JUNE 2021









WELCOME BACK COUNTRYSIDE!

June 6 is the official date set for indoor services to return to Countryside Community Church. The Church Council on Thursday, May 20, approved the Re-Start Task Force's recommendation to return to in-person worship with protocols that allow our church community to safely gather. The COVID case counts for the last two weeks fell below the Task Force's "pink" zone number of 500. The Omaha area case count was 238 (getting so close to the "orange" zone, 200 and below) and this week the numbers are continuing to decrease.

Masks will be required at all times in the sanctuary and in the church. Not everyone is vaccinated so we want to continue to, as Pastor Anna says, "show extravagant love of neighbor." Youth ages 12-16 are just now allowed to be vaccinated and children under 12 are still not allowed to be vaccinated. We are restarting with masks to keep ALL in our church community safe. Social distancing should still be maintained and a capacity limit for the sanctuary will be established. Registrations will be requested to facilitate social distancing and to help the Deacons and Staff plan accordingly. Please visit countrysideucc.org/register, to register for either the 9 AM or 11 AM service. For now, both services will offer the same music.

At this time, there will be no Children's church, Sunday School or nursery. In addition, congregational singing or choirs will not be part of the services. Communion will be delivered in prepackaged servings. The Common Grounds Coffeehouse will remain closed at this time. Social time before and after services will be reserved for outdoors. Countryside is working on bringing some fellowship opportunities to our congregation between services over the summer months.

The Re-Start Task Force will continue to meet regularly and evaluate the case counts and published studies, to make recommendations on protocols as we worship together this summer. Stay tuned as more details are communicated over the next few weeks. We are so excited to welcome you back!



ANNE JACKSON HIRED AS DIRECTOR OF KINDERNOOK PRESCHOOL

Anne Jackson has been a beloved teacher at Kindernook since 2009. Her creative classroom overflows with fun, learning and is a classroom where children feel a sense of place and lots of love. Anne has also worked as Assistant Director of Kindernook for the past four years and has been instrumental in setting up the new classrooms, supporting the teachers and working with all Kindernook families. We are excited for Anne to live into her role as the next director of Kindernook Preschool. She is committed to Kindernook, the families and the teachers and will bring her love of teaching, enthusiasm for fun and aptitude for building relationships to the position of director. Congratulation Anne, on your new position!

SUNDAY WORSHIP



Staff

Rev. Anna Crews Camphouse, ext. 230
Interim Minister of Engagement & Formation
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Dan Loven-Crum, ext. 226
Interim Director of Vision & Stewardship
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Rev. Tracey Perry, ext. 231 Interim Minister of Worship & Congregational Care traceyp@countrysideucc.org

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Debbie Vihstadt
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Roxanne Wiles Educational Program Coordinatorroxannew@countrysideucc.org

WELCOME BACK TO CHURCH! WE ARE ALSO ONLINE AND ON KMTV 3

We are currently in the PINK phase of our opening guidelines but rapidly heading towards orange. In June there are THREE ways to catch Countryside Community Church on Sunday mornings, in person at 9 AM and 11 AM (please register at countrysideucc.org/register), online through YouTube live which you can connect with at countrysideucc.org/live or on KMTV Channel . 10:30 AM. We will be continuing our KMTV services through the end of June and are currently looking at options to extend it through the end of August.



LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR, WEAR YOUR MASK IN CHURCH

"Truly I tell you, whatever you did for the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it for me." Matthew 25:40 NIV

We are so excited to be able to gather again for Sunday worship starting June 6! Being with one another as a worshiping community is something our hearts have yearned for more than words can express. It will be a gift to be together soon, but we must remember the lessons of care and compassion this season of pandemic has taught us. These lessons go far beyond the COVID-19 virus and include those still vulnerable to its effects.

Masking was not a normative part of our culture prior to the past year, but we have seen how thoughtfulness in masking and social distancing have had multiple implications on our collective health over the past year. Not only have we saved lives related to the COVID pandemic, but we also saw influenza numbers massively decrease. Many people said this was the first year in ages they did not even have a cold! As we go back to worship together, we will be asking everyone to hold fast to these lessons of compassion by continuing to mask in the building for the protection of everyone's health.

While many people have been vaccinated, some have been unable to receive the vaccination because it has not been approved. All children under 12 are part of this demographic and we have little knowledge of the long-term effects of having COVID on our children. So, when you interact with children who come to our services, please be mindful of taking extra care to give them the same space and consideration we have given our vulnerable populations all along. Additionally, expectant mothers may not have been able to have the vaccine. Still others are allergic or have special conditions like immunosuppression, cancer, or health issues that may leave them particularly vulnerable to diseases.

