



# First Christian Church

Disciples of Christ

430 S. 16<sup>th</sup> St. Lincoln, NE 68508 402.475.4289

## Weekly Worship

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

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**Week of June 6 2021**



### Call to Worship

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

One: On this day, we gather with thanksgiving in our hearts.

Many: For God's love is ever constant in our lives.

One: On this day, we would talk of all that is ours.

Many: Grace upon grace has been poured into our lives.

One: On this day, we would speak of what we believe.

Many: We will sing glad songs for all that God has done.

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 enter the season when the sun warms the earth, let our hearts and souls be softened to your presence. Lord, we are a house divided; every day it seems as though there is something new of us to disagree with our neighbor about. It is so hard to understand why people don't see things the way we do. Rather than continue to sow strife, God send us your Spirit so that we may be agents of unity. That instead of seeing things "our way," we start to see the world your way, the way you taught us through your Son, Jesus. May we strive for understanding, peace, and unity, in our community and in our world. Amen.

*Check out our weekly video at [www.fcclincoln.org](http://www.fcclincoln.org), First Christian's Facebook page, or search for First Christian Church, Lincoln, Nebraska on YouTube.*

[www.fcclincoln.org/youtube](http://www.fcclincoln.org/youtube)

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](http://fcclincoln.org) website to make an online donation via PayPal.

# Scripture Reading

## *Psalm 138*

Of David.

I give you thanks, O LORD,  
with my whole heart;  
before the gods I sing your praise;  
I bow down towards your holy temple  
and give thanks to your name for your  
steadfast love and your faithfulness;  
for you have exalted your name  
and your word above everything.  
On the day I called, you answered me,  
you increased my strength of soul.

All the kings of the earth shall  
praise you, O LORD,  
for they have heard the  
words of your mouth.  
They shall sing of the ways of the LORD,  
for great is the glory of the LORD.  
For though the LORD is high,  
he regards the lowly;  
but the haughty he perceives from far  
away.

Though I walk in the midst of trouble,  
you preserve me against the  
wrath of my enemies;  
you stretch out your hand,  
and your right hand delivers me.  
The LORD will fulfil his purpose for me;  
your steadfast love, O LORD,  
endures for ever.  
Do not forsake the work of your  
hands.

## *Mark 3:20-35*

<sup>20</sup>and the crowd came together again, so  
that they could not even eat. <sup>21</sup>When his fam-  
ily heard it, they went out to restrain him, for  
people were saying, 'He has gone out of his  
mind.' <sup>22</sup>And the scribes who came down  
from Jerusalem said, 'He has Beelzebul, and  
by the ruler of the demons he casts out de-  
mons.' <sup>23</sup>And he called them to him, and  
spoke to them in parables, 'How can Satan  
cast out Satan? <sup>24</sup>If a kingdom is divided  
against itself, that kingdom cannot  
stand. <sup>25</sup>And if a house is divided against it-  
self, that house will not be able to  
stand. <sup>26</sup>And if Satan has risen up against  
himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but  
his end has come. <sup>27</sup>But no one can enter a  
strong man's house and plunder his property  
without first tying up the strong man; then  
indeed the house can be plundered.

<sup>28</sup>'Truly I tell you, people will be forgiven  
for their sins and whatever blasphemies they  
utter; <sup>29</sup>but whoever blasphemes against the  
Holy Spirit can never have forgiveness, but is  
guilty of an eternal sin'— <sup>30</sup>for they had said,  
'He has an unclean spirit.'

<sup>31</sup>Then his mother and his brothers came;  
and standing outside, they sent to him and  
called him. <sup>32</sup>A crowd was sitting around  
him; and they said to him, 'Your mother and  
your brothers and sisters are outside, asking  
for you.' <sup>33</sup>And he replied, 'Who are my moth-  
er and my brothers?' <sup>34</sup>And looking at those  
who sat around him, he said, 'Here are my  
mother and my brothers! <sup>35</sup>Whoever does the  
will of God is my brother and sister and  
mother.'

