

# FEBRUARY



## BRUNCH-A-MONTH

Fellowship-- What is it? And what does it look like at Countryside Church? The Thesaurus suggests group, community, companionship, camaraderie, friendship, partnership, mutuality, solidarity, sociability, affiliation, and the list goes on and on! They all reference a sense of caring, of support and of understanding, exactly what our Countryside family offers one another.

So in the spirit of "fellowship" and wanting you to see what fellowship looks like at Countryside Church, I invite you to mark your calendars for some very important fellowship Sundays that are coming up! We will call them BRUNCH-A-MONTH! They are designed to bring our church families together in friendship, great food and above all, FUN! ETC (Enhancing True Commitment) members brought you the Chili/Chocolate Contest in January, which was a rousing success! Winners of that event were Darren Muhammad for Chili and Nancy Shaw for Chocolate. Their winning recipes are being served at the Annual Meeting lunch, scheduled for Sunday, February 7 at 11 AM in Memorial Hall.

February will be filled with fellowship

opportunities! Sweet Sunday will be held in the Commons on Sunday, February 14. This is one gigantic bake sale filled with the most beautiful and scrumptious home-baked goodies imaginable! Emma Boyd, one of our dedicated COYO kiddos and youth representative to the Board of Life Ministry, is organizing this event with proceeds being raised for the youth department. Also, we will have a BRUNCH-A-MONTH on Sunday, February 28 as we welcome our new members into the church family. Be sure to join us after service in Memorial Hall, introduce yourself and share your love for Countryside with them.

Our third BRUNCH-A-MONTH, sponsored by the Family Activities Committee, will be held on Palm Sunday featuring the Pancake Man! He has not been with us for a few years, so his return will spark not only a good time for those who wish to catch pancakes as they sail through the air, but also provides a warm entrance into Holy Week. Sharing a meal with friends and family, sharing great conversation and watching children as their voices erupt with laughter as they chase the pancakes makes for a heartfelt event.

April provides us with our fourth opportunity for fellowship as the Faith and the Environment (FATE) committee provides us with a delicious vegetarian brunch on Sunday, April 10. They will also be sponsoring Earth Day activities for the children in the gym directly following brunch.

Lastly, in May the Family Activities Committee again sponsor the "Buck a Bagel, Dollar a Donut" brunch on Pentecost Sunday, May 15, 2016. It is just what it sounds like! The event will be held in the Commons, or outdoors if the weather permits, and the money raised will be donated to a specific organization of choice. Who can resist a yummy donut (glazed or with sprinkles), bagels and a variety of cream cheeses? Yummy! BRUNCH-A-MONTH is easy! Just sign up at the Information Station or contact Mary Beth at [marybeth@countrysideucc.org](mailto:marybeth@countrysideucc.org).

BRUNCH-A-MONTH is affordable...not to exceed a suggested donation of \$5/person  
BRUNCH -A- MONTH is comfortable! It's an easy way to meet new folks, gather with longtime friends, and best of all, it brings you into fellowship with others.

# WELCOME TO COUNTRYSIDE



## **Church Office**

8787 Pacific Street, Omaha NE 68114  
Phone - 402-391-0350  
Email - [office@countrysideucc.org](mailto:office@countrysideucc.org)  
Website - [www.countrysideucc.org](http://www.countrysideucc.org)  
Facebook - [www.facebook.com/CountrySideOmaha/](http://www.facebook.com/CountrySideOmaha/)

## **Program Staff**

Contact information for program staff can be found on individual ministry pages.

## **Ministers**

**Rev. Eric Elnes, Ph.D.**  
Senior Minister, ext. 113  
[erice@countrysideucc.org](mailto:erice@countrysideucc.org)

**Rev. Chris Alexander**  
Associate Minister, ext. 130  
[chrisa@countrysideucc.org](mailto:chrisa@countrysideucc.org)

## **Assistant To The Ministers**

**Gayle Noble**  
Minister's Assistant, ext. 103  
[Gaylen@countrysideucc.org](mailto:Gaylen@countrysideucc.org)

## **Business Office**

**Dan Loven**  
Dir. of Admin & Communication, ext. 102  
[danl@countrysideucc.org](mailto:d anl@countrysideucc.org)

**Shari Garder,**  
Financial Secretary, ext. 123  
[sharig@countrysideucc.org](mailto:sharig@countrysideucc.org)

**Steve Gomez**  
Administrative Assistant, ext. 101  
[steveg@countrysideucc.org](mailto:steveg@countrysideucc.org)

**Open Position**  
Administrative Assistant, ext. 100  
[office@countrysideucc.org](mailto:office@countrysideucc.org)

**Jerry Gray,**  
Church Clerk  
[jerryg@countrysideucc.org](mailto:jerryg@countrysideucc.org)

**Brian Palmer**  
Building/Property Coordinator  
[brianp@countrysideucc.org](mailto:brianp@countrysideucc.org)

## **Audio/Visual**

**Nicholas O'Bradovich,**  
AV Tech Leader  
[nick0@countrysideucc.org](mailto:nick0@countrysideucc.org)

**Ben Semisch,**  
Videographer  
[bens@countrysideucc.org](mailto:bens@countrysideucc.org)

## **Minister of Spiritual Direction**

**Rita Otis**  
SD Minister, ext. 129  
[rmotis@outlook.com](mailto:rmotis@outlook.com)

## **WELCOME**

We would like to take this opportunity to offer you a warm Countryside welcome. We are a community that places great value on welcoming ALL to an open and affirming community where we celebrate and rest in a God who loves us beyond our wildest imaginations. We invite you to journey with us as we work together with the guidance of the Spirit, seeking those places where we are called to participate with God toward the fullest expression of who we are created to be. As a congregation of the United Church of Christ we believe the greatest expression of the Body of Christ is found in the local congregation, and each person in our community has a unique conversation with God that serves the whole. Countryside is a place where God is still speaking to us and to our community. Each of us is called to discern that voice and act on that discovery. We welcome you and invite you to participate with us in this calling.

## **OUR MISSION**

We are an inclusive, open and affirming family of faith, welcoming all to God's table of love and acceptance. We are diverse, yet united by Christ's example. We care for one another, support one another and challenge one another to become all that God creates us to be. We work together to nurture our community and to promote peace and justice in our conflicted world.

