

FEBRUARY 2020



Confirmation Class



CoYo Jr. High



Rabbi Stoller preached, January 5

COUNTRYSIDE MOMENTS



CoYo Ski Trip, Winter Park, CO



CoYo Ski Trip, Winter Park, CO



Coffee Talk, January 12

COMMON GROUNDS OPEN TUESDAY-THURSDAY

Can coffee be considered a comfort food? Well, it creates a sense of warmth, it helps you to relax and for many people it can lift their spirit. Any given Sunday, between 10 and 11 AM dozens of people gather at Common Grounds Coffee House at Countryside to visit, meet new people, get a weekly hug from a friend, smiles from happy baristas and volunteers, and to just share in the warmth and comfort of a good cup of coffee with people they share a common bond with. For these reasons, Common Grounds, is now open on more occasions than just Sunday mornings. Common Grounds is now open Tuesday through Thursdays from 8:30 - 11:30 AM to spread our love and community from Sunday through the rest of the week.

It is not surprising to walk in and find Imam Jamal grabbing a cup of coffee with a friend he has brought in, or Kindernook moms spending time together while their children are learning downstairs. Pastors Eric and Chris take time to work at a table in the corner while having a cup of coffee and chatting with people who come and go. The Countryside staff takes breaks to come in and mingle with construction

workers who are working on the building. It is not as busy at it is on Sundays but it is still filled with the same sense of community that makes it such a special place to be between services. The hope is to build it into more of a bustling coffee shop...especially a place for the members of our Tri-faith communities to come in, relax and get to know one another.

We invite you to come in during the week for a cup of coffee, a smile, a little lift of your spirit...it doesn't have to be Sunday for you to always be welcome in the Common Grounds Coffee House!

COMMON GROUNDS HOURS

Tuesday - Friday

8:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Sunday

9:30 - 11 a.m.

Special Events - TBD

If you would like to be trained as a barista contact Diane Scott at Twang56@aol.com



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WELCOME TO COUNTRYSIDE



Church Office

13130 Faith Plaza, Omaha NE 68144
Phone - 402-391-0350
Email - office@countrysideucc.org
Website - www.countrysideucc.org
Facebook - 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. 231
erice@countrysideucc.org

Rev. Dr. Chris Alexander
Associate Minister, ext. 230
chrisa@countrysideucc.org

Executive Administrative Assistant

Robyn Hubbard
Executive Administrative Asst., ext. 224
robynh@countrysideucc.org

Business Office

Dan Loven-Crum
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danl@countrysideucc.org

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Bonnie Buckland
Church Clerk
bonnieb@countrysideucc.org

Minister of Spiritual Direction

Rita Otis
Minister of Spiritual Direction
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, 11 AM Jazz Service and 8 PM Day One Service on the second Sundays of each month.

Nursery - child care (ages 0-2) is available at both morning Sunday services. The Nursery is located on the upper level on the south side, next to the office.

Common Grounds Coffeehouse - Between services from 10 AM to 11 AM we invite you to the Commons directly off the Foyer for coffee, donut holes and fellowship.

Connection Link is located in the Foyer. If you have any questions or would like to sign up for any church activities, please stop by the Connection Link.

Amplified Hearing Devices are available at the Welcome Center 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.

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

REV. DR. ERIC ELNES NAMED A SINAI AND SYNAPSES FELLOW

Through a highly competitive application process, which included 60 candidates from 21 states and four countries and a mix of rabbis, scientists, professors and chaplains, our own Rev. Dr. Eric Elnes has been accepted as a Sinai and Synapses Fellow. The Sinai and Synapses Fellowship is a small interfaith group of clergy, scientists and writers who are committed to elevating the discourse surrounding religion and science. By personalizing the relationship around religion and science, the Fellows are models for a productive conversation surrounding religion and science. Congratulations to our senior pastor, Eric Elnes, of whom we couldn't be more proud here at Countryside Community Church!

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2019-2021 Sinai and Synapses Fellows

Home > 2019-2021 Sinai and Synapses Fellows

sinaiandsynapses.org

PASTORAL CARE



STEPHEN MINISTRY

February 4, Tuesday, Ruth Conference Room – At 5:30 PM, Monthly Leadership Team in Ruth Conference Room; all are welcome.

February 4, 6 - 8 PM - Monthly Peer Support will meet in Ruth Conference Room to help one another in our roles as caregivers.

Mondays through May 18, the new Stephen Ministry class will be meeting from 6-8:45 PM.

PASTORAL CARE BOARD

Our board with its new members will meet Tuesday, February 11, at 6:30 PM in Ruth.

Please help with our congregational “Ode to Joy” activity at the annual meeting on February. 9, 12:30 PM.

