



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 June 26th, 2022



Call to Worship

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

One: Sing praises to our Lord:

Many: Who heals us and makes us whole.

One: Sing praises to our Lord, Faithful children of God

Many: Whose joy rises in our lives each and every day.

One: Sing praises to our Lord, give thanks to God's holy name:

Many: God's Kingdom is near to us; God's peace resides in our hearts.

Community Prayer

Holy God, we give you thanks that we are always able to come to you.

We open our hearts to you daily and yearn for an awareness of your presence. Be with us every day and make each of them holy in your sight.

AMEN

This week our guest pastor is Reverend Jane Holtzclaw:

Rev. Dr. Jane Holtzclaw is a physician specializing in Psychiatry and is an ordained Minister in the Presbyterian Church (USA). She is currently serving as a Psychiatrist and Chaplain at St Elizabeth and Nebraska Heart Hospitals.

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

Scripture Reading

2 Kings 5:1-14

¹Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Aram, was a great man and in high favour with his master, because by him the LORD had given victory to Aram. The man, though a mighty warrior, suffered from leprosy. ²Now the Arameans on one of their raids had taken a young girl captive from the land of Israel, and she served Naaman's wife. ³She said to her mistress, 'If only my lord were with the prophet who is in Samaria! He would cure him of his leprosy.' ⁴So Naaman went in and told his lord just what the girl from the land of Israel had said. ⁵And the king of Aram said, 'Go then, and I will send along a letter to the king of Israel.'

He went, taking with him ten talents of silver, six thousand shekels of gold, and ten sets of garments. ⁶He brought the letter to the king of Israel, which read, 'When this letter reaches you, know that I have sent to you my servant Naaman, that you may cure him of his leprosy.' ⁷When the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his clothes and said, 'Am I God, to give death or life, that this man sends word to me to cure a man of his leprosy? Just look and see how he is trying to pick a quarrel with me.'

⁸But when Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, he sent a message to the king, 'Why have you torn your clothes? Let him come to me, that he may learn that there is a prophet in Israel.' ⁹So Naaman came with his horses and chariots, and halted at the entrance of Elisha's house. ¹⁰Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, 'Go, wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored and you shall be clean.' ¹¹But Naaman became angry and went away, saying, 'I thought that for me he would surely come out, and stand and call on the name of

the LORD his God, and would wave his hand over the spot, and cure the leprosy! ¹²Are not Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them, and be clean?' He turned and went away in a rage. ¹³But his servants approached and said to him, 'Father, if the prophet had commanded you to do something difficult, would you not have done it? How much more, when all he said to you was, "Wash, and be clean"?' ¹⁴So he went down and immersed himself seven times in the Jordan, according to the word of the man of God; his flesh was restored like the flesh of a young boy, and he was clean.

Matthew 5:43-47

⁴³You have heard that it was said, "You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy." ⁴⁴But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous. ⁴⁶For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax-collectors do the same? ⁴⁷And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?

Reflection

Meditation for the 4th Sunday after Pentecost

Our passage today tells a story not far removed from current day happenings. – nations at war with each other and people with different ideals struggling against each other.

The Aramean (Syrian) King has a problem. One of his top Generals, Naaman, has developed Leprosy, a skin disease felt to be so highly contagious, incurable, and disabling that individuals were considered to be ritually unclean and hence forced into strict social isolation for the rest of their life. The king discovers that the only hope for cure is to seek the help of the Israeli prophet Elisha. To do so, he must go through the King of Israel. So what's the problem? The Arameans are a blood thirsty nation and have been at war with Israel, capturing their land and their citizens. The Aramean King and the Israeli King are not buddies. Despite this situation, the King of Aram sends Naaman and a troop of soldiers with a letter and a boatload of expensive gifts to the King of Israel requesting the king's help.

