THE SEASON OF LENT
WITH FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

All services are at First Presbyterian Church unless noted. Sunday services are @ 10 am.

Sunday, March 10
10:00 am Worship with Rev. Lauren Peters

Sunday, March 17
10:00 am Worship with Rev. Leanne Masters

Palm Sunday, March 24
10:00 am Worship with Rev. Dr. Sue Coller

Maundy Thursday, March 28
6:00 pm Worship with light dinner
Be sure to RSVP at (402) 477-6037 or info@fpclincoln.org

Good Friday, March 29
7:00 pm at Southern Heights Presbyterian Church

Easter Sunday, March 31
10:00 am Worship with Rev. Dr. Sue Coller

Southern Heights Presbyterian Church
5750 S 40th St, Lincoln, NE 68516
(402) 421-3704
SouthernHeightsPresbyterian@gmail.com

First Presbyterian Church
840 S 17th St, Lincoln, NE 68508
(402) 477-6037
info@fpclincoln.org
All Church Book Study
For more info: fpclincoln.org/events

This year we are reading the book "Wholehearted Faith" by Rachel Held Evans and Jeff Chu. This book is a collection of essays that explore the nature of Christian faith and how to find a path forward in Christianity beyond conservative evangelicalism. There will be several different small groups to choose from that will meet at different times and locations.

Monthly Book Club
For more info: njanike@hotmail.com

Books that we are reading in 2024 are: "We Are Displaced" by Malala Yousafzai; "Remarkably Bright Creatures" by Shelby Van Pelt; "The Kitchen House" by Lisa Wingate; "The Thursday Murder Club" by Richard Osman; and more!

We meet on the 3rd Friday of the month at 9 am in the Parlor.

Bible Study
For more info: info@fpclincoln.org

First Presbyterian has three women’s groups that meet monthly to nurture women’s faith through prayer and Bible study. Join us -

Circle 1 - 1st Wednesday of the Month, 9:00 am, Rm 107
Circle 2 - 3rd Thursday of the month 1:30 pm, Rm. 107
Circle 3 - Afterwork Bible Study, 4th Monday of the month. 5:30 pm, Zoom

Men's Bible Study meets every Tuesday at 8 am for breakfast and discussion in Rm. 107.
As we move through the season of Lent, we are focusing on our fears. What holds us back? How have we been hurt and how does that affect the way we relate to people? What fears need to die in order for us to fully live?

These questions are not easy ones, and often they are ones we don’t want to look at, because if we look at them, then we have to take our fears and the impact they have on our lives seriously. As I mentioned in my sermon starting the series on Feb. 18, our fears go deep – often back to childhood – and affect us in ways that we are sometimes oblivious to.

Those of you who are familiar with the enneagram know that each of the 9 “energies” that weave through our lives has a corresponding fear:

1. The fear of never being good enough – of being defective and a nagging belief that it is not ok to make mistakes.
2. The fear of being unloved and left alone in life.
3. The fear that others will consider you worthless if you lack accomplishments.
4. The fear of being invisible – of not finding your own identity and lacking significance or meaning.
5. The fear that you will fail, leaving you incapable and unable to help yourself or others.
6. The fear of being unsupported and living a life without guidance or direction.
7. The fear of missing out on your needs being fulfilled and experiencing pain.
8. The fear of being weak, vulnerable, and without power.
9. And the fear of conflict, and experiencing loss or disconnection from those you love.

Most of us, if not all of us, have something of each of these at work in our lives. Typically, some fears are stronger than others and have bigger impacts on how we live and relate, and others are barely noticeable. Which of these fears resonate with you? Why do you think that fear is active in your life? What if that fear died? What if that fear went away? How would that change your life? How would that change the way you relate to people? How would that free you to embrace the joyful, abundant life God offers you?

The reality is, our fears often cause us needless trouble in our lives and they cause us to react badly at times. This Lent I invite you to consider your fears, and understand them better. By understanding them better, perhaps it will be easier to let them die so you can experience the New Life of the Resurrection.
Our new financial administrator, Jennifer DeCamp, joined us as reviewed our 2023 financials (we did well!) and balance sheet. Thanks to your generosity and commitment to this church and God’s mission, where we had budgeted a shortfall of $53,000, we came out ahead by $26,000! That’s a difference of $79,000!