BAPTISMS

Carson James deBoer and Everett Richard Cade deBoer, Jr., were baptized on December 8, 2019. They're the sons of Rett deBoer and Laura Ann Bilek.

Kathy Cade deBoer, grandmother to Carson and Everett, was baptized on December 8, 2019.

MARRIAGES

Dr. James Armitage and Shirley Young were married December 31, 2019, in Omaha, with Rev. Dr. Chris Alexander officiating.

IN MEMORIAM

Ron Barnett (Joanie) passed away December 31, 2019, at Hospice House in Omaha; his life was celebrated at St. Margaret Mary Church on January 10.

Paul Nelson (Kari) recently lost his father Bertil G. Nelson who lived in Minnesota. His life will be honored at a memorial service later.

Allison (Guy) Evans's mother Joey Mecham died on January 13 in El Paso, Texas; a memorial service will be planned for late spring or summer.

ODE TO JOY

In the past 11 months of newsletters, we hope you've enjoyed reading all the different ways Countrysiders find joy. Now it's your turn! For the final Ode, take a moment to write a few words

about what brings you joy. (Please cut this out and return it to the Connection Link if you can't attend the annual meeting.)

If you plan to attend the February 9 meeting, though, please complete this ahead of time, or at the meeting itself, and share with people at your table once the Moderator cues us. Then leave your cards on the tables so that Pastoral Care may consolidate them to display Countryside's very own string of winter joy!

I find joy:

.....

My name: _____

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 Jan Brown.

Office Phone: (402) 391-0350 ext. 234

Email: janb@countysideucc.org



UPCOMING EVENTS

More Than a Joke Symposium - Now-April 2020

A weekly educational opportunity done in collaboration with our Tri-Faith Partners.

Topic: Caution: May Be Habit Forming - Ritual in Judaism, Christianity & Islam

Wednesday Lunch-and-Learns, February 12, 19 and 26 12:00-1:00 PM

Tuesday Evening Panel Discussion, March 3, 6:30-8:00 PM

This round of More Than a Joke will be held at Countryside Community Church

Dinner is included in the Tuesday evening discussion. There is a \$10 suggested donation

for dinner and an RSVP strongly encouraged, please email info@trifaith.org

For the full year schedule see countrysideucc.org, or the events section of Countryside's Facebook page.

New Men's Group Forming

Inspired by the teachings of Richard Rohr, the Center of Action and Contemplation (<https://cac.org>) and Illuman (<https://illumian.org/about/>) Countryside would like to explore forming a men's group. The group's purpose is providing space for spiritual growth in men that makes a difference in the world by providing men with an opportunity to do inner work in the company of other men using ritual and teaching to foster an environment where men can speak without being judged or shamed, discuss real life challenges of the different roles men play - husband/partner, father, grandfather, son, friend, provider, businessman, worker, etc.; Incorporating ritual experiences to help each other connect what is in our head, heart, and spirit into daily action. This group is for all men - young, old, or in-between - who are reading or listening to this (including you!). If you're curious and want to learn more you can watch this short video at <https://rb.gy/ti2rjo>

Phoenix Affirmations starts February 10

A new Phoenix Affirmations small group starts on February 10 and runs for six weeks

on Monday evening from 6:30 - 8:00 PM.

Because the Phoenix Affirmations are so

fundamental to many of our ministries at

Countryside, we strongly encourage our

community to participate in this six-week

discussion opportunity to learn more about

these affirmations and how they describe some of the joys we have within our Christian

tradition. All are welcome to join us. For more information please contact Diane Scott at

twang56@gmail.com



Conversations with Chris in the Coffee House, Starts January 15, 6:30 - 7:30 PM

Would you like to discuss the sermon you heard in church on Sunday? Are you inspired by something you have seen happening at Countryside? Do you have some ideas on what you would like to see our church start doing in the future? Is there an amazing family recipe you just want to brag about that you made for dinner last night? Well Rev. Dr. Chris Alexander wants to hear about them all!! Come on down to the church on Wednesday nights, the coffee shop is open and Chris will be there to listen and chat from 6:30 - 7:30 PM. No sign up necessary, just show up!



Mindfulness Sits - Second Wednesdays of the Month, 6:30 - 7:30 PM, February 12

Carlos Figueroa will present an experience called Mindfulness Sits, in collaboration with the Mindfulness Outreach Initiative and Convergence University. Join Carlos on the second Wednesday of every month, through April, as he guides you in a journey towards a better understanding of your spirituality. The class has moved to the Library (Lydia).

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, adult education classes and community partnerships.

