



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

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Week of December 6, 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 God of comfort and hope, your Word shared today gives us so much to look forward to. We pray to you that, like the Israelites, our term in isolation will soon be up, that what feels like a penalty will soon be done. We recognize how our pandemic isolation feels like exile, we feel like we are in the wilderness. Our normal schedules are dashed, we miss our loved ones, and our material comforts are a distant memory. But your comfort, O God, is more than material. Our comfort from you is our spiritual nourishment, your Word encouragement for our hearts. Thanks be to God!

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.

O Come, O Come Emmanuel
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2JpvW9FU Rg>

Performed by Sovereign Grace

Days of Elijah
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yWSATpx7uzk>

Performed by Twila Parlis

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 Reading

Isaiah 40:1-11

¹ Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God.

² Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her
that she has served her term,
that her penalty is paid,
that she has received from
the LORD's hand
double for all her sins.

³ A voice cries out:
'In the wilderness prepare the way
of the LORD,
make straight in the desert a
highway for our God.

⁴ Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be
made low;
the uneven ground shall become
level,
and the rough places a plain.

⁵ Then the glory of the LORD shall
be revealed,
and all people shall see it
together,
for the mouth of the LORD has
spoken.'

⁶ A voice says, 'Cry out!'
And I said, 'What shall I cry?'
All people are grass,

their constancy is like the flower
of the field.

⁷ The grass withers, the flower
fades,

when the breath of
the LORD blows upon it;
surely the people are grass.

⁸ The grass withers, the flower
fades;

but the word of our God will
stand for ever.

⁹ Get you up to a high mountain,
O Zion, herald of good tidings;
lift up your voice with strength,
O Jerusalem, herald of good tid-
ings,

lift it up, do not fear;
say to the cities of Judah,
'Here is your God!'

¹⁰ See, the Lord GOD comes with
might,

and his arm rules for him;
his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.

¹¹ He will feed his flock like a shep-
herd;

he will gather the lambs in
his arms,
and carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead the mother
sheep.

Reflection

Meditation for First Sunday of Advent

“Comfort for Our Wilderness Journey”

“Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God,” The prophet’s voice rings out across the ages and is undoubtedly as powerful today as it was then. Isaiah brought words of comfort to a weary people bowed down by their time in the wilderness of exile. Altogether, their time in the wilderness of exile would last 150 years. Think about that, last year FCC celebrated 150 years of mission and ministry. Throughout these generations, the people feared that God would remain silent and they felt incredible hopelessness and despair. Scholars agree that this passage from Isaiah dates to the time when King Cyrus signed an edict permitting the exiles to return home. Such actions brought comfort, but, there was more to it. With these words not only did comfort come to these weary exiles, but God commanded comfort. The word “comfort” can be either a verb or a noun. As a verb, comfort means to give strength and hope. As a noun, comfort means consolation, freedom from pain or trouble. God proclaimed that the exiles were given strength and hope as their time in the wilderness was coming to an end. God also brought consolation and freedom to the people. These words of comfort were not simply meant as a gift to wilderness weary people. The prophet prompted the people to share this proclamation with others.

As we move through our own wilderness of COVID, what words of comfort do we hear and share? Where do we receive strength and find hope? I find some comfort in the realization that “A voice cries out: “In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD” God called the ancient Israelites to prepare the way of the Lord while in the wilderness, they did not have to wait to do so

once they were beyond exile. With God’s help and guidance they were called to prepare while in the wilderness of exile.

Today we are also called to prepare, even within our wilderness of COVID. Like the ancient Israelites, we are called to prepare here and now. The prophet gave clear guidance on what these preparations entailed. The prophet went on; “make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain.” Obstacles are to be removed and the pathway is meant to be level and easy to traverse for all people. Nothing will remain that obstructs access to God.

Rev. Jill Duffield, editor of the Presbyterian Outlook, went on to comment that one of the striking parts of this passage for her was the next phrase. “Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.” In these days of isolation what a powerful reminder, we are not alone. Even in the midst of our wilderness, God’s glory will be revealed to everyone. Although this is glorious news, the prophet did not end there. The prophet went on “He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.” What wonderful images of love and tenderness! Even in the midst of our isolation and physical distancing, the prophet reminds us we will experience God’s glory and tender love together, even, and especially, in the middle of our wilderness journey. Good News indeed!

AMEN

Prayers & Praises

December 6, 2020

In Our Church Family:

- Georgann Jordan
- Betty Ferguson
- Arlene Heimer
- Marvin Thurber
- Roger & Jessica Vocasek
- William Deterding, *for COVID-19 in his facility*
- 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*
- Tricia Gangwish, *prayers for fighting breast cancer, aunt of Lindsay Swanson*
- Ron & Katy Pickel, *diagnosed with COVID-19, son and daughter-in-law of Dick & Roxie Pickel*
- Will Oldenburg, *prayers for deployment to Middle East, cousin of D'Arcy Blosser*
- Wayne Rediger, *prayers for triple bypass surgery, brother-in-law of Cec Burkhart*
- Aunt, Uncle, and several cousins with COVID-19 diagnoses, *family of Sondra Peterson*

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*
- Van Hall, *friend of William Deterding*
- Tallu Schuyler Quinn, *prayers for diagnosis of glioblastoma, friend of Kaleo and D'Arcy Blosser*
- Our sympathy to Sharon Schneiders and daughter Suzanne, *upon the passing of Jeff Schneiders, friends of the Blossers*

Our Timothys:

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

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



Song of the Week

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Words by Latin Prose, pre-9th Century

Music by Plainsong; adapt. Thomas Helmore, 1852

O Come, O Come Emmanuel
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.

*Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel will come to thee,
O Israel.*

O come, thou Wisdom from on high,
who ordered all things mightily:
to us the path of knowledge show;
and teach us in her ways to go.

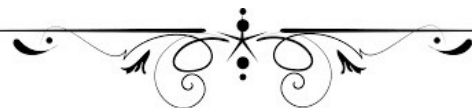
*Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel will come to thee,
O Israel.*

O come, O come, that Lord of might,
who to thy tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times did give the law
in clouds and majesty and awe.

*Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel will come to thee,
O Israel.*

O come, thou Root of Jesse, free
thine own from Satan's tyranny;
from depths of hell they people save
and give them victory o'er the grave.

*Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel will come to thee,
O Israel.*



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)