## **I AM NEW TO COUNTRYSIDE**

**Sunday Services** - 9 AM Classical Service and 11 AM Jazz Service

**Nursery** - childcare (ages 0-2) is available at both Sunday services and for Wednesday evening programs. The Nursery is located on the upper level along the main hallway towards the church's northwest entrance.

**Common Grounds Coffeehouse** - Between services from 10 AM to 11 AM we invite you to the Commons directly off the Foyer for coffee, donuts and fellowship. Information Desk is located in the Foyer. If you have any questions or would like to sign up for any church activities, please stop by the Information Desk.

**Amplified Hearing Devices** are available at the Information Station in the Foyer.

**Sunday School/Children's Church** - see Children's Ministries, page 7.

**Free Gift** - If you are a first time visitor at Countryside, we invite you to introduce yourself to one of the pastors in the foyer after the services so we might offer you a gift of our gratitude for visiting with us.

**Box, Basket and List** - The Box, Basket and List, are three ways that Countryside shares our gifts with one another and our community: The Box is a way to share our material possessions with one another and is located in the Foyer; the Basket is Countryside's way of sharing financial offerings with our community for the support of our ongoing program ministries and are located at the back of the Sanctuary; and the List is the way we share of our time and talent with one another and is printed in the Order of Worship.

**Rest Rooms** - Rest rooms are available on the main level by the offices and on the lower level by the elevator and by the gym.

**Countryside Email list** - If you would like to be on Countryside's weekly email list, please contact the church office at [office@countrysideucc.org](mailto:office@countrysideucc.org) or call 402-391-0350.

## **THANK YOU**

Thanks to all of you who took the time to complete my survey on Spiritual Practices and Discernment. I was shooting for 300 hundred responses and I received 306! So Thank you so very much for helping me with My Doctor of Ministry research project and for being so wonderfully supportive in our ministry here together at Countryside! Peace - Chris Alexander





## DEAR COUNTRYSIDE FRIENDS...

It is with very mixed feelings that I let you know of my decision to step down from my position as Pastoral Care Coordinator as of March 25th. It's hard for me to believe that it has been almost six years since you all welcomed me into the heart of Countryside as a member of this amazing staff. I have felt supported, encouraged and loved throughout my time in this position, and for that, I am incredibly indebted to you all.

I find myself at a joyful place in my life where it's time to concentrate on other experiences and endeavors. I have great respect and passion for pastoral care at Countryside and would not be doing it a service if I tried to continue in the same capacity while focusing on new things. I look forward with much anticipation and excitement to the wonderful future that we, as a church family, are building here at Countryside. I plan on remaining part of this family and will joyfully continue on the journey that Countryside is on. It will just be in a different manner...member, not staff person.

I'm incredibly grateful to Eric, Chris and the rest of the staff for the chance to be part of such a wonderful team. More importantly, I'm grateful to all of you for your trust, support and friendship. I have been blessed more than you know.

With much appreciation and gratitude,

Margie

## IN LOVING MEMORY

Dean Kadavy passed away on December 24 in Omaha. A private memorial was held in Omaha for the family. Dean's son and daughter-in-law are Roger and Cindy Kadavy.

Ginny Arnsperger passed away December 29 in Omaha. A memorial service was held on January 6 at the West Center Chapel of Heafey, Heafey, Hoffman, Dworak and Cutler. Ginny's daughter is Jil Barton and her grandchildren are Kristin and David Barton.

## CONGRATULATIONS

Jenna Gabriel Gallagher and Brian Gabriel welcomed daughter, Matilda Jane, on December 27. Matilda joins big sisters Trixie and Irish.

Ashley and Patrick Rainbolt welcomed son, Thomas Jasper, on December 28. Thomas joins big brother William.

*Countryside is a caring congregation that offers support to its members in numerous ways. Along with our pastors, who are always willing to provide you with compassionate direction, care and advice when called upon to do so, we have a wonderful support system with our Care Team and Stephen Ministers.*

### Care Team

*The Care Team consists of thoughtful, generous members of the congregation who provide various types of comfort or assistance to those in our church family experiencing times of hardship.*

### Stephen Ministry

*Stephen Ministry is an active lay ministry program within our church that provides confidential Christian support and hope to those who are facing difficulties in their lives.*

### AGAPE

*The AGAPE group has been a ministry of love and support for many decades, providing a warm and loving fellowship opportunity following memorial or funeral services.*

## QUESTIONS?

For more information about Pastoral Care contact Margie Bolte.

Office Phone: (402) 391-0350 ext. 117

Email: [margieb@countrysideucc.org](mailto:margieb@countrysideucc.org)

## WEDNESDAY NIGHT "ALIVE"

During the midweek gathering time known as Wednesday Night Alive, we serve a community meal (free-will offering) followed by choirs and educational groups for children and adults, as well as a variety of small group gatherings that range from knitting and parenting to financial planning. This is a perfect way to reconnect with church friends, create new friendships or to take time just to breathe!

**No WNA activities on February 7 in lieu of the Ash Wednesday service at 7:00 PM**

### WNA SUPPERS

Meals are \$5/person or you can purchase a month's ticket for \$20/person not to exceed \$80/family. Place reservations at the Information Station. Meals are served from 5:00 to 6:20 PM.

Feb 3 - Fried or grilled chicken, tossed green salad, rice

Feb 10 - NO SUPPER

Feb 17 - Vegetarian tomato soup, grilled cheese sandwiches

Feb 24 - Lentil meat loaf with squash gratin

### GRADE/MIDDLE SCHOOL

#### Choirs

Cherub Choir (grades K-1) : 5:15 – 6:00 PM

Carol Choir (grades 2-3) : 5:15 – 6:00 PM

Pilgrim Choir (grades 4-6) : 5:15 – 6:00 PM

Covenant Choir (grades 7-8) : 6:15 to 7:00 PM

#### Programs

Holy Moly (grades K-4) : 6:30-7:30 PM

Core 56 (grades 5-6) : 6:30-7:30 PM

Confirmation (grades 7-8) : 7:00 – 8:00 PM

### ADULTS/HIGH SCHOOL

#### In The Commons

For more details about these upcoming speakers go to "Center for Faith Studies" section on Page 4.

