



The LINK

Volume 7 | July 2020

Through Stained Glass

Friends, 2020 has been a challenging year. The human family is experiencing new challenges while revisiting old wounds. At Lincoln's first Juneteenth Celebration, the Rev. Glenn Shelton spoke of two pandemics our country is currently fighting: the one known as COVID-19 has been going on for four months; the other has been going on for 401 years—racism. As a people of faith, we have a responsibility to work toward ending both.

During the last four months, the session and I have taken a proactive approach in doing our part to help flatten the curve of the coronavirus. It hasn't been easy. Each week brought new challenges, and if 2020 has taught us anything, the future will likely have them, too. Now that Illinois has entered phase 4, we can enter into our Sanctuary again with limited numbers and restrictions regarding worship. Throughout this season, the session has leaned into Christ's great commandment to love one another as Christ loves us. We know not everyone shares the same experiences with the virus, but as Christians, we all understand the task to which Christ calls us is to love each other, especially the most vulnerable. As we move further into (and prayerfully beyond) the pandemic, we will continue to maintain this approach.

As Presbyterians, we recognize that despite our love of God, we still find ways to sin or separate ourselves from God, each other, or our own self. God loves us enough to call us to confess whatever gets in the way of having a good relationship with the Holy One of Perfect Love. When someone wrongs us, we have the responsibility of bringing it to their attention so that the relationship that has been harmed can be restored and healed. If we fail to say anything and just ignore them instead, we are not exhibiting love. A call to confession is a call to further love, which God does with a reassurance of divine good intentions toward us so that we're not afraid to confess our shortcomings in the light of God's love.

We also understand that sin is not only individual, but it is also social. Even though we don't want or mean to, we have a share in collective sin when we

belong to certain groups who sin against others. Sin is complex and inescapable. This is why Presbyterians have a confession of sin in almost every worship service, and the greatest sin may be the unwillingness to admit that we are sinful. One sin that continues to plague Christians in the United States is racism. The PCUSA defines racism as the systemic and structural ways that our society is still white-centered, white-dominant, and white-identified. It is an ongoing structure of society that gives advantage to whites at the expense of people of other racial groups. We know that all of humanity is created in the image and likeness of God, and yet, not everyone is treated as beloved children of God. Racism is the exact opposite of what God wants for God's people. It is the rejection of the other, which is entirely contrary to the Word of God incarnate in Jesus Christ. Racism is a lie about our fellow siblings, for it says that some are less human than others.

What can we do about the sin of racism? One of the young people who spoke at a recent rally invited white people to educate themselves about this pandemic. Listening to the stories of some of those speakers and other siblings of color has compelled our Session to be intentional about better understanding racism and how we can eradicate it from the different systems in which we exist. We have decided to read, study, and discuss the book, *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White Christians to Talk About Racism*, by Dr. Robin Diangelo. We will not be studying this book alone. I will be leading the discussions with the Rev. Laurie Hill, pastor of the St. John UCC. Together, our churches are making a bold statement by declaring that racism is a sin in which we no longer want to participate.

Laurie and I will offer two discussions every Wednesday for eight weeks. The schedule is as follows:

- July 1—1:30 p.m. @ St. John UCC & 7 p.m. on Zoom—Intro to the book and welcome from Laurie and Adam
- July 8—1:30 p.m. @ First Presbyterian Church of Lincoln [Adam leading discussion] & 7 p.m. on Zoom we will discuss chapters 1 & 2
- July 15—1:30 p.m. @ St. John UCC [Laurie

leading] & 7 p.m. on Zoom we will discuss chapters 3 & 4

- July 22—1:30 p.m. @ St. John UCC [Laurie leading] & 7 p.m. on Zoom [Adam leading] we will discuss chapters 5-6
- July 29—1:30 pm.. @ St. John UCC [Laurie leading] & 7 p.m. on Zoom [Adam leading] we will discuss chapter 7 & 8
- August 5—1:30 p.m. @ St. John UCC [Laurie leading] & 7 p.m. on Zoom [Adam leading] we will discuss chapters 9 & 10
- August 12—1:30 p.m. @ St. John UCC [Laurie leading] & 7 p.m. on Zoom [Adam leading] we will discuss chapters 11 & 12
- August 19—1:30 p.m. @ St. John UCC & 7 p.m. on Zoom Laurie and Adam will conclude our education on racism

The books can be purchased from the office for \$10. I encourage you if it is a practice you are familiar with, to purchase your own on an e-reader device. You can purchase the book on [Amazon](#).

