



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 March 13, 2022



Call to Worship

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

One: Wait for the Lord; be strong!

Many: The promises of God will never be broken.

One: With God as our light, what is there to fear?

Many: The promises of God will never be broken.

One: Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

Many: The promises of God will never be broken.

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.

Prayer of Confession

We confess, O God, that we have broken the bonds of harmony that you created for us. We have cut off our true selves by listening to the voices that point out our shortcomings. Gracious God, we try to live as an example when we notice all the things we are doing wrong. Forgive us, O God, when we give in to those voices and feel inadequate. Our negative thoughts and insecurities keep us from the harmony and hope you promise. Help us hope when hope seems hopeless. Let us be hopeful in your name for others caught in the worlds of hopelessness. 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

Genesis 15:1-18

¹After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, 'Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great.' ²But Abram said, 'O Lord GOD, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?' ³And Abram said, 'You have given me no offspring, and so a slave born in my house is to be my heir.' ⁴But the word of the LORD came to him, 'This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir.' ⁵He brought him outside and said, 'Look towards heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them.' Then he said to him, 'So shall your descendants be.' ⁶And he believed the LORD; and the LORD reckoned it to him as righteousness.

⁷Then he said to him, 'I am the LORD who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess.' ⁸But he said, 'O Lord GOD, how am I to know that I shall possess it?' ⁹He said to him, 'Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtle-dove, and a young pigeon.' ¹⁰He brought him all these and cut them in two, laying each half over against the other; but he did not cut the birds in two. ¹¹And when birds of prey came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

¹²As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and a deep and terrifying darkness descended upon him. ¹³Then the LORD said to Abram, 'Know this for certain, that your offspring shall be aliens in a land that is not theirs, and shall be slaves there, and they shall be oppressed for four hundred years; ¹⁴but I will bring judgement on the nation that they serve, and afterwards they shall come out with great possessions. ¹⁵As for yourself, you shall go to your ancestors in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age. ¹⁶And they shall come back here in the fourth generation; for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.'

¹⁷When the sun had gone down and it was dark, a smoking fire-pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces. ¹⁸On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, 'To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates.'

Luke 13:31-35

³¹At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to him, 'Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you.' ³²He said to them, 'Go and tell that fox for me, "Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work. ³³Yet today, tomorrow, and the next day I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed away from Jerusalem." ³⁴Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! ³⁵See, your house is left to you. And I tell you, you will not see me until the time comes when you say, "Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord." '

Reflection

Meditation for the 2nd Sunday in Lent

“I Would Rather be a Hen than a Fox”

This is difficult for me to say, but I would rather be a hen than a fox. Since childhood I have always loved foxes. I still have the birthday card I received as a child that was a picture of a fox. I have always thought they were such pretty animals and so clever, too. I have often been told that I would feel differently if I was a hen. People with hen houses describe foxes in a much different way than I do. Foxes are called cunning not clever. They take that which does not belong to them. They use stealth to sneak up on their prey. Their prey are often the young of other animals, like baby chicks.

These latter descriptions probably explain the use of the image of a fox to describe many political leaders today and throughout history. Jesus described Herod as a fox, undoubtedly for the many reasons already mentioned. Herod was experienced as cunning and cruel by those whom he ruled and by family and friends alike. Many were aware that Herod greedily took that which did not belong to him. He preyed on the weak and the vulnerable.

In our passage today, Jesus used the image of a protective mother hen to describe himself, quite the contrast to the fox Herod. While the imagery of the mother hen was traditionally used in reference to God throughout the Hebrew Scriptures, Jesus used it here to describe his role with the people of God. Ironically, the very people that Jesus vowed to protect would be some of the same people who betrayed him later. Jesus willingly took on this role of the hen.

