



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 April 3, 2022



Call to Worship

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

One: Break open our hearts this morning to hear your word, O God.

Many: Let our fears be vanquished and our spirits restored!

One: Come and let us worship with great joy!

Many: Let us drop the things of the past which weighed us down!

One: God is about to do something new in our lives!

Many: Let God's will become strong in our lives. 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.

Prayer of Confession

We often hold on to sorrow, anger, and fear, when you call us to joy, forgiveness, and courage. It is so easy to stay in the negative and fail to seek the positives in our lives. We ask your help when we grieve in times of grief, and then leave the grieving and return to the fullness of life. We ask you to help us face our fears and rely on you when our own courage is not enough. We ask your help to accept the forgiveness you give us, and in turn help us to forgive others. In the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ. 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

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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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Scripture Reading

Isaiah 43:16-21

¹⁶ Thus says the Lord,
who makes a way in the sea,
a path in the mighty waters,
¹⁷ who brings out chariot and
horse,
army and warrior;
they lie down, they cannot rise,
they are extinguished,
quenched like a wick:
¹⁸ Do not remember the former
things,
or consider the things of old.
¹⁹ I am about to do a new thing;
now it springs forth, do you not
perceive it?
I will make a way in the wilder-
ness
and rivers in the desert.
²⁰ The wild animals will honor
me,
the jackals and the ostriches;
for I give water in the wilderness,
rivers in the desert,
to give drink to my chosen peo-
ple,
²¹ the people whom I formed
for myself
so that they might declare
my praise.

John 12:1-8

¹ Six days before the Passover Je-
sus came to Bethany, the home of
Lazarus, whom he had raised
from the dead. ² There they gave a
dinner for him. Martha served,
and Lazarus was one of those at
the table with him. ³ Mary took a
pound of costly perfume made of
pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet,
and wiped them with her hair.
The house was filled with the
fragrance of the perfume. ⁴ But
Judas Iscariot, one of his disci-
ples (the one who was about to
betray him), said, ⁵ 'Why was
this perfume not sold for three
hundred denarii and the money
given to the poor?' ⁶ (He said this
not because he cared about the
poor, but because he was a thief;
he kept the common purse and
used to steal what was put into
it.) ⁷ Jesus said, 'Leave her alone.
She bought it so that she might
keep it for the day of my burial.
⁸ You always have the poor with
you, but you do not always have
me.'

Reflection

Meditation for the 5th Sunday in Lent

“Through the Wilderness toward a New Thing ”

Who doesn't love this verse from the Prophet Isaiah: “Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?” But so often we stop there; we don't move to the next portion: “I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.” We would like to believe that the new thing God is doing does not include the wilderness or the desert.

During Lent this year, we have made our way through the wilderness with Dana Trent as our guide. It has been an arduous journey full of challenges and struggles. As we entered the 4th week of Lent, she invited us to begin pondering the gifts that have come to us during this wilderness experience. However, these gifts would have meant little if we had not persevered in our travels through the wilderness. The ancient Israelites knew this, too. Had they not spent time in the wilderness of exile they would not have been able to appreciate the gifts that their return home brought. Their time in exile changed them. Has our time in the wilderness of Lent changed us?

The challenge for the Israelites hearing this prophecy was the reality that all they knew at the time was the promise of “a new thing.” They were just leaving the wilderness of exile when these promises of God were shared. They had spent decades in a foreign land far from home and all they had were mysterious promises. They were weary and tired as well as energized and excited. They were probably not sure they could leave their anxiety and despair behind. Could they really trust in the future promised by the prophet?

I suspect many of us can empathize with these feelings. We are being invited to leave the wilderness and desert of COVID. We are not sure if the pandemic is really over. We are gradually testing the waters through resuming group activities, shedding our masks, travelling, and making plans for the future.

In his comments for *Lectionary Homiletics*, David M. Scholer from Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena California, points out that “The purpose that God's chosen people, who will receive God's new thing, are to fulfill is to declare God's praise.” Although we might be tired and anxious, as were the ancient Israelites, we are invited to consider how we can praise God as we transition from the wilderness to this “new thing” planned by God.

Trent continues to invite us to do this by discovering the gifts of our wilderness experiences. To praise God is not to make light of the difficulties found in the wilderness. Like the ancient Israelites we are also defined, to some degree, by our time in the wilderness. But our wilderness experiences are not the only defining factors. Each of us will find different ways to praise God as we move through the wilderness towards new things. As a community of faith we have continued to praise God through the wilderness of Lent and the desert of COVID. We have worshipped God in person, virtually through videos and livestreaming, on paper through our weekly worship material and our Messenger newsletters, through the care provided by our Elders and Deacons, and through the faithfulness of all those who serve God through this congregation. We continue to praise God as we help in the resettlement of a family from Afghanistan.

We continue to praise God as we remain faithful, particularly during these times of wilderness and desert. New things are happening all around us. While we may not have completely exited the wilderness, we are reminded to put our hope and trust in God who is “doing a new thing” and who “is making a way in the wilderness.” We simply need to hold on and continue praising God.

AMEN

Prayers & Praises

April 3, 2022

In Our Church Family:

- Marvin Thurber
- William Deterding
- Vic Burgess
- Dick & Roxie Pickel
- Our sympathy to the family of Arlene Heimer, *upon her recent passing*
- Harold & Donna Baker
- Polly Putney
- Jessica Vocasek
- Lois Frogge
- Joan Dietrich

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*
- Our sympathy to the family of Alice Stehlik, *upon her recent passing, grandmother of Jessica Vocasek*

Friends:

- Cedric Gibb, *healing prayers, friend of Cec Burkhart*
- 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:

- Fairbury FCC and Rev. Darlene Novotny

Our Global Ministries Missionaries:

- John Campbell Nelson serving in Indonesia

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



Song of the Week

Fairest Lord Jesus

Words: Münster Gesangbuch, 1677

Music: Silesian folk melody

Fairest Lord Jesus,
Ruler of all nature,
O thou of God to earth come down,
thee will I cherish,
thee will I honor,
thou, my soul's glory, joy, and crown.

Fair are the meadows,
fairer still the woodlands,
robed in the blooming garb of spring.
Jesus is fairer;
Jesus is purer,
who makes the woeful heart to sing.

Fair is the sunshine,
fairer still the moonlight,
and all the twinkling, starry host.
Jesus shines brighter;
Jesus shines purer,
than all the angels heaven can boast.

Beautiful Savior,
Ruler of nations,
Son of God and Son of Man!
Glory and honor,
praise, adoration,
now and forevermore be thine!

Lenten Book Study

The Power of Significance by John C. Maxwell

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

