



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
Elaine Parman, Administrative Assistant

Week of December 22 & 29, 2024
info@fcclincoln.org
www.fcclincoln.org



*Merry Christmas
from the Staff of
First Christian
Church*

Last Weekly Worship Bulletin for 2024! Blessings to ALL - *Elaine Parman*

Lessons and Carols Reflection

From The Rev. Kara Hillhouse

In 1880, the Right Rev. Edward White Benson (who later became the Archbishop of Canterbury), a minister in the Church of England, created and led the first Festival of Lessons and Carols. The Rev. George Walpole (later the Bishop of Edinburgh) was a part of envisioning this new service. It was held on Christmas Eve, in a makeshift wooden structure (some described it as a shed), as the Cathedral was still under construction at the time. Benson was concerned at the exorbitant amount of alcohol consumed in Cornish pubs during the Christmas season, and was attempting to provide a way to attract such revelers out of the pubs and into the church.

The worship service shared readings from the Bible alternated with songs. The scripture stories were taken from the beginning of the Bible, Genesis, all the way through to the gospels, and took worshippers through the **fall of humanity**, the **promise of the Messiah**, and the **birth and life of Jesus**. Each successive passage speaks of the promise of a coming savior, and with each reading the promise gets closer to fruition. The readings help the listeners realize that the entire Bible is one cohesive story: the people of God anticipating the coming of a Savior. And we know, this Savior is Jesus Christ, who redeems this broken world, through his love and grace. The service has become a widespread celebration for both Catholics and Protestants worldwide.

We hope you'll join us this Sunday for our Festival of Lessons and Carols. It will be a celebratory and deeply meaningful way to prepare our hearts for Christmas.

Pastor Kara

4th Sunday in Advent



Christmas Eve Reflection

From The Rev. Kara Hillhouse

As a child, my family would always attend the 11pm Christmas Eve service at my church. Above all other services during the year, this one felt especially holy; perhaps because it was dark outside (the only service at church the entire year that was) and perhaps because of the lighting of candles at the end of the service while singing *Silent Night*. Passing the ever-increasing light from one person to the next, sharing the light with the person seated beside you...it felt holy. The gathering together and waiting in the dark was akin to what it must have been like for those shepherds of long ago, who, while gathered with their sheep, encountered the angels proclaiming the Good News of the birth of Jesus Christ. There must have been a sense of awe and wonder: what had just happened?! And then they went! Found their way to that manger, to that Savior, to experience it for themselves, and to worship the child.

Likewise, all these 2,000+ years later, we come in the dark searching for the Light. We come to celebrate the babe laying in the manger who would grow to be the Savior of the World. Our Savior. We come to remember that the manger points the way to the Cross, the ultimate sign of God's love for us. We hope you'll join us for one of the most meaningful worship services of the year: experience the power of music, the hope we find in the Light, and the reminder of how much we are loved.

Pastor Kara



Lesson Readings - December 22, 2024

1st Lesson - Genesis 3:8-15, 17-19 *Adam and Eve rebel against God.*

2nd Lesson - Genesis 22:15-18 *God promises to faithful Abraham that his descendants will be a blessing to all the nations of earth.*

3rd Lesson - Isaiah 9:2, 6-7 *Christ's birth and rule of peace and justice are foretold by Isaiah.*

4th Lesson - Isaiah 11:1-4, 6-9 *The peace that Christ will bring is foreshown.*

5th Lesson - Luke 1:26-35, 38 *The angel Gabriel announces to Mary that she will be the mother of Jesus.*

6th Lesson - Luke 2:1-7 *St. Luke tells of the birth of Jesus.*

7th Lesson - Luke 2:8-16 *The shepherds go to the manger.*

8th Lesson - Matthew 2:1-12 *The wise men are led by the star to Jesus.*

9th Lesson - John 1:1-14 *St. John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation.*

Scripture Readings - December 24, 2024

Isaiah 9:2-7

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness - on them light has shined. You have multiplied exultation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. For the yoke of their burden and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders, and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Great will be his authority, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Luke 2:1-20

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the

time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no place in the guest room. Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them, and Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told them.

Prayers & Praises

December 22, 2024



Song of the week

Silent Night

Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
'round yon virgin, mother and child!
Holy Infant so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace,
sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight;
glories stream from heaven afar,
heavenly hosts sing "Alleluia:
Christ the Savior, is born;
Christ the Savior, is born!"

Silent night, holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from thy holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Silent night, holy night!
Wondrous star, lend thy light;
with the angels let us sing
Alleluia to our King:
Christ the Savior, is born;
Christ the Savior, is born.



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 Joan Dietrich. Joan was in a car accident December 11th. She is in Tabitha for rehab. If you want to send a card, send to her home address.

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

Friends:

- Maggie Schumacher, *friend of Katelyn Long.*
- 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: Other Nebraska Clergy -
Rev. Dr. Paul Williams - Assoc. Professor of
Religious Studies @ UNO

Rev. James Harmon - First Central UCC - Omaha

Rev. Dr. Russ Seger - First Congregational Church -
Chadron

Sandy Denton - Western NE UCC

Gene Merrill - Brethren Church - Falls City

Rev. Shelby Moock - First Congregational UCC -
Hastings

Poinsettias - 2024

The poinsettias that grace the sanctuary this Christmas were given as follows:

<u><i>Name:</i></u>	<u><i>In Memory of:</i></u>	<u><i>Name:</i></u>	<u><i>Honoring:</i></u>
Donna Baker	Harold Baker	Mike & Bobbi Carlin	Chelle & Trey; Taylor, Bailey, Hanna & Manny
Gwen Belden	Albert & Darleen Watsek, Jim Belden	Sara Lugn	Ashley & Ryan Lugn
Blosser Family	Wilma Hogarth, Della Eggelston, Arlene Heimer and Doris Hazen	Kevin & Carla Pinneo	Carol Tienken; Barbara Pinneo
Cecilia Burkhart	Hank & Charlotte	Geoff Putney	Polly & Rae-Hope Putney
Mike & Bobbi Carlin	Jim & Ann Carlin and R.D., Nadine & Marilyn Bailey	Friends	The Bowkers
Kristie Christianson	Arlin Reuter	Friends	Jim Christ
Wayne Duncan & Susan Pallas-Duncan	Ed & Mary Ellen Duncan; Rick & Sharon Pallas	Friends	Wayne Duncan & Susan Pallas -Duncan
Monte D. Dietrick	J.R., Wilma, Scott, and Mary Jo Dietrick	Friends	Kara Hillhouse
Casey, Marcia & Evan Foster	Stan Foster; Our grandparents Foster	Friends	Mark Miller
Greg & Tezra Greder	Gary & Doris Greder and John Schmidt	Friends	Elaine Parman
Ron Hile & Shari McCright	Sharon Hile	Friends	Donna Ruhl
Phyllis Knosp	Clarence Knosp		
Sara Lugn	Eugene & Mildred Brockemeyer		
Elaine Parman	Loved Ones		
Kevin & Carla Pinneo	Bob Tienken and Virgil Pinneo		
Geoff Putney	Dick & Ray Putney, Dona Quimby; Anne Quimby Mathias		
Donna Ruhl	Loved Ones		



The poinsettias behind the chancel are given to the Glory of God and to honor the saints of First Christian