# Reflection

## *Meditation for 2nd Sunday after Pentecost*

### “Agents of Healing and Forgiveness”

As I read over the passages for today, I was particularly struck by our Gospel lesson from Mark. When Jesus shared the first parable which began in verse 24, I felt a deep resonance. Jesus said “If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand.” I was not the only one who felt that resonance with our text and our own times. John Wurster, pastor of St. Philip Presbyterian Church in Houston, shared a similar awareness in his article for the Presbyterian Outlook. Wurster pointed out:

His (Jesus) observation that a house divided against itself cannot stand not only gave Abraham Lincoln a moral foundation for the healing of the nation, it also serves as an indictment of the seemingly growing divisions in our common life. From the usefulness of masks to the necessity of vaccines, from the conduct of police to the definition of infrastructure, from the legitimacy of elections to the role of the press, dissension deepens in our life together. How much more division can we endure before the house falls and crushes everyone?

Wherever one stands on any or all of those issues may vary, but the one thing on which we can all agree is the presence of division. So, what binds us together? Where can we find healing and unity? Jesus gave us some guidelines for that very pursuit. As his followers we are invited to listen on. Wurster went on to say that the second parable of Jesus offers us more guidance.

The strong man is the root cause that must be addressed in order for meaningful progress and lasting change to happen. The strong man can be a structure or a stereotype, a prejudice or a falsehood, a memory or a regret. The strong man is that which holds us captive, continually exerting influence and accumulating power. Whatever form it may take, tying up the strong man

requires persistent courage and committed truth-telling, following the example of Jesus himself.

Jesus did not stop here with this final parable, he went on to talk about the heart of the matter, forgiveness, which is something that binds all humanity together. But Jesus did this in a way that was troubling for many and is still a challenge for us. Later in our passage Jesus went on to talk about blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, the unforgiveable sin. This verse has always troubled me; I have been sure that at some point in my life I probably did this, albeit unknowingly, and will never be forgiven. Fortunately, commentator Professor William L. Lane explained this passage in a way that made sense to me. Lane explained that this portion of the Gospel has to be taken in context. Lane said: “blasphemy is an expression of defiant hostility towards God.” Jesus intended to challenge those who said that he was motivated by Satan. Their refusal to recognize the reign of God in the life and ministry of Jesus was blasphemous. Their denial of the power and greatness of God as shown through Jesus was basically blasphemy. Here, blasphemy was the conscious and deliberate rejection of the saving power and grace of God released through Jesus’ words and actions.

Finally, as this passage drew to a close, Jesus lifted up one more quality of unity. What binds us together is the awareness that we are all part of God’s family. “And looking at those who sat around him, he said, ‘Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother.’”

Finding and bringing about healing in the midst of our divisions will be a challenge. It will take work, courage, commitment, and persistence. As family we can do it. Jesus invites us to join in the work of healing and forgiveness and invites us to do so as part of his family.

AMEN

# Prayers & Praises

## June 6, 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
- Tricia Gangwish, prayers for fighting breast cancer, aunt of Lindsay Swanson
- 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
- 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 Burkhardt
- Tomi, healing prayers for cancer diagnosis, friend of Sara Lugn
- Judy Nord, with bile duct cancer, friend of Dick & Roxie Pickel
- Jim Bottolfsen, for stage 3 lung cancer, friend of the Vocaseks

### Our Timothys:

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

### In the Nebraska Region:

- Cotner College Education for Ldsp Ministries and ELM Program

### Our Global Ministries Missionaries:

- Sean Amato serving in Egypt

Find more information and stories about our Global Ministry partners at [www.globalministries.org](http://www.globalministries.org)



# Song of the Week

## For the Beauty of the Earth

Text: Folliot Sandford Pierpoint, 1864

Music: Conrad Kocher, 1838

For the beauty of the earth,  
for the glory of the skies,  
for the love which from our birth  
over and around us lies:

Lord of all, to thee we raise  
this our hymn of grateful praise.

For the wonder of each hour  
of the day and of the night,  
hill and vale, and tree and flower,  
sun and moon, and stars of light:

Lord of all, to thee we raise  
this our hymn of grateful praise.

For the joy of ear and eye,  
for the heart and mind's delight,  
for the mystic harmony  
linking sense to sound and sight:

Lord of all, to thee we raise  
this our hymn of grateful praise.

For the joy of human love,  
brother, sister, parent, child,  
friends on earth and friends above,  
for all gentle thoughts and mild:

Lord of all, to thee we raise  
this our hymn of grateful praise.

For thyself, best gift divine  
to the world so freely given;  
for that great, great love of thine,  
peace on earth and joy in heaven:

Lord of all, to thee we raise  
this our hymn of grateful praise.

