



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

Sara Lugn, Stephen Ministry Leader
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Decorating for Advent



Thank you so much to our volunteers who stayed after worship on Sunday, November 22nd to decorate the Sanctuary for Advent.

The tree is up, our Advent candle wreath is prepared, and the Sanctuary looks beautiful. Here are some pictures of the work that was done. To see more, and a great time-lapse video of the decorating in action, see the First Christian Church Facebook page!



2021 Slate of Nominees

Board of Directors

Chair: Geoff Putney
Vice Chair: Jim Blosser
Secretary: Carla Pinneo
Treasurer: Donna Ruhl
Financial Secretary: Susan Pallas-Duncan

Foundation Representative

D'Arcy Blosser

Elder

Doug Effle
Cecilia Burkhart

Deacon

Brad Bowker
Rich Calver (1 yr)
Dan Cowger (1 yr)
Susan Pallas-Duncan
Lindsey Swanson (1 yr)

Submitted by the nominating committee:
Kristi Bowker, Connie Calver, Sara Lugn, Rev. Karen Moritz, Elaine Parman, Geoff Putney

Pastor's Corner

In his book *Soul Survivor: How Thirteen Unlikely Mentors Helped My Faith Survive the Church*, author Philip Yancey shared the stories of those who helped shape his thought and faith. His chapter 13 described one of my favorite authors, Henri Nouwen. Nouwen grew up in the Netherlands and became a Roman Catholic priest. He became a sought after speaker and his ministry led him to serve in a variety of ways throughout his life. I've read all of Nouwen's books and know something of his life, but I was really struck by Yancey's retelling of Nouwen's time in South America. While in Peru, he lived in a slum north of Lima and stayed with a family there. He felt particularly loved by the children there. "The children literally hugged life back into him" Nouwen would later say. "How little do we really know the power of physical touch," Nouwen also said in response to his visit to an orphanage. The children there fought for the privilege of touching him.

These boys and girls only wanted one thing; to be touched, hugged, stroked and caressed. Probably most adults have the same needs, but no longer have the innocence and unself-consciousness to express them. Sometimes I see humanity as a sea of people starving for affection, tenderness, care, love, acceptance, forgiveness and gentleness. Everyone seems to cry "please love me."

Yancey's recounting of this portion of Nouwen's life brought me to tears. It struck me that these reflections were never more true than they are today. As we move towards the end of 2020, many, if not most, of us probably feel like those orphans. Isolation and physical distancing have intensified these yearnings. For many of us, especially those of us who live alone, the church may be the major place in which these needs for human contact are met. And now, that is not true. As many of us worship virtually in our homes, and even those of us participating in in-person worship, we are separated by at least 6 feet. Our masks hide the expressions on our faces. Even with others, we are keenly aware of how separate and alone we really are. I suspect Nouwen could never have imagined a time like ours.

As we move into the Advent season, we may be keenly aware of the physical distances that keep us apart. Fortunately, this will be temporary, despite the fact that it seems to drag on. Perhaps this Advent

during COVID will provide opportunities to experience God's eagerness to touch us by becoming incarnate as a small, helpless baby. God hears our cry "please love me" and does so in ways humanity could never have imagined. Just like Nouwen, God "sees humanity as a sea of people starving for affection, tenderness, care, love, acceptance, forgiveness and gentleness." Hopefully during this Advent season, we will become aware of the many ways in which "God hugs life back into us" even, and especially, when we are physically distant.

With love and joy,
Pastor Karen

You can read more in *Gracias! A Latin American Journal* by Henri J. M. Nouwen.



Thank you to William Deterding for the gift we recently received at the First Christian office. This wall hanging is very much appreciated. Thank you for continuing to think about us and pray for us!

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

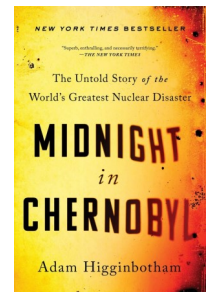
Book Club will meet again this month via Zoom. Invitation information will be coming out soon.

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.



“Reverse Advent Calendar” for Matt Talbot Kitchen & Outreach

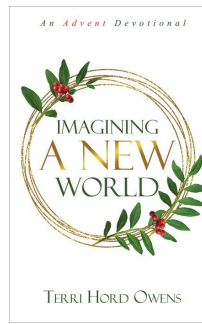
It’s not too late to join in the Reverse Advent Calendar for Matt Talbot! You can still gather the items below and bring them to church at the Christmas Eve service or Sunday, December 27th.

