



# First Christian Church

Disciples of Christ

430 S. 16<sup>th</sup> 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](http://www.fcclincoln.org)

[info@fcclincoln.org](mailto:info@fcclincoln.org)

**Week of July 26, 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

O loving God, today our worship reminds us of your never-ending, steadfast love for us. God, we are so grateful that we are your people and you are our God! Every day we have news swirling around us, images of people being hurtful and hateful, and it can lead us to wonder if maybe you've given up on us. But we only need close our eyes in prayer to be reminded that nothing of this world can separate us from the love you have for us. If you are for us, who can be against us? Who can judge our hearts but you? We pray that you continue to love us through this strange new world, through the gift of your Son, Christ Jesus. Amen.

**New Way to Connect!**

**Dial-A-Sermon 402-205-5988**

**Call any time to hear Pastor Karen's sermon for the week!**

## 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.

### You Are My All in All

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=32AAPEceqBs>

*Performed by Dennis Jernigen*

### Hallelujah (Your Love Is Amazing)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pWT3Hd6WqE0>

*Performed by Brenton Brown*

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

## *Psalms 105:1-11, 45b*

<sup>1</sup> O give thanks to the LORD, call on his name, make known his deeds among the peoples.

<sup>2</sup> Sing to him, sing praises to him; tell of all his wonderful works.

<sup>3</sup> Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice.

<sup>4</sup> Seek the LORD and his strength; seek his presence continually.

<sup>5</sup> Remember the wonderful works he has done, his miracles, and the judgments he has uttered,

<sup>6</sup> O offspring of his servant Abraham, children of Jacob, his chosen ones.

<sup>7</sup> He is the LORD our God; his judgements are in all the earth.

<sup>8</sup> He is mindful of his covenant for ever, of the word that he commanded, for a thousand generations,

<sup>9</sup> the covenant that he made with Abraham, his sworn promise to Isaac,

<sup>10</sup> which he confirmed to Jacob as a statute, to Israel as an everlasting covenant,

<sup>11</sup> saying, 'To you I will give the land of Canaan as your portion for an inheritance.'

<sup>45</sup> Praise the Lord!

## *Romans 8:26-39*

<sup>26</sup> Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. <sup>27</sup> And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

<sup>28</sup> We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. <sup>29</sup> For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. <sup>30</sup> And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

<sup>31</sup> What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us?

<sup>32</sup> He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? <sup>33</sup> Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. <sup>34</sup> Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. <sup>35</sup> Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? <sup>36</sup> As it is written, 'For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.'

<sup>37</sup> No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. <sup>38</sup> For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, <sup>39</sup> nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

# Reflection

## *Meditation for 8th Sunday after Pentecost*

### “Nothing Can Separate Us From God’s Love”

It was one of the loneliest times in my life. I went home to spend the summer with my Mom after my first year in college. I returned to the town in which I had spent a major part of my life, which is saying something for this Navy brat. My Mom no longer lived in our family home which had been sold after my parent’s divorce. She lived in a new, smallish apartment downtown made up of 4 rooms that included a shared bedroom with her. My high school friends all had their own lives and my new college friends were spending their summer with family all across the country. I felt isolated and very alone.

Perhaps you have had similar experiences in your lives. Perhaps that is how you feel now. We are isolated from one another in new and unexpected ways. Even as we slowly gather in small and safe groups, there is an abiding sense of isolation and separation.

As Paul wrote to the young church in Rome, I wondered if he struggled with a similar sense of isolation. Paul may have struggled with the awareness that he didn’t fit in with his family and the tradition in which he had grown up. After his conversion, he left the Jewish community behind, although it would always remain a part of him. But he also did not quite fit in with the newly emerging Christian community, either. And yet, he was driven by a sense of God’s love and presence that empowered him to overcome all these challenges. The isolation he experienced often included time in prison, cut off from the world outside. His travels for the sake of the Gospel often found him in new and strange places where he knew no one. He knew periods of great isolation and loneliness.

