



First Christian Church Disciples of Christ

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

Messenger

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May Act of Kindness Food Bank of Lincoln

Due to Coronavirus, the month of May has become **Give to Lincoln Day**. This is a time when everyone in Lincoln is encouraged to make a donation to the nonprofit organizations that are crucial to the care, support, and spirit of our great city.

Our May Act of Kindness is to collect monetary donations for **The Food Bank of Lincoln**. We have all heard how this pandemic has substantially increased the number of people and families needing to secure food from our local food bank during this difficult time.

The Food Bank of Lincoln continues to monitor developments regarding the spread of COVID-19 in our community and their service area. The situation changes by the hour, and they have to adjust accordingly. They are committed to feeding neighbors facing food insecurity. COVID-19 forces them to shift their mindset about work they've done in the past and what needs to be done today to ensure they can continue to do as much good for as long as they can in the future. Their distribution plans continue to take shape quickly to ensure food-insecure neighbors across their 16-county service area have access to food.

So, every donation you make through our May Act of Kindness will be made by First Christian Church on their behalf. We will make the donation to the Lincoln Community Foundation on May 28th, which will have a bigger impact for the Food Bank. On this day, nonprofits also get a proportional share of a \$500,000 challenge match fund provided by Lincoln Community Foundation and their sponsors.

Times have changed. Help us provide hope and sustenance for neighbors who were strangers to hunger and are now accessing The Food Bank's services for the first time. Our local nonprofits need us now more than ever. Please consider making a donation by mailing a check payable to FCC with May AOK on the memo line, or if you use AutoPay, put May AOK in the subject line when you email your request to the FCC office. If you are enrolled in AutoPay, your donation request email will also be considered your FCCheck payment authorization.

Thank you for your continued support of our Act of Kindness Outreach opportunities!

Pastor's Corner

I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another. - John 13:34-35 (NRSV)

General Minster and President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the Rev. Terri Hord Owens, began her recent letter to the Church with the above passage of scripture. She is one of many voices in the conversations congregations are having regarding the next steps for the Church in the age of COVID-19. The newest challenge before us is considering our next steps. Our Region has also offered salient and helpful comments on this subject. Many of us have been keenly listening to remarks from the national, state, and city officials as informed by health care professionals.

With all of this swirling around us, a group has been formed here at FCC to discern the path forward. This group met for the first time last week on Thursday April 30th and our next meeting will be on Wednesday evening May 13th. This group is made up of the Board Chair and Vice-Chair, the head of the Worship Team, the leader of the Torch Team, the Chair of the Building and Property Team, and staff. We have begun sifting through the resources available to us and plotting the next steps for our congregation. There is a lot to consider.

As we move forward it is critical to have the above scripture before us. Undoubtedly, we all have our own ideas and opinions. The challenge will be taking all the resources before us and weighing what is best for everyone. What we have all done over the past couple of months, and continue to do now, has been to protect the most vulnerable in our midst. Physical distancing, sheltering in place, and wearing face coverings when going out have all helped minimize exposure to the virus. Love compels us to continue doing all the above as we strive to create a worship environment that praises God and provides a healthy and safe space for worshipers.

We are all treading a path never trodden and the situation changes daily, sometimes hourly. With all this in mind, it may be some time before we are able to come together confidently and safely. It is important that we remain steadfast and open to God's leading. While the path ahead may be unclear, we can be sure that we will come together again.

Undoubtedly, we will all be changed by the new reality in which we live. However, there is much that we can take away from this experience that will deepen our life and faith. We have been invited to remember that we are part of a global community in which everyone is loved and cherished by God. We have been forced to ponder, what is it that makes us the church?

May we be guided by the God of love as we move forward and may we be given patience to move at God's pace, not ours.

In peace and love,

Pastor Karen



March Act of Kindness Update



This is what \$560 worth of gift cards looks like!! Yes, First Christian donated all these gift cards to Voices of Hope on April 9th, along with ten tubes of toothpaste, six toothbrushes, and five liquid hand soaps from our Collection Barrel.

Voices of Hope has had to modify their services to take into account the health and safety of their clients and staff. They are not taking any walk-in services or groups to minimize exposure and spread of COVID-19. They are collaborating with local law enforcement to provide services during the closure.

On April 9th, I was assured that during this time our gift cards will be given out by local law enforcement to clients that Voices of Hope deem appropriate. Our March Act of Kindness will be making a difference in the lives of current and former victims of relationship violence, sexual assault, and all related forms of abuse during this unusual time of physical distancing. Thank God for our local law enforcement heroes that are making our gifts available to those in need.

Elaine Parman
Outreach Team Leader



New Ministry Team

A new team has been created at First Christian Church. A **Re-opening Team** has been organized to discuss the steps necessary for First Christian to open up for public worship. This team has representatives from the staff, Worship team, the Board of Directors, and the Property team. Their first meeting was Thursday April 30th. Discussion focused around best practices for worship and when it may be safe to open. This team will be monitoring the daily information we receive from Lincoln city officials, as well as considering information shared by the Regional and National DOC offices. Decisions will be made on a day-by-day basis, as the situation is constantly changing. Be on the look-out for new information; the FCC office will be sharing updates as they become available.

