



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 May 2, 2021



Public Worship WILL be held at 10:30 am Sunday morning.

If you are not quite ready to join us for public worship, we invite you to follow along with this printed service.

Community Prayer

O God of never-ending love, we come to you this day with gratitude for all of your creation. Oh how we have missed the sun on our skin and the smell of sweet flowers when we go outside. Somehow amidst all of this beauty, there is still chaos in this world, and we need you to be with us now. Help to ease our fears and stay rooted in the true love of the world, you and your Son, Jesus Christ. When we stand in your love our fears melt away and we are able to love one another more fully. Fill us with your Spirit that it may be so. 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.

www.fcclincoln.org/youtube

Call to Worship

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

One: We come to this place where God pours out love on us.

Many: We join our voices in praise, as our fears are left behind.

One: We gather with these people, those who seek to follow Jesus,

Many: So we might walk the paths of service hand in hand.

One: We open our hearts to the gifts of the Spirit,

Many: So that grace and peace might be the fruit we bear.

Even if you are worshiping 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

Psalm 22:25-31

²⁵ From you comes my praise in the great congregation;

my vows I will pay before those who fear him.

²⁶ The poor shall eat and be satisfied;

those who seek him shall praise the LORD.

May your hearts live for ever!

²⁷ All the ends of the earth shall remember

and turn to the LORD;
and all the families of the nations shall worship before him.

²⁸ For dominion belongs to the LORD,

and he rules over the nations.

²⁹ To him, indeed, shall all who sleep in the earth bow down;

before him shall bow all who go down to the dust,
and I shall live for him.

³⁰ Posterity will serve him;
future generations will be told about the Lord,

³¹ and proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn,
saying that he has done it.

1 John 4:7-21

⁷ Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸ Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love.

⁹ God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. ¹¹ Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another.

¹² No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

¹³ By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. ¹⁴ And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Saviour of the world. ¹⁵ God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. ¹⁶ So we have known and believe the love that God has for us.

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. ¹⁷ Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgement, because as he is, so are we in this world.

¹⁸ There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. ¹⁹ We love because he first loved us. ²⁰ Those who say, 'I love God', and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. ²¹ The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

Reflection

Meditation for the 5th Sunday of Easter

“What Are You Afraid Of?”

What are you afraid of? Most of us are afraid of something, perhaps many things. Many of us fear tangible things, like certain animals. I had a friend that was so frightened by spiders that she would not even say the word, she always referred to them as “eight-leggeds.” For some people their fears border on terror. For many of us our fears are not so tangible; we might be frightened of certain settings or situations like heights or small spaces. Even the seemingly fearless have some fears. At our recent pastors retreat we explored the personality tool called the Enneagram. As I learned more about my type, I came to realize that one of my fears is being unprepared. I get anxious and fearful if I have the sense that I am not adequately prepared. Generally this serves me well, but sometimes this fear can get in the way. I always have to have plans, alternate plans, and contingency plans. It can get a bit cumbersome. As we continue to deal with COVID-19, I suspect many of us have become keenly aware of our fears. Coping with the pandemic may have stirred up old fears or brought on new ones. We live in fearful times.

Admitting to and dealing with our fears can be uncomfortable. But, fear is not a bad thing in and of itself. What do we mean by fear? The definition of fear is a strong emotion caused by expectation or awareness of danger or threat to the self. Sheldon Kopp in his book *Raise Your Right Hand Against Fear: Extend the Other in Compassion* distinguished between real and imagined danger. An awareness of real danger keeps us from harm. Imagined fear is an outgrowth of past experiences, legitimate but no longer true. Gerald Jampolsky noted in a similar book entitled *Love is Letting Go of Fear* that fear keeps us in the past, causes us to compare, causes us to judge, leads us to consumerism, and causes us to find fault.