Sunday Adult Forum

Meets at 10:10 AM in the Deborah Room. Beginning "The Wisdom of History"

Adult Ed Brown Bag Lunch

Mondays at 12:15 PM in the Chapel, bring a lunch. Studying The Islamic Golden Age

Racial Justice

Contact Mary Jo Weiss (mjbarbeiss@gmail.com) for meeting information. Currently reading "Citizen: An American Lyric" by Claudia Rankine

Books Bible and Beyond

Wednesdays at noon. Discussing "Grateful, THE SUBVERSIVE PRACTICE OF GIVING THANKS," by Diana Butler Bass

Anji Stanek Book Club

Mondays from 7 - 9 PM in Miriam. Currently reading, "Braiding Sweetgrass" by Robin Wall Kimmerer

Darkwood Brew Membership

As a member of Countryside you have free access to the entire Darkwood Brew video library. You can watch any of the 28 series with topics ranging from forgiveness to the environment at www.darkwoodbrew.org.
Username:CCUCC Password: tryside8787

QUESTIONS?

For more information about Center for Faith Studies contact Rev. Dr. Chris Alexander

Office Phone: (402) 391-0350 ext. 230

Email: chrisa@countrysideucc.org

Office Phone: (402) 391-0350

Website: www.centerforfaithstudies.org

Face book: Center-for-Faith-Studies



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Earthy Wisdom - Jesus's Parables from Creation, (January 12 - February 23)

If you've had your eyes checked at an optometrist's office, you know that certain letters on the eye chart look fuzzy until the right lens is put in front of your eyes. What appeared to be a "B" is actually an "E." What you thought was a "C" is actually a "G." When Christians study Jesus's parables in conversation with others, they often experience something similar. Different people read Jesus's parables through different lenses, which often help improve the focus of our own.

In this series, we will discover new and surprising levels of meaning within seven familiar parables of Jesus that focus on some aspect of Creation to speak of God's Realm (mustard seeds, fig trees, etc.). Our view of these parables will be augmented through conversations Dr. Elnes has had the prior week not only with Countryside's Worship Team, but also with our high school COYO group and his Tri-Faith clergy colleagues, who will be attending COYO as well!

Adding to the fun and congregation-wide engagement, Dr. Elnes will be taping a set of podcasts on these same parables with Tri-Faith clergy. They'll be in conversation with our youth on Sunday nights, then taping the podcast on Wednesday afternoons. Depending on editing time, the podcast will be released during the week following its use in worship.

Parable of the Leaven (Matthew 13:33-34)

- February 2: COYO session with TF clergy 6:30 - 7 PM
- February 5: PODCAST taped by TF clergy, *released the following week*
- February 9: MORNING WORSHIP 10 AM (Annual Meeting/Youth Worship)

Parable of the Budding Fig Tree (Matthew 24:32-35 / Mark 13:28-33)

- February 9: COYO Dinner 6 PM, Clergy Session 6:30 - 7 PM
- February 12: PODCAST taped by TF clergy, *released the following week*
- February 16: MORNING WORSHIP 9 and 11 AM

Parable of the Barren Fig Tree (Luke 13:6-9)

- February 16: NO COYO due to Justice Worship Service on Race at 5:30 PM
- February 19: PODCAST taped by TF clergy, *released the following week*
- February 23: MORNING WORSHIP 9 and 11 AM

Lent and Ash Wednesday, February 26)

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of a season of reflection and preparation before the celebrations of Easter. This year's UCC Lenten devotional, *Deliver Us*, focuses on the existential and everyday threats we face. With faithful people across the ages, we cry out to God for deliverance ... not only pleading for God to act, but seeking the courage to let God act through us. We can take such a risk ... or we can play it safe.

The Lenten season is a time for each of us to explore the ways in which we promote (or prevent) the deliverance we so desperately seek.

Books will be available for purchase in mid-February.

This year, Countryside will be preparing to install our new organ the last week of February. This means that there will be organ pipes spread all over the sanctuary on Ash Wednesday (February 26). Please be watching for announcements as to how we will be observing Ash Wednesday this year. It will be a little different but a service will take place and ashes will be available.



WORSHIP

Worship Planning team meets 10-Noon on Wednesdays

For more information about Worship contact Rev. Dr. Eric Elnes

Office Phone: (402) 391-0350 ext. 231

Email: erice@countrysideucc.org

Taste of Tri-Faith



FEBRUARY 23RD
4:00 - 6:30 PM
AMERICAN MUSLIM INSTITUTE

With a special baba ganoush competition! Join us for the fun.



see page 11 for details



Sunday's Comin'


A weekly, short podcast which looks ahead to Sunday's worship with Rev. Dr. Eric Elnes!

