



# 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

**Rev. Dr. Karen Moritz**, Pastor

**Ethan Cai**, Administrative Assistant

**Mark W. Miller**, Director of Music Ministries

**Sara Lugn**, Stephen Ministry Leader

[www.fcclincoln.org](http://www.fcclincoln.org)

[info@fcclincoln.org](mailto:info@fcclincoln.org)

**Week of August 14, 2022**



## Call to Worship

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

**One:** Holy God, shine your light into our lives,

**Many:** and we will call upon your name!

**One:** Loving Christ, turn your face towards us,

**Many:** that we may be saved!

**One:** Holy Spirit, restore us in your grace, bless us with justice, and show us the way to keep your vineyard from harm.

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 thanks that you know what it is like to live in a world full of division. When Jesus came to live among us he did not shy away from the uncomfortable experiences of being human. As we acknowledge the divisions in our lives and in our world give us courage to speak out and to listen. Help us stand up for all that you value, justice and freedom from oppression. At the same time, as we speak out help us truly listen to one another and to you.

AMEN

# Scripture Reading

## Psalm 80

To the leader: on Lilies, a Covenant. Of Asaph. A Psalm.  
Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,  
you who lead Joseph like a flock!  
You who are enthroned upon the cherubim,  
shine forth  
before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh.  
Stir up your might,  
and come to save us!  
Restore us, O God;  
let your face shine, that we may be saved.  
O LORD God of hosts,  
how long will you be angry with your people's prayers?  
You have fed them with the bread of tears,  
and given them tears to drink in full measure.  
You make us the scorn of our neighbors;  
our enemies laugh among themselves.  
Restore us, O God of hosts;  
let your face shine, that we may be saved.  
You brought a vine out of Egypt;  
you drove out the nations and planted it.  
You cleared the ground for it;  
it took deep root and filled the land.  
The mountains were covered with its shade,  
the mighty cedars with its branches;  
it sent out its branches to the sea,  
and its shoots to the River.  
Why then have you broken down its walls,  
so that all who pass along the way pluck its fruit?  
The boar from the forest ravages it,  
and all that move in the field feed on it.  
Turn again, O God of hosts;  
look down from heaven, and see;  
have regard for this vine,

the stock that your right hand planted.  
They have burned it with fire, they have cut it down;  
may they perish at the rebuke of your countenance.  
But let your hand be upon the one at your right hand,  
the one whom you made strong for yourself.  
Then we will never turn back from you;  
give us life, and we will call on your name.  
Restore us, O LORD God of hosts;  
let your face shine, that we may be saved.

## Luke 12:49-56

<sup>49</sup>I came to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! <sup>50</sup>I have a baptism with which to be baptized, and what stress I am under until it is completed! <sup>51</sup>Do you think that I have come to bring peace to the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division! <sup>52</sup>From now on, five in one household will be divided, three against two and two against three; <sup>53</sup>they will be divided:  
father against son  
and son against father,  
mother against daughter  
and daughter against mother,  
mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law  
and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.'

<sup>54</sup>He also said to the crowds, 'When you see a cloud rising in the west, you immediately say, "It is going to rain"; and so it happens. <sup>55</sup>And when you see the south wind blowing, you say, "There will be scorching heat"; and it happens. <sup>56</sup>You hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of earth and sky, but why do you not know how to interpret the present time?

# Reflection

## “Choosing the Difficult Path”

### *Meditation for the 10th Sunday after Pentecost*

In the refrain for his popular song “We Didn’t Start the Fire” Billy Joel sang “We didn’t start the fire. It was always burning, since the world’s been turning. We didn’t start the fire. No, we didn’t light it, but we tried to fight it.” His song rushed to my mind as I pondered our Gospel lesson this week. I have to admit, I was really tempted to skip this passage. Perhaps it makes you feel as uncomfortable as it makes me feel. I do not like thinking of Jesus in this way.

