCE NOTES

FRESH STARTS

One of the topics of conversation and concern at the Annual Congregational Meeting, held December 8th, was the budget shortfall in 2019 and the proposed budget deficit for 2020. As many of you have noticed, the 2020 budget was passed at the meeting with a full 16% of the budget, or just under \$40,000 unaccounted for. This is in addition to the \$20,000 that was never made up for 2019. That gives us a \$60,000 well to dig ourselves out of in 2020.

This deficit is coupled with a smaller amount of giving from previous years, and the 2020 stewardship campaign only made just over 70% of its goal. In year's past, First Christian has borrowed from other reserved funds to make up this difference, but these funds are depleting rapidly. At the current rate we are borrowing, our reserved funds will last roughly three more years.

There are several things you can do to help the financial future of the church. One is ordering SCRIP cards to make purchases. Talk to Donna R. after church any Sunday if you have questions about how SCRIP works. We also have a 5th Sunday Faith Giving opportunity once more this year on Sunday, December 29th. November brought in an impressive \$1,200. This will be an excellent chance to give one last gift.

As always, another way to help the future of the church, spiritually and financially, is inviting someone new to worship. This year FCC reached out to several community residences and businesses with Advent posters and post-cards. There are extras around the church if you want to share with neighbors or co-workers, too.

Thank you for all that you do for FCC. We need everyone on board to have a fresh start in 2020!

The Finance Team

Those Serving in January 2020

10:30 am Worship

Elders:

Jan. 5	Jim Blosser
Jan. 12	Connie Calver
Jan. 19	Monte Dietrick
Jan. 26	Gary Larsen

Deacons: Doug/Jessica Effle, Dan Cowger, Polly Putney, Jim Christ

Communion Prep: Doug/Jessica Effle & Dan Cowger

Ushers / Greeters:

Jan. 5	Donna & Harold Baker
Jan. 12	Cecilia Burkhart
Jan. 19	Scott Dietrick
Jan. 26	Jessica & Doug Effle

Hallway Hospitality:

Jan. 5	Geoff Putney
Jan. 12	Vince Ortega
Jan. 19	Dick Pickel
Jan. 26	Mike Carlin

Coffee Fellowship Hosts:

Jan. 5	Need Volunteer
Jan. 12	Music Ministry
Jan. 19	FCC Foundation
Jan. 26	Need Volunteer

Homebound Communion Teams: (January 12)

Jim Blosser & Dan Cowger
Connie Calver & Doug/Jessica Effle
Monte Dietrick & Jim Christ
Gary Larsen & Polly Putney

Other schedules and information for volunteer positions will be shared as it is made available.

2020 Volunteers Needed!

Are you interested in volunteering at First Christian Church? The following teams will be seeking new members in 2020:

Communications	Membership
Education	Outreach
Finance	Property
Hospitality/Meals	Worship

FCC asks that you prayerfully consider giving of your time and talents. YOU are the church, and we are all more successful when more people are involved the help our church thrive in creating Disciples of the Lord!



Celebrating 150 Years with Notes from Our Past

For more than 100 years our congregation has been blessed with a strong and vital music ministry. As we prepare for this year's Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, let's look back to an article in **The Church at Work** from December, 1919 when we celebrated our 50th anniversary:

"The large crowd at the services last Sunday night were certainly given a rare treat and a delightful hour and a half of genuine worship in the musical Christmas program presented by Mrs. H. J. Kirschstein and the chorus choir. Mrs. Kirschstein, at the organ, was assisted by Miss Edna Silsbee at the piano, and Miss Ruth Kirschstein and Mr. Charles Righter with violins. Never has the instrumental feature in our music been more helpful and pleasing, the stringed instruments contributing most beautifully. From the beginning to end, the solos, trios, and choruses were most pleasing and the Christmas hymns were sung heartily by the congregation. Mrs. Kirschstein had arranged for us some of the most beautiful of the old Christmas melodies as well as a number of the finest choruses from the 'Messiah'. It was really a wonderful night of song, filling our hearts with reverence for the Christ child."

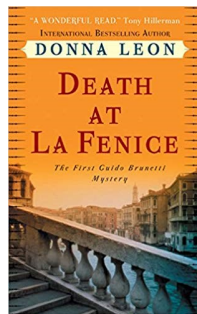
See you Sunday as we continue this incredible tradition!