Weekly podcast links for IOS and Android can be found on:

weekly C-10
facebook.com/CountrysideOmaha/
countrysideucc.org

Sunday's Comin'

details page 4



Conversation with Chris

in the coffeehouse

Join Chris Alexander Wednesday evenings



YOUTH MINISTRIES

COYO YOUTH GROUPS



2020 Vision - CoYo Convo with Tri-Faith Clergy continues this month.

If you've had your eyes checked at an optometrist's office, you know that certain letters on the eye chart look fuzzy until the right lens is put in front of your eyes. What appeared to be a "B" is actually an "E." What you thought was a "C" is actually a "G." When Christians study Jesus's parables in conversation with others, they often experience something similar. Different people read Jesus's parables through different lenses, which often help improve the focus of our own.

Our Sr. High Youth help us see from their viewpoint as we engage with our Tri-Faith clergy in discussion of our current Worship series Earthy Wisdom - Jesus's Parables from Creation.

UPCOMING YOUTH GROUP EVENTS

- **February 2:** 6:00-8:00 PM- Youth Pot-luck dinner followed by Tri-Faith Clergy Convo & Super Bowl Shenanigans while we plan for Youth Sunday
- **February 9:** Youth Sunday Service -10:00 AM Service followed by Annual Meeting
- **Saturday, February 28:** 7 PM-7 AM- Mystery Bus Tour & Lock In - Sign up [HERE](#)
- **May 31:** Baccalaureate Sunday - Mark your calendars!
Senior sign up to be included in our recognition service coming soon.

FAITH SINGERS/CONFIRMATION SINGERS SCHEDULE

Faith Singers Schedule

- February 9 – sing at 10 AM service (YOUTH Sunday)
- March 8 – Sing at 11 AM service
- March 22 – Sing at 11 AM service
- April 12 (Easter) – Sing at both services
- April 26 (Confirmation) – Sing at both services
- May 31 (Baccalaureate) – Sing at both services

Confirmation Singers Schedule

- February 9 – sing at 10 AM service (YOUTH Sunday)

CONFIRMATION

February Confirmation Schedule

Affirmation 12: Acting on the faith that we are born with a meaning and purpose; a vocation and ministry that serves to strengthen and extend God's realm of love. (Love of Self)

- **February 5:** Four Aspects of Your Calling
- **Saturday, February 8:** Community Cupboard Confirmation Outreach Opportunity
- **February 12:** Vocation - Guest Speaker: Tracey Halvorson
- **February 19:** Lent & Living with Grace - "Mask" project - Guest Speaker and Art Teacher, Cindy Cronn - Let's Paint!
- **February 26: No Confirmation** - Please attend the Ash Wednesday Service with your family

Future Events

- **February 1:** Community Cupboard Confirmation Outreach Opportunity
- **February 9:** 4:30-6:00 PM - Jr High CoYo tour of Together Inc led by Mike Hornacek

GARAGE SALE DROP OFFS START IN MARCH!

Garage sale drop offs start in early March so start collecting those treasures to help support our youth programs! Thank you!

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.

COYO Jr High

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

Confirmation

Confirmation meets Wednesdays 6:30 -7:30 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.

COYO Sr High

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

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.

Choirs

Faith Singers (high school) meets 4:45- 6:00 PM Sundays and sings twice a month in church. They also go on tour every summer.

Confirmation Singers (7-8 grade choir) meets Wednesdays 5:45 - 6:30 PM and sings once a month in church.

QUESTIONS?

For more information about Youth Ministries contact the church office at 402.391.0350 or email at office@countrysideucc.org



CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING FOR FEBRUARY

February 2 - Worship together in the Sanctuary

February 9 - Youth/Family Worship - Worship Begins at 10

February 16 - Sunday School

After his baptism, Jesus left the company of people and went into the wild. There, he fasted and prayed for 40 days. Satan tempted him with power and riches, but Jesus chose God as his partner, listening for guidance for the rest of his days.

February 23 - Sunday School

Fishers of People: Jesus invited Peter, Andres, James, and John to join him in recognizing God's kingdom around them and to share in the journey. They left their fishing nets to follow Jesus.

SPRING SCHEDULE: HOLY MOLY, CORE 56, AND CHILDREN'S MUSIC

February Schedule for Holy Moly, Core 56, and Children's Music:

February 5

February 12

February 19

There are no classes on Feb. 26 as it is Ash Wednesday

FEBRUARY SCHEDULE: HOLY MOLY AND CORE 56

Wednesdays

6:00-6:30 Core 56 music in Tamar

Holy Moly (K-4) story and lesson in the Purple Room

6:30-7:30 Core 56 meets in the Yellow Room

6:30-7:00 K-2 Music with Aly meets in Tamar/ 3-4 Holy Moly activity in Purple Room

7:00-7:30 K-2 Holy Moly Activity in Purple Room/ 3-4 Music with Aly in Tamar

WINTER WEATER

Remember that our Countryside programming follows the weather cancellations of the Omaha Public School District.