We reviewed our relationship with the Iglesia de JesuCristo, and approved continuing our lease with them for another year.

Carrie Cross joined us and she and Brad gave an update on the Welcome Center Task Force, looking at ways to open up space for a more comfortable Welcome Center, addressing some safety concerns regarding exiting the building in case of an emergency, and some ongoing congestion issues when we have larger events. They’ve also broached the idea of creating better access to the courtyard so we can more easily enjoy that outdoor space. Right now they are in the information gathering stage and will report back to the session.

We approved all routine motions for worship and communion services for the year, including through the Worship Committee a joint Lent Series with Southern Heights Presbyterian Church, including Ash Wednesday services at SH, a Maundy Thursday dinner and communion service at FPC, and a Good Friday service a SH.

The Worship Committee will review the Christmas Eve attendance trends and make a recommendation to session at a future meeting about what time and how many services to have on Christmas Eve. We were excited about the attendance this past year at the two services. Combined we haven’t seen those numbers since 2016!

We approved the baptisms of Cassandra Mae Gropp and Journie Wiles at upcoming worship services.

Session’s next meeting is our annual Session Retreat, March 1-3, at the Quilt Museum. This is when we focus on the big picture, review where we’ve been and look at where God is calling us. This year the retreat goes into Sunday, so we welcome the Rev. Sue Babovec to lead our Sunday morning worship and communion service at the church.
New Livestream Platform!

Our Sunday worship livestream is now available at fpclincoln.altarlive.com. We are excited to introduce a great new way to worship online that allows for a more immersive "church community" experience. You can "sit in a pew," chat with others in your pew, or simply sit quietly and take in the service. After the worship service, you'll be able to join other online worshippers for fellowship! At our church, we believe that community is just as important as worship, and our new platform brings both elements together in a unique way.

After the service ends, our hosts will move everyone to the lobby where you can join the Connections Café room to chat with the group or have a more intimate discussion with a few friends around a virtual table.

To interact with others, you will need to create an account. There are two ways to set up an account:

1. Go to altarlive.com and click "login." You will be prompted to create an account, after which an email link will be sent to activate it. Once you have activated the account, search for "First Presbyterian Church of Lincoln" (the "of" is important) and click to join our community. Then you can find a list of meetings and upcoming worship services, click on the one you want to attend, and you will be in our virtual sanctuary.

2. Email Carrie and ask her to send you an email invite. Follow the steps in the email to automatically become a member of our community at altarlive.

If you want to interact with others, you will need to give permission to your computer to use your camera and microphone. We recommend allowing access always so that you don't have to go through the same process every time you join.

Visit YouTube.com/@FPCLincoln for a short video on how the worship and fellowship experience works.

We will be using this platform for meetings, so if you are part of a committee or ministry team, you will need an account. During the transition, we will be using Zoom for select meetings. Your ministry team or committee leader will let you know when your group is switching to AltarLive.
Last October, we welcomed Eliana Elias, the Executive Director of Minga Peru, to our church. Pastor Sue was impressed by the work they are doing to bring their part of the world closer to the Kingdom of God. Eliana was invited to share their story and the response from our congregation was both exciting and humbling. We are continuing to explore this new relationship and Eliana will be returning for a visit from April 14-21.

During her visit, Eliana will be at our church on April 21 and we are working on filling up her time with other churches and groups to help her build a support base here in Nebraska for the work they are doing in the Amazon. We will keep you informed about the plans while she is here and ways that you can learn more about Minga Peru and our church’s partnership with them. If you have any groups in mind that would like to hear from Eliana, please let Jeri Brandt (Mission & Justice chair) or Pastor Sue know.

Minga Peru is a non-profit organization in the Peruvian Amazon that focuses on educating and empowering women in remote Amazonian villages. They also work on radio for social change, leadership training, and conserving natural resources. They are a leader in Latin America in helping organizations make their human rights and community development work more effective, inclusive, and sustainable.

