



**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 26th, 2022**



## Call to Worship

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

One: You we praise, O God! You we praise!

Many: We will sing our songs of joy this day and in all the days to come!

One: Life changes from day to day.

Many: You keep your promises and hold our faithfulness in your heart.

One: You shower us with your hope; you offer us help in every moment.

Many: You we praise, O God! You we praise!

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

O God, we give you thanks that you are our true source of freedom. Help us turn away from those activities and habits that alienate us from ourselves and separate us from others and you. Strengthen us with the fruit of your Spirit. Empower us to live our lives grounded in your love. Help us love ourselves and one another as you love us.

AMEN

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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

## 2 Kings 2:1-14

Now when the LORD was about to take Elijah up to heaven by a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. <sup>2</sup>Elijah said to Elisha, 'Stay here; for the LORD has sent me as far as Bethel.' But Elisha said, 'As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.' So they went down to Bethel. <sup>3</sup>The company of prophets who were in Bethel came out to Elisha, and said to him, 'Do you know that today the LORD will take your master away from you?' And he said, 'Yes, I know; keep silent.'

<sup>4</sup>Elijah said to him, 'Elisha, stay here; for the LORD has sent me to Jericho.' But he said, 'As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.' So they came to Jericho. <sup>5</sup>The company of prophets who were at Jericho drew near to Elisha, and said to him, 'Do you know that today the LORD will take your master away from you?' And he answered, 'Yes, I know; be silent.'

<sup>6</sup>Then Elijah said to him, 'Stay here; for the LORD has sent me to the Jordan.' But he said, 'As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.' So the two of them went on. <sup>7</sup>Fifty men of the company of prophets also went, and stood at some distance from them, as they both were standing by the Jordan. <sup>8</sup>Then Elijah took his mantle and rolled it up, and struck the water; the water was parted to the one side and to the other, until the two of them crossed on dry ground.

<sup>9</sup>When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, 'Tell me what I may do for you, before I am taken from you.' Elisha said, 'Please let me inherit a double share of your spirit.' <sup>10</sup>He responded, 'You have asked a hard thing; yet, if you see me as I am being taken from you, it will be granted you; if not, it will not.' <sup>11</sup>As they continued walking and talking, a chariot of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them, and Elijah ascended in a whirlwind into heaven. <sup>12</sup>Elisha kept watching and crying out, 'Father, father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!' But when he could no longer see him, he grasped his own clothes and tore them in two pieces.

<sup>13</sup>He picked up the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him, and went back and stood on the bank of the Jordan. <sup>14</sup>He took the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him, and struck the water, saying, 'Where is the LORD, the God of Elijah?' When he had struck the water, the water was parted to the one side and to the other, and Elisha went over.

## Galatians 5:1, 13-25

<sup>1</sup>For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.

<sup>13</sup>For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another. <sup>14</sup>For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' <sup>15</sup>If, however, you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another.

<sup>16</sup>Live by the Spirit, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. <sup>17</sup>For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want. <sup>18</sup>But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not subject to the law. <sup>19</sup>Now the works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness, <sup>20</sup>idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions, <sup>21</sup>envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these. I am warning you, as I warned you before: those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

<sup>22</sup>By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup>gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things. <sup>24</sup>And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. <sup>25</sup>If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit.

# Reflection

## *Meditation for the 3rd Sunday after Pentecost*

### “True Freedom in Christ”

In our national parlance these days we seem to talk a lot about freedom and liberty. Whether it is in the context of gun management, wearing or not wearing masks, or reproductive choices, the idea of personal freedom arises. As Christians, what does freedom and liberty look like for us? In our lectionary text from Paul's letter to the Galatians he spoke specifically about this topic for those grounded in Christ. For the Apostle Paul freedom was a spiritual matter. In her reflections for Presbyterian Outlook editor Rev. Teri McDowell Ott summed-up Paul's teaching well when she said: "In Christ, we are not freed from responsibility, not freed to do whatever we want, or freed to indulge in self-centered desires of the flesh. Rather, in Christ, we are freed for love, freed to care for, respect and cherish all lives. The cross is the symbol of this Christian freedom." She went on to point out that Jesus' life, death and resurrection embodied the transformative power of God's love. Paul reinforced the idea that freedom in Christ frees us from a number of things. Freedom in Christ frees us from self-indulgence and self-absorption. Contrary to popular belief, true freedom in Christ actually invites us into lives of servanthood and calls us into relationships that are harmonious and caring. This kind of freedom is not guaranteed and is intended to be life giving for everyone, not just a few. Freedom in Christ brings out the best in everyone.

