



**First Christian Church**  
Disciples of Christ

430 S. 16<sup>th</sup> 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  
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## February 14, 2025



### Valentine's Day Dinner

Have you made your Valentine's Day Gourmet Dinner reservations yet? Seating is limited to 40. Dinner will be a 3 course gourmet dinner served in the First Christian Church parlor @ 6:30 pm. ALL proceeds will go to Kamp Kaleo. Call 308-730-0333 to make your reservation.

### The 2025 Lenten Devotional chosen by the Worship Team

# THE HARDEST PART

*hurt we carry,  
hope we find*

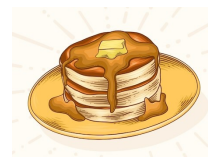
BY KATE BOWLER

Available online @ [https://katebowler.com/the-hardest-part-individual-download/?mc\\_cid=5f64b4804b](https://katebowler.com/the-hardest-part-individual-download/?mc_cid=5f64b4804b). Printed copies will be available in the Narthex on Sunday, March 2nd.

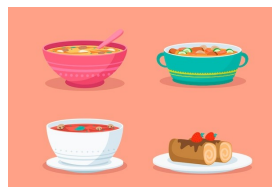
## Save the Dates

### March 4th - 5:30 pm

The First Christian Church Youth will be participating in a Lincoln Disciples' Youth *Fat Tuesday Pancake Feast*. This will be hosted at Bethany Christian Church. More information will be shared as we get closer. There is no cost for the meal, a free-will donation may be given to support the DOC Youth Mission Trip this Spring. We hope you'll join us!



### March 5th - Ash Wednesday



5:30 pm - Soup Supper



7 pm - Worship Service

## Pastor's Corner

Dear Friends,

“*The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet.*” --  
Frederick Buechner

God is actively pursuing the redemption of His creation. He wants to bring us healing. And the really cool thing is that He does it, in part, through *you and me*. It would be arrogant of us to assume we are the *only* means through which He works, but we are certainly an important part of the equation. When God works in our lives, He invites us (never forces us) to go in directions that will be good for us and His Kingdom. And that inevitably means we arrive in places that might seem a little uncomfortable, places we'd rather not be. But perhaps it is at that exact location that someone is waiting for us. Waiting for our smile, our support, our encouragement. Waiting for our guidance and wisdom. Or, perhaps we arrive at an intersection where we are the one in need of smiles, support, encouragement, guidance and wisdom, and someone else is waiting to help us. We may never understand why we are taken to certain places in our lives; but if we can *trust* that God is good - *always* - then maybe we can be willing to sit awhile in discomfort and wait for God to work.

Now I am *not* saying that God has called you to places like cancer, seizures, depression, divorce, unemployment, loneliness, and grief. I don't believe God causes these things, or wants these things for us. What I do believe is that He works *through* them to bring good; he redeems them *somehow*. If you are in one of those scary places hold on, because I believe God will cause you to intersect in ways and places that will allow Him to redeem whatever you are going through. Look for the intersections in your life. The place where your life comes together with someone else's in significant ways. These are the places God has invited you to go. And, if you are there, you have accepted God's invitation. Congratulations! It takes courage to go somewhere unknown. But that is the life of faith, being willing to go where we cannot see, trusting that God is already there waiting for us. May your life be filled with meaningful, life-changing intersections. We'll see you in church!

Pastor Kara





### Upcoming Youth Group Meetings

February 9th  
February 23rd  
March 9th  
March 21st-23rd - Spring Retreat at Kamp Kaleo  
March 23rd  
April 13th  
April 27th  
May 11th  
May 25th

Meetings are at 5:30 pm and supper is provided!

### Finance Notes

Thank You for your generous support in 2024!

The Finance Team cannot say THANK YOU enough to everyone who participated in 2024 Faith Giving, which topped out at just over \$13,000! Over one half of this total (\$6,800) was raised in December. What a show of loyalty and faithfulness to the church!

In addition, over 99% of all 2024 pledges were received! Because of this, 2024 is the sixth year in a row First Christian Church has ended the year in the black with enough income to cover expenses. The Finance Team is inviting everyone for cake at coffee fellowship following worship on **Sunday, February 2nd**, to celebrate.

After the fantastic year we had in 2024, we are hoping to make 2025 even better. To keep that momentum going everyone needs to pitch in and become an integral part of the mission and ministry of FCC.

