



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

Kelly Tyrrell, Church Administrator

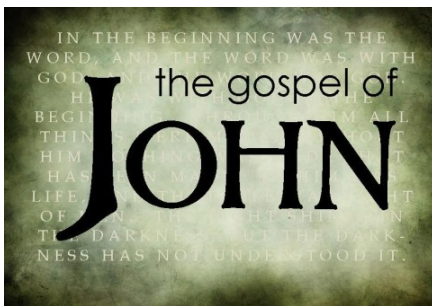
Mark W. Miller, Director of Music Ministries

Sara Lugn, Stephen Ministry Leader

www.fcclincoln.org

info@fcclincoln.org

Week of May 17, 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

Community Prayer

Sustaining and ever-present God, we come to you today with mixed emotions. With all of the noise swimming in our ears, we pray to hear your voice of calm, of reason, of love. Grant us patience, O Lord, as we fight against restlessness and struggle to stay at home. Grant us understanding to those who see our current circumstances differently than we do. We pray to you God for your Spirit to be upon us, to encourage us to continue finding new and inventive ways to love our neighbor. We pray this in the name of your son Jesus, 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/channel/UCVeJAW8Dmqv8Jmk5rzj43g>

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.

I Sing the Mighty Power of God

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eeSoEIKmmv0>

[v=eeSoEIKmmv0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eeSoEIKmmv0)

From Anabaptist-Mennonite Hymnody

How He Loves

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RxTOsQ3LDE4>

[v=RxTOsQ3LDE4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RxTOsQ3LDE4)

Performed by David Crowder Band

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

John 14:15-21

¹⁵ ‘If you love me, you will keep my commandments. ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you for ever. ¹⁷ This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.

¹⁸ ‘I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. ¹⁹ In a little

while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. ²⁰ On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. ²¹ They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them.’

Reflection

“Meditation for the 6th Week in Easter”

Our passage from John this week is a continuation of the reading for last week. The 14th chapter of John is the beginning of what is known as “Jesus’ farewell discourse and prayer.” Jesus hoped to prepare the Disciples for the changes that were coming. Undoubtedly, Jesus must have sensed the anxiety and fear that gripped the Disciples then. It’s never easy to talk about transition and change, and this was as true then as it is now. Like the early Disciples, we find ourselves in a time of transition and change. We take things one day at a time, and sometimes, one hour at a time. We know that our encounter with COVID-19 has changed us and our world. Like the early Disciples, we don’t know what’s next. We can only take things one step at a time.

Jesus knew that the coming changes needed to be met with faith. Jesus told the Disciples that God would continue to care for them, no matter what happened. One way in which God would continue to care for them would be to send the Paraclete. Over time we have developed ideas around what this really means. Often we translate the Greek Paraclete as Holy Spirit. I suspect this is partly due to Jesus’ comments in the next verse, “this is the Spirit of truth.”

However, this sometimes leads us to rush away from Jesus’ initial comments in verse 16 “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate (Paracleton), to be with you forever.” While the word “paracletos” literally means “advocate,” or “counsel for the defense,” it can mean so much more. The Paraclete is one who stands beside us, someone summoned to one’s side to provide aid. The Paraclete is one who pleads another’s cause before a judge. Basically, the Paraclete is an Intercessor. Jesus assures his followers that they will not be left alone.

These comments about the Paraclete come in the midst of Jesus’ teaching about love. In the midst of these words of comfort, Jesus told them about the importance of following the commandment of love which he has given them. For Jesus, love is the reality that God is with us and within

us, just as God has been with and within Jesus. This promise of love was intended as words of solace and comfort. This promise of everlasting love was, and is, also meant as a challenge. Just as God will send “another Advocate,” we are also invited to be advocates for one another. We are called to embody this challenge. Although we are in the midst of physical distancing, we are still called to stand beside one another, to plead the case of those around us. Like an Advocate, we are called to plead on the behalf of those who cannot offer their plea themselves.

Perhaps one of the greatest challenges, and even invitations, of our current situation is the growing awareness of how many need the help of true Advocates. Rev. Dr. William J. Barber, a well-known DOC pastor and Advocate, has been one of many voices reminding us that dealing with COVID-19 has revealed the disparities in our country and our world. We have come to see, more clearly than ever, the inequalities and disparities in our country; economic, racial, and societal. As we move forward, we too are invited to share what we have learned in this process. We also function as Advocates when we do what is needed to protect others, particularly the most vulnerable. Continuing physical distancing, wearing masks when out and about, and frequent hand washing protect us and one another.

While it has been a difficult time, particularly for those who have contracted the virus, there are positive things we can take away from this experience. Like the Disciples, we are anxious and afraid, uncertain about the future. Like the Disciples, we are reminded that no matter what happens, we have a relationship with Jesus and God sends us “another Advocate” to stand with us, beside us, and for us. May we be inspired by God’s Advocate to stand with, beside, and for one another.

AMEN

Prayers & Praises

May 17, 2020

In Our Church Family:

- William Deterding
- Betty Ferguson
- Arlene Heimer
- Marvin Thurber
- Roger & Jessica Vocasek
- Our sympathy to the family and friends of Ray Calkins at his recent passing

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:

- Kamp Kaleo on the River and the Staff, Campers, and Counselors

Our Global Ministries Missionaries:

- Kahala Cannon serving in eSwatini

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



Spiritual Practice

Everyday Blessings

Perhaps the most distinctive feature of Celtic Christianity is its affinity with nature. The Celts enthusiastically affirmed the psalmist's declaration, "The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims [God's] handiwork" (Psalm 19:1). The Celts believed that all creation is alive with God's presence. Because God's Spirit dwells in all living things, everything is inherently good; therefore all creation is to be treated sacramentally.

A consequence of believing all creation is alive with God's presence was that everything could be a window to God. Celts found nature an "icon." They could "see into" it and see God. Every moment, every location could become a time and place for encountering God.

Brad Kent, "Beneath the Celtic Cross of Jesus"
Presbyterians Today, Jan/Feb 2002

The Celts were not the only people to enjoy this "miracle of mindfulness," as the Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hanh calls it. The great Reformer Martin Luther said that we should be reminded of our baptism every time we wash our faces. Others have said that being in the rain or swimming should lead us to do the same. Just as Jews hang the *Mezuzah*, containing portions of the Law on the doorpost, to be reminded of God's word each time they enter or leave their home in (Deuteronomy 6), what things could you do throughout the day to remind you of God?

Say or write a prayer for daily activities. What do you do each day that is a prompt for thanksgiving or petition? "Thank you God that I still have my teeth," as you brush, or "Help me to be patience as I dust."

An Everyday Blessing - By Kris Haig

*Bless to me my potted plants, O God.
Bless to me their green leaves
Bless to me their sturdy stems
Bless to me their ghostly roots that stretch deep
into the secret loam.*

*Bless the pots that encircle them
Bless the water I pour on them
Bless the rivers and reservoirs, the pipes and spigots,
and the sea-green glass pitcher
that catches and carries your water of life.*

*Bless the sun that draws my plants to itself
and bless you, O Christ,
who draw me to yourself.*