



MESSENGER

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*

Volume 76, No. 9
September 24, 2026
info@fcclincoln.org
fcclincoln.org



There Our Hearts Will Be

During the month of October our stewardship MISSION project is: *Back Door Blessings*.

Plan to join us on Commitment Sunday, October 25th for:

WORSHIP and Pledge Dedication:

Reverend Robin Blakemore, Transitional Regional Minister, will be preaching and Elaine Parman will be giving the Ministry Moment.

CELEBRATION Lunch: Immediately following worship, please join us for a pot-luck lunch in the gym. Sandwiches will be provided by the Finance Team.

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

Save the Date:

Stewardship Commitment Sunday

October 25

Potluck Lunch Following Service



World Communion Sunday October 4th

World Communion Sunday is a Christian holiday celebrated annually on the first Sunday of October to promote unity and cooperation between Christian denominations. It originated in 1933 at a Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh, PA and in 1940 it was endorsed by the Federal Council of Churches to promote it worldwide. The Rev. Donald Craig Kerr, son of the originator, shares *"The concept spread slowly at first. It was during the Second World War that the spirit caught hold, because we were trying to hold the world together. It emphasized that we are one in the Spirit and the Gospel of Jesus Christ"*.



Mark your calendar! Sunday October 4, 2026 will be Pastor Kara's last worship service with us. Please come and be part of this special worship service with her. Following worship there will be a reception in the parlor where we will present her a *Love Gift* from the congregation. If you would like to be part of the *Love Gift* please put your gift in the offering plate, give to Elaine Parman or mail to the church office by September 29th with reference to *Love Gift*. Beginning Sunday, September 27th there will be note cards in the parlor for you to write Pastor Kara a note and put it in the box. This **Box of Love** will be given to her at the end of the reception as a reminder of her time with us. I look forward to seeing you on October 4th.

Blessings,
Elaine Parman
Board Chair

Pastor's Corner



Dear First Christian Family,

“So let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up.” Galatians 6:9

Ever feel discouraged about the tough stuff in the world? Maybe a little helpless, because you doubt that just one person can make it better?! I get it. I do too, sometimes. Indeed, it seems kind of naïve to think there's *anything* one tiny, imperfect human can do to make a difference. But then I think of those eleven disciples. When the dust cleared after Jesus' Resurrection, only eleven remained. They were frightened, maybe a little freaked out, and had definitely failed Jesus big-time...yet they were still standing, and still willing to do the work. And when Jesus sent them out, filled with the power of the Holy Spirit.... well, can you see the difference they made? Sure, it wasn't *just* the eleven—soon the vacancy on the team was filled, and other women and men joined in the work along the way, and the church grew. But the actions of those original disciples caused a ripple that quickly covered the globe.

The reason we can know with undeniable certainty that we alone *can* make a difference is that Jesus commanded us to do so. *Commanded us*. Do the work, he said, the sacred work I am calling you to. And God never *never* sends us out without first equipping us for what he's asking us to do. We hear this from the prophets, “Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be afraid, for I am your God; I will strengthen you; I will help you; I will uphold you with my victorious right hand” (Isaiah 41:10). And we hear it from Jesus himself, “[Y]ou will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses” (Acts 1:8). We have been empowered by God to do what is right. And “right” always ripples out far beyond us. And what is “right”? Right is whatever glorifies God. Right is whatever causes us to set aside our own desires and lead with his love and grace instead. Right is whatever shows love to our neighbor and this world. Right is whatever is compassionate and caring. Mighty things will happen, not because of anything we have done, but because God is behind it all, equipping, empowering, transforming. You *can* and *do* make a difference each and every time you say “yes” to following Christ. So, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding” (Proverbs 3:5). And may the Peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus (from Philippians 4:7). I love you all dearly.

Kara

Beginning October 3, 2026 please send all pastoral care needs, prayer requests and concerns to Elaine Parman, volunteer Care Minister at careminister@fcclincoln.org and they will be responded to immediately. We have secured the Rev. Darin Corder to assist as needed during this period of time prior to an Interim Minister joining us.

Elaine Parman, Board Chair
Jim Blosser, Board Vice Chair



COMING SOON!

Watch your email for an exciting announcement on how to order First Christian Church clothing and swag with the new First Christian logo!!!



The Communications Team



October Outreach Opportunity - 2026 Stewardship Mission Project

The Finance Team selected our ***Back Door Blessings*** ministry as the focus of this year's Stewardship Mission Project.