February 3, 6:30 PM:

Bill Williams, Heartland Honor Flights.

February 10, Ash Wednesday:

No Wednesday Night Alive in the Commons.

February 17, 6:30 PM:

Senator John McCollister.

February 24, 6:30 PM:

Laura Stastny, Director of Nebraska Wildlife Rehab, Inc.

#### Adult Choirs

Chancel Choir : 6:25 – 7:55 PM

Spirit of Grace : 8:05 – 9:05 PM



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **March 29, 7 PM - Annual Holocaust Education Week of Remembrance Speaker Series.**

The Annual Institute for Holocaust Education Week of Remembrance Speaker Series features Hungarian Holocaust Survivor Testimonies of Agnes Schwartz and Magda Brown.

### **March 31, 7 PM - Community for Mindful Living Annual Speaker.**

Hosted at CFS. Michael Ciborski, trained in the Buddhist tradition of Venerable Thich Nhat Hanh. He lived as a monk for seven years in Plum Village, France, and has worked intimately with Thich Nhat Hanh and the monastic community to organize, support and offer meditation retreats around the world. A skilled musician, he informally studied voice training and chanting of several European and Asian traditions and served for several years as an English language chant master in the monastery.

## IN THE COMMONS - WEDNESDAY NIGHTS

**6:30-7:15 PM: Program**

**7:15-8:00 PM: Optional Fellowship, Dialogue and Refreshments**

"In the Commons" has a double meaning – describing the place and the programming itself. A "commons-based" worldview emphasizes the concept that there IS such a thing as the common good, and that bringing people together in dialogue is essential to the sustainability of the human community. We will begin at 6:30 PM, with baristas/snacks and an invited guest presenting for about 15 minutes, and then continue with casual but surely engaging dialogue with the speaker and each other. You can come for the speaker only—but most like to stay for the dialogue!

### **February 3 - Bill Williams, Heartland Honor Flights**

Bill Williams is the co-founder of Patriotic Productions and its mission that includes the "Remembering Our Fallen" memorials. He is also the volunteer organizer of the Heartland Honor Flights, which has taken over 1,500 World War II Veterans and 600 Korean War Veterans to Washington D.C. since 2008. He and his wife, Yvonne, have dedicated themselves to honoring those who served and easing the pain of the family members who have lost their loved ones.

### **February 10 - ASH WEDNESDAY**

No Wednesday Night Alive In The Commons.

### **February 17 - Senator John McCollister.**

A member of Countryside, Senator McCollister is in his second term of office. Senator McCollister will talk about his experiences as a State Senator, share some stories, and reflect on how he tries to live out his faith in working for change through the Legislature.

### **February 24 - Laura Stastny, Director, Nebraska Wildlife Rehab, Inc.**

A not-for-profit organization of professional wildlife rehabilitators working under permits from the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The NWR mission is to rehabilitate native Nebraska wildlife and migratory birds for return to the wild, to preserve and restore native habitats, and to educate youth and adults about the importance of wildlife and ecosystems by engaging them in projects and activities that contribute to the well-being of our natural environment and inspire them to take action to protect it.

The Center for Faith Studies provides learning opportunities for the faithfully inquisitive Countryside Community. We encourage lifelong learning, growth and deepening understanding utilizing current scholarship through the CFS community lecture series, Wednesday Night Alive events, adult education classes and community partnerships.

### **Racial Justice Book Group**

Mondays at 7:15 PM in the Commons. Readings and videos on the concept of race in America. They are currently reading Bryan Stevenson's *Just Mercy*.

### **Adult Ed Brown Bag Lunch**

Mondays at 12:15 PM in the Chapel. Bring your lunch and learn. Drop in any time! Current series: *The Old Testament*. Dr. Amy-Jill Levine. (Great Courses)

### **Books Bible and Beyond**

Wednesdays at noon in the Chapel. Current book is *Short Stories by Jesus: The Enigmatic Parables of a Controversial Rabbi* by Dr. Amy-Jill Levine. Join at any time!

### **Adult Ed Forum**

Sundays at 10:10 AM in the Moderator's Room. Come whenever you can! Current series: *The Other Side of History: Daily Life in the Ancient World*. Professor Robert Garland. (Great Courses)

### **Omaha Earth Vigil**

Monthly meditation over shared grief, faith and hope for the planet. We meet on first Thursdays 6:30 to 7:00 PM in the Chapel. Sponsored by Community of Mindful Living and First United Methodist Church.

## QUESTIONS?

For more information about Center for Faith Studies contact **Kelly Keller**.

**Office Phone:** (402) 391-0350 ext. 119

**Email:** [kellyk@countrysideucc.org](mailto:kellyk@countrysideucc.org)

**Website:** [www.centerforfaithstudies.org](http://www.centerforfaithstudies.org)

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/Center-for-Faith-Studies-120882397136>



# JOURNEY GROUPS



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### **What is Converging Paths?**

The Converging Paths Ministry strives to strengthen the church community - both Countryside and the larger Church - by supporting faith formation and leadership formation through small groups (Journey Groups). The Converging Paths Ministry is developing small group resources based on the solid theological foundation of *The Phoenix Affirmations*. Members of Journey Groups have said that they believe they make better, more Christ-led decisions in their lives. Ask me, Terri, about Converging Paths. I'd love to tell you more!

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **Prayer Retreat 101 - March 4 - 6**

Have you been promising yourself, "One of these days I will go on one of those prayer retreats" that have stirred so much attention from prior participants? Now is your chance to act on that promise! Our own Dr. Eric Elnes will be leading a special Introductory Prayer retreat. This all-inclusive retreat will be held in the beautiful surroundings of Creighton University Retreat Center in Griswold, Iowa. It will begin with dinner and conversation Friday evening and end Sunday afternoon. While those with prayer experience are welcome to attend, no prior experience is expected. Cost is \$150 per person. A limited number of single and double occupancies are available. This includes all meals, accommodations, materials, and as much awe and wonder as you can take in. A \$75 registration fee up front will hold your spot. Space is limited so sign up today.

