



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 October 11, 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 waiting, some of us are living with fear and anxiety. We are COVID-weary, anxious about our unknown future, and tired of living with so many restrictions. When will we feel the way we used to feel? Fill us with your Spirit, Lord, to remind us that we are never alone in these trying times; remind us that you are with us always. For you to reach down to us, to create a covenant relationship with us, we are hardly worthy. Thank you for being our constant hope and stay in our uncertain world. We pray in the name of your Son, 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.

Great Is Thy Faithfulness

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0kIWWhFtVp0o>

Performed by Chris Rice

Forever

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XdsZpcA2R8>

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

Exodus 32:1-14

¹ When the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people gathered around Aaron and said to him, ‘Come, make gods for us, who shall go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.’ ² Aaron said to them, ‘Take off the gold rings that are on the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me.’ ³ So all the people took off the gold rings from their ears, and brought them to Aaron. ⁴ He took the gold from them, formed it in a mold, and cast an image of a calf; and they said, ‘These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!’ ⁵ When Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation and said, ‘Tomorrow shall be a festival to the LORD.’ ⁶ They rose early the next day, and offered burnt-offerings and brought sacrifices of well-being; and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to revel.

⁷ The LORD said to Moses, ‘Go down at once! Your people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have acted perversely; ⁸ they have been quick to turn aside from the way that I commanded them; they have cast for themselves an image of a calf, and have wor-

shipped it and sacrificed to it, and said, “These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!”’ ⁹ The LORD said to Moses, ‘I have seen this people, how stiff-necked they are. ¹⁰ Now let me alone, so that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them; and of you I will make a great nation.’

¹¹ But Moses implored the LORD his God, and said, ‘O LORD, why does your wrath burn hot against your people, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? ¹² Why should the Egyptians say, “It was with evil intent that he brought them out to kill them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth”? Turn from your fierce wrath; change your mind and do not bring disaster on your people. ¹³ Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, how you swore to them by your own self, saying to them, “I will multiply your descendants like the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it for ever.”’ ¹⁴ And the LORD changed his mind about the disaster that he planned to bring on his people.

Reflection

Meditation for 19th Sunday after Pentecost

“Moving Past Fear & Anxiety”

What would prompt the Israelites to turn away from God? God had been present with them and guided them through some very challenging times. God led them from captivity to freedom. God provided for their needs. Perhaps most importantly, God made a Covenant with them. So, why on earth would they turn away from God in such a dramatic way? I suspect they were motivated by 2 things: anxiety and fear. Moses had been gone a long time and they were in a holding pattern. They were undoubtedly anxious, particularly during this time of waiting. What was Moses doing and when would he return? What were they supposed to do in the meantime? I suspect their anxiety was heightened by fear. They had been through a lot and the future was uncertain. In the midst of their anxiety and fear they did what many of us do, they reverted to the familiar to help them cope. Does that sound at all familiar? Where do we turn when fearful and anxious? Perhaps we can empathize with the ancient Israelites more than we initially thought.

We have each known times of anxious waiting. As COVID drags on into its 8th month, many of us are keenly aware of our anxiety and impatience. When will this all end? When will things return to normal? When will mask wearing and physical distancing end? Waiting is perhaps one of the most difficult components of life and faith. Then, as if the anxiety weren't enough, we add on a healthy dose of fear. Now that our President has entered the battle with COVID, our fears escalate. We fear for ourselves and our loved ones. Fear of the virus is bad enough, but many of us are gripped by the fear of unknowingly spreading it to others. There is plenty of fear to go around. And there are bigger fears, what if our leaders and God have abandoned us! Sometimes we, like the ancient Israelites, want to return to a familiar time and place. We yearn for those pre-COVID days.

We find many different reactions to fear and anxiety in our story from Exodus. In their fear and anxiety the people turn to their present leader Aaron. I suspect he had also been consumed by anxiety and fear and he responds to the request to create an idol, something to fill in during the perceived absence of their leader Moses. Aaron turned to a popular image in ancient Middle Eastern cultures and cre-

ates a golden calf. For a time it must have assuaged their fear and anxiety, but it was not the real thing. I suspect Aaron was trying to bring hope and joy to these anxious and fearful people. He announced a day of festival and invited them to celebrate.