In the past few months our ***Back Door Blessings*** ministry has been utilized far more than when we envisioned and rolled it out 2 years ago. Our guests are struggling everyday to find gas, perishable food, and personal hygiene supplies and the ministry is well used by our transient guests for snacks, personal hygiene supplies and soon the need for warm clothes and blankets.

Currently our pantry is full of snacks, hygiene items and winter items but our supply of gift cards and fuel vouchers is running very low. Please support the 2026 Stewardship Mission project and donate financial resources so SCRIP cards and fuel vouchers can be purchased. Please do not bring food items and leave them on the counter, we don't need food or snacks. As you consider the many forms of Stewardship - financial resources, time, your spiritual gifts and talents please reach a little deeper and support this ministry. This ministry really gives a hand up to so many in our community. Thank you for being part of it. Please identify your donations as "26 SMP" on your check or cash envelope.



Husker Parking Volunteers Needed

FCC Faith Giving has increased by \$1184 from parking lot donations for the first three Husker home football games.

Monte Dietrick, Wayne Duncan and Brad Bowker oversee this ministry and are inviting you to join them. At least one more volunteer is needed each home game day. Your time commitment begins 4 hours before kickoff. Do you have 4 hours to volunteer?

Hint: this is a part of Stewardship, giving of your time!

This year Jim Christ has joined them on a game day. Visit with one of them and hear how much fun it is.

The remaining home games are:

- October 3 vs. Maryland @ TBD
- October 10 vs. Indiana @ TBD
- October 31 vs. Washington @ TBD
- November 21 vs. Ohio State @ TBD

Look at your calendar and then let the church office know which date works for you.



August Outreach Update



We can't thank you enough for supporting **We Can Do This**. We couldn't make this happen without the support and partnership of people like you. The impact of your giving is much more than numbers on a page. Thank you for the wonderful donation! (345 Food Items)

Susie Brown,
Founder/Executive Director
We Can Do This



I would like to thank everyone for their prayers and concerns during my recovery from some broken ribs. I cannot express how good it is to know that I have friends that care so much. Thanks again,
Monte





Those Serving in October

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:

Brady Christianson

Deacons:

Diane Zabokrtsky and Meghan Cowger

Elder:

October 4 - Jim Blosser

October 11 - Wayne Duncan

October 18 - Carla Pinneo

October 25 - Jim Christ

Hallway Hospitality:

October 4 - Elaine Parman

October 11 - Geoff Putney

October 18 - Vince Ortega

October 25 - Rich Calver

Ushers/Greeters:

October 4 - Wayne Duncan & Susan Pallas-Duncan

October 11 - D'Arcy Blosser

October 18 - Monte Dietrick

October 25 - Elaine Parman

Offering Counting:

October 4 - Rich Calver

October 11 - D'Arcy Blosser

October 18 - Gwen Belden

October 25 - Elaine Parman

THANK YOU ALL for volunteering to serve.



1st Cecilia Burkhart

11th D'Arcy Blosser,
Don True

13th John Swanson

20th Lillie May Everett
29th Jim Blosser

Book Club

Next Meeting - Saturday, October 24th

9:30 am D'Arcy Blosser's Home:

6245 Carveth Drive

Book for **October:**

The Keeper of Happy Endings

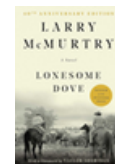
By Barbara Davis



Book for January:

Lonesome Dove

By Larry McMurtry



Everyone is welcome to join us!

*Thriving
Together*

REGIONAL ASSEMBLY
OCTOBER 9-10, 2026
FCC Hastings
Christian Church in NEBRASKA

Contact Elaine Parman by September 28, if you would like to participate. D'Arcy Blosser and Elaine Parman will be our voting delegates.

Deborah Group News

Deborah Group is underway! Our next meeting is October 5th - 7 p.m. at Hanna Pinneo's home: 1311 N. 37th St.. Sally Mason will be leading the discussion of Chapters 5-10.

We enjoy fellowship and good discussion and share resources (optional) for outreach giving. All women are invited to participate

From September through May we are reading and discussing Kate Bowler's book, Joyful Anyway. (Read Chapters 5-10 for October). Let D'Arcy Blosser know if you would like to attend!

And stay tuned for apple pie news coming up!