We have a powerful story from a Peace Corps Response Volunteer who worked with Minga Peru. This story highlights the impact of their work on the life of a community leader and her young son. Through Minga's workshops, the mother gained a stronger voice in her family, community, and country. Her son, despite his young age, picked up on leadership skills and has become an entrepreneur in his community. Their story serves as an example for others and has had a lasting impact on the volunteer’s life.

We believe that international relationships have a transformative power, as experienced by those who have been on international mission trips. We look forward to seeing how our relationship with Minga Peru develops and the possibility of a future trip to witness firsthand the impact they are making in the Amazon.
HIGHLIGHTS FROM PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN’S JANUARY 2024 MEETING

1. A slate was proposed, and an election held for new officers for Presbyterian Women (PW). The following officers were duly elected: Christy Abraham – Chair/Moderator, Vena Alesio – Vice Chair/Moderator, Cheryl Rennick – Treasurer, and Carol Ott Schacht – Secretary, and Lynn Hughes and Joan Berglund – PW Book Editors.

2. A general motion was made and seconded to pay for the following PW pledges and special offerings: Churchwide ($400), Synod ($200) and Presbytery ($200), and Special Church Offerings (Peacemaking, Joy, etc.) and PW Birthday offering for 2024.

3. Discussion was held regarding the development of By Laws for PW. Terri Sherman offered to put together draft By Laws and present them at our next meeting. Carol Ott Schacht will assist Terri.

4. Discussion was held regarding the Gifts of Women Sunday which PW typically plans and hosts. This year, International Women’s Day is on March 8th during Lent, so moving the service to a date in April was recommended. Members discussed using Horizons Magazine’s women’s service whose message centers on Proverbs 31:10-31. Vena volunteered to present the message and the group proposed a women’s choir to provide the music for the service. Additionally, Joan Berglund made a recommendation PW purchase a memorial from Churchwide in honor and memory of Carlene Waldron. It was moved and seconded that we allocate $100 from the Birthday Fund offering for the memorial which will be presented at the women’s service and dedicated to Carlene’s lifelong participation and many contributions to PW at FPC.

5. Three PW meetings were proposed for 2024 to be held on the second Sunday of January, June, and September. Our next meeting will be held on Sunday, June 9th, 2024, following worship.

Submitted by Carol L. Ott Schacht
Secretary, Presbyterian Women
This month we are getting to know long-time members Brett and Audrey Richert.

Brett grew up in York, Ne, and graduated from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Audrey was originally from southwest Minnesota, but also grew up in York. Even though they both grew up in York, they didn’t actually meet until after college when they were both in Audrey’s brother’s wedding.

Brett began working part-time for Stephens & Smith Construction while attending UNL, and has been working there ever since. He now heads the real estate development division of the concrete construction company. Audrey is a Doane University graduate, and is the Executive Director of the Nebraska Presbyterian Foundation, which is the parent company of a retirement community in Columbus, and also funds grants to PCUSA churches and human services organizations.

They have 3 children: Erinn and husband Will live in York; Seth and wife Casarah, and granddaughter Emree, live in Lincoln; their youngest daughter Mallory lives in Lexington, KY.

Brett & Audrey joined First Presbyterian and were married here by Rev. Dr. Tom Schmid in 1988. They chose First Pres because it was the closest Presbyterian church to where they were living at the time. They’ve moved a few times since then, but they’ve always remained at First Pres because of the people and friendships here which have been so meaningful in their lives.

Brett currently serves on Session and the Personnel Committee. Audrey is a Deacon and serves on the Christian Ed Committee.