Book Club News

Book Club will meet again **Friday January 10 at 6:30 pm** at D'Arcy Blosser's home. Our book for discussion is:

Death at La Fenice by Donna Leon



Below are some upcoming book selections:

Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury

Orphan Train by Christina Baker Kline

Eleanor Oliphant Is Completely Fine by Gail Honeyman

Anyone is welcome to join in our discussions at any time. We usually meet on Saturday mornings, but check the FCC Calendar of Events for specific dates and times.



In November, a pair of XL girls joggers were found in the parlor. Last Sunday, December 8, these girls leopard print fuzzy ear muffs were found in the Sanctuary. Both items are in the FCC office. If these are yours, please come in and claim them any time.

thank you

A big thank you goes out to all who made our Thanksgiving celebrations so wonderful.

Our dinner was made possible by so many, but **Bobbi and Mike Carlin** as well as **Scott and Monte Dietrick** deserve our special thanks. For many years the Carlins have purchased, cooked and prepared the turkeys and the Dietricks have purchased and prepared the potatoes and gravy. Please take a moment the next time you see them to offer your personal thanks for their stewardship of time, talents and financial resources.

The interfaith service was a huge success as well. **Deb Ortega** hand painted the bricks and decorated the tables, so please thank her for these beautiful gifts. Also, thanks to all who greeted, served at the reception and cleaned up.

It was a very busy day for our congregation but our hospitality was evident and well received by our guests. What a spectacular way to celebrate our 150 years of service to our community.

Prayers & Praises

December 12, 2019

In the Nebraska Region:

- All Ministries in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Nebraska
- Seminarians and those training for Ministry

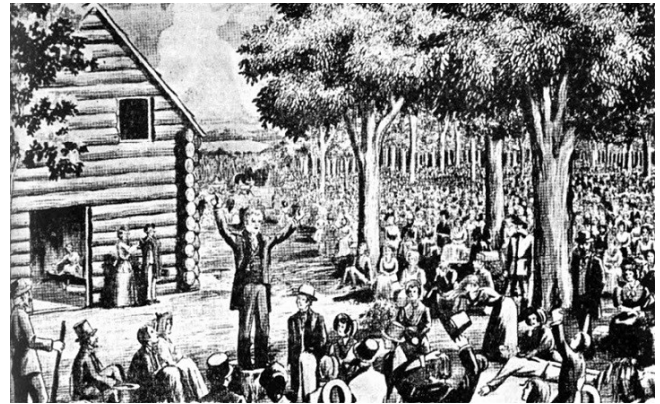
Our Global Ministries Missionaries:

- Kahala Cannon serving in eSwatini
- Elena Huegel serving in Mexico



Find more information and stories about

our Global Ministry partners at www.globalministries.org



Mid-America region offers “Cane Ridge Re-Vitals” program

As we approach 2020, if you have answered prayers that can come off the prayer request list, please contact the First

Starting in March, the Mid-America region has found a new way to help their more than 200 congregations connect with each other and their communities.

Regional Minister Rev. Ron Routledge has hosted six “Cane Ridge Re-Vital” events for congregations – spread out across Missouri, so no one drives more than 90 minutes to participate. Every participant is told to bring a “ministry item” to the event, and in an afternoon session, everyone shares the successful program that item represents. This idea-sharing helps neighboring leaders connect and brainstorm together.

From the first event, the region has created a worshipful setting for these congregations. The theme Scripture for the day is 2 Corinthians 3:18, and speakers reflect on the 1801 Cane Ridge Revival, at which, Routledge says, “Barton Stone said at the end of the experience, ‘For a moment in time, we saw the face of God.’”

The story of Cane Ridge is a powerful one for congregations who want to revitalize their ministry, Routledge explains, because “It was an awakening of a level playing field for a communion open to everyone...It’s a reminder to drop the creeds and get back to the simplicity of following Christ.”

Mid-America’s Cane Ridge Re-Vital effort is a powerful example of the work regions do to strengthen congregational life across the U.S. and Canada. As Routledge celebrates, “Participants leave [this event] saying things like, ‘I always thought a church our size couldn’t do this kind of mission, but now I see we can!’...If people go away encouraged and equipped, that’s a success in my book.”