Prayers & Praises

In Our Church Family:

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

Prayers for Rev. Bruce Frogge, Stephanie Frogge's brother, who has been diagnosed with a serious bone marrow disease. Further genetics testing is in progress to determine type and treatment plan.

Prayers for Jim Christ's nephew, Dennis Christ, in Oregon, continued prayers for healing and comfort as he goes through chemotherapy.

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

Prayers for Marvin and Phyllis Thurber, who have moved to Salt Creek Senior Living.

Prayers for Diane Zabokrtsky's mom, Elaine Clayton, who was in the hospital and has returned home.

Prayers for John Burkhart, who is recovering from heart rhythm issues.

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.

Our Timothy

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

In the Nebraska Region: Chadron UCC - Russ Seger

Our Global Ministries in: Japan

"God of steadfast love, we pray for the people of Odaka, Namie, and all the communities of Fukushima still living with the wounds of earthquake, tsunami, displacement, and nuclear disaster. Remember those who have returned home, those who cannot return, and those who wonder whether the places they once knew will ever truly feel like home again. Amen."

OCTOBER

Call to Confession

One:

All too often, we tell God we will do better, and be better, and then just go on living the same way we always have. Let this be the moment when we tell God of our faithlessness and failures, so we can start again and be renewed. Join me as we pray together:

Prayer of Confession

Many:

As you know, Healing God, we stand on the edge of your promises, yet cannot seem to let ourselves cross over into the life you intend for us. Despite the misguided ways of the world, we cling to it and resist your call to follow a different path. Forgive us, Lord, and have mercy upon us. When we continue to do what is wrong, because what is right is unknown and scary, give us courage. Guide us on the paths of righteousness, so that we might delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your name.

Good News of God's Grace

One:

Persistently, patiently, lovingly, God pours out grace and joy into our lives, healing our brokenness, forgiving our sins.

Many:

Loved, we are sent to love; forgiven, we are told to forgive; freed, we are called to set free. Thanks be to God. Amen.