Second and third grade Sunday School.

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 and Wednesday nights from 6-8 PM (Aug. - Apr.) for infants and toddlers ages newborn to two-year-olds.

Family Worship

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

Sunday School

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

Sunday School classes are located on the lower level in the new building. Please follow sign-age.

Children's Church

Chapel - This child-centered Worship celebrates our faith stories with songs, scripture, and discussion while honoring faith practices like communion, prayer, and storytelling. It's open to children five years old through 6th grade.

Wednesday Night Programming - Holy Moly

Lower Level - During the school year on Wednesdays from 6:00-7:30, K through 4th grade students meet for Holy Moly! A Sparkhouse curriculum teaches Bible stories with multimedia, crafts, activities, and storytelling.

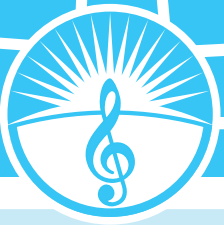
Wednesday Night Programming - Core 56

Lower Level - On Wednesday nights from 6:00-7:30, our 5th and 6th grade group delves into scripture study of Jesus's ministry and work. We also enjoy fellowship at lock-ins, movie nights, and group suppers.

QUESTIONS?

For more information about Children's Education contact **Rebecca Morello**.

Email: rebeccam@countrysideucc.org



Countryside has one of the most celebrated music and arts ministries in Omaha. We have excellent opportunities for expressing our faith through the creative arts. Our halls are bustling with activity on weekdays and Sundays as everyone brings their unique creative talents to worship services.

Confirmation Singers

Confirmation Singers is for youth in grades 7 and 8. They rehearse on Wednesday evenings 5:45-6:30 PM in Rahab (next door to the music office).

Faith Singers

Faith Singers, for high school students, rehearses each Sunday from 4:45-6:00 PM in the choir room. in Rahab (next door to the music office).

Countryside Community Church Choir (C4)

The C4 choir for adults explores a variety of contemporary choral literature as well as a classical choral repertoire. C4 sings regularly at Sunday worship services. Rehearsals are Wednesdays, 6:00 - 8:00 PM in Priscilla. Childcare up to age 12 provided.

QUESTIONS?

For more information about Music & Arts Ministries contact:

Alex Ritter
Acting Artistic Director
Email: alexr@countrysideucc.org

www.countrysideucc.org

Gustavus Choir performs on February 5, 7 PM

The Gustavus Choir, under the direction of Dr. Brandon Dean, will perform at Countryside at 7 PM on Wednesday, February 5. Admission is free; no ticket required. A freewill donation will be taken during the performance. The concert will also feature the Westside High School's choir, conducted by Doran Johnson.

Featuring music from both classic and contemporary composers, the choir will also perform a commissioned piece by Elaine Hagenberg (a composer whose music was featured in our Christmas concert on December 15).

Located in Saint Peter, Minnesota, Gustavus Adolphus College is a private, coeducational, liberal arts college affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. More than one-third of all Gustavus students participate in the music program, with three choirs, three wind ensembles, two symphony orchestras, three jazz ensembles, and numerous chamber ensembles that total over 30 musical ensembles on campus.



The Gustavus Choir from Gustavus Adolphus College in Saint Peter, Minnesota

Looking for volunteer chefs to cater for organ builders

We are also looking for some volunteer chefs! When the organ builders are in town, we will be feeding them lunches and some dinners. While we will cater some of these meals, we can save on expenses by providing home-cooked meals, sandwiches, and potluck dinners for the first week or two when their full crew is working on the installation of our new organ. If you are interested in helping out, please contact Alex Ritter at alexr@countrysideucc.org.



Dr. Christine Erlander Beard, flute, January 12



THE BOX FOR FEBRUARY

The box for February is canned soup, canned meat, peanut butter and cereal for Together. Countrysiders helped start Together decades ago. The organization collaborates to prevent and end homelessness. It envisions a community of prosperity where everyone experiences safe, affordable housing, food security, health and wellness. Together offers a food pantry that is open Monday - Friday for their clients. Please check your pantry for cans of soup, boxes of cereal, canned meat or peanut butter you do not need, and/or pick up a few at the store and bring them to the BOX. For more information about Together you can check out their website, togetheromaha.org.

