

The Word on the (F) Street



Making the Most of Christmas Jeff Heerspink, Pastor

There are those who love Christmas: the decorations, time together with family, shopping and the gifts.

There are those who despise Christmas: the hurrying, reminders of disappointed or dysfunctional family, and the expenses.

Regardless of your past, regardless of your feelings, we all are about to enter the Christmas season. I came across something several years ago, put together by a group of pastors from the Northwest who were dealing with these realities of Christmas. They called it “Christmas Conspiracy.”

“Christmas Conspiracy” was designed to help those who heard of it make the most of Christmas. They had four focuses:

Worship fully. Let’s make no apologies about the point of the Christmas story. We celebrate the birth of Jesus — God incarnate — the One sent to restore us. What if we to being a part of the happening?

Let’s make the most of our Christmas by worshipping God...

birth of Jesus — God incarnate — the One sent to restore us. What if we to being a part of the happening?

Spend less. Let’s not push ourselves deeper into debt so the pile of presents around the tree can be three feet high. It’s okay to buy presents for people you love. However, remember there’s no connection between the story of Jesus, and stopping by the mall to mindlessly buy a gift that someone doesn’t need, with money you don’t have. What if we buy a fewer gifts this year? Then be sure that the ones we buy are because we want to.

Give more. Wait. That sounds like a contradiction, doesn’t it? Maybe not. What if we gave relational gifts? These may require more thought, and more of us. Like when a young man gave a bag of coffee beans to his dad. Huh? The note on the gift said it all: “Dad you are only allowed to drink the coffee from these beans with me. And in the days that it takes us to enjoy this coffee, I just want to hear your voice. I miss you, and this is just for us.” That gift just became relational. What options could you utilize this year to give more relational gifts?

Love all. What if we took some of the money we saved from not buying Uncle Murray that sweater he was never going to wear anyway? What if we took some of that money and we gave it to those in need, those who are overlooked, to whom Jesus referred to as “the least of these?” Who could you bless this year? (Note there are giving catalogs in the back of church that give options to give some “crazy” good gifts like: Clean water, feed a child, give education, buy a cow or chicken for a family).

Let’s make the most of our Christmas by worshipping God, spending less but investing more and sharing the love of Christ through Generosity.



Calendar for December 2021

2nd: 6:30pm FoodNet
5th: Sunday Service
7th: 6:30am Prayer
9th: 6:30pm FoodNet
10th: **Happy Birthday Dave Hogan**
11th: **Happy Birthday Sheri Verkamp**
12th: Sunday Service; **Happy Birthday Lennon Proctor**
14th: 6:30am Prayer; **Happy Birthday Sonya Turco**
16th: 6:30pm FoodNet; **Happy Birthday Silas Richard**
18th: **Happy Birthday Braxton Verkamp, Katharen Wiese**
19th: Sunday Service
21st: 6:30am Prayer
22nd: **Happy Birthday Caleb Heerspink**
23rd: 6:30pm FoodNet
26th: Sunday Service
28th: 6:30am Prayer
30th: 6:30pm FoodNet

Please keep us up to date on birthdays & anniversaries! If you aren’t sure that we have your information, talk to Jane Mailand or simply fill out a Welcome Card and hand it to her. In addition, if your address, phone, or email has changed, let Jane know.



F Street Neighborhood Church, “It’s All Good in the Hood” Tees



Just so you are aware we currently have F Street Church “It is all good in the hood” tee shirts in both burgundy, and black, on sale for \$10. We also have some older tees in select sizes, that are for sale for \$5. Those of you who want to support and promote Celebrate Recovery, we also have F Street CR shirts.

Advent Season 2021, Bill Thornton, Teaching Pastor

As we look forward to Christmas (and the birth of Jesus we celebrate), the F Street Neighborhood Church annually observes the season of Advent as a time of preparation and anticipation for Christ to have renewed access into our hearts and lives as believers. 2021 has been a challenging year for many people, so we may find ourselves especially longing for those beautiful qualities that the coming of Jesus brings to us: Hope, Peace, Love, and Joy. The following is a schedule of messages:

November 28th, First Sunday of Advent

Candle: Hope

Message: *Hope’s Fulfillment*

Gospel Reading: Luke 21:25-36

December 5th, Second Sunday of Advent

Candle: Peace

Message: *Proclaiming Peace*

Gospel Reading: Luke 3:1-6

December 12th, Third Sunday of Advent

Candle: Love

Message: *Love’s Expectation*

Gospel Reading: Luke 3:7-18

December 19th, Fourth Sunday of Advent

Candle: Joy

Message: *Joy’s Fullness*

Gospel REading: Luke 1:39-55

December 24th, Christmas Eve

Candle: Christ

Message: *Let Us Go to Bethlehem*

Gospel Reading: Luke 2:1-20.