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



First Christian Church Calendar

Thursday, October 1st

7:30 pm - 8:30 pm Outside Group - Gym

Saturday, October 3rd

4 pm Recorder Consort

Sunday, October 4th

9 am Adult Sunday School

9:15 am Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

9:50 am Torch Worship Rehearsal

10 am SCRIP Orders due

10:30 am Worship

4 pm - 10:30 pm - Outside Group-Parl/Kit/Gym

Monday, October 5th

7 pm Deborah Group-Hanna Pinneo's Home

7:30 pm - 8:30 pm Outside Group - Gym

Tuesday, October 6th

7:30 pm - 8:30 pm Outside Group - Gym

Wednesday, October 7th

6:30 pm Handbell Practice - Sanctuary

7:30 pm Solos/Ensembles - Sanctuary

Thursday, October 8th

7:30 pm - 8:30 pm Outside Group - Gym

Saturday, October 10th

4 pm Recorder Consort

Sunday, October 11th Homebound Communion/ Stewardship Sunday

9 am Adult Sunday School

9:15 am Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

9:50 am Torch Worship Rehearsal

10:30 am Worship

4 pm - 10:30 pm - Outside Group-Parl/Kit/Gym

Monday, October 12th

7:30 pm - 8:30 pm Outside Group - Gym

Tuesday, October 13th

7:30 pm - 8:30 pm Outside Group - Gym

Wednesday, October 14th

6:30 pm Handbell Practice - Sanctuary

7:30 pm Solos/Ensembles - Sanctuary

Thursday, October 15th

7:30 pm - 8:30 pm Outside Group - Gym

Saturday, October 17th

4 pm Recorder Consort - Sanctuary

Sunday, October 18th Stewardship Sunday

9 am Sunday School

9:15 am Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

9:50 am Torch Worship Rehearsal

10:30 am Worship

4 pm - 10:30 pm Outside Group - Parl/Kit/Gym

6 pm Cabinet Meeting - Conference Rm

Monday, October 19th

7:30 pm - 8:30 pm Outside Group - Gym

Tuesday, October 20th

7:30 pm - 8:30 pm Outside Group - Gym

Wednesday, October 21st

6:30 pm - Handbell Practice - Sanctuary

7:30 pm Solos/Ensembles - Sanctuary

Thursday, October 22nd

Noon - Messenger Deadline

7:30 pm - 8:30 pm Outside Group - Gym

Saturday, October 24th

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

4 pm Recorder Consort - Sanctuary

Sunday, October 25th Commitment Sunday

9 am Adult Sunday School

9:15 am Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

9:50 am Torch Worship Rehearsal

10:30 am Worship

11:30 am Potluck Luncheon - Gym

4 pm - 10:30 pm Outside Group - Parl/Kit/Gym

Monday, October 26th

7:30 pm - 8:30 pm Outside Group - Gym

Tuesday, October 27th

6:30 pm - 8 pm Spirited Readers - The Mill @
Telegraph

7:30 pm - 8:30 pm Outside Group - Gym

Wednesday, October 28th

6:30 pm - Handbell Practice - Sanctuary

7:30 pm Solos/Ensembles - Sanctuary

Thursday, October 29th

7:30 pm - 8:30 pm Outside Group - Gym

Saturday, October 31st

4 pm Recorder Consort - Sanctuary

October SCRIP Orders are due on
October 4, 2026

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



There Our Hearts Will Be - *Ministry Moment*

Sara Lugn, Communications Team, shared the following message “You Give Them Something to Eat” during worship on Sunday, September 20th.

*I'm Sara Lugn, the Communications Team Leader. In Matthew 14, a crowd of thousands follows Jesus into a remote place, and by evening the disciples want to send them away to buy their own food. It's the responsible-sounding answer — let someone else handle it. But Jesus says: "They don't need to go away. **You** give them something to eat."*

The disciples have five loaves and two fish. That's it. Jesus doesn't wait for them to have more — he takes what's already in their hands, blesses it, and multiplies it until five thousand people are fed with baskets left over.

*On the Communications Team, our loaves and fish look like a Facebook post that helps a new family find us, a livestream that reaches someone who can't attend worship in person, a new logo — a cross and a green vine — that tells someone death doesn't get the last word, that new life keeps growing back. God has multiplied those small things: we currently have 370 YouTube subscribers and have had over 5,300 views in the last 28 days. This year's stewardship campaign is called **There Our Hearts Will Be** — from Jesus' words, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." That's really what this whole story is about. The disciples didn't just hand over food that day. They handed over something they were holding onto, and in letting go of it, they got to watch it become part of a miracle. Their hearts ended up right where their treasure went — in the middle of what God was doing for that crowd.*

That's true for us too. Our refreshed logo, our website, every social media post, every livestream and video on YouTube, every tool this team uses to reach people near and far exists because someone gave — faithfully, sometimes sacrificially — so ministry could go further than any one of us could carry it alone.

*So today I'm asking two things. First, if you have a gift for photography, writing, editing, design, or tech, don't pass that off to "someone else" — bring it, come talk with me. Second, as you prayerfully consider your giving to **There Our Hearts Will Be**, know that what you give doesn't just pay a bill. It becomes bread in someone's hands — a stream watched, a post shared, a person who finds their way home because you didn't hold back what was yours to give.*

Last year I introduced the Seeds of Hope and Love seed packet. I continue to be amazed that members and visitors continue to take the packets. I hope you will continue to hand the cards or the entire packet out to members of our community. I will continue to provide them.

You don't need five loaves. Two fish is enough to start with. Bring what's in your hands — your time, your talent, your treasure — let's see where your heart follows.

CROP WALK FOR HUNGER

10.11
1:00pm

Register at:



Sunday, October 11, 2026, 1pm
Our Saviour's Lutheran Church
1200 S. 40th St.
Lincoln, NE

Visit the link below or use the QR code to register as an individual or team and start raising money to feed the hungry! One and 1.5-mile routes planned.

One small step; one big impact!

Can't join us on the 11th?

- Walk anytime! Anywhere!

Walking doesn't work for you?

- Establish your own tradition!
- Take a special offering in worship.
- Host a meal or potluck to raise money.
- Create your own event.

However you choose to participate, take lots of pictures and share it with us on our Facebook page.

All donations are to be gathered and turned in via your participant packet BY October 30!

