



# 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

**Rev. Dr. Karen Moritz**, Pastor

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**Week of August 8, 2021**

## Call to Worship

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

One: In these moments, in this family of faith, the God of gentleness gathers us together:

Many: Hoping that our self-righteous anger might become passionate justice for others.

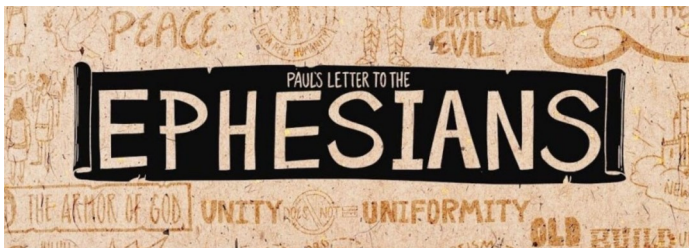
One: In this place, in that Body shaped by his grace, Christ, the Bread of life, calls us to service:

Many: Hoping our comfort level of complacency might be transformed into compassion for the needy all around us.

One: In our hearts, our mouths, our actions, the Spirit of holiness gifts us with truth:

Many: Hoping our faltering, fumbling words might be transfigured into good news.

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: Even if you are worshipping 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.  
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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

Loving God of forgiveness, thank you for being our ultimate role model, for showing us how to live in love and truth. It is a gift to be challenged and stretched, though it may not feel like it, to be encouraged to grow and learn from one another. May we become imitators of you and your Son, Jesus, as we learn to forgive as we have been forgiven and love as we have been loved. Let our anger not turn into sin. May we give up our pride and treat one another tenderheartedly. Give us the courage to speak truthfully to those we encounter, and to do so with grace. We pray that we use our words for good and not for evil; we pray to resemble Jesus with all our hearts. 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)

# Scripture Reading

## *Psalm 130*

A Song of Ascents.

<sup>1</sup> Out of the depths I cry to you,  
O LORD.

<sup>2</sup> Lord, hear my voice!  
Let your ears be attentive  
to the voice of my supplications!

<sup>3</sup> If you, O LORD, should mark iniquities,  
Lord, who could stand?

<sup>4</sup> But there is forgiveness with you,  
so that you may be revered.

<sup>5</sup> I wait for the LORD, my soul waits,  
and in his word I hope;

<sup>6</sup> my soul waits for the Lord  
more than those who watch for the  
morning,  
more than those who watch for the  
morning.

<sup>7</sup> O Israel, hope in the LORD!  
For with the LORD there is steadfast  
love,  
and with him is great power to re-  
deem.

<sup>8</sup> It is he who will redeem Israel  
from all its iniquities.

## *Ephesians 4:25-5:2*

<sup>25</sup> So then, putting away falsehood, let all of us speak the truth to our neighbors, for we are members of one another. <sup>26</sup> Be angry but do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, <sup>27</sup> and do not make room for the devil. <sup>28</sup> Thieves must give up stealing; rather let them labor and work honestly with their own hands, so as to have something to share with the needy. <sup>29</sup> Let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but only what is useful for building up, as there is need, so that your words may give grace to those who hear. <sup>30</sup> And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with which you were marked with a seal for the day of redemption. <sup>31</sup> Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, together with all malice, <sup>32</sup> and be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you.

<sup>1</sup> Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, <sup>2</sup> and live in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

# Reflection

## *Meditation for 11th Sunday after Pentecost*

### “Called to be Imitators of God”

Throughout my life I have struggled with the awareness that I am a lot like my mom. As children we often imitate our parents; we may take on their attitudes and mannerisms. Often as we grow to be teenagers, we work hard to be different than our parents, wanting to assert our own unique personality. As we grow into adulthood we become more able to see our parents as they are, faults and all. When we become able to see our parents as the flawed and special people they are, we may struggle with the ways in which we are like them and, we hope, different than them. As I grew older, I became convinced that I was very different than my mom. Now, I struggle with the awareness that I have become more like her. I have choices now, I can emphasize the good qualities I admired in her and find ways to deal with the challenging ways in which we are alike. For better or worse, as we mature we have choices to make. How will we imitate and embody our parents; the good, the bad, and the ugly. Even after the death of our parents, this struggle continues, perhaps for the remainder of our lives.

