



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

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Week of December 12, 2021



Call to Worship

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

One: Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say Rejoice!

Many: Our joy is in the Lord who blesses us.

One: Shout for joy, for the Lord is near!

Many: Our praises ascend to God for the mighty things God has done.

One: Let your praise dance and swirl in tribute to God!

Many: Surely God blesses and saves us.
Hallelujah! Praise be to God! Amen.

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

Forgive us God, for we have strayed from the path that you have set before us. It's not as though we don't know right from wrong, or good from bad, it's just that sometimes the pressures of the world push us away from being our best selves. But we also know that you, Lord, offer us never ending grace, mercy beyond bounds, and that you understand how hard it is to be human. Of course you do, for you have been here with us in flesh and bone. As we await this moment, when you touch our lives so personally, may you fill us with the Holy Spirit to trust in you, to live righteously through that trust, and to never doubt that you are with us always. 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

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.

Scripture Reading

Isaiah 12:2-6

² Surely God is my salvation;
I will trust, and will not
be afraid,
for the LORD GOD is my
strength and my might;
he has become my salvation.

³ With joy you will draw water
from the wells of salva-
tion. ⁴ And you will say on that
day:
Give thanks to the LORD,
call on his name;
make known his deeds among
the nations;
proclaim that his name is ex-
alted.

⁵ Sing praises to the LORD, for
he has done gloriously;
let this be known in all the
earth.

⁶ Shout aloud and sing for joy,
O royal Zion,
for great in your midst is the
Holy One of Israel.

Luke 3:7-18

⁷ John said to the crowds that came out to be
baptized by him, 'You brood of vipers! Who
warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

⁸ Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin
to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our
ancestor"; for I tell you, God is able from these
stones to raise up children to Abraham. ⁹ Even
now the axe is lying at the root of the trees; eve-
ry tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is
cut down and thrown into the fire.'

¹⁰ And the crowds asked him, 'What then
should we do?' ¹¹ In reply he said to them,
'Whoever has two coats must share with anyone
who has none; and whoever has food must do
likewise.' ¹² Even tax-collectors came to be bap-
tized, and they asked him, 'Teacher, what should
we do?' ¹³ He said to them, 'Collect no more than
the amount prescribed for you.' ¹⁴ Soldiers also
asked him, 'And we, what should we do?' He
said to them, 'Do not extort money from anyone
by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied
with your wages.'

¹⁵ As the people were filled with expectation,
and all were questioning in their hearts concern-
ing John, whether he might be the Messiah,

¹⁶ John answered all of them by saying, 'I baptize
you with water; but one who is more powerful
than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the
thong of his sandals. He will baptize you
with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷ His winnowing-
fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing-floor
and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the
chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.'

¹⁸ So, with many other exhortations, he pro-
claimed the good news to the people.

Reflection

Meditation for Advent Three

“Trust and do not be Afraid”

In this hymn of praise, or doxology, from the Prophet Isaiah we have powerful words of hope. Although scholars concur that this portion of chapter 12 was probably a later addition, this hymn of praise was presented to people who were hurting and anxious. The prophet brought the word of God to people who had been in exile and were hoping to return home soon.

While not literally in exile, I suspect that many of us no longer feel at home in our world today. So much has changed and even, dare I say it, unraveled. We seem at odds with one another about so many things. Tension, strife, and stress weigh many of us down. Anxieties about new variants of COVID-19 abound and many of us still hear news of those who have died from this virus. Political, racial, and economic disparities swirl around us. Then there are the stresses that arise during the holiday season. The words of the prophet ring through the ages and resonate as powerfully for us today as they did when first proclaimed. “Surely God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid, for the Lord God is my strength and my might; he has become my salvation.” As we celebrate the love and joy of this season, our hearts yearn for the sense of trust and confidence that the prophet proclaimed.

But, on the heels of these powerful words of love and joy, come the words of John the Baptist. Although grounded in the trust and confidence of Isaiah, John also brought words of challenge. John reminded those listening that we each have a part in this journey with God. The trust and joy that Isaiah spoke of came at a high price: the exile of an entire nation. The ancient Israelites had been through a lot and had often strayed from

God’s path. John reminded his listeners that although they had wandered from God’s path, God continued to call them home. God longed for an acknowledgment from the people that they had strayed and offered them a way to draw closer to God once again. Through the acknowledgment of their sin, they were called to repentance and forgiveness. They could no longer rely on their heritage to bring them onto the path of God. John reminded them that their lives and behavior would demonstrate for themselves and others that they journeyed with God.

Various people came to John seeking specific guidance regarding the path of repentance. He offered each of them a response tailored to their life’s calling. Although each response was specific, the themes of love and joy were present in each of them. John reminded them that each was called to a path that showed concern for those in need and a sense of justice for those they encountered. Little by little they were invited to help create the kind of world the prophet sang about.

John, like Isaiah, ultimately proclaimed the Good News to those who were hurting, fearful, and anxious. The heart of that Good News was the reminder that God was in their midst and would show this even more tangibly in the incarnation. We are blessed because this is still the heart of the Good News today: God is in our midst and comes to us in the advent of the Messiah. Despite the challenges of life, we can confidently trust in God’s promises and God’s presence.

AMEN

Prayers & Praises December 12, 2021

In Our Church Family:

- Arlene Heimer
- Marvin Thurber
- William Deterding
- Alice Peterson, *returning home from the hospital this week*
- Vic Burgess
- Harold & Donna Baker
- Polly Putney
- Jessica Vocasek

Relatives:

- Friends and Family of Vic Burgess
- Greg Ogren, *prayers for healing, still ill after surgeries and treatments, son of LaVonne Ogren*
- Mark Carpenter, *with colon cancer, brother of Jill Carpenter and Dick & Roxie Pickel*
- Lorie Chrastel, *Mark Carpenter's fiancée, prayers for recovery from a stroke*
- Roger Christianson, *with stage 4 cancer, father of Brady Christianson*
- Mother of John Swanson, *prayers for health as she is ill with COVID-19*
- Emily Carpenter, *aunt of Carpenters & Pickels is in hospice due to Covid in May*
- Gerald Deterding, *prayers for healing from cancer and pneumonia, father of William Deterding*

Friends:

- Tallu Schuyler Quinn, *prayers for diagnosis of glioblastoma, friend of Kaleo and D'Arcy Blosser*
- Cedric Gibb, *healing prayers, friend of Cec Burkhardt*
- 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*
- Kristen Moore, *daughter-in-law of Ken & Susan Moore, wife of James, prayers for healing from liver transplant*

Our Timothys:

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

In the Nebraska Region:

- Prayers for the Disciples General Church

Our Global Ministries Missionaries:

- Victor Makari serving in Israel/Palestine

Find more information and stories about our Global Ministry partners at www.globalministries.org



Song of the Week

Come Now, O Prince of Peace

Words & Music: Geonyong Lee, 1988

Come now, O Prince of Peace;
make us one body.
Come, O Lord Jesus;
reconcile all people.

Come now, God of love;
make us one body.
Come, O Lord Jesus;
reconcile all people.

Come now and set us free,
O God, our Savior.
Come, O Lord Jesus;
reconcile all people.

Come, hope of unity;
make us one body.
Come, O Lord Jesus;
reconcile all people.

Save The Dates

A Festival of Lessons & Carols

Sunday, December 19th 10:30 am
Sanctuary

Christmas Eve Worship

Friday, December 24th
6:00 pm Sanctuary

Christmas Hymn Sing

Sunday, December 26th
10:30 am Sanctuary