- | | |
|-------------|-------------------------|
| December 3 | Macaroni & Cheese |
| December 4 | Canned Fruit |
| December 5 | Canned tomatoes |
| December 6 | Canned tuna |
| December 7 | Dessert mix |
| December 8 | Jar of applesauce |
| December 9 | Canned sweet potatoes |
| December 10 | Cranberry sauce |
| December 11 | Canned beans |
| December 12 | Box of crackers |
| December 13 | Package of rice |
| December 14 | Box of oatmeal packets |
| December 15 | Package of pasta |
| December 16 | Spaghetti sauce |
| 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.

FCC Social Media!



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!

WELCOME VISITORS

The following people have recently visited
and shared in Sunday morning services:

Shane Dittmer

Please join us again in worship.
You are always welcome!



STEPHEN MINISTRY

“Let us do good to all people, especially to
those who belong to the family of believers.”
Galatians 6:10

Save the Date!

**2020 Annual
Congregational Meeting
Sunday December 6th
11:30 am after Worship
Sanctuary**

A Big Thank You

Harold & Donna Baker recently called in to the church to thank everyone who has been sending them cards and calling them. It is very much appreciated, especially during these times when we feel so isolated from one another. Thank you to everyone who is reaching out to someone in the congregation during these times. You make a difference in people’s lives!

DECEMBER

Those Serving in December

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

December 6	Kristi Bowker
December 13	Jessica Effle
December 20	Jessica Effle
December 24	Kristi Bowker
December 27	Mike Carlin

Elders

December 6	Sara Lugn
December 13	Debby Ortega
December 20	Monte Dietrick
December 27	Jim Blosser

Ushers/Greeters

December 6	NEED VOLUNTEER
December 13	NEED VOLUNTEER
December 20	Jessica & Doug Effle
December 27	Elaine Parman

Hallway Hospitality

December 6	Mike Carlin
December 13	Geoff Putney
December 20	Vince Ortega
December 27	Dick Pickel

Acolytes

December 6	Hunter & Edryk Christianson
December 13	Kyson Effle & Christian Swanson
December 20	Keaton Bowker & Evan Foster
December 27	Katie & Rebecca Swanson

Advent Candle Lighters

December 6	Jim Christ & Monte Dietrick
December 13	Effle Family
December 20	Mike & Bobbie Carlin
December 24	Bowker Family



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 3, 2020

Lincoln First Christian Church Calendar of Events

In the Nebraska Region:

- All Ministries of the Christian Church (DOC) in Nebraska

Our Global Ministries Missionaries:

- Raul F. Santiago Rivera serving in Puerto Rico

Find more information and stories about our Global Ministry partners at

www.globalministries.org



Thursday, December 3 - Messengers Mailed
FCC Office Closed

Sunday, December 6

- 10:30 am WORSHIP - Sanctuary
- 11:30 am Annual Congregational Meeting
Sanctuary/ZOOM
- 12:00 pm Virtual Coffee Fellowship - ZOOM
- 12:00 pm Elders Meeting - Parlor/ZOOM

Monday, December 7

- 7:00 pm Deborah Group Meeting - ZOOM

Wednesday, December 9

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

Thursday December 10

FCC Office Closed

Sunday, December 13

- 10:30 am WORSHIP - Sanctuary
- 12:00 pm Virtual Coffee Fellowship - ZOOM

Monday, December 14 - Messenger Deadline

Tuesday, December 15

- 9:00 am Staff Meeting - Conference Room

Thursday, December 17 - Messengers Mailed



Auto Pay Your Church Giving

Tired of writing checks? There is an easy, convenient and secure way

to electronically transfer funds from your checking account to donate to the church. Enrolling is easy – a debit authorization form and voided check is all that we need. Forms are available in the FCC office or can be emailed to you upon request. In addition, auto payment can be canceled at any time.

Auto Pay makes life easier for you by:

- Knowing you are faithfully supporting so many important vital ministries
- Realizing the joy in being the faithful steward God calls you to be
- Eliminating the need to write a check regularly helping your personal budgeting process

Auto Pay benefits to FCC:

- Provides a more predictable income flow for better church financial management
- Reduces time and effort in processing collections by FCC staff/volunteers
- Increases faithful offerings to the church due to regular automatic donations

**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!