



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

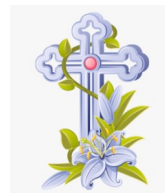
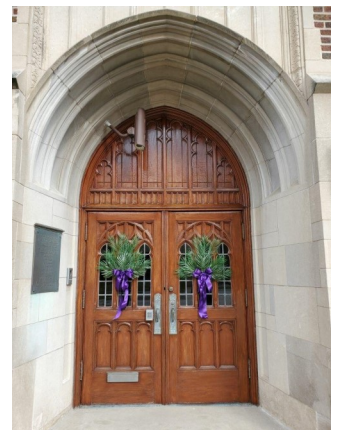
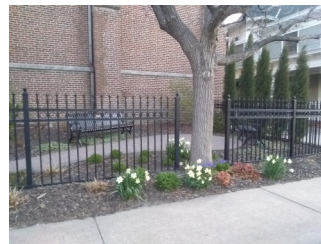
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April 8, 2021



Thank you to all who participated in our Holy Week and Easter services. They were wonderful. It was amazing having 70 at our Easter service. Thank you to

those who prepared our sanctuary for our special services. I would like to thank Gwen Belden and Deb Ortega in helping me with the new palm door decorations for Palm Sunday and Easter.



Pastor's Corner

“I have discovered over time that the cross is supposed to take its toll on us. It forms us to find God in the shadows of life. Ironically enough, it is the cross that teaches us hope. When we have survived our own cross, risen alive from the grave of its despair, we begin to know that we can survive again and again and again whatever life sends us in the future. It is this hope that carries us from stage to stage in life, singing and dancing around dark corners. But hope is not a private virtue. Hope makes us witness to the invincibility of the Spirit. The hope we bring to the other becomes the one sure gift we have to give to those in pain. What’s more, having suffered ourselves we become more caring to those in dark-nesses of their own. Suffering is what turns us into caring people.”
--Joan D. Chittister

In the book *Called to Question: A Spiritual Memoir*, Sister Joan D. Chittister talks about the cross and the hope of resurrection in the 12th chapter entitled “Darkness; a way to the light.” Her reflections really struck a chord for me as we move into Eastertide. Although she wrote this book about 16 years ago, her words still resonate. Little did she know as she wrote this book that we would face the challenges that have been a part of our lives this past year. Easter this year seems more poignant to me given these challenges.

We have dealt with suffering on a national and global scale. As she points out, we all bear the cross in various ways throughout our lives. This year we have carried the cross of awareness; through protest, poetry, literature, cinema, and speech we have been made aware of the burden of racism that still weighs down our country and world. As part of the global community, we have also carried the cross of pandemic. COVID-19 has affected us all differently. Many have borne the cross of loss and grief as they deal with the death of loved ones brought about by this virus. Even those of us not so directly wounded have been scarred. Many in our world, nation, community, and church have carried the cross of grief and the pain of saying goodbye without the traditional resources. But as Chittister reminds us, carrying our crosses forms us as Christians just as it formed Jesus. We are invited to cultivate a sense of compassion for all those who carry their own crosses. She went on to say that sharing our crosses of suffering helps make us caring and loving people.

Ironically, it is the willingness to carry our cross and suffer with others that teaches us hope. As we move into the Easter season we are reminded that

suffering, death, and the cross do not have the final word.

The new life found in the resurrection of Jesus teaches us that new life and hope triumph. Fortunately, this year we have weather that bears the signs of this new life. As the warm sun shone on us Easter morning we were greeted with the sounds of singing birds and the blossoming of flowers. I suspect I was not the only one moved by our Easter service this past Sunday. The beautiful lilies and flowers, the bright paraments, and the wonderful music filled the sanctuary as we gathered for worship. The joy was tangible as we remembered last Easter, probably the first time in our congregation’s history when we were unable to gather for public worship on this holy day. It was truly a joyous day! Such joy and hope make it possible to carry our crosses. The resurrection of Jesus reminds us daily that suffering and death do not have the final word. The Lord is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

In peace, joy, and hope,
Pastor Karen



Friendship Home Stuff the Bus April 5th - 18th

From April 5th – 18th, Friendship Home will host their **22st Annual Stuff the Bus**, the second time as a virtual experience due to COVID-19. Although the look and feel may be different again this year, the need has not changed for essential items to help the over 1,500 women and children that Friendship Home serves each year.

Visit friendshiphome.org to shop for items and make your monetary donation as victims of domestic violence work to rebuild their lives. Thank you for your support!

This I Know: Finance Notes

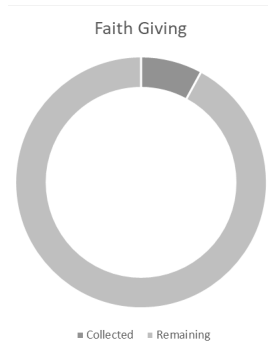
**“And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good.”
Romans 8:28**

Over \$2,300 was collected for the Disciples Week of Compassion offering that directly aides those most in need around the world. THANK YOU for your generous support!

So far this year, our expenses have exceeded our income by just over \$19,000. The first two months for 2021 were much colder and snowier than usual, which caused heating and snow removal expenses to be higher than expected, and we have had some emergency boiler repairs. Pledges are also running behind for the year.

Faith giving is lagging over 60% less than what is needed. Faith Giving needs to be more than just contributing a little every fifth Sunday. Faith Giving is necessary to support and sustain the basic operation and ministries of First Christian Church every week. A monthly average of \$65 per family would be all it takes to meet our 2021 Faith Giving Goal. As of March 28, we have received \$3,820 in Faith Giving.