Our epistle lesson for today invites us to take a different path. We are invited and called to love even though it seems impossible. Marianne Williamson in her book *A Course in Weightlessness* expressed this invitation and calling well when she said: “There are only two categories of thoughts: those of love and those of fear and the only way to transcend fear is to replace it with love.” In verse 18 of our epistle lesson today the author said: “There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love.” This verse has resonated with me and troubled me at the same time. I have wondered what perfection in love really meant. When I think of the world “perfect” I think of the definition “being entirely without fault or defect: flawless satisfying all requirements: accurate, corresponding to an ideal standard or abstract concept.” However, the Greek used by the author of this epistle, *teleos*, really means “completed” or “whole.” So, I think the author is talking about “complete” love or love in its wholeness.

So, how do we live out love in its fullness? We are able to love when we are grounded in God. Jampolsky remarked that we find and nurture love in four ways: by living in the present, through forgiving and letting go of the past, by looking outside ourselves, and by using our imagination. Williamson also remarked that “love casts out fear just as light casts out the darkness.” Our fears will remain but they need not have the final word in our lives and in our world. The love of God brought to perfection in Christ is the kind of love that can cast out fear. Empowered and emboldened by Christ we can live lives dominated by love and not by fear.

AMEN

Prayers & Praises

May 2, 2021

In Our Church Family:

- Georgann Jordan
- Arlene Heimer
- Marvin Thurber
- William Deterding
- Rae Hope Putney
- Jessica Vocasek
- Nancy & Leo Jelinek
- Vic Burgess
- Donna Baker
- Polly Putney

Relatives:

- Friends and Family of Vic Burgess
- Rick Pickel, for entering hospice care, 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 his current tour of duty is coming to an end and he is heading home, cousin of D'Arcy Blosser
- John Swanson's father, in nursing home with COVID-19
- Phyllis Jones, hospitalized with COVID, cousin of Dick Pickel
- Mark Carpenter, with colon cancer, brother of Jill Carpenter and Dick & Roxie Pickel
- Roger Christianson, with stage 4 cancer, father of Brady Christianson
- Our sympathy to Kara Madison, upon the recent passing of her father
- Kristen, sister of Leigh Lestina

Friends:

- Karen, during cancer treatments, co-worker of Rhonda Ball
- Tallu Schuyler Quinn, diagnosed with glioblastoma, prayers for healing, friend of Kaleo and D'Arcy Blosser
- Cedric Gibb, healing prayers, friend of Cec Burkhart
- Tomi, healing prayers for cancer diagnosis, friend of Sara Lugin
- Carson Mousel, 13-year-old grandson of Bob and Eileen Kunz, from Mildred Brockemeyer
- Judy Nord, with bile duct cancer, friend of Dick & Roxie Pickel
- Betty Finck, praise for improvements, friend of Pastor Karen

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:

Hastings FCC and Rev. Dustin Bower

Our Global Ministries Missionaries:

Jeff Mensendiek serving in Japan

Find more information and stories about

our Global Ministry partners at www.globalministries.org



Song of the Week

Gather Us In

Text & Music: Marty Haugen, 1979

Here in this place the new light is streaming;
now is the darkness vanished away;
see in this space our fears and our dreamings
brought here to you in the light of this day.

Gather us in, the lost and forsaken;
gather us in, the blind and the lame;
call to us now, and we shall awaken;
we shall arise at the sound of our name.

We are the young, our lives are a mystery.
We are the old who yearn for your face.
We have been sung throughout all of history,
called to be light to the whole human race.

Gather us in, the rich and the haughty;
gather us in, the proud and the strong;
give us a heart, so meek and so lowly;
give us the courage to enter the song.

Here we will take the wine and the water;
here we will take the bread of new birth.
Here you shall call your sons and your daughters,
call us anew to be salt for the earth.

Give us to drink the wine of compassion;
give us to eat the bread that is you;
nourish us well, and teach us to fashion
lives that are holy and hearts that are true.

Not in the dark of buildings confining,
not in some heaven light years away;
here in this place the new light is shining;
now is the kingdom, and now is the day.

Gather us in and hold us forever;
gather us in and make us your own;
gather us in, all peoples together,
fire of love in our flesh and our bone.