Want an Interview?

Beth Heerspink, Team Developer, Coach

On Sunday, November 21, Pastor Jeff led the final 3M Class, which focused on helping people understand how they are uniquely wired for ministry. In addition to providing chicken alfredo pizza (YUM), Jeff introduced the “SHAPE” interview process, which is a tool aimed at helping individuals understand their spiritual gifts: heart, abilities, personality, and experiences. Understanding these things can help us all gain insight into how we can not only serve the body, but also impact the greater kingdom.

If you were unable to attend the class on Sunday, but would like to know whether you are a lion, otter, beaver or retriever (through a personality test), learn more about discovering your specific spiritual gifts (with a spiritual gifts survey), and/or learn more about the teams we have at F Street, we would love to set up a SHAPE interview with you.

I am very excited about my new role of working with teams at F Street Church. I believe we are all more fulfilled when we are serving, and most importantly, Christ is honored and the body (church) is blessed. Every believer has spiritual gifts, talents, and experiences (no, you are not the exception) that can be used to bless others. If you would like to go through this interview process and learn more about yourself in the meantime, I would love to set up a time with you. Please give me a call at 402-217-2352.

Women’s Bible Study

The Friday morning Advent study will finish on December 17. We will resume meeting on January 21 with a study of the Holy Spirit.



Enrollment is Open for Winter Classes at Lincoln School of Ministry

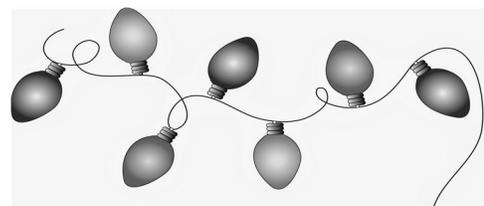
Bill Thornton, Teaching Pastor

With the all session of LSOM ending the first week in December, plans are now underway for the winter classes that will soon be offered. Our focus for this coming series will be on developing Ministry Skills in areas such as Biblical communication, pastoral care, and evangelism. If you would like more information about how to be a part of these equipping classes, please talk with Pastor Bill. Our winter session is scheduled to begin on Thursday, January 6th, and will meet at our building in the office area outside the Pastors’ offices.

Interested in Baptism?

Bill Thornton, Teaching Pastor

Perhaps you have been present when a friend or family member has been baptized, and you have wondered about whether you should experience this, too. We believe that baptism is a significant event in one’s life as a Christ follower, and as a church family we want to provide the spiritual encouragement and understanding that should accompany your decision to be baptized. If you are interested in learning more about this, please contact either Pastor Jeff or Pastor Bill.





Youth Group Update Sage Peterson, Youth Director

Hello F Street Church. November was an awesome month for F St. Youth! The group was able to go on its very first trip to Iowa to help with the VIP Prom. All the kids did an awesome job. Over the course of November, we also had five new kids attend our group, which is crazy awesome! We ended the month with a "Friendsgiving" meal before the kids headed into the break.

Looking forward to December, we can't wait to continue to watch our kids continue to grow, connect and learn. Also this month we are having an event for just high school students, partnering with two other youth groups!

If you are interested in learning more, supporting, or volunteering with F Street Youth, please contact Sage Peterson at sage.s.peterson@gmail.com

Pulpit vs Politics #8 Keith Morrissey, Elder

"Children are a gift from God. Children a reward from him." Psalm 127:3. *"Parents shouldn't be telling the schools what to teach."* Terry McCauliffe, Virginia Governor

It is important to realize and remember that children are a gift from God to **parents**, not to the state. As with any gift, a certain amount of responsibility comes with the gift, mainly the responsibility to use that gift wisely. Many of us have given gifts over our lifetime only to watch as it is wasted, abused, destroyed, ignored, or worst of all—regifted. As was pointed out in a recent sermon, billions of dollars are wasted each year on gift cards that are never used. How do you feel and respond when a gift is wasted? How do you expect God feels when a gift he has given you is abused, rejected or regifted? Especially when they were in their teen years, I may have wanted to return or regift my kids. (Can I get an Amen?). But I found that the only one willing to take responsibility for them was the state, and they were already doing a lousy job.

Most parents do recognize their children as a gift from God and will challenge the thought that they may be ignoring, wasting, rejecting, or regifting their kids. What about abortion? If that is not a rejection of God's gift, what is? (But that is a subject all on its own). What about handing your kids over to the state? If that is not an act of regifting, what is? And that is the subject for today.

But, you may ask, how am I regifting my kids? (Mal 3:9). How often do parents avoid their responsibilities to their children? Just check the number of people that you know who have never married, but are dependent on state funds to raise their kids? Or the number of parents that get divorced for selfish reasons, regardless of the trauma it creates for their children? What about those parents that choose drugs or alcohol over the welfare of

their children? Or those of us that let our kids spend hours on social media, or leave them in the care of public schools, without ever checking on them to see what they are learning or doing?

