



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 December 13, 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 promises, we pray to you from a place of weariness and isolation. Please strengthen us to find the good in every situation. We know that you come to your people to set them free, to help them live a life of abundance. Rather than praying for this year to simply be over, help us pray to make sense of it all. Could this year be a way for us to start our lives anew? Could this be the chance to strip away all of our unnecessary busyness and live a life full of love for what really matters? God, fill us with your Spirit and dwell within our hearts that it may be so. In the name of your Son, Jesus, we pray. 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.

People Look East

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7SPLNlg_ZFY

Performed by Marty Haugen

Garments of Praise

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T6cNIHUhTqY>

Performed by Robin Mark

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 61:1-11

¹The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,
because the LORD has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring good news to
the oppressed,

to bind up the broken-hearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and release to the prisoners;

² to proclaim the year of
the LORD's favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;

³ to provide for those who mourn in Zi-
on—

to give them a garland instead
of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the mantle of praise instead of a faint
spirit.

They will be called oaks of righteous-
ness, the planting of the LORD, to dis-
play his glory.

⁴ They shall build up the ancient ruins,
they shall raise up the former devasta-
tions; they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations.

⁵ Strangers shall stand and feed
your flocks, foreigners shall till your
land and dress your vines;

⁶ but you shall be called priests of
the LORD, you shall be named ministers
of our God;

you shall enjoy the wealth of
the nations,
and in their riches you shall glory.

⁷ Because their shame was double,
and dishonor was proclaimed as their
lot,
therefore they shall possess a double
portion; everlasting joy shall be theirs.

⁸ For I the LORD love justice,
I hate robbery and wrongdoing;
I will faithfully give them their recom-
pense, and I will make an everlasting
covenant with them.

⁹ Their descendants shall be known
among the nations,
and their offspring among the peo-
ples;

all who see them shall acknowledge
that they are a people whom
the LORD has blessed.

¹⁰ I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
my whole being shall exult in
my God;

for he has clothed me with the gar-
ments of salvation, he has covered me
with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a
garland, and as a bride adorns herself
with her jewels.

¹¹ For as the earth brings forth its
shoots, and as a garden causes what is
sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord GOD will cause righteous-
ness and praise to spring up before all
the nations.

Reflection

Meditation for Third Sunday of Advent

“Rejoice, This is the Year of the Lord’s Favor”

This third week of Advent is commonly “Gaudate” Sunday, which means “rejoice.” Philip E. Thompson, pastor at Roberts Chapel Baptist Church in Pendleton, NC commented in *Lectionary Homiletics* that “To rejoice is more than just being happy. ‘To rejoice’ is to engage in a radical act and to adopt a certain stance toward God and humanity.” During this week of “rejoicing” we are invited to hear these familiar words from the prophet Isaiah. For many of us these are familiar words that bring joy to our hearts. When we hear them we may hear echoes of the 4th chapter of Luke when Jesus read this passage in the synagogue in Nazareth. For many of us it is a challenge to hear this prophecy apart from Jesus’ call to ministry. But, what was it like to hear these words when uttered by the prophet? How might that original setting influence our hearing of these words today?

As we have mentioned throughout Advent, Isaiah brought the word of God to exiled and weary Israelites. The good news that their exile was ending rang in their ears, and at the same time, their fears and anxieties about what they would find upon their return weighed on their hearts. They carried memories of the past and hope for the future simultaneously. The prophet declared:

“The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor,”

One can see how these were powerful words for the exiles, cause for rejoicing. David Mosser, pastor of First United Methodist Church in Graham, TX also commented in *Lectionary Homiletics* “The text announces that God is eager to reverse

Israel’s previous misfortune. There is to be a new day for those steadfast and faithful to Yahweh’s promise.”

The prophet’s words made two things clear: first, God will build up those returning from exile by declaring a year of Jubilee, a time when everything begins afresh. Slaves were freed, the land was returned to its original owners, and debts were forgiven. It is a new beginning for God’s people. And secondly, God would build up Zion/Jerusalem once again.

But, how are these words of good news for us today? As we make our way through the exile of COVID-19, we yearn for joy. We have set aside many of the usual trappings of our lives and of this season. We know our exile will come to an end eventually, but how do we find joy now. As God proclaimed a year of Jubilee for the ancient Israelites, I believe our text today invites us to consider how our present times may be a time of Jubilee as well. Perhaps this time away from all the usual trappings of our life and of this season invites us to think about how we might find this as a time of new beginnings. As we step aside from “business as usual,” how might we use this time to consider how we could begin again. Perhaps this time in our lives and our world could be seen as an opportunity to “reboot” and “begin anew.”

As we share the good news of God’s presence in our midst, we share our memories of the past and our hope for the future. As we share this good news we offer words of hope to the oppressed and those held captive. Just as God rebuilt the people of Israel, God continues to rebuild us. Perhaps 2020 is the “year of the Lord’s favor” after all.

AMEN

Prayers & Praises

December 13, 2020

In Our Church Family:

- Georgann Jordan
- Arlene Heimer
- Marvin Thurber
- Roger & Jessica Vocasek
- William Deterding, *for COVID-19 in his facility*
- Our sympathy to the family of Betty Ferguson, *upon her recent passing*
- 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*
- 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*
- Daryl Cox, *in hospice for cancer, friend of the Pickels*

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:

Disciples General Church

Our Global Ministries Missionaries:

Sara Makari serving in Israel/Palestine

Find more information and stories about our Global Ministry partners at

www.globalministries.org



Song of the Week

Garments of Praise

By Robin Mark

Put on the garments of praise, for the spirit of heaviness
Let the oil of gladness flow down from your throne
Put on the garments of praise, for the spirit of heaviness
Your joy is my strength alone, my strength alone

Put on the garments of praise, for the spirit of heaviness
Let the oil of gladness flow down from your throne
Put on the garments of praise, for the spirit of heaviness
Your joy is my strength alone, my strength alone

Make these broken weary bones rise to dance again
Wet this dry and thirsty land with a river
Lord our eyes are fixed on you and we are waiting
For your garland of grace as we praise your name

Put on the garments of praise, for the spirit of heaviness
Let the oil of gladness flow down from your throne
Put on the garments of praise, for the spirit of heaviness
Your joy is my strength alone, my strength alone

Make these broken weary bones rise to dance again
Wet this dry and thirsty land with a river
Lord our eyes are fixed on you and we are waiting
For your garland of grace as we praise your name

Hallelujah, sing hallelujah
We give all honor and praise to your name

Hallelujah, sing hallelujah
We trade our sorrows for garments of praise

Hallelujah, sing hallelujah
We give all honor and praise to your name

Hallelujah, sing hallelujah
We trade our sorrows for garments of praise



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)