



First Christian Church

Disciples of Christ

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

Messenger

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LENT

WALKING WITH CHRIST

Save the Dates for upcoming Lenten services. We will also be worshipping every Sunday morning at 10:30 am in the Sanctuary - and - live-streaming at www.fcclincoln.org/youtube. All Holy Week services will be held in person and online. All are welcome - tell your friends!

Maundy Thursday April 1st

Tenebrae Service 7 pm

If watching online, feel free to light a candle at home.

Good Friday April 2nd

Worship 12 noon

24 Hour Virtual Prayer Vigil

1 pm Friday through 1 pm Saturday

Easter Sunday April 4th

Worship 10:30 am

Don't Forget SCRIP

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



Once again, we would like to decorate our worship space with lilies for Easter. If you would like to help make this possible, please fill out an order form and put it in the offering plate, or give it to Donna Ruhl. Plants are \$ 9.00. Forms available in the church office.

Deadline to order is Wednesday, March 10.

Individual Communion cups are available upon request. If you've been missing the experience of communion, contact the FCC Office, Pastor Karen, or one of the Elders to set up a time to receive communion. All packets are pre-sealed for your safety.



FCC Social Media!



If you have experienced any difficulties or problems with any of the Church offerings (videos, Worship, etc.) please contact the church office at (402) 475-4289.

Pastor's Corner

Christian life is not sustained only by private acts of prayer, justice and virtue. It is sustained in community by gathering ritually around the Word of God and through the breaking of the bread. However, it is important to understand that this kind of gathering is not simply a social one capable of only doing what social gatherings can do. To gather around the Word of God and the breaking of the bread is a ritual gathering and ritual brings something that normal social gathering does not, namely, transformative power beyond what can be understood and explained through the physical, psychological and social dynamics that are present.

--Ronald Rolheiser

During Lent we spend a lot of time focusing on our personal spiritual lives. We focus a lot of attention on deepening our prayer life and nurturing our journey with God. In many ways, this may feel particularly appropriate during these days of quarantine and isolation. For many of us introverts there has been a silver lining as we are encouraged to spend time looking inward. For the extroverts among us, this has probably been a very challenging time as we spend more time alone. But, as more and more of us get the vaccine, many of us begin to ponder what life after COVID-19 will look like. Undoubtedly, it will not look exactly as it did before the pandemic, but many aspects of life will resume. One of the things altered the most for people of faith has been worship. We have had to let go of familiar patterns of worship which centered around gathering together in person. We have been pushed to embrace new ways of gathering for worship with the use of technology. These new tools have enabled us to reach out in new ways that make it possible to include more people in this aspect of our faith. However, the isolation may make it tempting to underplay the importance of worship in the Christian life.

I was so impressed by the way Ronald Rolheiser described the centrality of worship in the Christian life. In the final chapter of his book *The Holy Longing: The Search for a Christian Spirituality* he discussed the topic "Sustaining Ourselves in the Spiritual Life." Although we have had to re-imagine what life as a community looks like during this pandemic, we have worked hard to sustain this important aspect of our life. Through the written word and various

types of technology we have worked hard to emphasize our life together as a faith community. Separation and isolation has been difficult for us all.

Through our ability to live-stream we have been able to lift up the centrality of the Word and the Lord's Supper, the very heart of our Reformed faith.

While many of us have missed gathering as a community, Rolheiser lifted up what makes gathering for worship so unique and special. Yes, we love the community aspect of gathering for worship. We love seeing one another and being together. But, as Rolheiser pointed out, worship is so much more, so much deeper. Sadly, the term "ritual" has become a "bad word" for many people today. However, as he pointed out, ritual brings the potential for transformation. Transformation is really the heart of this season. We participate in the transformation of Jesus which invites us to transformation as well.

As we move through this season of Lent, and this season of COVID, may we accept and embrace the promise of transformation. Through ritual and community we are invited to embrace the new life of resurrection.

In love and joy,
Pastor Karen



STEPHEN MINISTRY

"Keep on loving each other as brothers."
Hebrews 13:1

Book Club News

Book Club will meet again Friday March 19 at 6:30 pm at Kristi Bowker's home and via Zoom. Address and link information have been sent, check your email!

Our book for discussion is:

All the Gallant Men

by Donald Stratton and Ken Gire



Some of the upcoming titles to be discussed include:

Abide with Me by Elizabeth Strout

The Tattooist of Auschwitz by Heather Morris

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.

This I Know: Finance Notes

"And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good." Romans 8:28

The Bible says we should be generous and willing to give anything we can – both **time** and **money**. Monetary gifts cover incurred expenses, while gifts of time can inspire all and help reduce expenses.