Many of us have regifted God's gifts to us to the school system despite knowing that the school is lying to them and preparing them to be slaves of the state. (see Dan 1:3-4). We think that it is a favor to us that the Federal Government is considering spending trillions of our dollars on a bill that will allow them, amongst other things, to care for kids for us from toddlerhood thru community college. Just as long as we don't tell them what to teach.

Many schools are already teaching our kids horrendous lies that go against everything that we, and God, know as the truth. They already teach first graders that it is okay for Mary to have two mommies or two daddies, instead of one of each - as God intended it to be. Or, in spite of the fact that God only created two genders with the intent of boys becoming men and girls becoming women, we can now override God by picking and choosing and changing our gender to be what we want to be on any given day. Instead of America becoming a melting pot for all races and ethnicities, it is really a toilet bowl, and we should all be flushed down it, (well, at least all of "them" should be flushed. Not "us"). It is scary to think of what else they will teach our children if we let them.

As parents we need to take ownership of, and responsibility for, the gifts that God has given us. Our children should become a higher priority than our own selfish and self-centered wants. And we should definitely tell our schools what to teach. Maybe some of us should be running for slots on the school board, or at least talking to those already on the board. All of us need to be checking on what our kids are learning from social media and school, discussing it with them and teaching them the truth. Check the Bible. It tells in several places that it is the responsibility of parents to *"...bring up a child in the way he should be raised,"* (Prov 22:6).



Relationships & Religion

Alex, ATLAS Volunteer Coordinator

Sometimes people say "Christianity is not about religion, it's about a relationship." I would say it, instead, like this: "Christianity is about a relationship that moves me to do religious things." For example, my relationship with Jesus causes me to religiously attend church service every week or religiously read my Bible every day.

James 1:27 says, *"Pure and genuine religion in the sight of God the Father means caring for orphans and widows in their distress and refusing to let the world corrupt you."*

If you consider all of the "religious" things you did this year, how much of that time would be helping those in distress? How much would be pursuing purity? How much would be attending church services? Our goal at Atlas is to help you practice the two pure & genuine kinds of religion that James speaks on.

If you are struggling right now, Atlas can help by getting you a mentor who will walk with you in that struggle, helping you refuse the world's corruptions.

If you are ready to practice pure religion by walking with someone in distress then we need you. Right now, we have four women ready for mentors and no one to mentor them. There are also more men and women who will soon need to be paired up. Join us December 2nd at 6:00 p.m. at our office (1039 S 13th Street) to be trained as a mentor. Contact Alex at volunteer@atlaslincoln.org for more information or for future training dates if you can't make December 2nd.

Generous December Offerings Needed to Help Meet Goal

Tad Stryker, Elder

As we look toward the end of the year, I want to focus on our church goal for local giving. Our goal for 2021 is \$90,000. It can certainly be done, but we'll need a great month of December to meet it. We're calling this the "Make Up the Difference" campaign.

Depending upon the offering the last Sunday in November, I project that it will take between \$15,000 and \$20,000 to make up the difference in December to reach that goal.

Please join us in praying for this! As an action step to help us meet that goal, once again this year, we're challenging ourselves to double our normal giving during the month of December. Please prayerfully consider what you will give.

Remember, you have several ways to give. You can give in person at church on Sunday. You can mail a check to F Street Church, 1302 F Street, Lincoln NE 68508. And you can give electronically. It's easy, either through our website :

(fstreetchurch.org) or by using the Generosity app by Lifeway.



Health Ministry Corner

Barb Douglas, HMFNC

Hello and Merry Christmas to Everyone! I hope this Christmas season will be a memorable one. By that, I mean that we will remember, and concentrate on who the celebration is about, keeping our focus on Him!

2021 has been an extremely difficult year for many of us, to say the least. Our country is in more division and turmoil than ever. People are more divided than ever before.. So this Christmas season it has become even more important for those who call themselves Christ Followers to come together and follow his lead: forgive and love one another like never before!

There is so much we need to turn off and look away from, looking toward the One that made this holiday possible. He is the answer to ALL that overwhelms us. It's easy to forget and get all tangled up in the ways of this world. There is so much evil and

hate surrounding us, we really need to focus on and remember his promises. I made a list that we can refer to when times are tough or we just forget who we are:

1. We belong to God, through Christ, who gave his life for us. (Genesis 1:26 and also Romans 1:6, and there are many more.)
2. What does it mean to belong to Jesus Christ? To belong is to be accepted, to feel secure in community. As humans our greatest desire is to know and be known, to love and be loved. Our confidence in belonging extends through Christ to each other.
3. What does scripture say about our identity in Christ? Ephesians 2:10, "For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." Ephesians 4-5, "Because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in our transgressions...it is by grace you have been saved."
4. What does scripture say about what and who God owns? As founder and creator of the heavens and the earth and all that is in them, God holds the rights to all of it. That includes even us... our bodies, our minds, and our lives as seen in the following verses: Job 12:10; 1Corinthians 4:7 and 6:19.
5. How great is God's love for us? 1 John 3:1a, "How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called the children of God! And in John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, He gave his only begotten Son to die for us, that whosoever believes in him shall have eternal life."

