

# Ponca City Christian

First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)  
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Seeking, Serving, Sharing  
March 27, 2022



Why I love this church...

“I feel at home. The People - I can laugh and cry with. I can tell them my feelings and they accept them for who I am. They make me feel like family.”  
– Karyn Sledge



## Mask Recommendation Lifted

During the March 23, 2022 Council meeting, it was decided that the church will no longer recommend masks be worn at the church. This decision was made based on the current number of local cases of Covid-19. The levels of coronavirus spread will likely continue to fluctuate. The council will continue monitoring reports and recommendations for our area. We thank you for your patience and cooperation over the past two years.

## Partner in Education

In our continuing efforts to support the teaching and learning at Lincoln Elementary. This month we have given our PIE Partner 18 plastic totes for Science Kits used in the classrooms. The large, clear containers will help make the objects visible, easier to access and use. Totes were requested by the staff when Lincoln hosted their PIE Partners in the Fall, which Stephen attended. We were able to purchase the totes from a generous donation designated for the PIE program.

-Andrea Morriss (E-Team)

**Registration deadline is May 1<sup>st</sup>!**  
**Contact the office for more information!**

As we approach the celebration of Easter, we must first pass through the days of reflection during the season of Lent. This series of images bring the story of the final days of Jesus to the forefront of our meditations as we ponder the intersection of the ministry of Christ and our own experiences.

*John 19:2* And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe.



The thorn is a natural development of plants which serves to protect the stalk or vine that leads to the flower or fruit of the plant. It is not an instrument of aggression, but a mechanism of defense. The purpose of the thorn is to preserve life. Yet sadistic individuals broke past the defenses of the plant, stole its life, and corrupted the plant to become an instrument of torture.

The soldiers that inflicted pain and humiliation on Jesus felt they were justified in their actions. They were people with power and authority. From their perspective, Jesus was a worthless man from the margins of society. They assumed he was deserving of their torment.

It is sad that people of faith have at times taken the message of the gospel that is intended to preserve life, and have instead twisted the message of Jesus into one which inflicts harm upon the very people it was intended to serve. People in positions of power have deemed the marginalized as worthless and inflicted further abuses upon them. They have justified their actions with a skewed interpretation of scripture that condemns rather than uplifts.

The crown of thorns is a reminder that we don't always use God's gifts in the way God intended. Let us look to the guidance of the Holy Spirit to lead us in our decisions so that we may honor the abundance of God's grace that exists in the forms of the elements of the earth, the traditions of our faith, and through our inclusion in the Body of Christ.

-Pastor Stephen