Dark Grey: Received
Light Grey: Remaining



WELCOME VISITORS

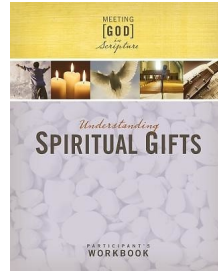
The following people have recently visited and shared in Sunday morning services:

Chris Brown
Diane & Charles Zabokrtsky
Alli Martinez and Family

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

Don't Forget SCRIP

See Donna after worship or send an email if you are interested in SCRIP. We have several cards on hand. Remember, SCRIP is a win-win for local businesses and First Christian Church.



Spiritual Gifts Study Wednesdays During Easter tide

In her book *Called to Question: A Spiritual Memoir*, Benedictine nun Joan Chittister explores the ideas of work and vocation. We all seek fulfillment, we want to use our God-given gifts, and we yearn to discern and fulfill our purpose in life. As we grow and mature, we may discover that our God-given gifts and our purpose grow and change as well. This will be particularly true as we move past our experiences with COVID-19. This past year has undoubtedly changed us individually as it has changed the world.

So, let's take some time and make some space to explore our God-given gifts and calling. Perhaps you have explored the topic of spiritual gifts before, or this may be a new opportunity. As we move through the Easter season, Pastor Karen wants to lead the church in "Understanding Spiritual Gifts." Tentative time is 6:00 pm on Wednesdays, format TBD depending on participants needs.

Suggested Schedule of Classes

- April 7-Introduction to "Shaped by God"
- April 14-Reading Week (Karen at Pastor's Retreat)
- April 21-Session 1 "To Equip the Saints"
- April 28-Session 2 "There's Only One You"
- May 5-Session 3 "Beyond the List of Ordinary Gifts"
- May 12-Session 4 "Till All Come to Maturity"
- May 19-Session 5 "With a Little Help from My Friends"
- May 26-Session 6 "Not Hearers Only"
- June 2-What Now? (optional session)

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.



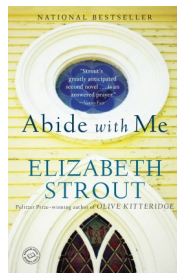
STEPHEN MINISTRY

"Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth."

1 John 3:18

Book Club News

Book Club will meet again Friday May 1 at 9:30 am at Kristi Bowker's home and via Zoom. Address and link information have been sent, check your email!



Our book for discussion is:
Abide with Me
by Elizabeth Strout

Some of the upcoming titles to be discussed include:
The Tattooist of Auschwitz by Heather Morris
The Fountains of Silence by Ruth Sepetys

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.

FCC Social Media!



Each week FCC is posting new pictures, videos, and links to great worship music. Look for First Christian Church on Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube for new content every week. Get connected!

WE NEED YOU!



Are you interested in volunteering at First Christian Church? The following teams will be seeking new members in 2021:

Membership
Education
Finance

Property
Hospitality/Meals
Outreach

Leadership is essential for First Christian Church to best serve the community and to follow it's call to ministry in the Capitol City. Please ask Pastor Karen, Jim Blosser, or Geoff Putney if you have any questions about what each position involves.



Those Serving in April

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

4/11 Wayne Duncan
4/18 & 4/25 Elaine Parman

Elders

April 11 Connie Calver
April 18 Tom Mason
April 25 Wayne Duncan

Hallway Hospitality

April 11 Geoff Putney
April 18 Jim Christ
April 25 Rich Calver

Ushers/Greeters

April 11 Elaine Parman
April 18 John & Lindsay Swanson
April 25 D'Arcy Blosser

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!

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

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.



Prayers & Praises April 8, 2021

In the Nebraska Region:

- Faith Christian Church and Rev. Lisa Sherman
- Falls City FCC and Rev. Fay Ann Blaylock

Our Global Ministries Missionaries:

- Fiona Kendall serving in Italy

Find more information and stories about our Global Ministry partners at

www.globalministries.org



Lincoln First Christian Church Calendar of Events

Thursday, April 8- Messengers Mailed

Sunday, April 11

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

April 12th - April 16th
Pastor Karen Out of the Office

Tuesday, April 13

11:00 am Recorder Consort Rehearsal
Sanctuary

Saturday, April 17

3:00 pm Bell Tree Rehearsal - Sanctuary

Sunday, April 18

10:30 am Worship - Sanctuary
12:00 pm Virtual Coffee Fellowship - Zoom
6:00 pm Ministry Cabinet Meeting - TBD

Tuesday, April 20

9:00 am Staff Meeting - Conference Room
11:00 am Recorder Consort Rehearsal
Sanctuary

Wednesday, April 21

6:00 pm Spiritual Gifts Study - TBD

Thursday, April 22 - Messengers Mailed



Disciples Justice Ministries Working on Study

Members of the Disciples Justice Ministries Cohort Group are engaged in a Lenten Book Study of [Walter Wink's Jesus and NonViolence: A Third Way](#).

The book study grew out of a months long conversation within the DJM group about the insidious threats of online radicalization of white nationalism. Group members are gathering weekly to discuss chapters from the book that are put in conversation with contemporary articles about the threats of white nationalism and the dangers of online radicalization.

This is a pilot project, and once it is complete the Disciples Justice Ministry group will transform their experience into a curriculum guide that can be used in local congregations, small group settings, and youth group meetings.

The DJM group will complete their book study during Lent, take the Easter Season to develop the curriculum, and have a finished study guide ready for local congregations by Pentecost! We'll share more news with you as this exciting project moves forward. For more information, email missiondirector@disciplespeace.org

From www.disciples.org

A Thank You.....

Georgann Jordan called to express her gratitude for the Elders and other members of the church that have reached out with cards and a palm cross over the last few weeks. She wanted everyone to know that reaching out is very much appreciated and how special it is to be remembered by her church family here at First Christian.



Sanctuary Flowers \$45

Call the FCC Office at
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to info@fcclincoln.org