



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

The Rev. Kara Hillhouse, Pastor
Mark W. Miller, Director of Worship, Music & Sacred Arts
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Week of December 15, 2024
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Community Prayer

O God of the exiles and the lost, you promise restoration and wholeness through the power of Jesus Christ. Give us faith to live joyfully, sustained by your promises as we eagerly await the day when they will be fulfilled for all the world to see, through the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

“Reprinted and Revised Common Lectionary Prayers,
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Call to Worship

One: Sing for joy; shout out loud!

Many: May God’s presence fill us with hope and joy!

One: Sing aloud; rejoice in your hearts!

Many: May the celebration of Christ’s birth renew our hearts with love and grace!

One: Sing praises; laugh out loud!

Many: May the Spirit bring us blessings to share with everyone we meet!

Sermon

From The Rev. Kara Hillhouse

Turning Ashes into Beauty

In our text this week we find Mary, barely a woman, inexperienced and sheltered, singing about God's blessings in her life - despite the horribly dangerous, scandalous nature of what God is calling her to do. We find her testifying to God's vision for our world—a world finally made right through Jesus. God began to fulfill this vision for his Creation by turning the world on its head, so as to bring healing and hope. But when our world gets turned on its head, it doesn't feel good, and all we see is chaos and pain around us. Mary teaches us how to see our circumstances differently. Mary sees God turning her turmoil into songs of joy and awe. Where in our lives are we to fully recognize the presence of God working in wondrous yet mysterious ways, and sing of it aloud in spite of all who might wish we remain silent? Where do we see what looks hard to our eyes, but is really God stretching us to go beyond our small imaginations to experience His wonder more fully? Because these hard places are precisely where we need to praise the Lord, just like Mary. Join us for worship on this third week of Advent, where we'll share in a time of meaningful worship and blessed fellowship. We'll see you at First!

Pastor Kara

3rd Sunday in Advent



Scripture Readings

Philippians 4:4-7

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.



Luke 1:39-55

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord." And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name, His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

Prayers & Praises

December 15, 2024



Song of the week

Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn

Awake! Awake, and greet the new morn, for angels herald its dawning. Sing out your joy, for soon he is born, behold! the Child of our longing. Come as a baby weak and poor, to bring all hearts together, he opens wide the heavenly door and lives now inside us forever.

To us, to all in sorrow and fear, Emmanuel comes a singing; his humble song is quiet and near, yet fills the earth with its ringing; music to heal the broken soul and hymns of loving kindness. The thunder of his anthems rolls to shatter all hatred and violence.

In darkest night his coming shall be, when all the world is despairing, as morning light so quiet and free, so warm and gentle and caring. Then shall the mute break forth in song, the lame shall leap in wonder, the weak be raised above the strong, and weapons be broken asunder.

Rejoice, rejoice, take heart in the night. Though dark the winter and cheerless, the rising sun shall crown you with light; be strong and loving and fearless. Love be our song and love our prayer and love our endless story; may God fill every day we share and bring us at last into glory.



In Our Church Family:

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

Prayers for Cecilia Burkhart. She broke her right collar bone in a fall.

Prayers for Roger Vocasek. He dislocated his shoulder and is doing PT while waiting for an MRI approval.

Friends:

- Allen Watsek, brother of *Gwen Belden is being treated for cancer.*
- John Burkhart, husband of *Cecilia Burkhart as he continues to recover and get his speech back.*
- 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:

- Rev. Bruce Frogge, *Cypress Creek CC in Spring, TX*

In the Nebraska Region: Center on Church in Mission

Our Global Ministries Missionaries: Hong Kong

“O God of many names, You keep us united in understanding that You, O God, are the God of compassion, justice, and peace. You are the God who stands and protects the poor and the powerless, the God who brings down the mighty and sends away the rich empty. We are from various religious backgrounds, economic statuses, and even political beliefs, yet we are united in our common aspiration to serve and defend the poor, the discriminated, and the lowly.”

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