The things that inhibit freedom, in Paul's opinion, are what he called the "works of the flesh." These are the things that cause us to become self-indulgent and pulls us away from love. Many today would say that indulging in these various activities is freedom. However, when taken to extremes, these activities really eat away at our spiritual freedom. The activities named are not necessarily the problem, but when they separate us from others and isolate us they can become problematic. For Paul true Christian freedom is life giving, for ourselves and one another. When these activities keep us from being our best selves they bring captivity not freedom. When they pull us away from God and God's love they no longer represent freedom.

For Paul true freedom lies in the fruit of the Spirit. The Greek term Paul used meant fruit, grain, harvest, result, or outcome. Although it contains many elements, this "fruit" or "outcome" is one single gift from God. This fruit is experienced from within and the benefits reach out from the individual. In essence, the elements of this fruit are intended as an antithesis to the works of the flesh. This gift from the Spirit brings out our best selves, connects us with others and God. Paul said: "...the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control." Although presented as a simple list of words, each word in Greek presents a more complex meaning. Paul used the familiar word for love, *agape*, which was generally used to describe the kind of love God has for us. The kind of love that lifts up the other and their needs. The part of the fruit named joy can also mean happiness or gladness. When the list moved on to peace, it can mean an inner peace as well as harmony in the community. Paul went on to lift up patience and goodness. For Paul goodness could be understood as mercy, kindness and doing what is right for oneself and another. Then Paul lifted up generosity and went on to the term generally translated as faithfulness. When Paul spoke of faithfulness there was also the implication of trust in God. When Paul spoke of gentleness there was the implication of humility, that recognition that we are created by the same loving God. Finally, Paul concluded this list with the quality of self-control. Paul presented us with an incredible list indeed! This fruit is not expressed in all our lives in the same way. Undoubtedly some fruit is born more readily in our lives than others. The invitation that Paul presented to the early Christians, and presents to us today, is to look to ourselves first and nurture the fruit of the Spirit in our own lives. As we do this we become more able to find the true freedom that only God offers. We discover a freedom that sets us free while caring for ourselves and others. Such freedom from within delivers us from bondage and truly sets us free as beloved children of God.

AMEN

# Prayers & Praises

## June 26, 2022

### In Our Church Family:

- Marvin Thurber
- William Deterding
- Vic Burgess
- Dick & Roxie Pickel
- Harold & Donna Baker
- Polly Putney
- Jessica Vocasek
- Lois Frogge
- Joan Dietrich

### Relatives:

- Friends and Family of *Vic Burgess*
- Mark Carpenter, with colon cancer, brother of *Jill Carpenter and Dick & Roxie Pickel*
- Roger Christianson, with stage 4 cancer, father of *Brady Christianson*
- Annie DeLosSantos, with liver cancer diagnosis, sister of *Vince Ortega*

### Friends:

- Cedric Gibb, healing prayers, friend of *Cec Burkhart*
- Carson Mousel, grandson of *Bob and Eileen Kunz*, from *Mildred Brockemeyer*

### Our Timothys:

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

### In the Nebraska Region:

- Minden First Christian Church and Rev. Joe Tira

### Our Global Ministries Missionaries:

- Fiona Kendall serving in Italy

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



# Song of the Week

## Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty

Text: Benjamin Schmolck, 1732

Music: Joachim Neander, 1680

Open now thy gates of beauty,  
Zion, let me enter there,  
where my soul in joyful duty  
waits for God who answers prayer;  
O how blessed is this place,  
filled with solace, light, and grace.

Gracious God, I come before thee;  
come thou also unto me;  
where we find thee and adore thee,  
there a heaven on earth must be;  
to my heart O enter thou;  
let it be thy temple now.

Speak, O Lord, and I will hear thee;  
let thy will be done indeed;  
may I undisturbed draw near thee,  
while thou dost thy people feed.  
Here of life the fountain flows;  
here is balm for all our woes.

## FCC Social Media!



Each week FCC is posting new pictures and announcements. Look for First Christian Church on Instagram, Facebook, and You Tube for new content every week. Get connected!

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