### **Gifts of the Dark Wood Begins March 8**

A brand new Journey Group is forming that will explore Dr. Elnes' latest book, *Gifts of the Dark Wood: Seven Blessings for Soulful Skeptics (And Other Wanderers)*. Learn more about how we meet God in the depth of our struggles. This is an excellent opportunity to finally join a Journey Group. The group will be facilitated by David Leslie and will meet Tuesday evenings 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM for six weeks from March 8 through April 12 in the Youth Room.

*Journey Groups are small groups that meet weekly to discuss and discover what our Stillspeaking God is calling us to do in our lives, community and the world. In the process, we form deep relationships offering support to one another through life's journey.*

### **A Journey through Luke**

Several of our Journey Groups are following the sermon series, *The Way of Jesus: A Journey through Luke*. It's not too late to join a group. This series runs through Easter, March 27.

### **Darkwood Brew**

New Journey Groups are forming that watch and discuss *Darkwood Brew* videos. Join in and dig into some provocative theological discussions while developing lasting relationships.

### **Gifts of the Dark Wood**

Plan on joining this group in March, which will be studying Dr. Elnes' newest book, *Gifts of the Dark Wood*.

## QUESTIONS?

For more information about Journey Groups contact Terri Vincent.

Office Phone: (402) 391-0350 ext. 121

Email: [terriv@countrysideucc.org](mailto:terriv@countrysideucc.org)

**Prayer 101 Retreat**  
with Rev. Eric Elnes, Ph.D.

March 4 - 6  
(Friday evening to Sunday afternoon)

Creighton University  
Retreat Center  
in Griswold, Iowa

See page 5 for more details

**COYO STOCK SALE**  
Buy Stock in COYO!

New Dividends for Stockholders in 2016!  
Sale starts Feb. 7

**COUNTRYSIDE'S  
HORS D'OEUVRE CONTEST**

Saturday, February 6 | 6:30-10:00 PM  
At the home of Todd & Kathleen Samland

We invite you to bring your most scrumptious, yummy and creative hors d'oeuvres. You don't need to be an expert cook, we accept ANYTHING (edible that is)! Suggested Donation: \$5

See Page 10 for details!



# YOUTH MINISTRIES

## COYO SR HIGH

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### Summer Mission Trip

It's more of a Worship trip than a Mission trip as you navigate the lakes and trails of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. Find out more about who you are in connection to nature and to God. June 19-27. Cost is \$375 before fund-raising. Bring \$100 deposit and sign up by February 7 at <http://countrysideucc.org/coyo/srhigh/mission>

#### Faith Singers Tour

The Faith Singers Tour is a combination of service and fun. Come share your gifts with churches around the Midwest and have a great time with good friends. Cost is \$400 before fund-raising. Bring a \$100 deposit and sign up by February 7 at <http://countrysideucc.org/coyo/srhigh/fstour>

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### Student Leadership - Sunday, February 21, at 9 AM

Everyone is welcome to give their input on upcoming events and ways to help include all students in everything COYO does. Also, be a part of the Tri-Faith youth leadership planning team. Meets every third Sunday at 9:00 AM. Come once or every month.

#### Papio Fun Park - Sunday, February 28, 6 - 8 PM

Unlimited fun for free at Papio Fun Park. Laser tag, Jump Shot, Spaceball, Arcade. Everything is free for two hours. Sign up at <http://countrysideucc.org/coyo/srhigh>



COYO Sr High Winter Retreat

## COYO JR HIGH

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### Papio Fun Park - Friday, February 12, 7 - 10 PM

Unlimited fun for free at Papio Fun Park. Laser tag, Jump Shot, Spaceball, Arcade. Everything is free for two hours. Sign up at <http://countrysideucc.org/coyo/jrhigh>

#### Urban Plunge - March 18-20

COYO Jr High Urban Plunge in Lincoln. Serve at 9 ministries and go to 3 churches. For more information on this event and to sign up, by February 7, go to <http://countrysideucc.org/coyo/jrhigh/plunge>

#### Hiking in Colorado - July 10-15

Four days of backpacking all around the spectacular rock formations in the Lost Creek Wilderness of Colorado. Take in the creative work of God and listen for what God has to "say" to you without your cell phone. Cost is \$150. For more info and to sign up, by March 1, go to <http://countrysideucc.org/coyo/jrhigh/wilderness>.



Countryside Youth (CoYo) serves students in grades 7-12. Junior and senior high students are encouraged to participate in a wide variety of activities that develop community, encourage spiritual growth, and serve the wider community in Omaha. Monthly events and summer trips are offered to enhance youth experiences.

#### Confirmation

Confirmation meets Wednesdays at 7 PM and Thursdays at 3:45 PM during the school year. It is a two-year program for 7th and 8th graders to explore the Phoenix Affirmations, the Bible, and the church.

#### Mission Trips

Mission trips help students get hands-on faith experiences. Mission trips include Pine Ridge, inner city, foreign country, and wilderness trips that explore God's creation.

#### COYO Sr High

COYO Sr High meets Sunday evenings from 6 PM to 8 PM, including dinner at 6 PM. The purpose is to build strong and welcoming friendships, serve the community together, and to grow in faith.

#### COYO Sr High 606

Exploration of the Christian Faith from the ground up. Everyone in high school is welcome to attend. Come once or come every week. Meets Wednesdays at 6:06 PM in the COYO Room.

#### COYO Jr High

COYO Jr High meets Sunday afternoons from 4:30 PM to 6:30 PM, including dinner at 6 PM. The purpose is to build strong and welcoming friendships, serve the community together, and to grow in faith.

### QUESTIONS?

For more information about Youth Ministries contact Will Howell.

Cell Phone: (402) 960-0818

Office Phone: (402) 391-0350 ext. 111

Email: [willh@countrysideucc.org](mailto:willh@countrysideucc.org)



## CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING FOR FEBRUARY WORSHIP SERVICES

Feb. 7 - Family Worship followed by Annual Meeting; children remain in the sanctuary with their families.

Feb. 14 - Sunday School, in various classrooms (see below). Lesson: Jesus as Good Shepherd.

Feb. 21 - Children's Church, in the chapel (same level of the church as the sanctuary/nursery).