Those to whom he wrote probably struggled with some of the same experiences as well. Most of them had turned away from their childhood traditions, pagans and Jews alike. They may have also felt isolated from family and friends who did

not understand their desire to follow Jesus the Christ. Some of them would also be imprisoned and eventually martyred for their new faith. The isolation must have been very intense.

It seems to me that Paul’s experiences added a depth to his message that resonated with those gathered in Rome two centuries ago. His words are so beautifully crafted that they resonate for us today as well. As we physically distance and don face masks, it’s easy to see how we might feel isolated and separated. As we fight an illness that has taken over 140,000 lives in the U.S., it might be tempting to think that COVID-19 has the final word. As we restrict our contacts and find ourselves at home much more than usual, it is easy to see how many of us might feel a sense of separation and isolation.

So, when Paul brought this chapter of his letter to a close we can embrace his words with gusto because they were shared by someone who knew experiences of isolation and loneliness. Paul knew that the experiences of our life do not define our true reality. As Children of God, there is nothing that can separate us from God’s love. Perhaps in our day we might paraphrase his last verse: “For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor virus, nor injustice, nor earthly forces, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

The outer realities of my life that summer did not change, but my inner reality did. When I shared my struggle with a college friend in a letter she wrote back and urged me to memorize these two verses of Paul’s letter. His words empowered me to move through the isolation and loneliness because I knew that God was with me. We face challenging times, but like Paul, we can be assured that nothing will separate us from God’s love in Christ Jesus our Lord! Alleluia!

**AMEN**

# Prayers & Praises

## July 26, 2020

### In Our Church Family:

- William Deterding
- Betty Ferguson
- Arlene Heimer
- Marvin Thurber
- Roger & Jessica Vocasek
- Our sympathy to the family of Scott Dietrick upon his passing Sunday, July 19th
- 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 Timothys:

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

### In the Nebraska Region:

- North Side Christian Church, Omaha and Rev. Susan Ellis

### Our Global Ministries Missionaries:

- Brigitte Eale serving in Kenya

Find more information and stories about our Global Ministry partners at [www.globalministries.org](http://www.globalministries.org)



Check out our weekly video at [www.fcclincoln.org](http://www.fcclincoln.org), First Christian's Facebook page, or search for First Christian Church, Lincoln, Nebraska on YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCVejAW8Dmqv8Jmk5rzj43g>

# Spiritual Practice

## Christian Meditation

John Main (1926-1982) lived for a time in south-east Asia, where he learned how to meditate from an Indian monk. Main understood meditation as a simple, basic way of prayer borne of silence and stillness. While it was very meaningful to him, it was also counter to the dominant "mental prayer" of the time, which tended to be in the realm of thinking. Main later became a Benedictine monk, and while in the United States he realized that the tradition of Christian prayer was in truth not that different from the eastern meditation he had previously learned. Since then, his teachings have been shared through the World Community of Christian Meditation (WCCM).

### To Meditate:

- ◇ Seek a quiet place, and find a comfortable upright sitting position, close your eyes.
- ◇ While sitting in a relaxed position, begin the silently say a single word, known as a mantra, which is intended to point to the sacred. The WCCM recommends using the Maranatha. It is an Aramaic word meaning "Come, Lord Jesus," as found at the end of 1 Corinthians and the book of Revelation.
- ◇ Pray the word in four equally stressed syllables: ma-ra-na-tha. To aid in saying the word slowly and rhythmically, some people tie the repetition of the term into their breathing.
- ◇ As you speak the word silently and repetitively, listen to it. The idea is not to think or imagine anything, the seemingly godly or otherwise,. Main himself summed up his practice simply by saying, "Just say your word." It is recommended that a person practice this prayer twice a day for up to twenty or thirty minutes each time.

Meditation is not a matter of passivity, but active attention. Therefore thoughts that arise are only distractions that can be ignored by repeating the word. Simply ignore it, and the way to ignore it is to say your mantra.

### For further reading:

John Main, *Word into Silence*

### For further information:

Contact the World Community of Christian Meditation at [www.wccm.org](http://www.wccm.org).

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