The Israeli King can't comprehend that the Aramean King is actually asking for help and assumes a trap. Eventually the situation gets sorted out and Elisha gets in the loop and agrees to help. Elisha sends his messenger to Naaman with instructions to wash in the Jordan. Naaman then strikes an attitude – why won't the prophet see him personally? – and impulsively turns around to go home. Naaman's servants sit him down for a chat and convince him to “chill” and follow directions. Naaman complies – *“So he went down and immersed himself seven times in the Jordan, according to the word of the man of God; his flesh was restored like the flesh of a young boy, and he was clean”* (2 Kings 5:14)

As I sit with this passage I'm reminded of my deployment to Iraq as a physician and psychiatrist while serving with the Air Force.

It was the summer of 2017 at a point when the Iraqi conflict was ramping up. I was stationed at a Forward Operating Base where our medical mission was to receive wounded soldiers straight from the battlefield. We provided life saving emergency care, then flew the wounded by helicopter to Bagdad for the remainder of their care. Believe it or not, there are rules of war, specifically the Law of Armed Conflict (LOAC), which we are required to follow to the letter. One of those rules states very clearly that we are to provide the exact same medical treatment to the wounded enemy that we would provide to friendly forces, no exceptions.

There were many times when we were treating enemy soldiers in our emergency room and operating room right next to our own soldiers. You can only imagine the emotional and moral struggles that we experienced. After all, resources are limited in time of war. However, there was never a question of how to proceed. The enemy always received the same care that we provided to friendly forces. The chaplain and I made ourselves available to the rest of the medical team to process afterwards.

I can't help but wonder what the Israeli King would have thought as he witnessed what was essentially an enemy caravan approaching and his difficulty in accepting the notion of a friendly mission. The prophet Elisha however, didn't hesitate. He didn't ask questions. He immediately offered to heal the very man who could easily come back and harm him. And, as we learn in the verses that follow – he didn't accept any payment. He healed unconditionally, he made the man clean.

Sound familiar? Jesus as he washed the feet of his disciples that night that he was betrayed tells Peter as he washes his feet – “you are clean” (John 13:10-11).

Elisha met Naaman where he was – in his humanity. Not as an enemy, not as a powerful wealthy General of a foreign army. He met him as a human being in the image of God and healed him and made him clean.

I recall one night in the ER when we were receiving numerous casualties – enemy and friendly forces from the same fire fight. One of our soldiers who had been in that scene was standing guard over an unconscious enemy soldier. As I watched him, I was struck by the unspoken look of compassion on his face – compassion for the humanity of a man who had tried to kill him.

Jesus, in his Sermon on the Mount tells the crowd - *You heard that it was said, “You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy”. But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who persecute you”* (Matt 5:43-44).

One need only read the headlines to understand that we are in a time where not only are nations at war with each other, we as human beings are struggling against each other and against creation. Different beliefs, different backgrounds, different values, different visions. The Prophet Elisha looked past the power and the shield to see the humanity in the face before him. We have the power to do the same.

Amen

Prayers & Praises

July 3, 2022

In Our Church Family:

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

Relatives:

- Family and friends of Doug Wielage, Jessica Vocasek's uncle who passed away suddenly last week.
- Friends and Family of Vic Burgess
- 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:

- Murray Christian Church and Rev. Josh Sawyer

Our Global Ministries Missionaries:

- Wally Burman serving in Costa Rica

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



Song of the Week

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee

Text: Henry van Dyke, 1907

Music: Ludwig van Beethoven, 1824

Joyful, joyful, we adore thee,
God of glory, Lord of love!
Hearts unfold like flowers before
thee,
opening to the sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness;
drive the dark of doubt away.
Giver of immortal gladness,
fill us with the light of day.

All thy works with joy surround
thee;
earth and heaven reflect thy rays;
stars and angels sing around thee,
center of unbroken praise.
Field and forest, vale and
mountain,
flowery meadow, flashing sea,
chanting bird and flowing
fountain,
call us to rejoice in thee.

Mortals, join the happy chorus
which the morning stars began.
Love divine is reigning o'er us,
joining all in heaven's plan.
Ever singing, march we onward,
victors in the midst of strife.
Joyful music leads us sunward
in the triumph song of life.

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!