



First Christian Church

Disciples of Christ

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

Messenger

430 S. 16th St.

Lincoln, NE 68508

402.475.4289

www.fcclincoln.org



Rev. Dr. Karen Moritz, Pastor
Kelly Tyrrell, Church Administrator
Mark W. Miller, Director of Music Ministries

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December 17, 2020



“Reverse Advent Calendar” for Matt Talbot

It’s not too late to join in the Reverse Advent Calendar for Matt Talbot! You can still gather the items below and bring them to church at the Christmas Eve service or Sunday, December 27th.

- December 17 Chicken noodle soup
- December 18 Tomato soup
- December 19 Can of corn
- December 20 Can of mixed vegetables
- December 21 Can of carrots
- December 22 Can of green beans
- December 23 Can of chicken
- December 24 Jar of jelly

If you are unable to deliver the food to the church, call or text Sara Lugn or call the church office at 402-475-4289 and we will make arrangements to have your donations picked up. Please also consider making a donation by mailing a check to the church, payable to FCC, with Advent written on the memo line OR use AutoPay.

The need is even greater this year due to the ongoing pandemic. Let’s show the Spirit of Christmas during this Advent season to help the less fortunate in Lincoln this year.

NOTES FROM THE BOARD

Dear FCC Members and Friends,

On December 6th we had our congregational meeting and approved the slate of nominees and budget for 2021. Given the circumstances of the last year, all of the board officers agreed to serve another term in order maintain the continuity of leadership until we can have better opportunities for training new leaders. If you are interested in any leadership position at FCC please let Pastor Karen or myself know.

The 2021 budget deficit is concerning, our pledges and expected building use contributions are down, and we continue to defer our outreach spending. My hope is that in the not too distant future we will be able to return with a renewed passion for in person worship, fellowship, and outreach. We are still looking forward to the installation of our new video streaming system, but a critical part has been delayed.

We’ve received good news that our payroll protection loan was forgiven and as of December 6, 2020 we’ve received \$16,563 in Faith Giving! WOW! I wish you safe and happy rest of 2020 and look forward to what the new year will bring.

Sincerely,
Geoff Putney
Board Chair



STEPHEN MINISTRY

“There should be no division in the body, but...its parts should have equal concern for each other.”

1 Corinthians 12:25

Pastor's Corner

“A shoot shall sprout from the stump of Jesse, and from his roots a bud shall blossom. The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him...”
--Isaiah 11:1-2

In his book *Gracias! A Latin American Journal*, priest and author Henri J.M. Nouwen described his thoughts on the above passage in his journal entry for Wednesday December 2, 1981.

Our salvation comes from something small, tender, and vulnerable, something hardly noticeable. God who is the Creator of the Universe, comes to us in smallness, weakness, and hiddenness.

I find this a hopeful message. Somehow, I keep expecting loud and impressive events to convince me and others of God's saving power; but over and over again, I am reminded that spectacles, power plays, and big events are the ways of the world. Our temptation is to be distracted by them and made blind to the “shoot that shall sprout from the stump.”

When I have no eyes for the small signs of God's presence-the smile of a baby, the carefree play of children, the words of encouragement and gestures of love offered by friends-I will always remain tempted to despair.

The small child of Bethlehem, the unknown young man of Nazareth, the rejected preacher, the naked man on the cross, he asks for my full attention. The work of our salvation takes place in the midst of a world that continues to shout, scream, and overwhelm us with its claims and promises. But the

promise is hidden in the shoot that sprouts from the stump, a shoot that hardly anyone notices. (page 62)

Although his words come from a different time and place than our own, I found his reflections pertinent for today. We all need words of hope, especially now. This year we don't have the usual spectacles and big events that often mark the holiday season. This year we are once again invited to remember that God “comes to us in smallness, weakness, and hiddenness.”

May we, like Nouwen, be aware of all the small signs of God's presence in our lives and world. We are invited to put aside our despair and embrace the hope, love, and joy that comes with the birth of the Christ child.

With a hopeful and joyous spirit,
Pastor Karen

Don't Forget SCRIP

See Donna after worship or send an email if you are interested in SCRIP. The next special order will be in January, but we have several cards on hand. Remember, SCRIP is a win-win for local businesses and First Christian Church.

Book Club News

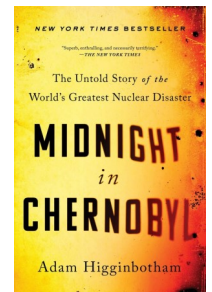
Book Club will meet again this month via Zoom. Invitation information will be coming out soon.

Our book for discussion is:
Midnight in Chernobyl
by Adam Higginbotham

Some of the upcoming titles to be discussed include:

All the Gallant Men by Donald Stratton and Ken Gire
Little Women by Louisa May Alcott

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, or change of location.



January

Those Serving in January

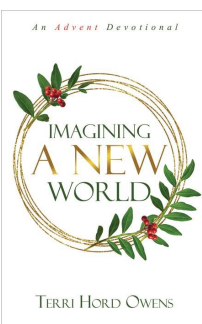
Stay posted as the rest of the service positions are assigned for January. If for any reason you will be unable to fulfill your requirement, please find a substitute and alert the FCC Office. We can also help find substitutes if necessary. Thank you in advance for your service to FCC!