These are only a few reasons to celebrate this Christmas season. Let's celebrate now, and take these verses, and many more, into the new year with us. Make 2022 a novel year, one to remember because of the love and sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ! Christ gave us two commandments just before his ascension: 1. "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, and soul. And the second is as important, "Love your neighbor as yourself."

May God's Blessings light your paths all the rest of this year, and last through the next!

Merry Christmas

Regular Email Updates

If you would like to, but are not getting regular updates about things at "F" Street Neighborhood Church, please send a request to be added to the email list at fstreetchurch@gmail.com

Prayer Requests

If you have prayer requests, please send them to our office email at fsncoffice@gmail.com



Community Groups

Group: Men's Bible Study

Location: Green Room at Church Building

Contact: Tad Stryker

Day/Time: Mondays, 7 pm

Group: Within My Reach (Relationships) Class

Location: Area Outside Pastors' Offices

Contact: Vincent or Cathy Grove

Day/Time: Tuesdays, 6:30 pm

Group: VA Small Group Study

Location: Victory Apartments (445 Honor Drive)

Contact: Jeff Heerspink or Carlos Gomez

Day/Time: Wednesdays, 2 pm

Group: Keith Morrissey's House

Location: 1750 Prospect Street

Contact: Keith Morrissey

Day/Time: Thursdays, 7 pm

Group: Women's Study: "Advent of our Savior"

Location: Fireside Room at Church Building

Contact: Beth Heerspink

Day/Time: Fridays, 10 am

Monthly Bible Reading Schedule

2 Peter

In his second letter to the same group of believers, scattered throughout the north of Asia Minor, Peter defends "knowledge." Referred to, some fifteen times in the three chapters of this letter, Peter reiterates that knowledge and knowing the word of God are the primary means of growth for the Christian. Pursuing this spiritual maturity was the first line of defense against false teachers and heretics, who sought to tear down the church with unbiblical theology about God. This letter encourages us to consider the importance we give in our own life - of clinging to knowledge of God as it is revealed in scripture. For Peter, the proper knowledge of God could combat the false teachers living amongst the churches he wrote to, and could grow their faith by attending to the word of God.

Jude

The Bible and tradition suggest that this letter was written by Jesus' half brother, Jude. The letter is hard to date because of its lack of detail in recounting people and places, but scholars suggest it was most likely written around AD 67 to 80. In this letter, Jude draws on the Bible imagery of Cain killing Abel and the punishment of Sodom and Gomorrah to condemn those who rejected authority and those who sought to please themselves. Believers could stand against those who sought to tear down the church by remembering the teachings of the apostles, building each other up in the faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, and keeping themselves in the love of God. This short, punchy book exhorts us as believers to stand for the truth against error.

Revelation

Coming from the Greek word for apocalypse, the title of this last book in the Bible provides the backdrop for the end of history and the culmination of God's plan for life here on Earth. What began in Paradise at the beginning of the Bible ends in Paradise at the close of the Bible. The book is for those who hope in Christ and long for the beauty, hope, and fulfillment of God's final chapter when the brokenness of sin is healed. We will dwell once again in all of the fullness of God's presence, no longer separated from Him. While Revelation is a book of hope for the redeemed, it also paints in stunning symbolism the tribulation and judgement of God on those who do not believe. The book of Revelation is God's final answer action upon sin when pain, tears, and death are no more and for those who have trusted in Christ eternal life is forevermore.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Nov 29 – 2 Pet 2	Nov 30 – 2 Pet 3	Dec 1 – Jude 1	Dec 2 – Rev 1	Dec 3 – Rev 2
Dec 6 – Rev 3	Dec 7 – Rev 4	Dec 8 – Rev 5	Dec 9 – Rev 6	Dec 10 – Rev 7
Dec 13 – Rev 8	Dec 14 – Rev 9	Dec 16 – Rev 10	Dec 17 – Rev 11	Dec 17 – Rev 12
Dec 20 – Rev 13	Dec 21 – Rev 14	Dec 22 – Rev 15	Dec 23 – Rev 16	Dec 24 – Rev 17
Dec 27 – Rev 18	Dec 28 – Rev 19	Dec 29 – Rev 20	Dec 30 – Rev 21	Dec 31 – Rev 22