December 15th - 22nd

Our finest gifts support the work of regional ministries this Christmas. Your regional ministry works to:

- Connect congregations to each other
- Foster faith development
- Gather Disciples in camps, conferences, and assemblies
- Nurture the development of a new generation of pastors
- Assist churches in calling new ministers
- Interpret the global mission of the Church
- Represent the Church in ecumenical gatherings
- Counsel and pray with those who are troubled of spirit
- Lead the Church to address racism
- Inspire leaders to experiment and create
- Witness to the power of God to make things new

The Christmas Special Day offering supports all of these and many other ministries of our regions.

Please give generously to this year’s Christmas Offering.



STEPHEN MINISTRY

“For where two or three come together in my name, there I am with them.”

Matthew 18:20

Lincoln First Christian Church Calendar of Events

Thursday, December 12 - Messenger Mailed

Sunday, December 15 - 3rd Sunday of Advent

9:30 am Seekers Adult Class - Library
10:30 am **Lessons & Carols WORSHIP** - Sanctuary
11:30 am **Disciples Women's Bake Sale** - Parlor
10:45 am Worship & Wonder (ages 3-7) - 2nd Fl. Classroom
11 am, 1 pm CCC Meetings - Library

Monday, December 16

11:00 am - 3:00 pm Cotner College Board Meeting - Parlor
5:30 pm CCC Class - Library

Wednesday, December 18

5:30 pm Snack Supper - Parlor
5:30 pm Adult Study - Library
6:00 pm Handbell Quartet Rehearsal - Sanctuary
6:15 pm Youth Group - Meets in Parlor
6:30 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal - Sanctuary
7:30 pm Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal - Sanctuary

Sunday, December 22 - 4th Sunday of Advent

9:30 am Seekers Adult Class - Library
10:30 am **WORSHIP** - Sanctuary
10:45 am Worship & Wonder (ages 3-7) - 2nd Fl. Classroom
11 am, 1 pm CCC Meetings - Library

Monday, December 23

5:30 pm CCC Class - Library

First Christian Office Closed December 24-25

Tuesday, December 24th

6:00 pm **Christmas Eve Worship** - Sanctuary

Wednesday, December 25th

No FCC Activities - Merry Christmas!

Sunday, December 29th

9:30 am Seekers Adult Class - Library
10:30 am **Christmas Hymn Sing WORSHIP** - Sanctuary
10:45 am Worship & Wonder (ages 3-7) - 2nd Fl. Classroom
11 am, 1 pm CCC Meetings - Library

Monday, December 30

10:00 am Communications Meeting - Conference Room
5:30 pm CCC Class - Library

First Christian Office Closed Dec. 31, 2019 & Jan. 1, 2020

Wednesday, January 1

No FCC Activities - Happy New Year!

Sunday, January 5 - Epiphany (Observed) - SCRIP Orders Due

9:30 am Seekers Adult Class - Library

Sunday, January 5 Cont.

10:30 am **WORSHIP** - Sanctuary
10:45 am Worship & Wonder (ages 3-7) - 2nd Fl. Classroom
11 am, 1 pm CCC Meetings - Library

Monday, January 6

5:30 pm CCC Class - Library
7:00 pm Deborah Meeting - Bobbi Carlin's home

Tuesday, January 7

9:30 am Staff Meeting - Conference Room
1:30 pm Martha Group Meeting - Relda Lathrop's Home

Wednesday, January 8

5:30 pm Snack Supper - Parlor
5:30 pm Adult Study - Library
6:00 pm Handbell Quartet Rehearsal - Sanctuary
6:15 pm Youth Group - Meets in Parlor
6:30 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal - Sanctuary
7:30 pm Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal - Sanctuary

Thursday, January 9 - Messenger Mailed



2020 Leadership Retreat

SAVE The DATE

Saturday January 25th

9:00 am - 1:00pm

More information coming soon!

Welcome Visitors

The following people have recently visited
and shared in Sunday morning services:

Tom & Mary Carpenter
Tony Flack
Edan Hall

Please join us again in worship.
You are always welcome!



FCC Social Media!



FCC is now on Instagram!

Follow the church to see great photos of services and events. Then check out our Facebook page for great information about coming events and Sunday worship services, including scripture references.