Worship Leader

Kristi Bowker

Elders

January 3	Sara Lugn
January 10	Cecilia Burkhart
January 17	Doug Effle
January 24	Monte Dietrick
January 31	Wayne Duncan



There are two Advent Studies being offered this year. Wednesday mornings at 9:00 am, join Regional Minister Chris Morton for a study of our Advent Devotional *Imagining a New World* by Terri Hord Owens. Wednesday nights at 6:00pm, FCC's own Pastor Karen is also leading a study on our Devotional. Both meetings will be via Zoom. Check your email for more information!

Dial-a-Sermon
402-205-5988



There is a new option to stay connected to First Christian. Just call 1-402-205-5988 to hear Pastor Karen's sermon for the current week. We are offering this service for all of those who are not yet ready to worship in person but may not have access to our online offerings. Spread the word!



Holiday Office Hours

With the holidays approaching, now is a good time to alert you to FCC Office closures for the next month:

Wednesday, Dec. 23 - Friday, Dec. 25
Office Closed

Wednesday Dec. 30 - Friday Jan. 1
Office Closed

We will be back to normal operations, Monday - Friday, 8:30 am to 2:30 pm starting January 4, 2021



Dear First Christian Church
Members and Friends:

We are fortunate to have a dedicated and talented church staff that have worked diligently, both in person and remotely, throughout the year to provide us with a variety of worship opportunities during these unprecedented circumstances. This year has certainly been different, and our staff have gone above and beyond to provide meaningful experiences to all of us. As we enter the Advent and Christmas season, please join me in showing our appreciation with a love gift for Pastor Karen, Mark Miller, director of music ministries, Kelly Tyrrell, church administrator, our custodian, and nursery staff.

Please put your gift in the offering plate, mail it to the church office to be received no later than December 20th, give it to Jim Blosser, vice chair of the church board, or if you are already signed up for electronic funds transfer you can email Donna Ruhl. Please indicate "Staff Christmas" on your gift. Checks should be made payable to the church.

May you be especially blessed as we journey through this season together!

Sincerely,

Geoff Putney

Geoff Putney
Board Chair

Prayers & Praises December 17, 2020

In the Nebraska Region:

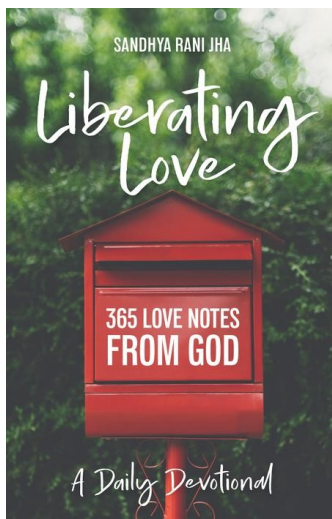
- Children and youth in our Congregations
- Seminarians and those training for Ministry

Our Global Ministries Missionaries:

- Sara Makari serving Israel/Palestine

Find more information and stories about our Global Ministry partners at

www.globalministries.org



A Chalice Press “Top Holiday Pick” that will last the entire year.

“I am so grateful for a daily devotional that honors both scripture and real life. Jha offers us a real jewel here ... I really can't wait to use it!”—**Nadia Bolz-Weber, NYT bestselling author and pastor**

Are you longing for an encouraging word from God, just for you, just for today? *Liberating Love Daily Devotional* features 365 “love notes” from God, intimate messages of hope and comfort to connect you more deeply with God and all of God’s beloved.

When the world is scary and comfort is in short supply, Sandhya Rani Jha’s *Liberating Love Daily Devotional* provides a daily message of encouragement and hope. In 365 “love notes from God,” hear the voice of our loving God connecting your life with the Bible’s many stories of imperfect people facing real challenges.

Drawing from all 66 books of the Bible, each devotion includes scripture, a brief meditation, and a word of hope, encouragement, and challenge that will help you foster a deeper relationship with God and with the great diversity of God’s beloved children. If you’ve never found a devotional for your inclusive values, *Liberating Love* is for you.

Lincoln First Christian Church Calendar of Events

Thursday, December 17 - Messengers Mailed
FCC Office Closed

Sunday, December 20

10:30 am Lessons & Carols WORSHIP
Sanctuary

12:00 pm Virtual Coffee Fellowship - ZOOM

Tuesday, December 22

11:00 am Filming Weekly Worship Video
Chapel

Wednesday Dec. 23rd - Friday Dec. 25th
FCC Office Closed

Wednesday, December 23

9:00 am Regional Advent Study - ZOOM
6:00 pm FCC Advent Study - ZOOM

Thursday, December 24

6:00 pm Christmas Eve WORSHIP - Sanctuary

Sunday, December 27

10:30 am WORSHIP - Sanctuary

12:00 pm Virtual Coffee Fellowship - ZOOM

Tuesday, December 29

11:00 am Filming Weekly Worship Video
Chapel

Wednesday Dec. 30th - Friday Jan. 1st
FCC Office Closed

Sunday, January 3

10:30 am Epiphany Worship - Sanctuary

12:00 pm Virtual Coffee Fellowship - ZOOM

Monday, January 4 - Messenger Deadline

7:00 pm Deborah Group Meeting - ZOOM

Tuesday, January 5

9:00 am Staff Meeting - Conference Room

11:00 am Filming Weekly Worship Video
Chapel

Thursday, January 7 - Messengers Mailed Out