



First Christian Church

Disciples of Christ

430 S. 16th St. Lincoln, NE 68508 402.475.4289

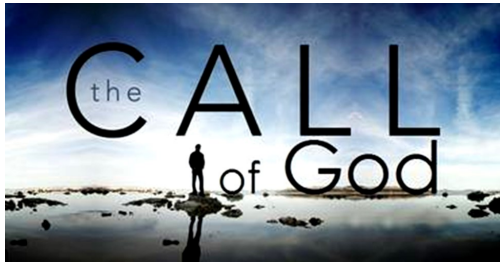
Weekly Worship

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

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Week of January 24, 2021



Call to Worship

Feel free to follow along with our Call to Worship from today's live-streamed worship service.

One: Pecking away at our computers, idling in a knot of traffic:

Many: We wait for you, God of all words, to fill us with hope.

One: Pacing the halls of a hospital, sitting outside the principal's office:

Many: We wait for you, God of comfort, to fill us with hope.

One: In the silence of each night, beginning each day's new journey:

Many: We wait for you, Steadfast Love, for you are our safe place.

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 Lord, in all of the chaos of our lives, sometimes it is hard to hear your call. In other times, we hear your call loud and clear and are too afraid, too self-conscious to take the leap of faith you ask us to. God, give us the courage to act on your call, to faithfully follow where you lead us. We know that our communities will be forever changed by the pandemic we are living through. Lord, this church community is precious to us; give us the encouragement and creativity to keep alive the Spirit we've always had. We pray all of this in the name of your son, Jesus. Amen.

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>

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

Jonah 3:1-5,10

¹ The word of the LORD came to Jonah a second time, saying, ² ‘Get up, go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim to it the message that I tell you.’

³ So Jonah set out and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly large city, a three days’ walk across. ⁴ Jonah began to go into the city, going a day’s walk. And he cried out, ‘Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!’ ⁵ And the people of Nineveh believed God; they proclaimed a fast, and everyone, great and small, put on sackcloth.

¹⁰ When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it.

Mark 1:14-20

¹⁴ Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, ¹⁵ and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.’

¹⁶ As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake—for they were fishermen.

¹⁷ And Jesus said to them, ‘Follow me and I will make you fish for people.’ ¹⁸ And immediately they left their nets and followed him. ¹⁹ As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. ²⁰ Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him.

Reflection

Meditation for 3rd Sunday after the Epiphany

“Not Just a Fish Story”

Jonah is probably one of the best known and well-loved characters in the Bible. Well, perhaps I should rephrase that, the fish that swallows Jonah is probably one of the best known and well-loved characters of the Bible. Perhaps it is the vivid way in which this story is told or the memorable characters that makes this story stand out for us. From childhood we are told the story of Jonah in the belly of the great fish. Although this is one of the shortest books of the Bible, it still stands out for us. But, there are other components to this story that make it even more remarkable. In reality, Jonah is really not a nice guy.

In many ways, he is an anti-hero in this popular story. As the introductory notes to the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible puts it, Jonah is a recalcitrant prophet who tries to flee from God and God's call and who sulks when the inhabitants of Nineveh repent. Jonah does not come off well in this story. We have a very unflattering portrait. Jonah resists God's call, not once but twice. He comes across as a nationalist who only wants mercy for his nation Israel. It becomes clear that he does not believe any of the heathens to whom he is called deserves God's love or mercy. For Jonah the inhabitants of Nineveh, the capitol of Assyria, did not deserve God's mercy because this nation was seen as an enemy of Israel.

And yet, God still chose to use this man as a messenger and prophet. While Jonah resisted God's call, God persisted. God persisted in calling Jonah and in the desire to show mercy to those regarded as heathens. Perhaps the really long-lasting quality of this story is not the “great fish” but the lessons we can learn from this all too human man. Some of

us may resonate with the story of the first Disciples, as recounted in our Gospel lesson from Mark, who eagerly and quickly respond to Jesus' call to follow and serve. But, I bet a lot of us resonate more with the story of Jonah.