Feb. 28 - Sunday School, in various classrooms (see below). Lesson: Palm Sunday.

## SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSROOMS

### Lower Level

(take stairs or elevator one floor down)

#### 9:00 Service

Room 114A - Grades K-6

#### 11:00 Service

Room 117 - Grades 2-3

Room 114B - Grade 4

Room 112 - Grades 5-6

### Upper Level

(same as the sanctuary, chapel, and nursery)

#### 9:00 Service

Room 215 - Pre-Kindergarten

#### 11:00 Service

Room 214 - Pre-Kindergarten

Room 213 - Grades K-1

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**NO Core 56 or Holy Moly** on February 10 so families can celebrate Ash Wednesday together!

**Core 56** is engaging in Lent in a new way. Our students are encouraged to find something to cut from their daily schedules and use that time connect with God! Here's where you folks come in; your student may need some help discerning their sacrifice, and they will need support as we travel through Lent! Please ask your students about their Lent experience and encourage your family members to participate! The connection time can vary based on how your student connects best, so consider seated meditation, kneeling prayer, focus-object meditation, reading prayers, reading scripture and discussing with an adult, or even yoga. Whatever creates a space of connection between your student and God!

**Holy Moly** is going to be studying Lent and Holy Week this month!

**Nursery Ministry** is looking for dedicated people to keep it going! Volunteers engage in different levels of commitment and times, so contact Nursery Coordinator, Breann, at [blundbl34@gmail.com](mailto:blundbl34@gmail.com) for information.



*Rebecca Morello, Director of Children's Education*

## QUESTIONS?

For more information about Children's Education contact [Rebecca Morello](mailto:Rebecca Morello).

Office Phone: (402) 391-0350, ext. 109

Email: [rebeccam@countrysideucc.org](mailto:rebeccam@countrysideucc.org)

*Children's Education offers programs designed to inspire, explore, and develop a solid faith foundation. Through story, discussion, and experiential activities, our students embark on a Christian path encouraged by enthusiastic study, adventurous approach to Scripture, and cultivation of a strong faith community.*

### Nursery

*Childcare is available during Sunday worship services for infants and toddlers ages newborn to two-year-olds. Our nursery volunteers are trained and have passed background checks.*

### Acolytes

*Our Fireflies bring the light of Worship into the Sanctuary each Sunday morning at 9:00 AM. If you are interested in your child becoming an acolyte, contact Rebecca.*

### Vacation Bible School

*Vacation Bible School is a short summer camp designed to immerse our students in a community experience of scripture stories and activities. In 2016, it will take place July 11-15.*

### Wednesday Night Programming - Holy Moly

*On Wednesday nights, K through 4th grade students meet for Holy Moly! A Sparkhouse curriculum that teaches Bible stories with multimedia, crafts and activities, and storytelling.*

### Wednesday Night Programming - Core 56

*During the school year, our 5th and 6th grade group delves into scripture study of Jesus' ministry and work. We also fellowship at lock-ins, movie nights, and group suppers.*

### Sunday School

*Our students and teachers engage with scripture and activities with our in-house curriculum through Countryside's theology and faith practices. Sunday School is offered for students pre-k through 6th grade.*

### Family Worship

*On the first Sunday of each month, Family Worship offers opportunity to share scripture, message, and communion as a family! Children's Bibles, books, and age-appropriate activity bags are available.*

### Children's Church

*This child-centered Worship celebrates our faith stories with songs, scripture, and discussion while honoring faith practices like Communion, prayer, and stewardship! It's open to children 5 year-old through 6th grade.*



# MUSIC MINISTRIES

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### **Searching for New Director of Music Ministry**

The job description for the Director of Music Ministry has been completed and the committee is now at work posting the position on multiple websites. An expanded version of the posting may be found on our Countrysideucc.org website. While the committee is awaiting responses, we are working on a standardized evaluation form to be used for all resumes as well as questions to be asked of the applicants on the first round of interviews which will most probably be done via Skype. Applications may be sent to [musicsearch@countrysideucc.org](mailto:musicsearch@countrysideucc.org).

### **Ash Wednesday Service Special Music**

Our special guest musician for the Ash Wednesday service on Wednesday, February 10 at 7:00 PM will be flutist Alyssa Griggs. She will be playing the music of Robert Muczynski, Frank Martin, and Ernst von Dohnanyi. Noted for her "high level of fearless skill," flutist Alyssa Griggs is a dynamic orchestral, chamber, and solo artist. In October 2010 Alyssa received first prize in the Alexander & Buono International Flute Competition where she gave her solo debut recital at Carnegie Hall. Additionally, she has won Honorable Mention for the 2015 Myrna Brown Competition, and First Prize in the 2014 Upper Midwest Flute Association Young Artist Competition, and the Florida Bach Young Artist Competition. In 2013 Alyssa was a finalist in the Byron Hester Competition in Houston, TX. Alyssa has also been named an Emerging Artist by Miyazawa Flutes.



### **9:00 AM Classical Service Special Music Series**

Do you enjoy classical music? The music ministry will be featuring classical musicians in the 9:00 AM Classical Sunday services.

- February 14 - Alex Ritter, Piano, selections from Scriabin's Preludes, Op. 11
- February 21 - Sheryl Hadeka, French Horn, music by Paul Basler and others.
- February 28 - Alex Ritter, Piano, selections from Rachmaninoff's Etudes - Tableaux, op. 33 and 39

\* Alex Ritter - Countryside's own organist and pianist.

\* Sheryl Hadeka - French Horn teacher and Associate Principal Horn, Omaha Symphony. Former Horn Instructor, Brookhaven College and Loyola University New Orleans.

Countryside church has one of the celebrated music ministries in Omaha. We have many excellent opportunities for expressing our faith through music. Our music rooms are bustling with activity on weekdays and Sundays as our singers prepare for worship services. Each group participates at least monthly in services.

#### **Cherub Choir**

The Cherub Choir is for children in Kindergarten and second grade. Rehearsals are on Wednesday evenings 5:15-6:00 PM. This group sings monthly in worship.

#### **Pilgrim Choir**

Pilgrim Choir is for children in the third through sixth grades and rehearsals are on Wednesday evenings 5:15-6:00 PM. This group sings monthly in worship.