Again in 2025, the finance team is designating the LAST Sunday of each month as “Faith Giving” Sunday. Faith Giving is just one way to support the mission and ministry of FCC. Stewardship is much more than money. Stewardship is everything that we do in response to God’s gracious, unconditional, unending love. In the coming weeks, there will be plenty of opportunities for you to commit time and talent to the work of God through your Stewardship.

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

### February Youth & Outreach Team Collections

The First Christian Youth and the Outreach Team will be focusing on collecting financial and tangible items to support the 2025 Souper Bowl of Caring (SBOC) annual event. All proceeds and items collected in the barrel will be donated to **Matt Talbot Kitchen & Outreach here in Lincoln.**

**On Sunday, February 9th** bring your money, checks, and coins as the Youth will be collecting those items. You are welcome to mail a donation to church. All checks made out to FCC and SBOC on the memo line please.



**ALL** of February please bring items listed below for the Collection Barrel:

- ♦ canned meats (chicken, tuna, ham, Spam)
- ♦ canned fruits
- ♦ granola bars
- ♦ packaged jerky/ packages of Slim Jims
- ♦ small packages of nuts
- ♦ hand/foot warmers

Please get items that don't require any preparation and cans with pull tabs to open.



20th	Monte Dietrick
22nd	Hazel Waller
25th	Hanna Pinneo Boring
27th	Rae-Hope Putney

### February SCRIP Orders are due on February 2, 2025

Please contact the office or Donna Ruhl if you have questions or need to place a special order.



## Communications Team - January Board Report

I want to give a big Thank You to everyone who supports FCC's YouTube and social media platforms and shares the great work happening at FCC.

In 2024, our YouTube Channel saw an increase of an additional 100 subscribers. We now have 239 subscribers. Our channel now has had 42,720 views in 2024 compared to 19,151 views in 2023 which is a 123% increase. 93.5% of our views are from non-subscribers. We continue to have viewers from around the world. Our top five videos to date are 1) The Lord is God with 1,674 views; 2) Glorious Things of Thee are Spoken with 1,020 views; 3. Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee with 964 views; 4) Praise Ye the Lord with 906 views; and 5) Lord Who Throughout These Forty Days with 871 views. THANK YOU to our Video Team for streaming our services every week. This wouldn't be possible without YOU! We now have an average of 50 to 60 views of our weekly worship service each week.

We also have seen some growth in our Facebook and Instagram pages. We now have 325 Facebook followers and 111 Instagram followers compared with 292 Facebook and 107 Instagram followers in 2023. Our Facebook and Instagram pages are also followed around the world. We have had 23.7K Facebook views and 1,400 Instagram views in 2024.

If you haven't checked out our YouTube videos already, I encourage you to do so. I would also encourage you to Subscribe to our channel and click the Like button on our videos. Also, if there is a video you really enjoy, share it with your friends. The number of subscribers and likes play a role in the algorithm that suggests our videos to viewers.

If you have a Facebook or Instagram page, I would encourage you to Follow First Christian Church and to like our posts. This also helps these algorithm's to help people find our pages. If you don't have a Facebook or Instagram page, it is free to sign up. Shhh, you don't have to follow your friends or other pages, just follow First Christian Church so you don't miss out. The posts with pictures showing the life and activities of our church consistently have the best reach of our posts. If you are involved in a church activity, take some pictures and send them to me, so I can post them. If there is a post you really like, share it with your Facebook or Instagram friends and introduce them to what we have to share about First Christian Church.

I continue to be amazed at how far the ministry of First Christian Church has spread around the world. We can grow it even bigger with your help!

Thank you!  
*Sara Lugin*  
Communications Team



Christmas Eve 2024 at First Christian Church



Renewal of Baptismal Vows - January 12, 2025



Justice in Action Prayer Vigil at Lancaster County Jail -  
January 19, 2025



First Christian Church Chapel remodel - January 20, 2025

## Those Serving in February

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:**

Kristi Bowker

### **Elders:**

February 2 - Wayne Duncan  
February 9 - Cecilia Burkhart  
February 16 - Jim Christ  
February 23 - Connie Calver

### **Deacons:**

Brady & Kristie Christianson

### **Homebound Communion: February 9**

Wayne Duncan, Cecilia Burkhart, Jim Christ, Connie Calver

### **Hallway Hospitality:**

February 2 - Rich Calver  
February 9 - Vince Ortega  
February 16 - Geoff Putney  
February 23 - Doug Effle