BOCO CHRISTMAS OFFERING - COMMUNITY CUPBOARD

Thank you for your generosity to the Countryside Community Cupboard! This year the Board of Christian Outreach raised over \$18,000 for this mission! The Community Cupboard has been fortunate to be able to continue its mission to love and feed thy neighbor and we could not do it without generous donations. Since October of 2010 Countryside's Community Cupboard has been held the first Saturday of each month, rain or shine and has provided groceries for 250-300 local families each month.

The Community Cupboard is always looking for volunteers and needs approximately 40 to 50 each month to do things like welcome and check in visitors, unpack food and set it out tables, set up snacks and coffee in Marys' Hall, play live music, make some pre-packed boxes of food for folks who choose this option, help carry groceries out to the parking lot. If you speak another language this might be a great opportunity for you to converse with native speakers as our clients speak a variety of languages. If you want to help on pantry day, call Mary Beth Link at 402-391-0350 or email communitycupboard@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

...is where specific items are collected each month to address various needs. "The Suitcase" is where we continuously collect hotel-size toiletries. Both are in the Foyer near the Connection Link.

Community Cupboard

A large mobile food pantry takes place right here at Countryside on the first Saturday of each month from 9:00-11:30AM. You are invited to come witness this miracle happening!

Holiday Offerings (Christmas and Easter)

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

Small Service Grant (SSG)

Countryside members who volunteer with local groups/ events may apply for a small service grant (SSG) of less than \$500 to cover materials and supplies. Contact us or find the SSG request forms on the church website.



COUNTRYSIDE CORNER



MARYS' HALL

Chances are, since the church has opened, you have seen Marys' Hall written both as Mary's Hall and Marys' Hall. The correct name of our large hall is Marys' Hall because it pays homage to the three Marys of the bible:

- **Mary, Mother of Jesus**
- **Mary Magdalene** - Jesus's closest female disciple, mentioned in the gospels more than most of the apostles. Mary was witness to Jesus's crucifixion, burial, and resurrection.
- **Mary of Bethany** is famous for being a friend of Jesus, along with her siblings, Martha and Lazarus. Mary sits at Jesus's feet as he teaches people in her home while her sister Martha toils in the kitchen. Jesus says, "Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her." - Mary is a reminder to all of us that gender roles can be fluid in the household of God.

Marys' Hall is a large multi-purpose room with a beautiful view of the Tri-Faith Commons. It is also home to eight of the rock glass windows which brighten this space.

1. The Fish Window – Alpha and Omega - A fish was the sign Christians in the early church used

to avoid persecution. INRI - Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews - wording Pontius Pilate put on the cross when Jesus was crucified.

2. The Scales of Justice - Trust and Justice - Scales represent equality and justice. In the lower panel, the last judgment is shown.

3. The Crown of Thorns – Faith and Hope - The crown of thorns and the empty tomb, signifying that through faith and hope, we are able to triumph over our tribulations.

4. The Bible and Sword – Truth and Wisdom - A tribute to the reformers who died by the sword in order to defend the supremacy of Scripture, and the right of all people to interpret scriptures in their own tongue.

5. The Shell – Repent - Signifies baptism, and our "turning around" from our old way of life, and rising to new life.

6. The Wheat and Grapes – Grace and Forgiveness - the bread and wine of communion.

7. The Ark – Rejoice and Mercy - The rainbow is a symbol of pardon and reconciliation given to the human race by God after the flood.

8. The Lily – Eternal Life - Symbolizing Easter, and our rebirth in the Spirit.



A view of the rock glass windows in Marys' Hall during the Advent Brunch in December.





LIFE MINISTRIES



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Countryside's annual Soup 'r Sweet - Sunday February 2 in Marys' Hall beginning at 12:30 PM! Come sample soups and desserts from Countryside's very own gourmet chefs! The winners of the soup, stew, chili category as well as the dessert will be determined by your votes. No need to sign up to do the tasting just come on down to Marys' Hall.

MEN'S SPIRITUALITY RETREAT

March 20-22, 2020

Are you a man who is looking for greater connection to Creation, God, and other men? Join Dr. Eric Elnes and Rev. Darrell Goodwin (Associate Conference Minister of the Iowa-Nebraska-South Dakota Conference of the UCC) for an inspiring and rejuvenating weekend at the Creighton Retreat Center in Griswold, Iowa! Participants will experience a variety of prayer and meditation practices together with outdoor activities and plenty of time for reflection and conversation about what it means to be both spiritual and male in the modern world.



Rev. Darrell Goodwin

You will also experience the center's outstanding food, all made from scratch daily.