Like Jonah, we may resist God's call. It may not be as blatant for us as it was for Jonah, but we may struggle to believe that God's mercy is really for all people and all creation. As we move through these turbulent times in our country and our world, we are invited to remember that God's love and mercy come to all who repent and seek it.

Jonah's story also reminds us that God is in control. God issues the call on each of our lives. God calls us to faithful service. We are called to serve with compassion. Compassion for one another and compassion for ourselves. While God's call is challenging, we need not flee because God persistently calls us and empowers us to respond in faith. Thankfully, in the midst of our resistance, God is persistent.

In his article for *Lectionary Homiletics*, Philip Culvertson suggested that there are 3 important lessons to be learned from the story of Jonah. The first, that God can, and does, use the most reluctant agents to share the good news of God's love and mercy. Second, that God works remarkable miracles with all kinds of people. And finally, that God judges people in the present not for their past. May the story of this reluctant and recalcitrant prophet inspire us to answer God's call, wherever and to whomever it takes us. God's love and mercy really are for everyone.

AMEN

Prayers & Praises

January 24, 2021

In Our Church Family:

- Georgann Jordan
- Arlene Heimer
- Marvin Thurber
- Roger & Jessica Vocasek
- William Deterding
- Jill Carpenter, *diagnosed with COVID-19*
- Nancy & Leo Jelinek
- Vic Burgess
- Donna Baker
- Polly Putney
- Mildred Brockemeyer
- Rae Hope Putney

Relatives:

- Friends and Family of *Vic Burgess*
- Rick Pickel, *for returning to chemotherapy, son of Dick & Roxie Pickel*
- 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 as he anticipates deployment to the Middle East, cousin of D'Arcy Blosser*
- John Swanson's father, *in nursing home with COVID-19*

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 Lugn*
- Tallu Schuyler Quinn, *diagnosed with glioblastoma, prayers for healing, friend of Kaleo and D'Arcy Blosser*
- Dan Principato, *complications with COVID-19, friend of the Vocaseks*
- Cedric Gibb, *healing prayers, friend of Cec Burkhart*
- Tomi, *healing prayers for cancer diagnosis, friend of Sara Lugn*
- Sympathy to the family of Darrel Cox, *upon his recent passing, friends of Dick & Roxie Pickel*
- Sympathy to the family of Bob Topil, *upon his recent passing, friends of Dick & Roxie Pickel*
- Mother of Mark Schwaninger, *upon recent stroke, friend of Marcia Foster*
- Derek Hilgert, *prayers for multiple health issues, friend of the Effle family*

Our Timothys:

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

In the Nebraska Region:

Ashland FCC and Rev. Bob Schofield

Our Global Ministries Missionaries:

Thomas Smith serving in Korea

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



Song of the Week

Will You Come and Follow Me?

Words & Music by John L. Bell and Graham Maule, 1987

“Will you come and follow me
if I but call your name?
Will you go where you don't know
and never be the same?
Will you let my love be shown;
will you let my name be known;
will you let my life be grown in you
and you in me?”

“Will you leave yourself behind
if I but call your name?
Will you care for cruel and kind
and never be the same?
Will you risk the hostile stare
should your life attract or scare?
Will you let me answer prayer in you
and you in me?”

“Will you let the blinded see
if I but call your name?
Will you set the prisoners free
and never be the same?
Will you kiss the leper clean,
and do such as this unseen,
and admit to what I mean in you
and you in me?”

“Will you love the 'you' you hide
if I but call your name?
Will you quell the fear inside
and never be the same?
Will you use the faith you've found
to reshape the world around,
through my sight and touch and sound in you
and you in me?”

Lord, your summons echoes true
when you but call my name.
Let me turn and follow you
and never be the same.
In your company I'll go
where your love and footsteps show.
Thus I'll move and live and grow in you
and you in me.