### **Ushers/Greeters:**

February 2 - Monte Dietrick  
February 9 - D'Arcy Blosser  
February 16 - Elaine Parman  
February 23 - Wayne Duncan & Susan Pallas-Duncan

### **Acolytes:**

February 2 - Gianna Greder  
February 9 - Kyson & Keaton Effle  
February 16 - Trev Greder  
February 23 - Edryk Christianson

### **Offering Counting:**

February 2 - Gwen Belden  
February 9 - D'Arcy Blosser  
February 16 - Elaine Parman  
February 23 - Rich Calver

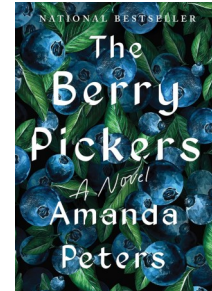
**THANK YOU ALL** for volunteering to serve.

## February Book Club

February meeting will be Saturday, February 15th @ 9:30 am - D'Arcy Blosser's Home.

The book for February is:

*The Berry Pickers* by Amanda Peters



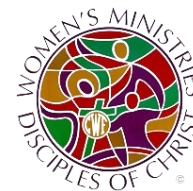
For March - choose a "banned" book. Come prepared to discuss why the book has been targeted.

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## 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](mailto:bkbowker@gmail.com).



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## Deborah Group - Disciples Women

Deborah Group will meet @ 7 pm, Monday, February 3rd at Cecilia Burkhart's Home.

We will discuss Chapter 6 of *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](mailto: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

*Prayers for Roger & Jessica Vocasek.* Both are struggling with a variety of health issues.

*Praise for Joan Dietrich.* Joan is out of rehab, settling into her "new" home with her daughter.

### Friends:

- Gina Simpson, *sister of Sara Lugn.* Gina and Sara will be going to Mayo Clinic in MN where Gina will have brain surgery on February 12th for a benign mass.
- Linda De Los Santos, *sister of Vincent Ortega.* Linda is in rehab in Scottsbluff.
- Maggie Schumacher, *friend of Katelyn Long.*
- John Burkhart, *recent scan shows he is cancer-free.*
- Tammy Foral, *healing, patience and strength as facing many health issues.* Co-worker of Sara Lugn

### Our Timothy:

- Bruce Frogge at Cypress Creek CC in Spring, TX

**In the Nebraska Region:** Ashland First Christian Church - Bob Schofield

### Our Global Partners and Missionaries in: India

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



## Lincoln First Christian Church Calendar of Events

### Sunday, February 2

- 9 am Adult Sunday School - Library
- 9:15 am Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal
- 9:45 am Torch Worship Team Rehearsal
- 10 am SCRIP Orders Due
- 10:30 am Worship

### Monday, February 3

- 7 pm Deborah Group Meeting - Cecilia Burkharths' Home

### Wednesday, February 5

- 6:30pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal

### Sunday, February 9 Homebound Communion

- 9 am Adult Sunday School - Library
- 9:15 am Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal
- 9:45 am Torch Worship Team Rehearsal
- 10:30 am Worship
- Noon Youth Group Meeting

### Tuesday, February 11

- 10:30 am Staff Meeting

### Wednesday, February 12

- 6 pm Justice in Action Meeting - Library
- 6:30 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal

### Friday, February 14

- 6:30 pm Valentine's Day Kamp Kaleo
- Fundraiser Dinner - Parlor

### Saturday, February 15

- 9:30 am Book Club - D'Arcy Blosser's Home

### Sunday, February 16

- 9 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
- 6 pm Cabinet Meeting - Conference Room

### Wednesday, February 19

- 6:30 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal

### Sunday, February 23

- 9 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 Elders Meeting - Library
- 5:30 pm Youth Group Meeting

### Monday, February 24

- Noon Messenger Deadline

### Tuesday, February 25

- 10:30 am Staff Meeting

### Wednesday, February 26

- 6:30 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal

### Thursday, February 27

- Noon Messenger mailed/emailed



Pastor Kara's blog, *Delighting In the*

*Lord.* You can access it online at [delightinginthelord.blog](http://delightinginthelord.blog). Scroll down to see the list of blog posts.

This (usually) weekly blog takes a look at finding Joy in our daily lives, using scripture, humor and stories. If you subscribe (the "Subscribe" button is at the bottom of the page), you will receive an email each time a new blog is posted. You can also receive a printed off copy of each blog upon request.