#### **Covenant Choir**

Covenant Choir is for middle school youth in grades 7 and 8. They rehearse on Wednesday evenings from 6:15-7:00 PM before Confirmation in the Junior Choir Room. This group sings monthly in worship.

#### **Faith Singers**

Faith Singers is a choir for grades 9-12 and regularly rehearses each Sunday from 4:45-6:00 PM. This choir sings most weeks during the school year for one of our worship services.

#### **Chancel Choir**

Chancel Choir is a "traditional" church choir for post-high school youth and adults. This choir sings each week for one of the worship services. Regular rehearsals are on Wednesdays from 6:25-7:55 PM.

#### **Spirit of Grace**

Spirit of Grace is a group of adults of all ages that explore contemporary church music. This group rehearses on Wednesdays from 8:05-9:05 p.m. Spirit of Grace generally sings once or twice each month, alternating between the first and second services.

## QUESTIONS?

For more information about Music Ministries contact Bruce Blanchard or Vicky Palmisano

Bruce Blanchard  
Email: [bblanchardh@gmail.com](mailto:bblanchardh@gmail.com)

Vicky Palmisano  
Email: [vickyp@countrysideucc.org](mailto:vickyp@countrysideucc.org)

Alex Ritter - Organist

Tyler Gruttemeyer - Interim Faith Singer Director

Aly Amstutz - Cherub Choir Director



**Chancel Choir Rehearsal**



# CHRISTIAN OUTREACH



## SPECIAL CHRISTMAS OFFERING

The 2015 Special Christmas Offering for Community Cupboard raised more than \$18,000, with the final tally still pending! Thank you so much for your generous financial contributions! Those funds ensure that the Community Cupboard will continue operating beyond the next year plus some! Remember it happens at Countryside on the first Saturday of every month from 8:00 to 11:30 AM. Feel free to stop by and witness this miracle unfolding first-hand! Volunteers are welcome.

## THE BOX FOR FEBRUARY

In December, our congregation collected 230 jars of peanut butter amounting to more than 350 pounds! WAY TO GO! For February, we are collecting new and gently used hand bags, purses and gym bags, along with small "Blessings" like: hand wipes, deodorant, and other hygiene items; cough drops, chap stick, gift cards, meal bars and other snacks. We will combine these items with the ongoing hotel-size items collected in The Suitcase (next to The Box). Please bring what you can or find something at the store.

If you know of an agency that would benefit from in-kind donations like these, we welcome and encourage your recommendations as we plan for 2016 recipients of The BOX. Please contact: [christianoutreach@countrysideucc.org](mailto:christianoutreach@countrysideucc.org)

### QUESTIONS?

For more information email Christian Outreach at [christianoutreach@countrysideucc.org](mailto:christianoutreach@countrysideucc.org)

*Christian Outreach embraces opportunities that reflect appreciation, respect, and love where there was otherwise much neglect - providing funding and service opportunities that nurture lasting change in our congregation, our community, and our world.*

### The Box

*"The Box" is a dedicated drop off area where items addressing specific needs are collected each month. It can be found in the Foyer, just south of the main doors.*

### Community Cupboard

*The largest mobile food pantry in Nebraska takes place right here at Countryside on the first Saturday of each month. On average, the Community Cupboard provides food for over 275 families in our community each month.*

### Holiday Offerings (Christmas and Easter)

*Each year the Christian Outreach directs two special mission offerings—the Christmas and Easter offerings. These offerings are given to organizations both locally and internationally.*

### Small Service Grants (SSG)

*Countryside members who volunteer with local groups and events may be awarded small grants (up to \$500) to cover the costs of materials and supplies. SSG request forms are available on the church website.*

# RELOCATION UPDATE



## FEBRUARY UPDATE

The CRC and the Building subcommittee are working with the architects of Alley Poyner Macchietto to refine the insights that were developed at the December Workshops when the Relocation Committees and Building Committees met with the architects for two days of intensive discussions about building design.

The following goals determined at past congregational workshops guide our decision making as we work through the design process of the new building. They are: Architectural Expression, Material Quality, Budget Adherence, Program Space, Durability, Sustainability, Functionality, and Use of Daylight and Views.

Currently the CRC is reviewing energy efficiency options in order to build an environmentally sustainable church. There is an ongoing cost/ benefit analysis intended to meet the needs and resources of our congregation. Once some of these decisions are made a projected budget of annual operating costs can be estimated.

Since 2015 the Chairs of the Relocation Capital Campaign, Cyndi Kugler and Don Otis, along with the CRC, have been working diligently to align fundraising goals with the building budget and potential congregation financial resources. The theme of the Campaign will be Breaking New Ground: Spiritually and Physically and incorporates the spiritual benefits as well as the physical benefits of our relocation. Watch this space for news regarding the kickoff of the capital campaign.

A congregational update and the 2016 budget for relocation matters will be presented at the annual Meeting on February 7.

All questions and comments are welcome. Please contact [crc@countrysideucc.org](mailto:crc@countrysideucc.org).

*To stay informed of what is happening with the relocation efforts, look for the Relocation icon in Countryside's communications: display area outside the church office, weekly C10 emails, monthly newsletter, and the Countryside website [www.countrysideucc.org](http://www.countrysideucc.org).*

### QUESTIONS?

*If you have questions or comments, see one of the following committee members: Rwick MacInnes, Tim Kerrigan, Cyndi Kugler, Paul Nelson, Pam Kregg and Nancy Behringer or email [crc@countrysideucc.org](mailto:crc@countrysideucc.org).*



# LIFE MINISTRIES



*Life Ministry supports and improves the quality and "wellness" of family life. Life Ministry strives to engage people in a wide variety of social and educational activities for individuals and families. It is designed to strengthen family bonds and provide outreach in support of family members. Life Ministry also brings strength and continuity to Countryside's volunteer base, by advising staff and by serving as a conduit between congregation and Countryside's Life Ministry and Volunteer programs.*

## QUESTIONS?

For more information about Life Ministries contact Mary Beth Link.

