



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 9, 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

As we prepare ourselves to worship you this day, we thank you, God, for showing us the way. Just as Jesus appeared to his friends and disciples after his resurrection, he continues to show up for us in our daily lives, if only we look for him. Help us to be complete disciples of Christ, to worship *and* to serve, to adore Jesus *and* take action when he needs us to be his hands and feet in the world. May the Holy Spirit be the moving force in our lives, encouraging us to be bold and live life anew as Christians in this world. We pray this in the name of 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.*

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 gather in this place, some empty, some filled, some whole, some broken:

Many: Yearning for the Holy Spirit to fill us.

One: We come, with these ordinary people, who have shown us the way:

Many: Trusting that God will continue to illuminate our hearts.

One: We surround the Table of grace so that we might be fed by the bread of life:

Many: That fed, we may serve others; that healed, we may bring hope to the world.

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

Acts 1:1-11

¹ In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning ² until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. ³ After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over the course of forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. ⁴ While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. ‘This’, he said, ‘is what you have heard from me; ⁵ for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.’

⁶ So when they had come together, they asked him, ‘Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?’ ⁷ He replied, ‘It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.’ ⁹ When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. ¹⁰ While he was going and they were gazing up towards heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. ¹¹ They said, ‘Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up towards heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.’

Luke 24:44-53

⁴⁴ Then he said to them, ‘These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.’ ⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, ⁴⁶ and he said to them, ‘Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹ And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.’

⁵⁰ Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. ⁵¹ While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. ⁵² And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; ⁵³ and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

Reflection

Meditation for the 6th Sunday of Easter

“A New Way of Being”

At the end of this month it will be two years since the death of my mom. Sometimes it still surprises me when those moments of grief arise. Lately, I have been thinking about the weeks leading up to her death. During Holy Week that year, I think I shocked her doctor when I called and asked if he had thought about hospice for my mom. There was a short pause and I think I heard him take a deep breath. He seemed a bit relieved when he replied that he had thought of this, but I think he was not sure if my brother or I were ready to consider this level of care. We made plans to begin hospice care right away. As I think back on that time I am not sure who was preparing whom; whether my mom was preparing us or my brother and I were preparing her. But, I think the intentional time and space for preparation made a lot of difference for us all.

I wonder if the Disciples had a similar experience with Jesus. Our scripture lessons today seem to demonstrate some of the efforts Jesus made to prepare the Disciples for what would happen next. Their journey together had already taken them in unexpected directions. Who could have imagined Jesus' brutal death on a cross? Even more unimaginable was his resurrection. All that was a lot to take in and now they had to prepare for one more unusual departure. He would not just depart, he would ascend.

Although we do not make much of the ascension in Protestant circles, it is obviously important enough to show up twice in the Lukan narratives of the Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles. The idea of bodily ascension was nothing new to the faithful then. The Hebrew Scriptures included one of the most famous ascension stories, familiar to the faith of Jesus' time and ours, the story of Elijah. This ascension story has been retold in various art forms, music, and visual arts. So, why do the authors of our scripture lessons today share a similar story about Jesus? I suspect these passages hope to remind us that things were about to change. Jesus would be

leaving, but he would still be present with them in a new and radically different way. He had conquered death but he could not remain with them in this bodily form. With his ascension Jesus would now be with them in Spirit.

In an article about the ascension of Jesus, Kevin Scott Fleming, pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Evansville, Indiana, suggested that the ascension continues to be important for us for several reasons. A central issue in this event was Jesus' Exaltation and the Church's call to worship the Exalted Christ. Another important point was the idea that things have changed for Jesus, for the Disciples, and for us. Jesus was no longer in a human body but He was, and still is, present. The Disciples still had to go on. They had to adapt and change. Now they would have to come together as the Church. Now they would have to take up the mission of God to love and serve. Fleming said it well: Christ's work was now their work and, by extension, our work too.

Just like those who witnessed this event, we are invited to be empowered by this new presence of God and Christ through the Holy Spirit. Fleming went on to point out that the ascension lifts up one of the great challenges that the church has always faced. We tend to see our call to love and service as an either/or proposition; adoration or action, worship or service, contemplation or engagement. The radical change illustrated by the ascension makes it clear, it is not a choice between two different elements. All of these elements are part of the life of a Christian. Jesus' ascension reminds us that we are called to adoration and action, worship and service, contemplation and engagement. The ascension of Christ brought about a new way of being for Jesus, for the Disciples, and for us.

AMEN

Prayers & Praises

May 9, 2021

In Our Church Family:

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

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*
- Our sympathy to the Dockhorn family, *upon the passing of Rick's 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 Brockmeyer*
- Judy Nord, *with bile duct cancer, friend of Dick & Roxie Pickel*
- Betty Finck, *praise for improvements, friend of Pastor Karen*

Our Timothys:

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

In the Nebraska Region:

Havelock Christian Church and Rev. Rob Welch

Our Global Ministries Missionaries:

Karen Campbell-Nelson serving in Indonesia

Find more information and stories about our Global Ministry partners at

www.globalministries.org



Song of the Week

Crown Him With Many Crowns

Text: Matthew Bridges, 1851

Music: George Job Elvey, 1868

Crown him with many crowns,
the Lamb upon his throne;
hark, how the heavenly anthem drowns
all music but its own!
Awake, my soul and sing
of him who died for thee,
and hail him as thy matchless King
through all eternity.

Crown him the Lord of love;
behold his hands and side,
rich wounds, yet visible above,
in beauty glorified:
no angel in the sky
can fully bear that sight,
but downward bends his burning eye
at mysteries so bright.

Crown him the Lord of peace,
whose power a scepter sways
from pole to pole, that wars may cease,
absorbed in prayer and praise.
His reign shall know no end;
and round his pierced feet
fair flowers of paradise extend
their fragrance ever sweet.

Crown him the Lord of years,
the potentate of time;
creator of the rolling spheres,
ineffably sublime.
All hail, Redeemer, hail!
For thou hast died for me;
thy praise shall never, never fail
throughout eternity.

