



First Christian Church

Disciples of Christ

430 S. 16th St. Lincoln, NE 68508 402.475.4289

Weekly Worship

love all • live spiritually • rejoice in hope • show hospitality

Rev. Dr. Karen Moritz, Pastor

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Week of March, 22, 2020



In the face of COVID-19 and the recommended closing of public spaces, First Christian Church is devoted to bringing worship to you. Please reach out to the church office if you are in need of assistance or help.

In the spirit of community and fellowship, we ask that you follow along with this printed service. Find a comfortable place to be, relax your body, and calm your mind. Try to come into a prayerful mindset. As you pray the community prayer, remember, your fellow congregants at First Christian will be praying this along with you. Feel free to keep this prayer to pray all week.

Community Prayer

Dear Creator God, we pray to you today from different locations, but all with the same heart. God thank you for the bodies you have given us to dwell in on earth. Lord, may our faith be stronger than our fear. May your Spirit fill our hearts when we grow weary. May our love of neighbor fuel our determination to keep all those around us safe and healthy. In the name of the great healer, your Son Jesus, we pray. Amen.

Check out our weekly video at www.fcclincoln.org, First Christian's Facebook page, or search for First Christian Church, Lincoln, Nebraska on YouTube.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1X7O_jW-duE

Worship Playlist

Unfortunately, one piece of the worship service that we cannot replicate on paper is our wonderful music ministry. Below are links to the songs for this week's worship and reflection. If you have access to the internet, you can type in the links below - OR - you can type the name of each song into YouTube's search engine to enjoy the music this week.

Great Is Thy Faithfulness

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ErwiBz1QA4o>

Performed by Maranatha Music

Torch Song

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=01Yj7H-eSjM>

Performed by Chris Tomlin

Even though the Church building is closed for worship, our operation costs still continue. Please continue your regular giving to the church in addition to your faith giving. The FCC office is accepting checks at 430 S. 16th Street, Lincoln, NE 68508. We can also mail you a debit authorization form to do automatic withdrawals. Finally, there is a "GIVE" button on the top right-hand side of the fcclincoln.org website to make an online donation via PayPal.

Scriptures

Psalm 23

¹ The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.
² He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters;
³ he restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for his name's sake.
⁴ Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff—they comfort me.
⁵ You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.
⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD

Ephesians 5:8-14

⁸ For once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light—
⁹ for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true.

¹⁰ Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹ Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.

¹² For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly; ¹³ but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, ¹⁴ for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,

‘Sleeper, awake!
Rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.’

Reflection

“Meditation for the Fourth Week of Lent”

In the introductory notes to the Letter to the Ephesians, the NRSV notes that this epistle is “a celebration of the life of the church.” This letter was intended as a message for all the new churches in Asia Minor, not just the community in Ephesus. The author knows that these new communities of believers are struggling to create an identity.

Life in the first century was challenging, particularly for these new communities of Christians. Many of them faced challenging, and sometimes life-threatening, situations. They lived in dark times. As we face daily life in the shadow of COVID-19, we may have the sense that we are facing a dark time, too. Like the early Christians, we are also being invited to consider what it really means to be the church. This is undoubtedly a question all of us ponder, but I have to tell you, this is a challenging question for me as your pastor. For me, worship is the very heart of who we are and empowers us to do ministry in all its various forms.

The author of this letter reminds us that no matter how dark things may seem, the light of Christ still shines in our lives and in our world. In fact, the author is bold enough to say: “For once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. “ We may be keenly aware of darkness within and around us, but it does not have the last word. In God, we are light. In fact, the author goes on to use a beautiful phrase, we are invited to “live as children of light.” We are invited to manifest this light by remembering that “the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true.” So, if the darkness threatens to overpower us we are invited to look for all that is good, even in this strange and fright-

ening situation. We are also invited to ponder what is right and true. There is a lot of misinformation out there, so we must sort through it for what is right and true. All this can be quite overwhelming, so sometimes finding the good, right, and true means limiting our exposure to it all.

