



First Christian Church

Disciples of Christ

430 S. 16th St. Lincoln, NE 68508 402.475.4289

Messenger

love all • live spiritually • rejoice in hope • show hospitality

The Rev. Kara Hillhouse, Pastor
Mark W. Miller, Director of Worship, Music & Sacred Arts
Elaine Parman, Administrative Assistant

info@fcclincn.org
www.fcclincn.org

Volume 74, No. 11
November 27, 2024

Advent 2024

First Christian Church invites you to join us
at 16th & K Streets
Lincoln, NE 68508

Sunday - December 1, 2024
1st Sunday of Advent
10:30 am - Sanctuary

Sunday - December 8, 2024
2nd Sunday of Advent
10:30 am - Sanctuary

Sunday - December 15, 2024
3rd Sunday of Advent
10:30 am - Sanctuary

Sunday - December 22, 2024
A Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols
10:30 am - Sanctuary

Tuesday - December 24, 2024
Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
7 pm - Sanctuary

2024 Advent Devotional

The Worship Team selected *“The Weary World Rejoices”* by Kate Bowler as the devotional for this Advent Season beginning December 1st.

To access online: https://katebowler.com/seasonal_devotional/the-weary-world-rejoices/#guides. Some copies are available in the Narthex.

Annual Congregational Meeting

Sunday - December 1, 2024

Following Worship

2025 Nominees

Elders:

Cecilia Burhart (25) – 1 year term
Jim Blosser (25) – 1 year term
Wayne Duncan (25) - 1 year term
Connie Calver (25) - 1 year term

Deacons:

Kristi Bowker (25) - 1 year term
Brad Bowker (25) - 1 year term
Riley Bowker (25) - 1 year term
Susan Pallas-Duncan (25) – 1 year term
Vince Ortega (28)
Dan Cowger (28)
Meghan Cowger (28)

Official Board:

Chairperson: Doug Effle
Vice-Chairperson: Jim Blosser
Secretary: Elaine Parman
Financial Secretary: Susan Pallas-Duncan
Treasurer: Donna Ruhl

FCC Foundation Member:

Gwen Belden



Blosser Open House

4648 Happy Hollow Court

Friday - December 13, 2024

7 p.m.

Pastor's Corner

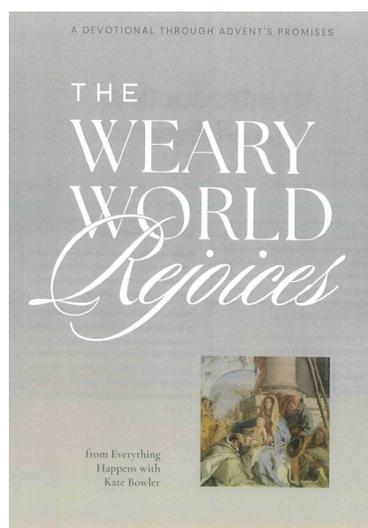
Dear friends,

This Sunday is the first day of Advent, a special season in the life of the church. Advent is a time of preparation for the celebration of the *past birth* of the Christ child, in addition to preparation for the *future second coming* of Jesus. It's a time of waiting for something greater than ourselves: the Savior of the world.

Maybe your family observes some Advent traditions. Lighting candles on the *Advent wreath* is one of the most popular traditions. The *Hanging of the Greens* is another one, in which a church is decorated for Christmas. *Advent calendars* are sometimes used to mark the days until Christmas. I remember growing up using these and each day I would open a window which concealed a piece of candy or chocolate. I wouldn't always be able to restrain myself to one piece per day, so some years the advent calendar didn't last anywhere near Christmas Day! Today, they have all sorts of Advent Calendars, containing different types of teas, wines, toys (some for our pets), and so on. Another tradition is the *Jesse Tree*. For information on this, click on <https://ofthehearth.com/diy-jesse-tree-ornaments/>. Volunteering for a family/friends *service project* can be meaningful - maybe make it an annual tradition! Many organizations that meet the needs of those who go without are looking for volunteers. Listening to religious *Christmas music* provides a soothing and meaningful backdrop to our daily activities. Reading a daily *Advent devotional* for the month of December - the one we've selected for this year is Kate Bowler's "*A Weary World Rejoices*" (the link to this devotional is on this page - we can provide you with a hardcopy if you prefer) - can provide a little daily ritual of refocusing our hearts. And, of course, attending *worship services* helps keep us rooted in what really matters.

