



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
www.fcclincoln.org
info@fcclincoln.org

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January 7, 2021



Working for Justice Ecumenical Legislative Briefing Day

Saturday, February 13, 2021

9:30 am - 12:00 pm

This is a virtual conference

9:30 am

Zoom meeting rooms open

9:45-10:10 am

Welcome, Prayer, Reflection, Introduction

10:15-10:45 am

Choice of four Q&A sessions

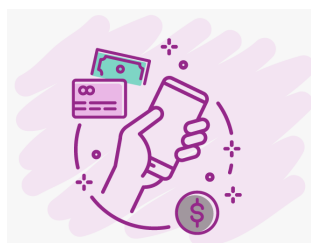
10:55-11:25 am

Choice of four Q&A sessions

11:30 am - 12:00 pm

Advocacy: Communicating with your
State Senator, Closing

Topics to be discussed include education, immigration, gerrymandering, racial justice, and more. For more information go to www.nelegisbrief.org.



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



STEPHEN MINISTRY

“As you have heard from the beginning, his command is that you walk in love.”

2 John 1:6b

Pastor's Corner

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

John 1:14

In his book *"The Holy Longing: The Search for a Christian Spirituality"* author Ronald Rolheiser explored the differences between Theist (God centered) and Christian (Christ centered) spirituality. One of the key differences and distinctions of Christian spirituality for Rolheiser was the centrality of the incarnation. Having just passed through Advent and Christmas, I found his words quite striking. Rolheiser commented on the above text from John in a striking way. He translated the text: "The Word was made flesh and it dwells among us." He noted that the text is usually translated "The Word was made flesh and it dwelled (or lived) among us." Generally, the text is in the past tense, but Rolheiser deliberately puts it in the present, or more accurately in an "ongoing" tense. This conveys the thought of the author of this Gospel more faithfully. The actual Greek words here are verbs that connote action that began at a clear point in the past and continue into the present.

Rolheiser made the point that this text is foundational for us as Christians and, as he put it, the incarnation is a mystery of our faith that is generally misunderstood or "under understood." Generally, we grasp a small portion of the iceberg that is this concept; we only grasp it in part. "We miss its meaning by not seeing its immensity." During Advent and Christmastide we have celebrated the mystery of the incarnation. As we move through the weeks after Epiphany and prepare for Lent and Easter, we will mark the rest of the story; Jesus' life, ministry, death, and resurrection. When we come to Easter Sunday, we may be tempted to think we have completed the remembrance of the incarnation, that it has come to its fulfillment.

When we think of the incarnation we tend to think of the 33 years Jesus spent on earth. While that is partially correct, Rolheiser invites us to go deeper. "Where it is wrong is that it gives the impression that the incarnation was a 30 year experiment, a one shot incursion by God into human history." This gives the impression that the incarnation was a past event and fails to recognize the ongoing quality of the incarnation today. "The incarnation is still going on and is just as real and as radically physical as when Jesus of Nazareth, in the flesh, walked the dirt roads of Pales-

tine." The mystery of the incarnation is God taking on human flesh and dealing with human beings in visible and tangible ways. Advent and Christmas are not simply a time in which we remember and celebrate Immanuel, God with us. During these seasons we participate in the mystery of the ongoing incarnation.

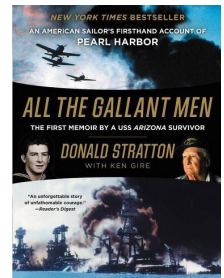
This is particularly challenging these days when we are separated from one another by masks and physical distancing. Living out the incarnation, God with us, is more challenging and more essential these days. Rolheiser pointed out that God is still as real, as present today as God was when Jesus walked the earth. God remains incarnate through us as members of the Body of Christ, as the Body of Believers. We have had to adopt new ways of living out the incarnation since we cannot rely on physical presence. We continue to strive to use all the tools we have to make the incarnational presence of God real. In addition to in-person worship we now have live streaming which makes it possible to worship virtually as well. We continue to send out weekly worship material which is also posted on our website. We rely on tools like Facebook and Instagram. We use old fashioned tools like the telephone and written cards and letters. Even, and perhaps especially, when we are physically separated we remain part of the Body of Christ and "God becomes flesh and lives among us." That is really the Good News of the Gospel for our day and all time.