Office Phone: (402) 391-0350, ext. 112

Email: [marybethl@countysideucc.org](mailto:marybethl@countysideucc.org)

## SOCIAL GROUP UPDATES

Young at Hearts will be celebrating Valentine's Day on February 11 with lunch and a movie, all in the comfort of the Moderators Room. Good company and good food await you.

Interplay will NOT be on the second Saturday. We need to move to February 20 instead. Mark your calendar and I'll send info on the theme later.

Lunch Bunch Circle will have a Pot Luck Valentine Party Luncheon on February 8 in the Moderator's Room at noon. A program on "KINDNESS" will follow our lunch. Shirley Clemons is our Hostess and everyone is welcome.

## UPCOMING IN FEBRUARY

### Financial Peace University Classes - February 3

Classes will begin at Countryside on Thursday, February 3 running through April 14. The classes will be facilitated by Mike Potter, a financial educator, coach, and advisor who strives to take complicated financial concepts and break them down into easily understood facts. You will walk through the basics of budgeting, dumping debt, planning for the future, and much more! The class is filling, but there is still some room available. Suggested donation of \$99 to cover the cost of the books. Stop by the Information Station to register or contact Mary Beth at [marybethl@countysideucc.org](mailto:marybethl@countysideucc.org) for more information.

### The Hors D'oeuvre Contest - February 6

For the past 18 years this event brings folks together for pure enjoyment of food, conversation and friendship. The Enhancing True Commitment (ETC) committee has sponsored this event annually and will be hosted by in the home of Kathleen and Todd Samland. Consider attending this fun-filled evening on Saturday, February 6 from 6:30-10:00 PM. Bring your favorite hors d'oeuvre, beverage of your choice, or both. Coffee and soda are provided and there is a suggested donation of \$5/ person to help offset some of the cost for the event. Sign up at the Information Station and contact Mary Beth with any questions at [marybethl@countysideucc.org](mailto:marybethl@countysideucc.org) or at 402-391-0350 ext. 112.

### Sweet Sunday - February 14

On Valentine's Day, Sunday, February 14 Countryside will once again hold an AMAZING bake sale filled with home-baked "sweets for your Sweetie!" This annual event has been absent for about 6 years, but thanks to the enthusiasm of Emma Boyd, one of Countryside's dedicated youth, the event will return. Emma and friends will coordinate this event with the proceeds going to the Countryside Youth Program. So, dust off those tried and true recipes, bring out the cookie sheets, or mix up some delicious Puppy Chow and join in the fun! All donated goods are asked to be at the church by Friday morning, February 12. Contact Mary Beth at [marybethl@countysideucc.org](mailto:marybethl@countysideucc.org) for more information.

## VOLUNTEER CORNER

### Weekly Kitchen Help

Looking for 3-4 dedicated volunteers who would take responsibility for Countryside's kitchens on a weekly basis. This would involve putting dishes away, wiping counters, emptying dishwasher and keeping an inventory of necessary supplies. If interested then stop by the Information Station on Sunday morning.

### Conscientious Dishwashers Seeking Same

Volunteers are needed to help with washing mugs after the 11AM worship service. It is easy and many hands make light work, but we really need the hands! If interested contact Mary Beth at [marybethl@countysideucc.org](mailto:marybethl@countysideucc.org).

### Family Activities Committee

Looking for 6 additional volunteers to assist young children make Christmas ornaments at this year's Advent Workshop. The crafts are simple, but our participants hands are small! There is a flyer with the workshop information in this newsletter. If interested contact Mary Beth at [marybethl@countysideucc.org](mailto:marybethl@countysideucc.org).

### The Community Cupboard Food Pantry

Volunteers are needed for the Pantry on January 9th. Any and all age groups are welcome. Ability to lift, bend and stand on your feet for extended periods of time are appreciated. If interested contact Mary Beth Link at [marybethl@countysideucc.org](mailto:marybethl@countysideucc.org), or Andi Lawlor at [communitycupboard@countysideucc.org](mailto:communitycupboard@countysideucc.org)

The List is the way we share of our time and talent with one another. Each week we lift up an opportunity to volunteer within a specific ministry at Countryside. Check the Order of Worship each Sunday or the weekly email to learn what is the List for each week.

### Mobile Meals

This caring, monthly ritual takes only 2 hours, but truly feeds not only receiving the meals, but also the people who are delivering them. We are currently looking for 2-3 more volunteers who would be willing to give of their time so that others may be fed. The schedule for January thru May of 2016 is now being created. If interested stop by the Information Station.

# GET CONNECTED

## SOCIAL GROUPS

### **Friend to Friend**

This group specializes in outreach projects and programs in addition to preparing and serving the monthly meals for the Young at Heart seniors group. Meets on the 2nd Thursday each month, September through May at 11 AM in the Moderator's kitchen. Contact Pam Kregg at pamgg@cox.net.

### **Family Activities Committee**

This group offers educational and social opportunities designed to strengthen family bonds and support of all family members. Open to families with children, birth through 12 years old. Meets on the 4th Sunday of each month at 10 AM in the Family Life Office. Contact Mary Beth Link at marybethl@countysideucc.org.

### **Enhancing True Commitment (ETC)**

This group encourages commitment to making church a priority through active participation in fun, faith and fellowship events. Meets on the 2nd Wednesday of the month, 6:30 PM. Contact Mary Beth Link at marybethl@countysideucc.org.

### **Knit-n-Wit**

Join in the fun as you learn to knit, continue an existing project and teach others to knit/crochet. Open to knitters of all skill-levels. Meets every Wednesday from 6 to 8 PM at Whole Foods. Contact Jeanne Cunningham at jkcunningham@cox.net.

### **WNA Supper Group**

This group consists of volunteers in our congregation. If there is a meal your family loves then share it with the church on Wednesday evenings. Contact Mary Beth at marybethl@countysideucc.org.

### **Women's Lunch Group**

This multi-generational group is open to all women and meets at noon on the 1st Monday of each month at First Watch (1222 S 71 St.). Contact Mary Beth Link (marybethl@countysideucc.org).

### **Nine-to-Dine**

This group consists of 9 individuals, who all meet on a monthly basis at various restaurants or at someone's home for a home cooked meal. Contact Mary Beth Link at marybethl@countysideucc.org.

