



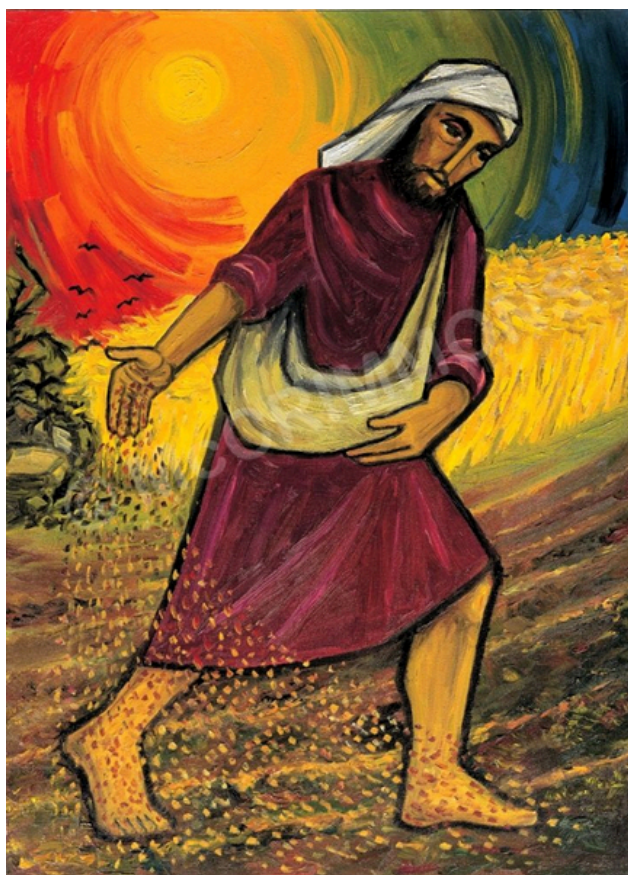
FIRST
CHRISTIAN
CHURCH

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*
Amy Johnson, *Administrative Assistant*

Week of July 12, 2026
info@fclincoln.org
fclincoln.org
430 S. 16th Lincoln, NE 68508-2575



Community Prayer

Ancient Gardener, your holy word is planted in our hearts as good seed in fertile soil. So nurture us that we may bear fruit abundantly. Amen.

*“Reprinted and Revised Common Lectionary Prayers,
copyright 2002 Consultation on Common Texts”*

Call to Worship

One: Your grace is a lamp for our hearts, O God.

Many: Light our way through the shadows of this world.

One: When we struggle with questions and doubts,

Many: tell us your stories of hope and grace.

One: When we are about to wander off into the wilderness,

Many: show us the paths to your peace and joy.