In a way, this choice has often puzzled me. I know there are those who love hens and chickens and even collect figurines of them. I think I picked up a little of my mother's fear of birds, particularly hens and chickens. I remember going into the dark hen house on the farm we rented when I was a child. I did not like it. I could hear the birds moving about and clucking, I could smell them, but I could not really see where they were and this unsettled me. I also noticed that it was foolish to disturb the chicks because the mother hens would fiercely protect them, which generally meant pecking at the intruder. But, when I am able to push aside these childhood memories, I have to admit that being so fiercely protected and sheltered under the warm wings of the mother hen must have been an enviable position for the young chicks.

The component of this passage that is often missed is the backdrop of violence. Jesus lived in a violent time which was brought home by the author of this Gospel as Jesus was threatened by the powers that be. This must have been a real wilderness experience for Jesus when he realized that his very life was being threatened. Jesus's willingness to love and protect the most vulnerable was God's call on his life, but it was not received well by Herod.

Sadly, this environment of violence is not something relegated to the past. We continue to live in the wilderness of violent times when the foxes in our world strive to use their cunning and stealth to hurt others, particularly the vulnerable. Perhaps it is this very awareness that makes this passage so striking. In these uncertain and fearful times, it is definitely comforting to remember how protectively and gently God cares for us. In a world that seems filled with cunning foxes who wreak havoc upon the innocent, we yearn to know that God sides with the protective mother hens.

In addition to comfort, this story also reminds us of the call on our lives to be the protective mother hens in our world and not the foxes. How can we protect the hurting and the vulnerable? In response to the havoc wrought by the foxes of this world, we continue to see protective mother hens all around us. Alongside the horror, we see image of those who step up to bring comfort and care to those in need. We are aware of all those around the world who have contributed to the various agencies helping in this crisis. We know of demonstrations around the globe supporting the Ukrainian people. Prayers continue to rise to God from all over the world. Many call out for justice and seek to find ways to assure it.

Although I still love foxes, I have to admit that I would rather be a hen than a fox. Our world today certainly needs more mother hens ready and willing to protect and care for the vulnerable.

AMEN



Prayers & Praises

March 13, 2022

In Our Church Family:

- Arlene Heimer
- Marvin Thurber
- William Deterding
- Vic Burgess
- Our sympathy to the Effle family, upon the passing of Doug's mother Dianne
- Harold & Donna Baker
- Polly Putney
- Jessica Vocasek
- Lois Frogge

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
- Annie DeLosSantos, with liver cancer diagnosis, sister of Vince Ortega

Friends:

- Our sympathy for the family and friends of Tallu Schuyler Quinn, former Kamp Kaleo Peace Intern and founder of the The Nashville Food Project; Tallu passed away on Feb. 17 after a nearly 2 year battle with glioblastoma
- Cedric Gibb, healing prayers, friend of Cec Burkhardt
- Carson Mousel, grandson of Bob and Eileen Kunz, from Mildred Brockemeyer
- Dr. Bob Kunz, prayers for healing after second surgery for pancreatic cancer

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:

- All Chaplains in Nebraska

Our Global Ministries Missionaries:

- Our mission coworkers in Kenya

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



Song of the Week

Loving Spirit

Words: Shirley Erena Murry, 1986

Music: Corner's Gross Catholisch Gesangbush, 1631

Loving Spirit, loving Spirit,
you have chosen me to be,
you have drawn me to your wonder,
you have set your sign on me.

Like a mother you enfold me,
hold my life within your own,
feed me with your very body,
form me of your flesh and bone.

Like a father you protect me,
teach me the discerning eye,
hoist me up upon your shoulder,
let me see the world from high.

Friend and lover, in your closeness
I am known and held and blessed:
in your promise is my comfort,
in your presence I may rest.

Loving Spirit, loving Spirit,
you have chosen me to be,
you have drawn me to your wonder,
you have set your sign on me.

Lenten Book Study

The Power of Significance by John C. Maxwell

March 9 Session 1

Write Your Own Significance Story

March 16 Session 2

Find Your Why to Find Your Way

March 23 Session 3

Embrace Intentional Living

March 30 Session 4

Be Willing to Start Small

April 6 Session 5

Live with a Sense of Anticipation

Holy Week

No Wednesday Night fellowship

April 20 Session 6

Seize Significance Opportunities Every Day