



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 July 12, 2020



Public Worship WILL be held at 10:30 am Sunday morning.

If you are not quite ready to join us for public worship, 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 God of the Harvest, we pray to your during this in between time, trying to wait patiently to see what fruit will be sown from our lives. We know that when we gather together, even in spirit if not in person, and we read your Word, your seed is being sown in our hearts. Help us to not be choked out by temptations, not only from things like wealth, but from small actions, like the desire to go out to eat or get a haircut. Encourage us through your Spirit to do that which is best for our health and the health of 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.

In the Bulb There is a Flower

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8RHek8k5WoY>

Performed by Debra Nesgoda

Sing, Sing, Sing

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IV5Vdi55OU>

Performed by Chris Tomlin

Even if you are worshipping from home, 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 Readings

Genesis 25:19-34

¹⁹These are the descendants of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham was the father of Isaac, ²⁰and Isaac was forty years old when he married Rebekah, daughter of Bethuel the Aramean of Paddan-aram, sister of Laban the Aramean. ²¹Isaac prayed to the LORD for his wife, because she was barren; and the LORD granted his prayer, and his wife Rebekah conceived. ²²The children struggled together within her; and she said, 'If it is to be this way, why do I live?' So she went to inquire of the LORD. ²³And the LORD said to her, 'Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples born of you shall be divided; one shall be stronger than the other, the elder shall serve the younger.'

²⁴When her time to give birth was at hand, there were twins in her womb. ²⁵The first came out red, all his body like a hairy mantle; so they named him Esau. ²⁶Afterwards his brother came out, with his hand gripping Esau's heel; so he was named Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when she bore them.

²⁷When the boys grew up, Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field, while Jacob was a quiet man, living in tents. ²⁸Isaac loved Esau, because he was fond of game; but Rebekah loved Jacob.

²⁹Once when Jacob was cooking a stew, Esau came in from the field, and he was famished. ³⁰Esau said to Jacob, 'Let me eat some of that red stuff, for I am famished!' (Therefore he was called Edom.) ³¹Jacob said, 'First sell me your birthright.' ³²Esau said, 'I am about to die; of what use is a birthright to me?' ³³Jacob said, 'Swear to me first.' So he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob. ³⁴Then Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew, and he ate and drank, and rose and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright.

Mathew 13:1-9, 18-23

¹That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the lake. ²Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. ³And he told them many things in parables, saying: 'Listen! A sower went out to sow. ⁴And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. ⁵Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. ⁶But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. ⁷Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. ⁸Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ⁹Let anyone with ears listen!'

¹⁸'Hear then the parable of the sower. ¹⁹When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. ²⁰As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; ²¹yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. ²²As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. ²³But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.'

Reflection

Meditation for 6th Sunday after Pentecost

“Trusting in the Sower”

When we hear this familiar parable many of us here at FCC may think of the four windows in the north hallway that vividly depict this story of Jesus. However, I suspect many of us probably don't think much about the seeds. There are so many of them and the Sower throws them all about. Each seed is so small, but the Sower knows that it only takes a few in the right place to make the effort worthwhile. The law of averages means that if you scatter enough seeds, some will land in fertile soil and bear a bountiful harvest. Jesus tells us that the “seed” is the Word of God thrown out into the world. I find myself wondering in these challenging times where God's seeds are landing. Will they land in fertile ground?

We only hear the beginning and the end of this story, we don't hear about what happens in-between the sowing and the harvest. Is it simply chance that has some seeds land in a place of fertility where they receive the care and attention they need to flourish? Is it simply chance that dictates that other seeds will fall on rocky or thorny ground and therefore die before anything can happen? Perhaps the real challenge is recognizing that our lives take us to fertile *and* infertile places. Perhaps the painful reality is that the Word of God within us does not always flourish. We may also come to realize that the ground in which God's seed lands is not what it seems at first. As we face these challenging times, it might be tempting to believe that God's Word falls on rocky and thorny ground. As we confront the challenges of racism and deal with a worldwide pandemic, it's

tempting to believe that this is the thorniest and rockiest ground available. Our anxieties and cares for the present and the future may choke out any awareness of God's love and presence.

But, what if this time is actually one of fertility? That is not to say that we ignore the pain and struggle all around us. But, what if this time is one in which God's Word has taken root and is now growing? This may be a time when we can find more space to be with ourselves, to spend time in reflection and prayer. Perhaps this is a time when we can take a breath and evaluate our lives and commitments. Perhaps this is a time to let the seeds of God's Word grow and deepen with us.

And what if this is not only true for us as individuals, but also true for us as a congregation? What if we embrace this time as an opportunity to let God's Word take root and grow? Life in the midst of this pandemic has forced us to step back, pause, and evaluate our life together as a faith community. Moving forward, we will have some opportunities to choose what we want to embrace. In making such choices, we may find God inviting us to grow in ways we never expected. One of the challenges for us is that we are living in that in-between time. The Sower has planted the seeds and we must wait to see what the harvest will bring. Will the harvest be one hundred-fold, sixty-fold, or thirty-fold? Whatever the harvest, may we have the courage to live in this in-between time and trust in the Sower and the Harvester.

AMEN

Prayers & Praises

July 12, 2020

Spiritual Practice

Attentive Eating

In Our Church Family:

- William Deterding
- Betty Ferguson
- Arlene Heimer
- Marvin Thurber
- Roger & Jessica Vocasek
- Scott Dietrick
- Marj Snodgrass
- Nancy & Leo Jelinek
- Gwen Belden

Relatives:

- Friends and Family of Vic Burgess
- Friends and Family of Dick & Roxie Pickel
- Rick Pickel, *going back in for treatments, son of Dick & Roxie Pickel*
- Herb, *prayers for health and wellness, cousin of Tom Mason*
- Fred Ogren, *prayers for healing during hospitalization, son of LaVonne Ogren*
- Our sympathy to Betty Gish, *on the passing of her brother Monsignor James Dawson*

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*
- Dennis, *battling cancer, friend of the Effle Family*
- Will Barrett, *for healing with gut issues, high-school aged neighbor of the Blossers*
- Prayers for justice and equality for our brothers & sisters of color throughout the nation. We are ALL created in God's Image! *from Tom Mason*

Our Timothy's:

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

In the Nebraska Region:

- Nebraska City FCC and Rev. Michael Schmidt

Our Global Ministries Missionaries:

- Eleazar Fernandez serving in the Philippines

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



Have you ever considered spending time in intentional silence while eating with another person? Try to be present to the other without filling each moment with words, or feeling awkward because you have nothing to say, and at the same time attentive to what you are eating.

A variation on this is to sit quietly, alone or with others, listening to a tape of quiet music or a spiritual writer. Many classic texts can be found on tape, and mealtime provides a natural time to feed both body and soul. In many Benedictine communities, there is an assigned reader for each week to provide this prayerful service.

It is easy to make all food “fast food,” consumed without thought or attention. Thich Nhat Hahn, a Buddhist monk, suggests eating in such a way that it takes several minutes, feeling the portion in your mouth, noticing its texture and weight, simply taking time with your food to really taste it. (See his book *The Miracle of Mindfulness*.)

Be mindful of those who prepare your meals. In planning a weekly Sabbath day, prepare food ahead of time or schedule very simple meals so that no one has to sacrifice their time. Or make working together in the kitchen a priority.

Be aware of those who do not have enough to eat. Schedule a weekly meal with simple fare, perhaps only bread, fruit, cheese, and water. Recognize that for many people around the world, this would be a feast. Give thanks that this simple meal is a choice you can make, not a way of life forced upon you by poverty.

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