However you observe Advent, try not to get caught up in the frenzied craziness of the holidays and instead make this a time of *intentional preparation* for the glory and awe of Christmas day, because let's face it, if we aren't intentional about it, it will not happen. When we focus our hearts on the *real* reason for this season, God's great love for us, it will make it even more meaningful when, on Christmas day, we all find a gift in the manger with our name on it! May you have a blessed and meaningful Advent season. We'll see you at First!

Pastor Kara



https://katebowler.com/seasonal_devotional/the-weary-world-rejoices/#guides

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THANK YOU!

Neither sun, rain, wind, or cold could keep our dedicated Husker home game parking lot volunteers from performing this important ministry. Many thanks to Jim Christ, Monte Dietrick, Brad Bowker and Wayne Duncan.

FCC *Faith Giving* increased by \$1,858 from parking lot donations for the 2024 Husker home football season. It's not too early to start planning for the 2025 season. Your time commitment begins 4 hours before kickoff.

FYI - the 2025 home football games are as follows: Sept. 6 Akron; Sept. 13 Houston Christian; TBD Iowa; TBD Michigan; TBD Michigan State; TBD Northwestern; TBD USC.

\$\$ Finance Notes \$\$

The season of Advent begins December 1st. A time of hope, anticipation and waiting, as we prepare to celebrate Christ's birth. Waiting gives us time to reflect on the many blessings that come during this season and how we can give.

Giving is an act of love. It's choosing to help someone else above ourselves. It's about making a sacrifice that echoes the self-giving love of God and it's about returning that love. We need you to reciprocate God's wondrous love by generously supporting the mission and ministry of First Christian Church in the city of Lincoln, Nebraska!

As you contemplate the gifts you are giving this year, please consider making a *Faith Giving* gift to help enhance the mission and ministry of First Christian Church and bring hope to others.

May the Spirit of God be with you,
The Finance Team

December Collection Barrel

Please join the FCC *Back - Door Blessings* Team and support the *Lincoln Police Department (LPD) & CenterPointe Alternate Response Team* as they care for our unsheltered neighbors with dignity and respect.

The LPD & CenterPointe offer a co-responder model of caring for the most vulnerable members of our community. Rather than a uniformed police officer responding to a call regarding those less fortunate hanging around buildings, out of sight spots, dumpsters and so on, a Street Outreach expert responds and listens to the needs, assesses the situation, offers essential weather items, snacks and resources to the more than 800 programs in Lincoln.

Our *Back - Door Blessings* Team - Pastor Kara, Elaine Parman, Jim Blosser and Wayne Duncan have had the opportunity to meet with LPD and CenterPointe to discuss ways FCC can use the resources and support the care they provide through this model.

Since October 15, 2024 the *Back - Door Blessings* Team has contacted the *Alternate Response Team* to come assist with visitors to our back door during office hours and, before or after Worship on Sunday mornings. On each occasion a non-uniformed Street Outreach expert has arrived within 15 minutes of the request. They are very respectful of where the person is at that given moment and provide assistance the *Back - Door Blessings* Team is not able to provide.

Your commitment to our new *Back - Door Blessings* ministry is vital and we appreciate all that you have already given.

Most needed items are:

- * Hand and feet Warmer packets
- * New thermal socks for men and women
- * New warm hats for men and women
- * New warm gloves for men and women
- * Emergency thermal blankets (like the Swiss Safe Brand)
- * Individual snack packs of nuts, jerky, granola bars, protein bars
- * Individual toothbrushes/small toothpaste packs
- * Individual packs of Wet Ones

ALL are available on Amazon! Order an Amazon SCRIP card in your December order, a Win-Win for FCC and *Back - Door Blessings*.