### **Lunch Bunch Circle**

This group meets for lunch as well as special programming on the 2nd Monday of each month, September through May. Contact Gloria Ried at g-g.ried@cox.net.

### **Countryside's Angels Bicycling**

This new group is open anyone (all ages) interested in bicycling. They meet periodically when the weather is calling them to ride! Contact Mark Stursma at mstursma@yahoo.com.

### **Young at Heart**

This social group is specifically designed for the seniors at Countryside Church who meet on the 2nd Thursday of the month at Noon. This group enjoys a wonderful home-baked meal generally followed by either a movie or a short program. Contact Pam Kregg at pamgg@cox.net.

### **Reel Faith**

This group meets in the Chapel for a great movie, snacks and discussions! Meets on the second Friday of the month, 6:30 PM. Contact Molly Anderson at moanderson@cox.net.

### **Men's Breakfast Group**

This is a group of Countryside men (all ages) share their breakfast at 7 AM every Tuesday morning, at Rockbrook's Garden Café. Contact Mary Beth Link at marybethl@countysideucc.org.

### **FAME (Friday Art & Music Experience)**

This group dabbles with watercolor paints and adult coloring books. We listen to music, laugh a lot, share stories and a pot of coffee (or two!), and enjoy being together. Contact Pam Kregg at 402-896-3866.

## EDUCATION GROUPS

### **Faith and the Environment**

(FATE) is group promotes spirituality through environmental education, advocacy and simple acts of kindness within Countryside and beyond. They meet on the 1st Monday of the month, 5:30 PM in the Youth Room. Contact Ann Naylor at annnaylor@cox.net.

### **LGBTQ 101**

LGBTQ 101 is a monthly class held on the 2nd Thursday of each month and is facilitated by PFLAG members. The class covers LGBTQ issues and helps increase awareness about gender identity and expression. Contact Mary Beth Link at marybethl@countysideucc.org.

### **Adult Education**

See full listing under Center for Faith Studies on page 4.

### **Journey Groups**

See full listing under Journey Groups on page 5.

## HEALTH & WELLNESS GROUPS

### **T'ai Chi Chih®**

TCC is a series of gentle movements that can be done by anyone. This group meets every Mondays at 10 AM in the Foyer. Contact Rita Otis at rmotis@outlook.com.

### **InterPlay**

This interactive group meets on the 2nd Saturday of the month, 9:30 - 10 AM in the Foyer at Countryside. Contact Rita Otis at rmotis@outlook.com.

## BOARDS & COMMITTEES

### **Church Council**

Between congregational meetings, the Church Council acts upon all issues facing the Church. They establish the overall policy of the Church and work with the staff on the general direction of the activities of the Church. Meets the 3rd Thursday after the 3rd Tuesday of each month. Contact Rick MacInnes, Moderator, at moderator@countysideucc.org.

### **Board of Christian Outreach (BOCO)**

This board nurtures outreach projects, coordinates efforts within the church to develop mission themes, and to select organizations to receive special offering grants. Meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 PM. Contact board chair, Don Otis, at donotis@me.com.

### **Board of Christian Education (BOCE)**

This board brings strength and stability to Countryside's educational efforts by advising staff and providing both adults and children with educational programs. Meets on the 3rd Monday of each month at 7 PM. Contact board chair, Anji Stanek, at anjisgtanek1@gmail.

### **Board of Art & Music (BAM)**

This board provides sincere, artful and spiritual experiences for the congregation. Meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month, 6:30 PM. Contact board chair, Shannon Avar, at Stamper2k@cox.net.

### **Board of Life Ministries (BOLM)**

This board oversees all social activities, volunteer coordination and family based educational classes held at Countryside. Contact Mary Beth Link at marybethl@countysideucc.org.

### **Board of Youth (BOY)**

This board brings strength and stability to COYO through development, planning and management for our youth programs. Meets on the first Tuesday of the month at 7PM. Contact board chair, Shari Fisher, at doglover21@cox.net.

### **Board of Trustees**

This board oversees the financial and property concerns for Countryside, including stewardship, budgeting process and regular review of the financial position of the church. This board meets on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 6 PM. Contact board chair, Butch Ethington, at ethomaha@gmail.com.

### **Board of Pastoral Care (PCB)**

This board promotes staff and lay ministry efforts to support contact and comfort church and community members, focusing on people facing difficult times in their lives. This board meets quarterly at 5 PM. Contact board chair, Joyce Davis, at joyce.davis809@gmail.com.

### **Board of Deacons**

This board is responsible for any church tasks that are related to worship and fellowship as well as communicating with new members and visitors. Meets on the fourth Tuesday of the month at 7PM. Contact board chair, Bonnie Buckland, at bonniebuckland@outlook.com.

### **Nominating Committee**

This committee is composed of 9 - 12 church members and past chairs of the boards and moderator. They meet weekly from September through November. The mission of the Nominating Committee is to recruit church members to serve on the eight leadership boards at Countryside Church, the vice moderator-elect and the church delegates who attend Nebraska's Annual Conference of the United Church of Christ.



Countryside

Community Church

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST | 8787 PACIFIC STREET | OMAHA, NE 68114

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# Ash Wednesday Service

Wednesday  
February 10  
7:00 PM



402-391-0350 | [COUNTRYSIDEUCC.ORG](http://COUNTRYSIDEUCC.ORG)

## SWEET SUNDAY Returns!

Sunday,  
February 14  
10:00 AM  
(In the Commons between services!)

Pick up some delicious home-baked "Sweets for your Sweetie" which will help support our Countryside Youth!

More details on page 10.

Lent begins February 10

## HEART SOUL MIND STRENGTH

2016 LENT DEVOTIONAL

Heart Soul Mind Strength  
2016 Lent Devotional  
from the Stillspeaking Writers Group

This fresh collection of unique Lenten devotions includes a scripture verse and prayer for each day of Lent.

Devotional books available at the Welcome Center.  
Suggested Donation - \$3

## Youth Sunday

February 7  
10 AM



Please note only one 10 AM service on February 7. Single service to be followed by a lite lunch and the annual meeting.

## 2016 Annual MEETING



Countryside Community Church

Sunday, February 7  
12 Noon