So, as children of light, how can we let that light shine within each of us? One way would be to dare to imagine what church *could* be. Yes, corporate worship is important, but, it does not define us as the people of God. What defines us is our willingness to embrace our identity as children of light and as such, to shine God’s light in our lives and in our world. For the next few weeks, worship will look a bit different. Instead of worshiping in our beautiful sanctuary, everyone is invited to worship virtually, with computers, tablets, and smart phones. We’ll be sharing worship resources in a weekly bulletin/newsletter format and in a short videos online. Hopefully, these resources will empower us to be the church for one another.

We’re exploring a variety of ways to stay connected to God and to one another. Empowered by this time in scripture and prayer we’re invited to reach out to one another, particularly to the more vulnerable in our community. Make a phone call, drop someone a note or an email, visit someone in person if you are able and feel comfortable doing so.

As we shine the light of Christ in the lives of others we’ll undoubtedly find that the light of Christ blazes in our own lives, too. As children of light, may we celebrate our call to be the church, because nothing can quench the light of God!

AMEN

Prayers & Praises

March 22, 2020

Lectio Divina

("Holy Reading")

A Way of Praying with Scripture

Psalm 23

Select a time and place that is peaceful, and in which you may be alert and attentive. Prepare yourself for prayer in whatever way is beneficial for you (e.g., addressing God, focusing on an image or your breathing, emptying yourself of thoughts, singing, etc.

1. Slowly begin reading a biblical passage, reading it again and again until a word or phrase strikes you, grabs you, invites you to it, or somehow seems to attract you. ("Lectio" = reading)
2. Enter into that word or phrase, and let it enter into you, by slowly, attentively repeating it again and again, ruminating over it. ("Ruminatio" = rumination, chewing)
3. Reflect on, meditate on, what the word or phrase offers you, or on its meaning in your life, or on how you respond to it. ("Meditatio" = meditation)
4. Rest silently with God, contemplating God, waiting for what God offers, simply open to God without actively attempting to communicate anything to God. ("Contemplatio" = contemplation)
5. Actively express to God the prayers that rise out of your prayerful experience of the word or phrase. ("Oratio" = oration, spoken / communicated prayer)

In Our Church Family:

- Gene Brockemeyer
- William Deterding
- Betty Ferguson
- Rose Dow
- Arlene Heimer
- Marvin Thurber
- Roger & Jessica Vocasek
- Tom Mason & family
- Wayne Duncan & his music

Relatives:

- Friends and Family of Vic Burgess
- Friends and Family of Dick & Roxie Pickel
- Herb, prayers for health and wellness, cousin of Tom Mason
- Praise for Cecilia Burkhardt's mother, who is much better
- Jill Snodgrass, prayers for upcoming aneurysm surgery, from Marj Snodgrass
- Stephanie, prayers for upcoming surgery on a frontal lobe tumor, cousin of Vince Ortega
- Tony's parents, prayers for safe international travel, from Tony Flack
- Stephen Lawrence, in ICU for treatment in Fresno, CA, brother of Lois Frogge

Friends:

- Pam Larsen, continuing to fight cancer, friend of Marcia Foster
- Peggy Westburg, prayers during chemotherapy, friend of Lindsay Swanson
- Karen, during cancer treatments, co-worker of Rhonda Ball
- John Cox, prayers for healing after a fall and broken pelvis, from Dick & Roxie Pickel
- Dianna Clark, prayers for health concerns and upcoming tests
- Prayers for a co-worker, who was paralyzed in an accident, from Carla Pinneo
- Prayers for our president, that he might experience love and let it change his life, from Carla Pinneo
- Dennis, battling cancer, friend of the Effle Family
- Skip & Jo Thomas, prayers while they make hard medical decisions, friends of Harold & Donna Baker
- Will Barrett, for healing with gut issues, high-school aged neighbor of the Blossers
- Neici Rodriguez, prayers for mental health and employment

Our Timothys:

- Bruce Frogge at Cypress Creek CC in Spring, TX
- Glenda Dietrich Moore, Creative Arts Ministry in Lincoln, NE

In the Nebraska Region:

- Crestwood Christian Church and Rev. Christy Ahmose
- CrossBridge Christian Church

Our Global Ministries Missionaries:

- Maria Abigail Hernandez serving in Japan
- Dustin Riebel serving in Ecuador

Find more information and stories about our Global Ministry partners at

www.globalministries.org

