



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

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Week of April 26, 2020



We will NOT be having Worship Service Sunday at the Church.

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 loving Creator, we come to you in prayer this week tired, overwhelmed, and anxious from the strangeness of our days. We pray thanks to you for giving us common ground through which to connect to one another. Lord, in the coming days and weeks of isolation, grant us the love and peace of Jesus to see every stranger as an angel in disguise. Help us to stay strong in the face of fatigue and uncertainty. We know, dear God, that your Son is here among us, if only the Spirit guides our hearts to invite him in. It is in his name that 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. Thank you!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xCSXR_VtjfU

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.

Thine is the Glory

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GK0I9vj2QII>

Performed by the Mennonite Hour Singers

Open Up the Heavens

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U3l32BCLcKA>

Performed by Meredith Andrews

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.

Scripture

Luke 24:13-35

The Road to Emmaus

¹³ Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, ¹⁴ and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. ¹⁵ While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, ¹⁶ but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. ¹⁷ And he said to them, 'What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?' They stood still, looking sad. ¹⁸ Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, 'Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?' ¹⁹ He asked them, 'What things?' They replied, 'The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, ²⁰ and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. ²¹ But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. ²² Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, ²³ and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. ²⁴ Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women

had said; but they did not see him.' ²⁵ Then he said to them, 'Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! ²⁶ Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?' ²⁷ Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

²⁸ As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. ²⁹ But they urged him strongly, saying, 'Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.' So he went in to stay with them. ³⁰ When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. ³¹ Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. ³² They said to each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?' ³³ That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. ³⁴ They were saying, 'The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!' ³⁵ Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Reflection

“Meditation for 3rd Sunday in Easter”

In these days of COVID-19, we are reminded that our perceptions of scripture are greatly influenced by our current circumstances. While God’s Word is eternal, the filters through which we encounter it are effected by our life journey. It’s striking how many of the resurrection appearances happen to just two or three people at a time.

As two of Jesus’ followers journey to a nearby town, they encounter a stranger. In these days of “sheltering in place,” we are probably keenly aware of the suspicion that rises in our hearts when we run into a stranger on our few excursions out. In this day and age, we would avoid such a stranger, we definitely would not invite that person to join us for a meal.

Thankfully, the setting for these early followers was quite different. Writer Henri Nouwen, in his book *With Burning Hearts: a Meditation on the Eucharistic Life*, reminds us that one of the key components of this story is the importance of “invitation.” The Disciples invite this stranger to join them, in their journey and in their meal. Without the openness on their parts, this story would never have happened. Nouwen points out that this invitation is the needed element that changes this encounter from something interesting to a life changing and transformational event.

The challenge inherent in transformation, however, is that this process re-

quires receptivity on our part. The key verbs in this passage, particularly in the phrases, “their eyes were opened” (verse 31) and “he (Jesus) had been made known to them” (verse 35) are in the passive voice. Something was done to them, not something they actively did. This emphasizes the fact that this is a gift from God. They are transformed by this encounter. Their minds were opened, their perceptions broadened, and their hearts were burning within them.

We, like these early followers, are invited to embrace transformation. Although we cannot physically journey as they did, we can open our hearts and minds to the power and presence of Jesus. Once we invite Jesus to journey with us, we, too, begin by sharing our story. We open our invitation further through daily prayer, reading and meditating upon scripture, and by sharing in weekly worship through our weekly bulletins and videos. As we invite Jesus into our hearts “our eyes are opened” and Jesus is made known to us. Even in the midst of these unusual times, we can open our hearts and minds and invite Jesus to share our journey.

Like the Disciples, our journey will include challenging events. Like the Disciples, we may also find that Jesus is eager to accept our invitation. Much to our surprise we, like the early Disciples, may find our lives forever changed and transformed. What a tremendous gift, indeed.

AMEN

Prayers & Praises

April 26, 2020

Spiritual Practice

Pray and Work

In Our Church Family:

- William Deterding
- Betty Ferguson
- Arlene Heimer
- Marvin Thurber
- Roger & Jessica Vocasek

Relatives:

- Friends and Family of *Vic Burgess*
- Friends and Family of *Dick & Roxie Pickel*
- Herb, *prayers for health and wellness, cousin of Tom Mason*
- Stephanie, *prayers for upcoming surgery on a frontal lobe tumor, cousin of Vince Ortega*

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*
- Dianna Clark, *prayers for health concerns and upcoming tests*
- Prayers for a co-worker, *who was paralyzed in an accident, from Carla Pinneo*
- Dennis, *battling cancer, friend of the Effle Family*
- 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:

- Grand Island FCC and Rev. Julie Western

Our Global Ministries Missionaries:

- Kaitlin Thompson serving in Dominican Republic

Find more information and stories about our Global Ministry partners at www.globalministries.org



Cultivate an attitude of mindfulness toward daily chores so that you can see God in them. Take a moment to pray over the tools of your day, to give thanks for them, or to ask for their proper use, whether a mop, paintbrush, or high technology. The computer may or may not crash, but you might develop the gift of patience needed to handle the situation.

Use technology to help you in your devotional life. Set up your screensaver with a meaningful Bible verse or quotation from a spiritual writing. Make your computer wallpaper a scene from nature that reminds you of God's creative power. Each time you have to enter a password, make it a word of religious importance to you - the gifts of the Spirit, one by one, will keep you going for a long time!

Consider this variation on the Celtic prayer for starting a fire as you turn on your computer:

For the God of Life: turn on your computer tower;

For the God of Peace: turn on your monitor; and **For the God of Grace:** turn on your printer.

Brother Lawrence, a 17th century Christian Carmelite found in his thirty years of serving as a cook that the kitchen was a fruitful place for practicing the presence of God:

"The time of business does not with me differ from the time of prayer, and in the noise and clatter of my kitchen, while several persons are calling for different things, I possess God as in great tranquility as if I were upon my knees."

Adapted from the Office of Spiritual Formation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)