Register Today!
<https://events.crop hungerwalk.org/crophungerwalks/event/lincolne>



COMMUNITY BOOK STUDY
SPIRITED READERS
EVERYBODY ALWAYS By Bob Goff



WE WILL DISCUSS 2 CHAPTERS EACH MONTH
PLEASE BRING YOUR OWN BOOK
4TH TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH
6:30 pm - 8 pm
LOCATION: THE MILL AT TELEGRAPH
330 S. 21st St, Lincoln
No RSVP needed, call with questions: 402-475-4289
Website: fcclincn.org



I absolutely love the Nebraska Junk Jaunt. 300 miles of garage sales in central Nebraska because I can't get enough of other people's crap! It energizes me and feeds my creative juices. But even more fun than bargains and back stories is the food. With about a zillion people coming into tiny Nebraska bergs, local churches (and fire halls and libraries and community centers) see it as a great fundraising opportunity and offer food for purchase. You can find BBQ and German food and delicious dishes originating from Sweden and Czechoslovakia and homemade ice cream, bake sales, home grown veggies and pickled everything. Not for nothing I take my cooler with me when I go.

People of faith know how to feed people.

People of **all** faiths know how a good meal, shared with good people, can feed the spirit as well as the body. From potlucks to morning coffee & donuts to funeral dinners supporting grieving families: there is something sacred about gathering around a table and making sure there is enough to go around. And sometimes feeding people raises money for other wonderful things.

And I think that's one reason people of faith are particularly heartbroken by the knowledge that, at any given moment, there are people right here in our community who don't have enough food. Last year, I attended the Food Insecurity Summit hosted by Justice in Action. One of the things that struck me was simply how many people in Lincoln and Lancaster County are working to make sure our neighbors have enough to eat.

There are food pantries and feeding ministries, community organizations and nonprofits—and so many faith communities—all working to make sure our neighbors have enough to eat. It was inspiring.

It was also sobering: all of those people are working so hard because the need is so great. Here at First Christian we often collect food items for various programs in addition to gift cards and snacks for *Back Door Blessings*. FCC volunteers serve a monthly meal at The Gathering Place and I'm still recovering from the hot dogs, cookies, popcorn, ice cream and chips from PraiseFest, our faith community's neighborhood outreach party.

Based on listening sessions just like the one we're hosting on September 30, Justice in Action has chosen food insecurity as its new issue for research and response. On Wednesday, September 30 at 6:00, FCC will host a listening session at the home of D'Arcy and Jim Blosser. You are invited to participate by sharing the community problem of food insecurity that has impacted you, your family, and your neighbors personally. Based on the more than 80 listening sessions scheduled to take place around Lancaster County, strategies will be developed to address this very important issue.

Stick around to learn more about Justice in Action after worship on September 27th or contact FCC team leader, Stephanie Frogge, at stephaniefrogge@sbcglobal.net. We hope you'll join us!



Youth Retreat at Kamp Kaleo

Join us for the **2026 Fall Youth Retreat** on **October 23–25, 2026**, at Kamp Kaleo in Burwell, Nebraska! This weekend is open to **7th–12th grade students** and their adult sponsors and will be filled with faith, fellowship, fun, and adventure. The cost is **\$140 per person**, which includes lodging, meals, and all activities.

Men's Retreat at Kamp Kaleo

Join other men for a weekend retreat at Kamp Kaleo! Dive deeper into your own faith and self, guided by an insightful and challenging keynote speaker. Connect with others and share your faith stories. Experience inspiring and transformational worship. And relax and rejuvenate on the grounds of Kaleo. The retreat will begin on Friday evening and end Sunday morning after a closing worship. A variety of activities will be available Saturday afternoon on the grounds of Kaleo, or take your own adventure to Burwell, Ord, or other nearby attractions.

Rev. Jeff Hagaman is the keynote speaker. He is a graduate of United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities and has faithfully served churches in Minnesota and Nebraska. In retirement, he has continued his ministry as an Associate Conference Minister for the Tri-Conference, United Church of Christ, and as a Nebraska Conference Deacon. When he's not serving the church, Jeff can usually be found outdoors. Whether camping, hiking, biking, gardening, landscaping, or volunteering at Spring Creek Audubon Center near Denton, Nebraska, his love for creation shines through in all he does.

The cost for Friday evening through Sunday morning is **\$190 (\$100 if lodging is not needed)**. Anyone **16 or older** is welcome to attend (participants under 18 must register with an adult). Lodging and all meals from Friday dinner through Sunday breakfast are included.

Go to kampkaleo.com, click on events and Men's Retreat to register.

Praisefest 2026

On September 13th we enjoyed an evening of fun at Praisefest! Many enjoyed the bounce house, airbrush tattoos, fire truck, Street Treats and food. Thanks to everyone who volunteered their time to help with planning, food, activities, music, setup and cleanup. It was a beautiful evening to share God's love with our neighbors and friends!