Sermon

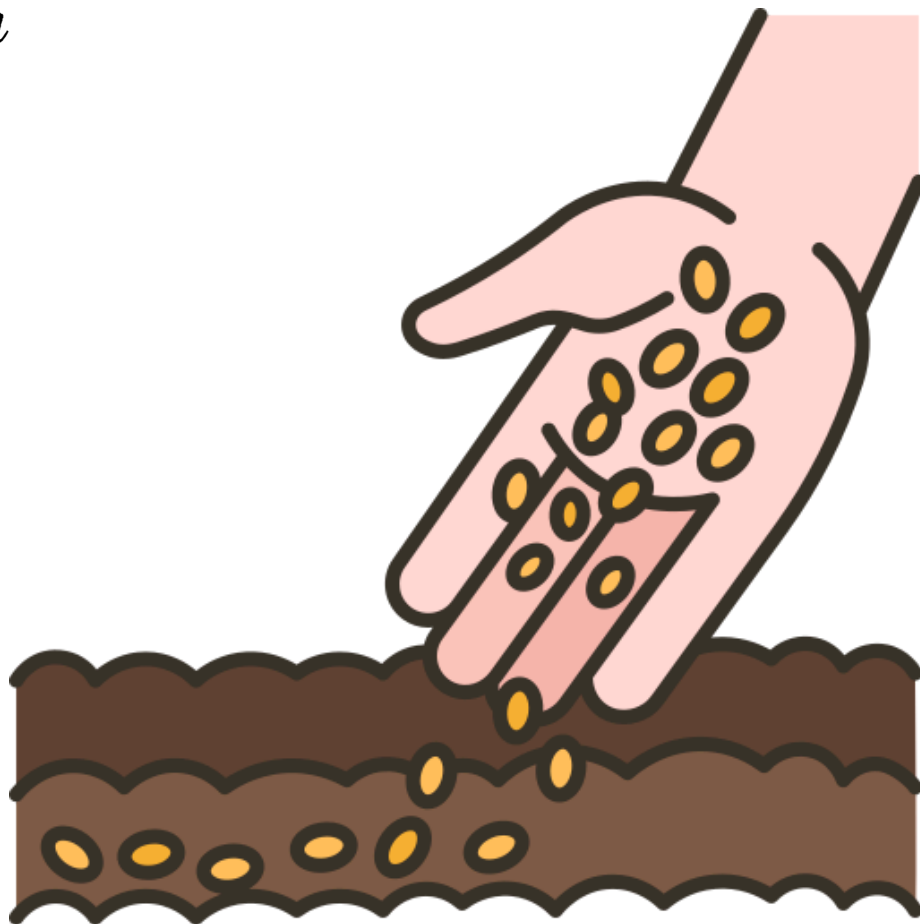
From The Rev. Kara Hillhouse

Matthew 13: 1-7

Let's Get Some Dirt Under those Nails!

I love being around farmland. I love seeing the striped rows appear as the crops push through the ground; and that particular shade of green that only corn leaves achieve. I love harvest time when the farmers are out late at night, and you see the combine's headlights from afar, illuminating the swirl of corn dust in the air. And there's something so beautiful about watching the harvested corn pour out the chute into the back of the semis, as if it were liquid gold. Jesus seemed to know a lot about agriculture. Because of where we live, the parables he told about things like soil and seeds hit especially close to home. This week we'll look at the Parable of the Sower, and see what we can learn about Jesus' lessons in farming. Join us for worship and fellowship this week. We'll see you at First!

Pastor Kara



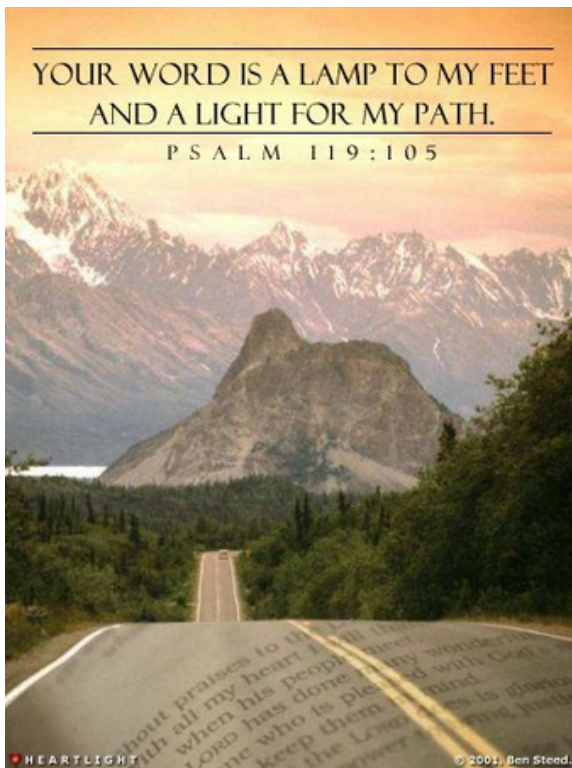
Scripture Reading

Psalm 119: 105-112

Matthew 13: 1-17

“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. I have sworn an oath and confirmed it, to observe your righteous ordinances. I am severely afflicted; give me life, O Lord, according to your word. Accept my offerings of praise, O Lord, and teach me your ordinances. I hold my life in my hand continually, but I do not forget your law. The wicked have laid a snare for me, but I do not stray from your precepts. Your decrees are my heritage forever; they are the joy of my heart. I incline my heart to perform your statutes forever, to the end.”