Stocking Stuffer Gift Cards!

SCRIP cards make a great holiday gift, and now for Christmas, smaller denominations are available for certain retailers.

\$10 Cards From

Amazon - Applebee's - Bath & Body Works - Ched-dars - Cracker Barrel - CVS - Dick's Sporting Goods - Disney - Home Depot - IHOP - Marshalls/ Home Goods - McDonald's - Old Navy - Olive Garden - Sam's Club - Sierra - Target - TJ Maxx - Walmart

\$5 Cards From

Barnes & Noble - Cold Stone Creamery - Panera - Starbucks - Taco Bell

Larger denominations are available, too! Scrip orders go out on the first Sunday of each month. **December 1st** is the last Sunday to order before the holidays!

For a complete list of "national" brands available, please go to <https://www.raiseright.com/brands>.

Purchase of any and all SCRIP supports local businesses and gives a portion of the proceeds back to the church. It's a Win-Win for everyone!

If you have special orders for SCRIP, please get in touch with Donna Ruhl or the FCC Office. Thank you again for participating in our SCRIP Program.



Please DO NOT park in the Masonic Lot on the North side of our building! Use the FCC lot at the corner of 17th & K Streets or street parking on 16th and K Streets.



Coffee Fellowship Hosts Needed!

It can be as simple as making a couple pots of coffee; preparing a pitcher of ice water; and putting cups and glasses out. It doesn't have to include food but, at least a time of fellowship in the parlor after worship.

Are you one of the missing pieces in the FCC Leadership Team puzzle?



As the Cabinet of FCC looks ahead into 2025, the need for team leaders and team members has missing pieces.

Please consider visiting with Pastor Kara about these teams, the openings and how your gifts and talents may be just the piece needed to complete this leadership team puzzle.

December Birthdays

2 nd	Brady Christianson
3 rd	Ashley Lugin
7 th	Kyson Effle
22 nd	Hunter Christianson



Those Serving in December

If for any reason you will be unable to fulfill your responsibility, **please find a substitute**. All of these positions need to be filled each morning.

Worship Leader:

Cecilia Burkhart

Elders:

December 1 - Sara Lugn
December 8 - Wayne Duncan
December 15 - Wayne Duncan
December 22 - Jim Christ
December 24 - Jim Blosser
December 29 - Sara Lugn

Deacons:

Kristi Bowker and Susan Pallas-Duncan

Homebound Communion: December 8

Jim Blosser, Wayne Duncan, Cecilia Burkhart, Jim Christ

Hallway Hospitality:

December 1 - Rich Calver
December 8 - Doug Effle
December 15 - Mike Carlin
December 22 - Geoff Putney
December 29 - Vince Ortega

Ushers/Greeters:

December 1 - Elaine Parman
December 8 - D'Arcy Blosser
December 15 - Wayne Duncan/Susan Pallas-Duncan
December 22 - Monte Dietrick
December 29 - Elaine Parman

Acolytes:

December 1 - Kyson & Keaton Effle
December 8 - Edryk Christianson
December 15 - Trev Greder
December 22 - Gianna Greder
December 29 - Edryk Christianson

Offering Counting:

December 1 - Elaine Parman
December 8 - D'Arcy Blosser
December 15 - Rich Calver
December 22 - Gwen Belden
December 29 - Elaine Parman

THANK YOU ALL for volunteering to serve.

NO December Book Club

NO meeting in December. The book for January is *The Reading List* by Sara Nisha Adams.



January meeting will be January 18, 2025 at Marcia Foster's Home.

If you have one of the books that Kristi brought to book club, you will find a bookmark in it. Please write down three books you would put on a reading list on the back and bring it to the January meeting. If you don't have one of those copies, please bring a slip of paper with three books on it!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to All!

Adult Sunday School

Please join as we discuss the book *Sabbath* by Wayne Muller. Each week we will read a short chapter in class and then the homework will be to "practice." Class meets in the Library and generally runs from 9:00-9:45 am each Sunday.