If you have not had an opportunity to meet Darrell, you'll see him in worship on weekends when he is not preaching somewhere in the Tri-State region, or getting work done in Mary Beth Link's old office, which the Conference rents from us. Before joining the Tri-State Conference, Darrell served as Pastor of Liberation United Church of Christ in Seattle, Washington. He has a long-time interest in men's spirituality and expertise in spiritual direction.

The retreat starts with dinner on Friday, March 20, 2020, at 6:00 PM and ends after lunch on Sunday, March 22. It will be at the Creighton University Retreat Center, Griswold, Iowa. The cost is \$160 per person. This includes two nights of lodging, meals, snacks, meeting space and events. Scholarships are available. A \$50 deposit is due by March 1, 2020, to secure your spot for this inspiring event. Signup at the Connection Link or email robynh@countrysideucc.org.

SOCIAL GROUP UPDATE

Ladies Lunch group will meet on Monday, February 3, at First Watch at Noon. It is located in Aksarben in the back room (1222 S. 71 St, Suite B). All three faith communities are invited to attend. Feel free to grab a friend and join us for great conversation, good food, and lots of laughter.

Lunch Bunch Circle will not meet in January and February. The next meeting will be at Gloria Ried's house on March 9 - Christmas in March! Should you have any questions, please contact Gloria at 402-333-3115.

Interplay Saturday, February 8, 2020. For additional information or questions, please contact Rita Otis at rmotis@outlook.com.

Nine to Dine Groups - Interested in meeting new people while enjoying a terrific meal? Consider joining one of our many Nine to Dine groups who meet in a variety of homes and restaurants on a monthly basis. You could even start your own group. To find out more about these opportunities, please contact Chris Alexander at chrisa@countrysideucc.org.

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 the church office.

Office Phone: (402) 391-0350

Email: office@countrysideucc.org

VOLUNTEER CORNER

The Community Cupboard Food Pantry

Community Cupboard Food Pantry is needing additional help at the pantry on Saturday, February 1, 7:45-11:30 AM. It takes approximately 60 volunteers to put together, serve and clean up a Pantry. Your help is ALWAYS welcomed and needed! Contact communitycupboard@countrysideucc.org This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Thank you!

Thanks to the Board of Life Ministries for hosting coffee hour throughout the month of February. Be sure to stop one of the board members to learn more about what Board of Life Ministries is responsible for and how you can help.

Taste of Tri-Faith Volunteers Needed

Taste of Tri-Faith Volunteers are going to be needed for the February 23 Taste of Tri-Faith event. It will be held from 4 - 6:30 PM at AMI this year. We will need help setting up, running food, serving, filling up drinks, clearing tables and then cleaning up after the event. If you are interested in volunteering please email Amanda Ryan at alryan@trifaith.org and she will then email you the sign up link. You can also sign up by clicking on the volunteer link through Countryside's weekly C-10 email (which comes out every Friday).

Baristas still needed!

We are looking for Baristas to possibly help on Friday afternoons, to substitute on the Tuesday - Thursday 8:30 - 11:30 shifts, and to help with special events. If you are interested, please email Diane Scott at Twang@aol.com. Thank you!

SOCIAL GROUPS

Social Activities Committee (SAL)

This multi-generational group encourages commitment to making church a priority through active participation in fun, faith and fellowship events. Meets on the 1st Sunday of each month, 10 - 11 AM in Marys' Hall.

Knit-n-Wit

Join in the fun as you learn to knit, continue an existing project or 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 jkunningham@cox.net.

Nine-to-Dine

Consisting of 9 individuals, this group meets on a monthly basis at various restaurants in Omaha or sometimes someone's home for a nice home-cooked meal. Contact Chris Alexander at chrisa@counttrysideucc.org.

Women's Lunch Group

This multi-generational group, open to all women, meets at noon on the 1st Monday of each month. Contact Chris Alexander for more information chrisa@counttrysideucc.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 or 402.333.3115.

Men's Breakfast Group

This group of Countryside men (all ages) share their breakfast at 7 AM every Tuesday morning at Rockbrook's Garden Café. Contact Chris Alexander at chrisa@counttrysideucc.org.

FAME (Friends, Art, Munching & Enjoying)

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. Meets Fridays at 10:00 AM. Contact Pam Kregg at 402-896-3866.

Mahjong

This multi-generational group meets weekly on Tuesday afternoons from 1:00-3:00 PM in the Common Grounds. They teach and play Mahjong with anyone who would like to learn. Jeri Lundblad is the coordinator of this group and you may contact her at jeri62lynn@gmail.com for additional information.

BOARDS & COMMITTEES

See counttrysideucc.org/about-us

HEALTH & WELLNESS GROUPS

T'ai Chi Chih®

TCC is a series of gentle movements that can be done by anyone. This group meets every Thursday at 9:30 AM in the Countryside Foyer. Contact Rita Otis at rmotis@outlook.com.