In love and peace,
Pastor Karen

Book Club News

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

Our book for discussion is:
All the Gallant Men
by Donald Stratton and Ken Gire



Some of the upcoming titles to be discussed include:

Little Women by Louisa May Alcott
Abide with Me by Elizabeth Strout

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.



Those Serving in 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

Jessica Effle

Elders

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

Hallway Hospitality

January 10	Rich Calver
January 17	Vince Ortega
January 24	Mike Carlin
January 31	Geoff Putney

Ushers/Greeters

January 10	Wayne & Susan Pallas-Duncan
January 17	Elaine Parman
January 24	John & Lindsay Swanson
January 31	D'Arcy Blosser

THANK YOU for volunteering. Your efforts at First Christian Church is what keeps Sunday worship alive and thriving!

Thank you!

The staff at First Christian Church, Kelly Tyrrell, Mark Miller, and Pastor Karen Moritz want to give a big thank you to the congregation for our Christmas gifts. This generous gift makes a big difference to us. We are so lucky to get to work with First Christian in all that we do.

Sincerely,

*Kelly Tyrrell
Mark Miller
Pastor Karen Moritz*

2020 Year In Review

2020 was a challenge for the staff to find new ways to bring the congregants of First Christian Church a meaningful worship experience. In the past year, we held in-person worship, emailed and mailed Weekly Worship bulletins, created Weekly Worship videos in the Chapel, and most recently, we've started streaming our services live from the Sanctuary. Below is some information about how people engaged in worship in 2020.

In-Person Worship

(monthly average attendance)

June: 28 people
July: 27 people
August: 27 people
September: 25 people
October: 23 people
November: 22 people
December: 23 people

Weekly Worship Videos

(monthly average views)

June: 27 views
July: 66 views
August: 72 views
September: 44 views
October: 33 views
November: 44 views (includes streaming)
December: 98 views (includes streaming)

Weekly Worship Bulletins

(monthly average email opens)

June: 38 opens
July: 44 opens
August: 36 opens
September: 34 opens
October: 32 opens
November: 47 opens
December: 42 opens

We are so excited that so many people were engaged in worship over our multiple platforms. First Christian Church is proving that a vibrant worship community can face any challenge.



See What's New with SCRIP



A Note from the Worship Team

On behalf of the Worship Team, I would like to thank everyone who participated in our Advent and Christmas Eve Worship Services, both in-person and virtually, our Zoom Advent Devotional Study, the 2020 Advent Bingo game, and the Reverse Advent Calendar food collection for Matt Talbot Kitchen & Outreach.

We collected 8 boxes of food and 7 monetary donations from the Reverse Advent Calendar. Figuring on an average of \$45.00 per box, we made a contribution of over \$700 to Matt Talbot!

I feel we had an excellent Advent and Christmas season, despite the challenges we continue to face during this unprecedented pandemic. Worship attendance remained strong despite the increasing case numbers. This is a testament that our visitors and members appreciate the value of continuing weekly services during this time.

We are blessed that we were able to begin recording and live-streaming our Sunday services. Thank you to the First Christian Church Foundation for providing the funds to purchase the new video equipment needed to accomplish this. A huge thank you to Geoff Putney for all the time and energy he put into recording the services until the video equipment was installed.

I would like to extend a sincere thank you to Jim Blosser for adding the additional decorations to the sanctuary and church throughout the Advent season. I would also like to thank Wayne Duncan, Jim Blosser, and Mark Miller for their assistance in taking down and putting away the decorations after worship on January 3.

The Worship Team looks forward to providing meaningful worship services in 2021. Together we can make this a great year!