God reacted swiftly and intensely to their actions. God's anger boiled hot. Not only had God's people created a false god, they broke the covenant God made with them not so long ago. They forgot who had created them and who led them from bondage to freedom. As so often happens when a relationship is broken, anger was the response. Basically, God told Moses "I want to be alone" and sent him back down the mountain. However, instead of following God's command, Moses pleaded for the people. Moses began by telling God that God's reputation was at stake. Did God want the Egyptians to say that God intended evil by dragging the people into the wilderness only to destroy them? As their discourse proceeded, God's wrath began to subside and God decided not to destroy the Israelites. By reminding God of the long relationship with the Israelites forged with their ancestors, Moses enabled God to let go of the anger. God changed and decided not to destroy them.

Genuine reasons for hope and celebration arose. There was no longer a need for false gods, false hope, or false celebration. The relationship between God and the Israelites survived this time of trial. God remained faithful and present to God's people. We too can share in this message as well. God remains present with us in the midst of anxiety and fear. Even when we are tempted to turn away, God is still passionately present with us. The reality of our times remains, we still wait in fear and anxiety. However, like the ancient Israelites, we are reminded that God remains with us. This remembrance of past promises made and kept gives us power to remain faithful as well. Times are not easy, but, we are not alone even amidst the anxiety and fear. God goes with us and continues to guide us as God has gone with God's people in the past.

AMEN

Prayers & Praises

October 11, 2020

In Our Church Family:

- Georgann Jordan
- Betty Ferguson
- Arlene Heimer
- Marvin Thurber
- Roger & Jessica Vocasek
- William Deterding
- Marj Snodgrass
- Nancy & Leo Jelinek
- Vic Burgess
- Donna Baker
- Polly Putney

Relatives:

- Friends and Family of Vic Burgess
- Fred Ogren, *prayers for healing during hospitalization, son of LaVonne Ogren*
- Tracey & Jeanne Reisis, *prayers for COVID-19 diagnoses and heart attack, niece and nephew of Dick Pickel*
- Tricia Gangwish, *prayers for fighting breast cancer, aunt of Lindsay Swanson*
- Sondra Peterson & Sister Rhonda, *prayers for the passing of their mother*

Friends:

- Pam Larsen, *continuing to fight cancer, friend of Marcia Foster*
- Peggy Westburg, *praise for improvement, though there is no cure for her cancer, friend of Lindsay Swanson*
- Karen, *during cancer treatments, co-worker of Rhonda Ball*
- Peggy, *prayers for fighting breast cancer, co-worker of Sara Lugin*

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:

Verndon Christian Church and
Rev. Daniel Spencer

Our Global Ministries Missionaries:

Larry Colvin serving in Ghana



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

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](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCVejAW8Dmqv8Jmk5rzj43g)

Song of the Week

Great Is Thy Faithfulness

Words by Thomas O. Chisholm

Great is Thy faithfulness
O God my Father
There is no shadow of turning with Thee
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they
fail not
As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be.

Great is Thy faithfulness
Great is Thy faithfulness
Morning by morning new mercies I see.
All I have needed thy hand has provided
Great is Thy Faithfulness Lord unto me.

Summer and winter, and springtime and har-
vest,
Sun, moon and stars in their courses above;
Join with all nature in manifold witness
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy and love.

Great is Thy faithfulness
Great is Thy faithfulness
Morning by morning new mercies I see.
All I have needed thy hand has provided
Great is Thy Faithfulness Lord unto me.

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to
guide;
Strength for today and bright hope for to-
morrow
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!

Great is Thy faithfulness
Great is Thy faithfulness
Morning by morning new mercies I see.
All I have needed thy hand has provided
Great is Thy Faithfulness Lord unto me.