InterPlay

This interactive group meets on the 2nd Saturday of the month, 9:30 - 11:30 AM in the Countryside Foyer. Contact Rita Otis at rmotis@outlook.com.

EDUCATION GROUPS

Faith and the Environment (FatE)

This group promotes spirituality through environmental education, advocacy and simple acts of kindness within Countryside and beyond. They meet on the 3rd Tuesday of the month, 6:30 PM in the Youth Room. Contact Christy Palmer at christysuepalmer@gmail.com.

Adult Education

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



trifaith.org

templeisraelomaha.com

americanmusliminstitute.org

MUSLIM CULTURE EXHIBIT AT OMAHA CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

Now - April 19
Omaha Children's Museum, 500 S. 20 St.
The Omaha Children's Museum has a new exhibit called "America to Zanzibar: Muslim Cultures Near and Far," an interactive exhibit sponsored by the Omaha Children's Museum and the American Muslim Institute. Enjoy innovative hands-on experiences and discover fascinating objects, images and information from over 50 countries. Children can explore ancient trade routes on a two story Indian Ocean dhow (boat) or on a camel. They'll thrill to the excitement of a global marketplace as they pretend to buy, sell and trade fruit, fish, spices, ceramics, textiles, and rugs. The exhibit environment is rich with art, architecture and design elements from across the globe. Visitors will marvel at a 3-D exploration of mosque architecture from the Maldives to China. Original works by emerging American Muslim artists join traditional art forms including intricately designed tiles, ornate ceramics, and complex patterned rugs. There's even an interactive replica/interpretation of a Pakistani truck for children to decorate. There are several special events that will run throughout the exhibit so check out the Omaha Children's Museum website at ocm.org for the schedule.

SHALOM HABIBI - COMEDY TOUR

Thursday, March 12, 7 - 8:30 PM
The Backline, 1618 Harney St.
Shalom Habibi is a comedy tour featuring Jewish and Arab comedians performing at cultural centers across the US. The goal of the tour is to bridge the gap between our two communities in at least a small way to inspire meaningful conversation and hopeful unity.



Every show features at least two Jewish and two Arab/Muslim comedians. Following every show, the comedians will host a Q+A podcast recording with the audience. A portion of the proceeds from each show go to HIAS and IRUSA (Yemen Food Relief)
Tickets required: purchasing options available soon.



facebook.com/TriFaithInitiative/
facebook.com/AmericanMuslimInstitute/
facebook.com/templeisraelomaha/

TASTE OF TRI-FAITH

Sunday, February 23, 4 PM - 6:30 PM
AMI, 13140 Faith Plaza
Join us for our annual Taste of Tri-Faith event. Please bring a dish to share with members of our faith partner congregations and the larger Omaha community. To respect the dietary needs of our community, please refrain from using pork, shellfish, or alcohol in your dish. A special addition of a "Controversial Food Competition" will take place this year. What is a "Controversial Food Competition", you might ask... Have you ever wondered who makes the best hummus? Or does the best falafel come from Turkey, Israel, Lebanon, or right here in Omaha, Nebraska?! Well, this year we will find the answer to who makes the best baba ganoush!
To reserve your spot in the competition or to get more information please email Amanda Ryan at alryan@trifaith.org. Competition is limited to the first 7 people to reserve their spot. Grand prize will win a Tri-Faith merchandise prize and the coveted "Baba Ganoush Royalty Crown."

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WORSHIP SERIES



EARTHY WISDOM

Jesus's Parables from Creation

January 12 - February 23

see details on page 5

See page 5 for all of the details including a weekly podcast that goes with it!

Countryside Recycling EFFORTS
COLOR KEY

All recycling types located in coffee house



MIXED RECYCLING

Paper
Aluminum Cans
Plastic Containers



LANDFILL



COMPOST

Food Scraps
Napkins
Paper towels



CARDBOARD



ENERGY BAGS

Soft Plastics
Styrofoam
Plastic Silverware



SAVE THE DATE!

Annual Meeting

and

SOUP LUNCH

February 9

following the 10 AM Youth Sunday Worship

Please join the congregation for a delicious soup lunch (vegetarian option available) and to learn how Countryside is performing in our Annual Report. There are also by-laws that need to be voted on. Those can be found on the website or can be picked up at the Connection Link between services.

Please register at:

countrysideucc.tpsdb.com/OnlineReg/184

Gustavus Choir

Gustavus Adolphus College in Saint Peter, MN



Gustavus Choir

Wednesday, February 5

7 PM at Countryside

With Westside High School's choir

Concert is free and open to the public.