Division swirls all around us, every day and in many ways. There seems to be dissension in the political, religious and cultural realms of life. The divisions threaten to destroy families and undermine our most important relationships. With all that in mind, it was equally difficult to turn away from this text. Rev. Teri McDowell-Ott took on this passage in her reflections for the Presbyterian Outlook. Although she was also uncomfortable with this text, she knew it was important to reflect upon it and not run away screaming in the opposite direction. Her reflections really hit home for me when she pointed out: “In her Feasting on the Word commentary on this text, Audrey West writes that this passage in Luke is best understood in light of the whole gospel story, that “the passage is **descriptive rather than prescriptive.**” Jesus does not intend to destroy relationships, West says, but “this sort of rupture can be the result of the changes engendered by Christ’s work.”” So often when we read the words of Jesus we immediately jump to the sense that what he said was meant to be “prescriptive” or even “predictive.” We think Jesus is describing something that will happen in the future as a result of his coming and actions. In this case, it seems, Jesus identified a quality of the human condition. We seem to move toward division and dissension all too naturally. Perhaps Billy Joel had something there, it does seem that “we didn’t start the fire. It was always burning, since the world’s been turning.”

So, if our passage is meant to be descriptive what does that mean for us? Those of us who

grew up in homes where there was a great deal of conflict may find ourselves particularly uncomfortable with this passage. It is tempting to avoid conflict at any question and we may believe it is best to remain silent and keep our opinions to ourselves. We may believe that it is our job to bring peace and harmony at any cost. We may think it our job to be like Switzerland during World War II, to stay neutral. McDowell-Ott reminds us that division is a part of human existence and we are called out of neutrality and silence. As followers of Christ we are often called upon to take sides and stand up for the hurting and the oppressed. In his willingness to carry and die on the cross Jesus always sided with the oppressed and calls us to do the same.

However, I think McDowell-Ott left out an important component in this discussion. While we are called away from silence and neutrality it is important to consider how we deal with the divisions in our lives and world. Despite our discomfort, we must take a stand and be willing to express our beliefs and convictions. However, it is critical that we do this in a way that fosters real conversation. Conversation involves a give and a take, listening and speaking. So often our disputes and disagreements move to shouting and name calling. No one wants to be a part of that kind of interaction. The challenge before us is; how do we remain true to our beliefs and, at the same time, remain open enough to listen to one another?

Silence and neutrality are not the path, but neither is yelling and name-calling. It takes courage to stand up for what we believe. It also takes courage to really listen to one another. In this time of division may we be strengthened by the witness and presence of Christ to stand up for justice and speak out against oppression. May we be as eager to listen to one another as we are to speak. May we be emboldened to truly listen to God.

AMEN

# Prayers & Praises

## August 14, 2022

### In Our Church Family:

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

### Relatives:

- Family and friends of George Bowker, *Brad Bowker's father who passed away recently*
- Family and friends of Doug Wielage, *Jessica Vocasek's uncle who passed away recently*
- Friends and Family of *Vic Burgess*
- Roger Christianson, *with stage 4 cancer, father of Brady Christianson*
- Family and friends of Annie DeLosSantos, *sister of Vince Ortega who passed from cancer recently.*
- Laurie Aufdemberge, *with breast cancer, sister of Kristi Bowker*

### Friends:

- Cedric Gibb, *healing prayers, friend of Cec Burkhart*
- Carson Mousel, *grandson of Bob and Eileen Kunz, from Mildred Brockemeyer*
- Dan Principato *recovering from surgery for Dercum's disease, friend of the Vocaseks*
- Family of Barb Kuzma, *with brain tumor, friend of Kristi Bowker*

### Our Timothys:

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

### In the Nebraska Region:

- Peru Community Church with Rev. Ray and Rev. Becky Girard

### Our Global Ministries

#### Missionaries:

- Bosela Eale serving in Kenya



Find more information and stories about our Global Ministry partners at

[www.globalministries.org](http://www.globalministries.org)

# Song of the Week

## How Firm a Foundation

Text: Katherine Hankey 1866

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the  
Lord,  
is laid for your faith in God's excellent  
Word!

What more can be said than to you God  
hath said,  
to you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?

"Fear not, I am with thee, O be not  
dismayed,  
for I am thy God, and will still give thee  
aid;  
I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause  
thee to stand,  
upheld by my righteous, omnipotent  
hand.

"When through the deep waters I call  
thee to go,  
the rivers of sorrow shall not overflow;  
for I will be near thee, thy troubles to  
bless,  
and sanctify to thee thy deepest distress.

"When through fiery trials thy pathway  
shall lie,  
my grace, all sufficient, shall be thy  
supply;  
the flame shall not hurt thee; I only design  
thy dross to consume, and thy gold to  
refine.

"The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for  
repose,  
I will not, I will not desert to its foes;  
that soul, though all hell should endeavor  
to shake,  
I'll never, no, never, no, never forsake."