The author of Ephesians invites us to consider our calling to be “imitators of God.” We all come to that invitation with different opinions about what that would look like. In her reflections for the *Presbyterian Outlook*, Whitney Wilkinson Arreche, a PC (USA) minister in Texas, suggests that we often move to the end of this text before pondering the earlier verses. As good Christians and imitators of God, we often jump immediately to forgiveness which comes at the end of our passage today. Whether we are ready or not, we are often pressed to forgive whenever we are hurt. What would happen if we contemplate the portion of our passage today that precedes that injunction? As the passage draws to a close the author urges us “to be imitators of God.” In the long list that precedes this invitation, it is so easy to focus on the imperative to forgive without thinking about all that comes before it. Arreche summarized the text well:

- ◇ Put away falsehood. Speak the truth.
- ◇ Be angry. Do not sin, and do not make room for the devil.
- ◇ Give up stealing. Work honestly and share.

- ◇ Let no evil talk come from your mouths. Give grace to those who hear.
- ◇ Do not grieve the Holy Spirit.
- ◇ Put away bitterness, wrath, anger, wrangling, slander, and malice.
- ◇ Be kind and tenderhearted.
- ◇ And only then: Forgive.
- ◇ Imitate God. Live in love.

Just as learning to imitate our parents is a life-long journey, so is learning to imitate God. It is a process that takes us through all these steps. I have come to realize that I often imitate the characteristics of my mom that I do not like: struggles to admit and deal with anger, tendencies toward bitterness, allowing my fears and anxieties to consume me. I have also learned that I imitate some of the more noble qualities of my mom as well: independence, self-reliance, intelligence, and poise. I will have a life-long struggle dealing with the challenging components of my personality and strengthening the more positive side.

The key difference, however, is the reality that as we strive to imitate God, we have Christ as our example and guide. With God’s strength we can move through this challenging process. Just like Christ, anger may at times be an appropriate response as long as it does not lead us to separation from God or others. At times we may need to speak the truth although it is difficult and unwelcome by others. In time we are invited to come to forgiveness and love. Just like Christ, we are invited to embrace our full humanity, the good, the bad, and the ugly. But with Christ’s love and guidance, we can move towards a fuller imitation of God that grows stronger with each passing day. “Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.”

**AMEN**

# Prayers & Praises

## August 8, 2021

### In Our Church Family:

- Georgann Jordan
- Arlene Heimer
- Marvin Thurber
- William Deterding
- Jessica Vocasek
- Nancy & Leo Jelinek
- Vic Burgess
- Harold & Donna Baker
- Polly Putney
- Sally Mason, *in Bryan West after bicycle accident*

### Relatives:

- Friends and Family of Vic Burgess
- Tricia Gangwish, *prayers for fighting breast cancer, aunt of Lindsay Swanson*
- 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*
- Gene Gangwish, *prayers for healing in the ICU, father of Lindsay Swanson*
- David Sovey, *prayers for successful surgery, grandson of Harold and Donna Baker*
- Brother and Grandfather of Tony Flack, *prayers for healing from respiratory illness and cancer, from Tony Flack*
- John and Joyce, *for safety from wildfires, brother and sister-in-law of Jim Christ*
- Lester, *for safety from hurricanes, cousin of Jim Christ*
- Greg Flack, *prayers to adjust to his new home with friends, from Tony Flack*
- Greg Ogren, *prayers for recent cancer surgery, son of LaVonne Ogren*

### 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 Lugn*
- Judy Nord, *with bile duct cancer, friend of Dick & Roxie Pickel*
- Jim Bottolfsen, *for stage 3 lung cancer, friend of the Vocaseks*
- Carson Mousel, *13-year-old grandson of Bob and Eileen Kunz, from Mildred Brockemeyer*
- Jamin and Hailey, *for the safe delivery of their baby girl, from Tony Flack*
- Our sympathy to the family of Pat Hoeft, *upon his recent passing, friends of Pastor Karen*
- Tyson and Zeke Kohl, *prayers for the loss of their mother, from Tony Flack*

### 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:

- Pawnee City First Christian Church

### Our Global Ministries Missionaries:

- Maria Abigail Hernandez serving in Japan

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



## Song of the Week

### *O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee*

Text : Washington Gladden, 1879

Music: Henry Perce Smith, 1874

O Master, let me walk with thee  
in lowly paths of service free;  
tell me thy secret; help me bear  
the strain of toil, the fret of care.

Help me the slow of heart to move  
by some clear, winning word of love;  
teach me the wayward feet to stay,  
and guide them in the homeward way.

Teach me thy patience, still with thee  
in closer, dearer company,  
in work that keeps faith sweet and strong,  
in trust that triumphs over wrong.

In hope that sends a shining ray  
far down the future's broadening way;  
in peace that only thou canst give,  
with thee, O Master, let me live.