They share their home with Macy, their enthusiastic and resident clown Standard Poodle. They are looking forward to a vacation in Tennessee this year to explore Nashville, the Cumberland Gap, and the Smoky Mountains (there may also be some bourbon-tasting involved).
March is always that weird time that’s still kind of caught in winter but signs of spring are starting to appear, which makes it a great month to be in the throes of Lent as we see the signs of Easter on the horizon. Yes, Easter is on its way and one of FPC’s traditions is the Easter Egg hunt on Easter morning (March 31st). This event is not just for us, it’s for the neighborhood and community that surrounds us. The CE Committee has already begun planning and we would love to have your help with this wonderful event that brings our neighborhood together. If you would like to donate some candy to go into the eggs it would be greatly appreciated. The Youth will be filling approximately 400 eggs on March 24th. Remember that the candies need to be bite-sized that can fit into an egg. And it’s always great to have some gluten-free and nut-free options. For a list of gluten-free and nut-free candies, you can find a list on the Easter Egg event page on the church website. But that’s not all that is happening here at First Presbyterian this spring.

FPChristian Education with Kris Brammer

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Confirmation for our 6th-8th graders has begun and we ask your prayers for the young people involved along with the covenant partners who are giving of their time to walk with them in their faith journey. Confirmation is a several-week class culminating in Confirmation Sunday on March 24th.

The Hebrews adult Sunday school class in March will be exploring the topic of Christian Nationalism. Over a couple of sessions, we use a video presentation by Dr. Sam Perry for “a glimpse into the sociocultural phenomenon of white Christian Nationalism and how the Bible is being used to support ideologies that are opposed to the teachings of Jesus.” This will be a listen/watch and discussion format.
Thank You from the Personnel Committee

We want to thank the congregation for their continued generosity and support of our staff. As we reported at the annual meeting, this year we were able to give all staff cost-of-living increases that also made up for part of the cost-of-living increase that we did not give last year (for a total of 8.9%). The session approves salaries for all staff with the exception of installed pastors, which the Book of Order delegates to the congregation. In December the Session unanimously voted to give increases to staff and approved recommending to the congregation an equal increase for Pastor Sue, which you approved at the annual meeting. We were also able to move some of our staff who were significantly underpaid up to a fairer salary. As you know, inflation has hit everyone hard, and our staff are no exception. One of our goals is to do our best to support our staff in their service to the church by making sure to the best of our ability that their salaries keep up with inflation and that they are fairly compensated in today’s market. In setting those salaries we not only look at the Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) put out by the Social Security Administration every October, we also draw on a resource that surveys churches all over the nation that allows us to compare our salaries to what staff with similar responsibilities in similar sized churches (in terms of membership and budget) in similar type communities and regions are paid. Again, thank you for your support of our staff who go above and beyond in supporting and helping to lead our church!

The Personnel Committee is committed to transparency with the session and congregation. Questions?? Just ask the Personnel Committee chair, Paul Jasa, for assistance.

~ The FPC Personnel Committee

Got questions? Just ask! Got ideas? We’d love to hear them!
(emails go to the whole committee/ministry team)

Session: session@fpclincoln.org Pastor Sue Coller, Moderator
Christian Ed: CE@fpclincoln.org Cindy Lloyd, Chair
Hospitality: hospitality@fpclincoln.org Rick Cypert and Susie Wilson, Co-Chairs
Mission & Justice: mission@fpclincoln.org Jeri Brandt, Chair
Music & Fine Arts: music@fpclincoln.org Steve Henderson, Chair
Online Ministry: onlineministry@fpclincoln.org Brad Hinrichs, Chair
Personnel: personnel@fpclincoln.org Paul Jasa, Chair
Property: property@fpclincoln.org Bill Janike, Chair
Stewardship & Finance: stewardship@fpclincoln.org Janna Loehr, Chair
Worship & Sacraments: worship@fpclincoln.org Terri Sherman, Chair
Congregational Nominating Committee: nominating@fpclincoln.org Carol Ott Schacht, Chair
Foundation: foundation@fpclincoln.org Jim Wagner, President
First Presbyterian Church
Where faith is nurtured, curiosity is encouraged, diversity is welcomed, and all are loved.

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Worship Opportunities
In-Person Worship Services
10:00 am - English 12:00 pm - Nuer
Live Stream Worship Service: 10:00 am

Online Sermon:
YouTube.com/@FPCLincoln

Online Worship:
fpclincoln.altarlive.com

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