Executive Committee Update

First Christian Church via the Executive Committee applied for and received a small business payroll protection loan. The loan is forgivable and is used for payroll and utility costs. It allows us to pay all of our staff as if we were operating under normal circumstances. It also allows us to expand our custodial hours for additional cleaning and disinfecting. We have done well at maintaining our pledges (THANK YOU!), this program just allows us additional stability during uncertain times. If you have any questions, please let us know.

Geoff Putney
on behalf of the Executive Committee

Don't forget Auto Pay!

Tired of writing checks? Auto Pay makes life easier for both you and the church. Enrolling is easy, a debit authorization form and voided check is all we need. Forms are available upon request. Thank you for your support of FCC!

New May Office Hours

In an effort to comply with the State of Nebraska "Work-at-Home" recommendations, we will be changing the FCC Office Hours. If you need something from the office, please call first to see if the church administrator is in. The office WILL BE OPEN from 8:30 am to 2:30 pm on the following days:

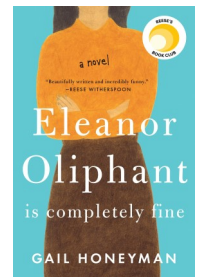
Tues. May 5
Wed. May 6
Fri. May 8
Tues. May 12
Wed. May 13
Tues. May 19
Wed. May 20
Tues. May 26
Wed. May 27

Emails and voicemails WILL be checked regularly. In addition to complying with state regulations, these new hours will save the church essential funds which may be needed by the end of this pandemic.

If you have any questions, please contact Kelly T. in the church office, (402) 475-4289 or info@fcllincoln.org.

Book Club News

Book Club will meet again **Saturday, May 30 9:30 am** will be meeting via ZOOM.



Our book for discussion is:
Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine
by Gail Honeyman

If there are any changes, an email will be sent out to the Book Club email list.

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.



STEPHEN MINISTRY

"Nobody should seek his own good, but the good of others."

1 Corinthians 10:24

Prayers & Praises May 7, 2020

In the Nebraska Region:

- Havelock Christian Church and Rev. Rob Welch
- Humboldt Christian Church and Rev. Howard Blecha

Our Global Ministries Missionaries:

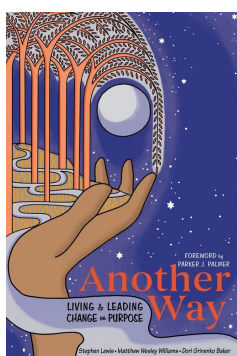
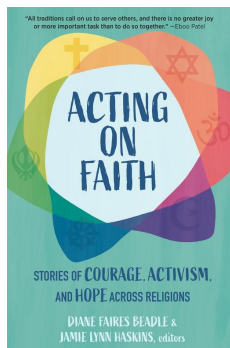
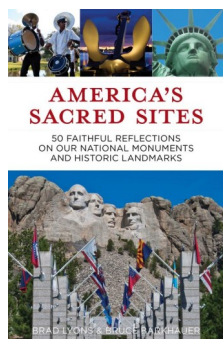
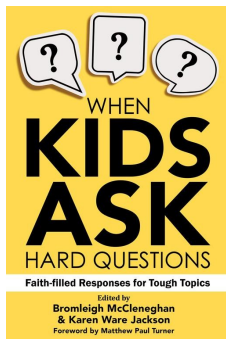
- Tom Liddle serving in East Timor
- Nishan Bakalian serving in Lebanon

Find more information and stories about our Global Ministry partners at

www.globalministries.org



New From Chalice Press



For more information go to
www.chalicepress.com



Coming in August – Kamp
Kaleo Rummage Sale
First Christian Church
Lincoln, NE

Questions?

Contact

D'Arcy Blosser or Gwen Belden

Lincoln First Christian Church Calendar of Events

Thursday May 7 - Messenger Mailed

Sunday, May 10 Mother's Day

- Paper/Electronic Bulletins available
 - YouTube Worship Video online at www.fcclincoln.org
 - Check Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube for links
- 11:30 am **Virtual Coffee Hour** via ZOOM

Wednesday, May 13

6:30 pm **Youth Group ZOOM Meeting**
7:30 pm **Re-Opening Team ZOOM Meeting**

Sunday, May 17

- Paper/Electronic Bulletins available
 - YouTube Worship Video online at www.fcclincoln.org
 - Check Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube for links
- 11:30 am **Virtual Coffee Hour** via ZOOM
6:30 pm **Board Meeting** via ZOOM

Monday, May 18

12:00 noon Deadline for The Messenger

Tuesday, May 19

9:00 am **Staff Meeting** - Conference Room

Wednesday, May 20

6:30 pm **Youth Group ZOOM Meeting**

Thursday, May 21 - Messenger Mailed



FCC Social Media!

Each week FCC is posting new pictures, videos, and links to great worship music. Look for First Christian Church on Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube for new content every week. Get connected!