First Christian Church is very blessed that 100 years ago, the congregation was eager to provide a new building in which to fulfill God's mission and ministry in downtown Lincoln. The eventual result was our current magnificent building at this wonderful location of 16th & K Streets. Our immediate neighborhood is now quickly growing with an influx of people actively seeking to live downtown. Many hundreds of new upscale apartments and condos are being created and built within blocks of First Christian Church.

Over the years, the congregation has remained steadfast in its commitment to ministry in downtown Lincoln. Additions, renovations, and improvements were made to meet changing needs. Since the Sanctuary, gym, and kitchen remodeling in the late 1990s, we have quickly fallen behind with basic maintenance and upkeep in other areas of the building. Even the areas renovated in the 1990s are now in urgent need of repairs and renewal.

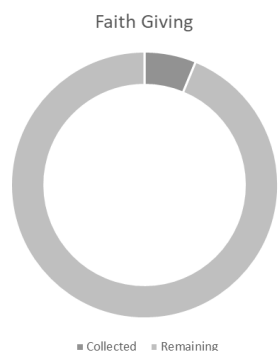
About a year ago, the Capital Campaign Feasibility Team went on a tour of the building and determined areas needing immediate attention. Then came COVID and the work of this team was put on hold. Fortunately, the pandemic provided Mark Miller the inspiration and time to research and complete several of these projects himself. (Thank You, Mark!) The Chapel Hall, North Hall, North Stair Hall, and other areas of the building have been and are being restored and returned to their intended appearance and usefulness.

Dedicated volunteers are needed to continue to restore and renew various areas of the church building! Anyone willing to give the gift of time to work on building projects, please contact Jim Blosser.

Don't forget, our monthly faith giving goal for 2021 is **\$4,000**. As of February 28, 2021, we have received **\$3,015** in Faith Giving!

The Finance Team

Dark Grey: Collected
Light Grey: Remaining



SERVE

What is God calling you to do?

Those Serving in March

There was a mistake in last month's Messenger regarding Ushers & Greeters. Please see the updated list below. Sorry for any confusion!

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.

Worship Leader

Kristi Bowker

Elders

March 7	Sara Lugn
March 14	Cecilia Burkhart
March 21	Doug Effle
March 28	Monte Dietrick

Hallway Hospitality

March 7	Geoff Putney
March 14	Jim Christ
March 21	Rich Calver
March 28	Vince Ortega

Ushers/Greeters

March 7	John & Lindsay Swanson
March 14	D'Arcy Blosser
March 21	Jessica Effle
March 28	Monte Dietrick

There is a NEW position that we need volunteers for: **live-streaming worship!** So far, Geoff Putney and Brad Bowker have shouldered this task, but they would like to teach others how to run the cameras for Sundays they are unable to come. Please contact Geoff or the FCC Office if you are interested in learning this position. Many hands make light work!

WELCOME VISITORS

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

*Duane Westing & Linda Kell
Rev & Mrs. John Duhling
Chris Brown*

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

Prayers & Praises

March 4, 2021

In the Nebraska Region:

- CrossBridge Christian Church and Rev. Robert Fugarino
- Edenton Christian Church and Rev. Christy Ahmose

Our Global Ministries Missionaries:

- Abigail Fate serving in Mexico

Find more information and stories about our Global Ministry partners at

www.globalministries.org



Lincoln First Christian Church

Calendar of Events

Thursday, March 4 - Messengers Mailed

Sunday, March 7 - SCRIP Orders Due

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

Wednesday, March 10

- 6:00 pm Lenten Study - Zoom

FCC Office Closed March 11th - 12th

Saturday, March 13

- 3:00 pm Bell Tree Rehearsal - Sanctuary

Sunday, March 14 - Daylight Savings Begins

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

Monday, March 15

- 12:00 pm Messenger Deadline

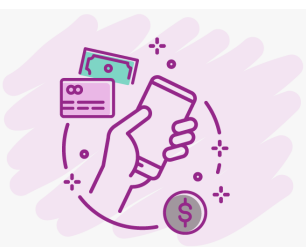
Tuesday, March 16

- 9:00 am Staff Meeting - Conference Room
- 10:30 am Recorder Rehearsal - Sanctuary

Wednesday, March 17

- 6:00 pm Lenten Study - Zoom

Thursday, March 18 - 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



Lenten Group Study - Every Wednesday

In addition to the Lenten devotionals provided by the church, Pastor Karen is also inviting everyone to join in a Lenten group study Wednesday nights at 6:00 pm held via Zoom. The group will be studying from *The Wired Word* periodical. If you are interested in attending, contact the FCC Office so we can get you on *The Wired Word* mailing list. More information and the Zoom link will be coming out soon.



Sanctuary Flowers \$45

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