We are doing a bold thing. We are not doing this only as members of the Lincoln First Presbyterian or as the St. John UCC. We are not doing this bold thing as only as Christians of Logan County. We are not doing this bold thing merely as siblings to people of color. We are doing this bold thing as human beings, created by the love of God, who has called us to live in this time and in this era for a particular and real purpose. As we strive to resist the pandemics around us—not only coronavirus and racism—remember Christ's calls us to combat the pandemics of apathy, indifference, isolation, intolerance, and oppression. These are surely the real work God is calling us to confront, and by God's grace and with your help, we shall be an example of a community willing to engage with the hard work.

Keep the faith, friends,
Adam

WORSHIP NOTES FOR JULY

Sunday, July 5: *The Fifth Sunday after Pentecost*
Sermon Title: Choosing Acceptance
Sermon Text: Genesis 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67
Today we will celebrate communion. Please have your communion elements for worship!

Sunday, July 12: *The Sixth Sunday after Pentecost*
Sermon Title: The Challenge of Choosing
Sermon Text: Genesis 25:19-34 & Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

Sunday, July 19: *The Seventh Sunday after Pentecost*
Sermon Title: Choosing to Dream
Sermon Text: Genesis 28:10-19a & Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

Sunday, July 26: *The Seventh Sunday after Pentecost*
Sermon Title: Choosing Deception
Sermon Text: Genesis 29:15-28 & Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

JULY BIRTHDAYS

2	Connie Boss
3	Ben Read
6	Marsha Dallas
8	Shirley Bartelmay
11	Angela Stoltzenburg
12	Curt McCallister
19	Erin Frick
19	Ruth Kapik
25	Julie Kasa
26	Judy Busby
30	Rachel Shershen

JULY ANNIVERSARIES

4	Bill & Shirley Opper
9	Gary & Karen Sams Davis
13	Allen & Jeannine Pickering
21	Kirk & Ellen Dobihal

Thank you all so much for making my last Sunday as musical director so special. I was touched by all the signs, cards, flowers, gifts, well wishes and texts. You all have truly been a blessing to me.

In Christ,
Julie Kasa



From the Worship & Spiritual Formation Team: Worship in the Sanctuary to Begin on July 19

Depending on Governor Pritzker's ruling expected at the end of the month to allow us to move to Phase 4 of the State's reopening plan, we are preparing to welcome members of the congregation back to worship in the Sanctuary beginning on July 19. We will be limited to 50 people, so there may be a need to rotate people from week to week. In order to manage the process, we are asking those of you who wish to attend worship in person to let us know by 5 p.m. on Thursday by sending an email to worshipatfirst@gmail.com and letting us know how many people in your family will attend. You may also call Cathy Maciariello at 347-681-6906. We will have specific pews set aside for singles, couples, and groups of three or more in order to ensure proper physical distancing.

On Friday you will receive a confirmation email with any special instructions for the day of worship. Please know that there will be some specific requirements, including wearing a mask and sanitizing your hands when you enter the Sanctuary. In addition, there will be no printed bulletins, singing or recitation, and the Bibles and hymnals are being removed from the Sanctuary. You are welcome to bring your own Bible and to print your own copy of the bulletin.

Each service will also be conducted on Facebook Live and Zoom for those who still prefer to worship at home. ***Communion will be celebrated the first Sunday of each month, and these services will be held on Facebook Live and Zoom ONLY. There will be NO in-person worship the first Sunday of the month.***

Please know that we are taking every step to ensure the safety of our members, including sanitizing pews, providing hand sanitizing stations at each entrance, and encouraging folks to use the rest rooms only in case of emergency. We ask that you bear with us as we proceed with care and caution, and while we continue to experiment with the best ways to provide meaningful worship opportunities for everyone.

Session Notes: March 16, 2020

Accepted Session minutes of May 12, 2020.
Approved the potential reopening of in-house services July 19, if the State of Illinois reaches phase 4.
Accepted all Committee Reports. Accepted the Treasurer's Report. Approved a book study entitled White Fragility as a combined effort to work with St. John's Church in promoting antiracism. Accepted the new electric rate from Homeland Energy.

Submitted by Connie Boss, Clerk of Session

The LINK

First Presbyterian Church
301 Pekin St.
Lincoln, IL 62656

www.preslincoln.org
office@preslincoln.org
217-732-6141

Office hours: Mon.-Fri., 8 a.m.-1 p.m.
Pastor available Monday — Thursday

STAFF

Rev. Adam Quine
Christine Thomas, Admin. Asst.
Chet Lord-Remmert, Organist
Leo Logan, Sexton
Connie Boss, Clerk of Session

Annual Blood Drive

Because of the pandemic, the Central Illinois Community Blood Center postponed the June Drive that First Presbyterian Church has faithfully sponsored for the past 20 years or so. They **may** request our sponsorship later in the year; if so, we will be needing homemade cookies from several of you and blood donations from those of you who are able. We will keep you posted if the need occurs.