If you are interested in participating or want more information, please contact Kristi Bowker at bkbowker@gmail.com.

Deborah Group - Disciples Women

Deborah Group meets Monday, December 2 @ Hanna Pinneo's Home.

This fall we started a study of the book *Fierce Love :A Bold Path to Ferocious Courage and Rule-Breaking Kindness That Can Heal the World* by Rev. Dr. Jacqui Lewis (\$12.99 + tax). If you would like to join us, contact D'Arcy Blosser -darcy.blosser@gmail.com or 402-429-6902.

Prayers & Praises

In Our Church Family:

- Donna Baker
- Rhonda Ball
- Cecilia Burkhart
- Bobbi Carlin
- Mike Carlin
- Jim Christ
- Joan Dietrich
- Wayne Duncan
- Phyllis Knosp
- Polly Putney
- Rae-Hope Putney
- Marvin Thurber
- Phyllis Thurber
- Jessica Vocasek
- Roger Vocasek

Cecilia Burkhart, prayers for continued healing after a fall and breaking her collar bone.

Roger Vocasek, prayers for dislocated shoulder. Waiting for orthopedic doctor appointment.

Friends:

- Allen Watsek, brother of *Gwen Belden is being treated for cancer.*
- John Burkhart, husband of Cecilia Burkhart is getting his voice back with speech therapy
- Tammy Foral, healing, patience and strength as facing many health issues. Co-worker of Sara Lugn
- Cedric Gibb, healing prayers, friend of Cec Burkhart

Our Timothy:

- Bruce Frogge at Cypress Creek CC in Spring, TX

In the Nebraska Region: Youth & Outdoor Ministries

"Dear God of creation and hope, God of life and growth, God of forgiveness and redemption, today the people of Armenia and Lebanon are both drinking a bitter cup, tasting sorrow after sorrow. Like Naomi, they are bereft of a future and a hope, crushed by death after death, watching their family tree being hacked to the ground."

For more information and stories about our Global Ministry partners visit www.globalministries.org



First Christian Church Calendar of Events (continued)

Monday, December 30

Noon Messenger Deadline

Tuesday, December 31 Office Open - 9am to 2 pm

Wednesday, January 1 Office Closed - **Happy New Year**

Lincoln First Christian Church Calendar of Events

Sunday, December 1 1st Sunday in Advent
 9:00 am Adult Sunday School - Library
 9:15 am Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal
 9:45 am Torch Worship Team Rehearsal
 10 am SCRIP & Poinsettia Orders Due
 10:30 am Worship
 11:30 am Annual Congregational Meeting - Sanctuary

Monday, December 2
 7 pm Deborah Group Meeting - Hanna Pinneo's Home

Wednesday, December 4
 6:30pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal

Saturday, December 7
 1 pm Living Nativity Outing - Murdock, NE

**Sunday, December 8 2nd Sunday in Advent/
Homebound Communion**
 9:00 am Adult Sunday School - Library
 9:15 am Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal
 9:45 am Torch Worship Team Rehearsal
 10:30 am Worship

Tuesday, December 10
 10:30 am Staff Meeting

Wednesday, December 11
 6:30 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal

Friday, December 13
 7 pm Blosser Open House

Sunday, December 15 3rd Sunday in Advent
 9:00 am Adult Sunday School - Library
 9:15 am Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal
 9:45 am Torch Worship Team Rehearsal
 10:30 am Worship
 6 pm Cabinet Meeting - Parlor

Wednesday, December 18
 6:30 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal

Sunday, December 22 Lessons & Carols Service
 9:00 am Adult Sunday School - Library
 9:15 am Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal
 9:45 am Torch Worship Team Rehearsal
 10:30 am Worship
 11:30 am Worship Team Meeting - Library

Tuesday, December 24
 7 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Wednesday, December 25 Office Closed - Merry Christmas

Thursday, December 26 Office Open - 9 am to 2 pm

Sunday, December 29
 9:00 am Adult Sunday School - Library
 9:15 am Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal
 9:45 am Torch Worship Team Rehearsal
 10:30 am Worship