



# 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  
**Mark W. Miller**, Director of Music Ministries  
**Ethan Cai**, Administrative Assistant

[www.fcclincoln.org](http://www.fcclincoln.org)  
[info@fcclincoln.org](mailto:info@fcclincoln.org)

Week of November 27, 2022



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 of light, we give you thanks that you journey with us as we travel through all the liminal spaces of life. So often we feel overwhelmed by the darkness that surrounds us and often dwells within us. Journey with us as we make this Advent journey. Help us be attentive to all the ways in which your light shines even in the deepest darkness. Continue to give us glimpses of the world as you see not as it appears to us today. Help us accept your invitation to “come, let us walk in the light of the Lord!”

AMEN

During Sunday worship in the season of Advent we will be using material from our Advent devotional "Be Ready" page 4. It is our hope that as you light your own Advent Candles you will use the same material and feel connected with us as we do the same during Sunday worship.

### Call to Worship

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

One: We don't always know what time it is,

Many: but according to Jesus, it is time to watch.

One: We're not always sure what we should wear,

Many: but according to the Spirit, we should wear garments of Light.

One: We're not always sure what we should do,

Many: but according to God, we should always seek good for those around us.

# Reflection

“Come, Let us Walk in the Light of the Lord”

*Meditation for the 1st Sunday of Advent*

As we begin our Advent journey we find ourselves in what is often called a “liminal space.” A “liminal space” refers to a transitional or initial stage of a process. So, in one sense, we are in a transitional phase and an initial stage of the journey we know as Advent. Liminal can also mean “occupying a position at or on both sides of, a boundary or threshold.” Our biblical texts for today definitely place us on the boundary between the first and second comings of the Christ. As Rev. Barbara Chaapel commented in her reflections for the Presbyterian Outlook, “The Advent season always begins with eschatological texts from the Gospels, this year from Matthew 24, Jesus’ final sermon teaching in Matthew. Advent begins not with the quiet gentleness of the nativity scene, but rather with dramatic references to the Christ’s second coming.” It will actually be weeks before we approach the manger, this will not happen until Christmas Eve. So, we begin in that liminal space between the first and second coming of the Christ. Next week we will jump from the end of the Gospel of Matthew back towards the beginning where we hear about the proclamations of John the Baptist. We learn that John also urged the people to prepare for the first coming of the Christ. As we move into the third week of Advent we will hear the teachings of Jesus about John the Baptist. Finally, as we come to the fourth Sunday of Advent we will have our Service of Lessons & Carols where we will hear the entire scope of salvation history as it comes to us in scripture and music. It is not until we reach Christmas Eve that we will finally approach the manger. Throughout Advent we are invited to stand in the often uncomfortable liminal space that straddles many realities at one time. Today we take the initial steps of a journey that will take us many places. At times the journey may be challenging and at other times it will seem familiar and comforting. The gift of our journey through Advent is that we do not make it alone. We will be guided by our time in worship and by our daily devotional “Be Ready.”

As we begin our time in this liminal space we hear the words from the prophet Isaiah. The prophet spoke to people who also found themselves in a liminal space. Their world would be turned upside-down as warfare ravaged their nation and eventually threw them into exile. The nation to whom he prophesied would reach the pinnacle of life and also

the depths of destruction. They would know great times of darkness and despair. So, the prophet urged them to follow the teachings of the Lord and despite the darkness to “walk in the light of the Lord.” Then we come to the Gospel of Matthew that has a similar tone. Like Isaiah, the author of Matthew shared a vision of the “end times.” Jesus warned of a time when warfare and violence would seem to reign. Like the prophet, Jesus also proclaimed the coming of a new age. As we reflected on a similar text a few weeks ago, we are invited to remember that language about the “end times” often mirrored what was actually happening at the time in which it was written. With that in mind, we know that those who initially heard these words were living through challenging times. Like the ancient Israelites, many of those who heard the words of Jesus felt exiled and oppressed by the Roman Empire. Warfare and violence were a part of daily life. For many, times seemed dark indeed. They lived in a liminal space straddling many realities at once.

So, what do we do in this liminal space in which many of us live today? How do we straddle this uncomfortable boundary between now and this new age? As Chapel pointed out, our only instruction is to watch and wait. We are invited to be attentive to all that is happening in our world, our community and ourselves. We need not shy away from the painful realities that confront us. At the same time, we are invited to embrace all that is good. For me that means keeping a gratitude journal in which I acknowledge and give thanks for the blessings I perceive in the world, in our community, here at FCC and in my personal life. As we stand in this liminal space we are invited to straddle the painful realities of life and the blessings that surround us. How can we do this? Isaiah provided important guidance. Like the ancient Israelites, we are urged to “come, let us walk in the light of the Lord!” As we walk in the light of the Lord we can journey through the liminal spaces of darkness and light. During this Advent season may we have the courage to journey through the liminal spaces of life because we do not travel alone. “Come, let us walk in the light of the Lord!”

AMEN

# Scripture Reading

## Isaiah 2:1-5

The word that Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

In days to come

the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains,

and shall be raised above the hills; all the nations shall stream to it.

Many peoples shall come and say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,

to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.'

For out of Zion shall go forth instruction,

and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

He shall judge between the nations,

and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into ploughshares,

and their spears into pruning-hooks;

nation shall not lift up sword against nation,

neither shall they learn war any more.

## Matthew 24:36-44

'But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so too will be the coming of the Son of Man. Then two will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken and one will be left. Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.

# Prayers & Praises

## November 27, 2022

### In Our Church Family:

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

### Relatives:

- Friends and Family of *Vic Burgess*
- Roger Christianson, *with stage 4 cancer, father of Brady Christianson*
- Laurie Aufdemberge, *with breast cancer, sister of Kristi Bowker*
- Nicole Lee, *as she recovers at home, mother of Leigh Lestina*

### Friends:

- Cedric Gibb, *healing prayers, friend of Cec Burkhart*
- Carson Mousel, *grandson of Bob and Eileen Kunz, from Mildred Brockemeyer*
- Sue Babovec, *recovering at home from heart surgery*

### Our Timothys:

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

### In the Nebraska Region:

- Other Nebraska Clergy
- Rev. Gary George, Executive Director @ Hospice House  
Rev. Dr. Paul Williams – Associate Professor of Religious Studies @ UNO  
Rev. James Harmon – First Central UCC – Omaha  
Rev. Hollie Schmidt – Plymouth UCC – Lincoln  
Rev. Dr. Russ Seger – First Congregational Church – Chadron

### Our Global Ministries Missionaries:

- Nishan Bakalian serving in Lebanon

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



# Song of the Week

## Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

Text: Charles Wesley, 1744

Come, thou long-expected Jesus,  
born to set thy people free;  
from our fears and sins release us;  
let us find our rest in thee.

Israel's strength and consolation,  
hope of all the earth thou art;  
dear desire of every nation,  
joy of every longing heart.

Born thy people to deliver,  
born a child and yet a king,  
born to reign in us forever,  
now thy gracious kingdom bring.

By thine own eternal Spirit  
rule in all our hearts alone;  
by thine all-sufficient merit  
raise us to thy glorious throne.