“That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told them many things in parables, saying: ‘Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears, listen!’ Then the disciples came and asked him, ‘Why do you speak to them in parables?’ He answered, ‘To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. For to those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. The reason I speak to them in parables is that “seeing they do not perceive, and hearing they do not listen, nor do they understand.” With them indeed is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah that says: “You will indeed listen but never understand, and you will indeed look but never perceive. For this people’s heart has grown dull, and their ears are hard of hearing, and they have shut their eyes; so that they might not look with their eyes, and listen with their ears, and understand with their heart and turn—and I would heal them.” But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. Truly I tell you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it.’ ”



Prayers & Praises

July 12, 2026



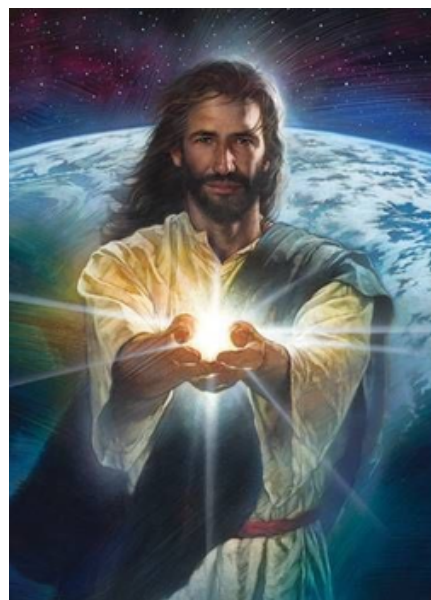
Song of the Week

O Word of God Incarnate

O Word of God incarnate, O Wisdom from on high, O Truth unchanged, unchanging, O Light of our dark sky: we praise you for the radiance that from the hallowed page, a lantern to our footsteps, shines on from age to age.

The church from you, dear Savior, received this gift divine; and still that light is lifted on all the earth to shine. It is the chart and compass that, all life's voyage through, amid the rocks and quick-sands still guides, O Christ, to you.

O make your church, dear Savior, a lamp of purest gold to bear before the nations your true light, as of old; O teach your wandering pilgrims by this our path to trace, till, clouds and storms thus ended, we see you face to face.



In Our Church

Family:

- Donna Baker
- Cec Burkhart
- Joan Dietrich
- Monte Dietrick
- Polly Putney
- Bob Throop
- Marvin Thurber
- Phyllis Thurber
- Jessica Vocasek
- Roger Vocasek

Prayers for Jim Christ's nephew, Dennis Christ, in Oregon, who has been diagnosed with colon cancer and is in ICU recovering from surgery to remove a significant section of his colon.

Prayers for healing for Vince Ortega's sister, Linda De Los Santos, who has been diagnosed with liver cancer.

Prayers for Phyllis Thurber, who has been struggling with pneumonia for a while and was recently hospitalized for it and then had a stroke. She is in the ICU. Prayers for healing and for her family.

Prayers for healing for Kristie Christianson's mom, Lucy Reuter-Masek, after a mild stroke.

Prayers for Monte Dietrick, for continued healing.

Prayers for Cec Burkhart for continued healing.

Prayers for Bob Throop for continued healing and strength.

Prayers for Roger Vocasek as he looks for a job.

Prayers for Jessica Stehlik-Vocasek for her health issues.

Prayers for Katelynn Long for continued healing and strength.

Friends:

- Ron Collamore, *prayers for his health.*

Our Timothy

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

In the Nebraska Region: Nebraska City First Christian Church -Mike Njus

Our Global Ministries in: France

"God-Eternal, we pray that you will give us courage to share around us the hope that carries us to be a witness of your Good News. Sow creativity, courage and perseverance in us to always find new ways, to proclaim to seekers of meaning the life you promise. Amen."

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



JULY

Call to Confession

One:

We spend so much time accusing ourselves, judging ourselves, punishing ourselves for what we have done, or not done. But God would draw us closer to the Heart of forgiveness, that we might be filled with healing and grace. Join me, as we confess where we have missed the mark, praying together:

Prayer of Confession

Many:

What then are we to say about our lives, Searcher of our hearts? We know how often we have duped others with our deceit. We remember how often we promise one thing, only to do the opposite. We struggle to trust you, while we so easily listen to the promises of those who would pull us away from you. Forgive us, Merciful God. Your grace is more powerful than any of our sins, your hope is more durable than our silly choices, your love will traverse anything, and everything, which separates us from you.

Good News of God's Grace

One:

Hear the good news: the One who could accuse us, saves us from sin and death. The One who could condemn us, cradles us in grace. The One who could punish us, prays for us.

Many:

Now we know, there is nothing, not a thing, that can separate us from God. Thanks be to the One who forgives us. Amen.



430 S. 16th St. | Lincoln, NE 68508 | (402) 475-4289