Sara Lugin
Worship Chair

Are you tired of carrying all of those plastic gift cards? Do you find yourself at a store without SCRIP? Are you a SmartPhone user? Has COVID-19 prevented you from buying SCRIP?

Now you can purchase scrip anytime you need it, anywhere, right from your phone! Scrip is literally at your fingertips for gas, clothing, home goods, honey-do projects, and even those late night Amazon shopping excursions! You can even ask your shopper friends and family to enroll!!

Shop With Scrip has just gotten easier as they recently created a free app called **RaiseRight** available at both Apple's App Store and Google Play. You'll be prompted to enter our enrollment code, available in the church office, and then to create your personal family ShopWithScrip account. If you were already using the mobile website MyScripWallet, all of your information and Scrip will automatically be transferred to the RaiseRight app.

Most of the vendors offer a choice of an eGift card or physical plastic gift card. Many of the physical gift cards are reloadable, meaning you can add money to them rather than buying a new card. To use the eGift or reloadable gift cards you must sign up for their online payment program PrestoPay™ which lets you pay for your mobile orders by securely linking your bank account to your ShopWithScrip account. For a nominal 15 cents per order, PrestoPay connects to your bank account and withdraws the money. A credit card can also be used with a 2.6% fee added. If ordering only plastic gift cards, you can continue to pay Donna Ruhl by check or green electronic transfer form. All orders (paper and online) for physical cards are sent monthly after the first Sunday of the month.

Please note gift cards for local vendors such as Super Saver, Hy-Vee, Russ's, Runza, etc. are not available using the app and must be ordered from Donna.

If you have any questions or need help getting started please contact Gwen Belden, Brad Bowker or Geoff Putney.

Prayers & Praises January 7, 2021

In the Nebraska Region:

- Trinity Chapel and Rev. Brandon Proffit
- Ashland FCC and Rev. Bob Schofield
- Alliance FCC

Our Global Ministries Missionaries:

- Danielle Murry-Knowles serving in Lesotho
- Maria Bakalian serving in Lebanon

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



Lincoln First Christian Church Calendar of Events

Thursday, January 7 - Messengers Mailed Out

Sunday, January 10

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

Sunday, January 17

10:30 am Worship - Sanctuary
12:00 pm Virtual Coffee Fellowship - ZOOM
6:00 pm Board Meeting - ZOOM

Monday, January 18

12:00 pm Messenger Deadline

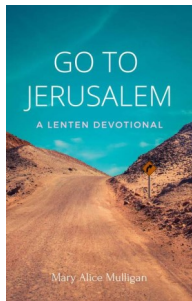
Tuesday, January 19

9:00 am Staff Meeting - Conference Room

Thursday, January 21 - Messengers Mailed Out

Don't Forget SC RIP

See Donna after worship or send an email if you are interested in SC RIP. The next special order will February 7, but we have several cards on hand. Remember, SC RIP is a win-win for local businesses and First Christian Church.



This Lent, imagine yourself placing your hand in the hand of Jesus and journeying with him to Jerusalem.

In these daily devotions for the 40 days of Lent and Holy Week, pastor and scholar Mary Alice Mulligan leads us on a self-reflective journey to discover what it really means to follow Jesus. As you journey with Jesus to Jerusalem, you'll reflect on the scriptures in which Jesus calls on his Disciples to leave everything and follow him, is baptized and announces his ministry, predicts his own death, clears the temple and pledges to rebuild it in three days, and proclaims God's love for all.

Entries begin with the darkness of Ash Wednesday and culminate with the glory of Easter morning. During Holy Week, Mulligan takes us through the events of that long-ago week with fresh eyes, new ways to understand an old story. These concise entries include scripture, reflections, journaling prompts, suggested spiritual practices, and a prayer. Entries are undated, making this a perennial resource.



Sanctuary Flowers \$45

Call the FCC Office at 402-475-4289 or email to info@fclincoln.org

FCC Social Media!



WELCOME VISITORS

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

*Alison Bowker Family
Effle Family, Parents of Doug Effle
Duane and Linda Westing*

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