It is our time to shine with the love we feel in our hearts towards one another. Let us celebrate regathering by continuing to show extravagant love of neighbor by masking, keeping space, and asking before we approach new people or those we have not seen in a while. Thank you for your thoughtful attention to continued love of neighbor. We'll see you soon!

Your interim leadership team, Pastor Anna Crews Camphouse Pastor Tracey Perry Dan Loven-Crum

JUNE WORSHIP

A three-week June sermon series will be Forgiveness and Pastor Tracey will be leading us in worship.

June 13: God's Continual Forgiveness

June 20: Forgiveness of Self June 27: Forgiveness of Others

As we navigate through opening the church back up to our congregation, please watch your weekly emails and our social media accounts for some outdoor fellowship opportunities between services.

COFFEE TALK WITH DIANE AND BILL - THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONVERSATION!

Coffee Talk with Diane Scott and Bill Bolte will not continue because they will be headed back to in-person services. They look forward to serving you coffee at the Common Grounds coffeehouse as soon as the Covid-19 numbers allow them to. Thank you to Diane and Bill for keeping our church community together while our building was closed!

COUNTRYSIDE CONNECTED

RABBI ARYEH AZRIEL CLASSES CONTINUE ON MONDAY MORNINGS

Rabbi Aryeh Azriel will continue Monday Mornings between 10:00-11:30AM. Classes have returned in person but will also be available on ZOOM. The link can be accessed through our church calendar and the password is 13130. He will be continuing with his Sermons For Life: a view of Jewish life and tradition from the sermons of Rabbi Aryeh Azriel while serving the Congregation of Temple Israel in Omaha, Nebraska. For more information, please contact Debbie Vihstadt at debbiev@countrysideucc.org.



MINDFUL MEDITATION SITS WITH CARLOS, JUNE 2 AND 16, 6 PM

Mindful Meditation Sits with Carlos Figueroa will be continuing on Wednesdays, June 2 and 16. from 6:00-7:00 PM via Zoom. You can access these sits through the Zoom link on the church calendar. If you have any questions or would like more information about these opportunities, please contact the church office at office@countrysideucc.org.

LEARN ABOUT REDUCING CARBON EMISSIONS, THURSDAY, JUNE 17, 6 PM

As people of faith, we believe God calls us to care for each other and God's planet. To do that in the face of climate change means changing how we meet our energy needs. The First Plymouth Church Climate Action Team invites you to join us to look at the science and other facts we need to make responsible decisions.

Thursday June 17, from 6-7 PM: Would you like to reduce carbon emissions and possibly reduce energy costs for your home, small business or small rental properties, or car, but aren't sure where to begin? Learn what steps provide the greatest benefits and how to get started with some specific steps, such as adding solar panels or adding a heat pump or buying an electric vehicle. Marc Shkolnick, Energy Services Manager for Lincoln Electric System, uses an interactive Jeopardy-style game to help audience members sort out their smartest energy moves. Grab your smart phone to play from home, or just follow along on this fun educational experience. Marc's presentation is for all electricity consumers and not specific to LES. Access this online presentation at www.firstplymouth.org/cat.

VOLUNTEER FOR COUNTRYSIDE'S BOOTH AT HEARTLAND PRIDE

Heartland Pride is back and Countryside will host a booth at the festival on July 10. If you would like to volunteer please contact Diane Scott at dianes@countrysideucc.org. The festival begins at noon at Baxter Arena. For more information about the event go to heartlandpride.org.



Deb McCollister, aka Pig Pen, invites you to the Tri-Faith Garden—and promises that mud is not a condition for "employment"!



THANK YOU FOR MAKING THE SANCTUARY BEAUTIFUL!

Countryside would like to say a big THANK YOU to Kim Schwartz for all of the beautiful flower arrangements she has made for the altar over the past few months. Even though no one has been able to enjoy them in person, they have helped add color and beauty to our online and TV services. We appreciate the gorgeous bouquets she has made for us. They have all been done with silk flowers. Below are two examples of what she has done for us.



Our current altar flower arrangement



Arrangement from May.

TRI-FAITH INITIATIVE



STRAIGHT TALK IN TUMULTUOUS TIMES

Excerpts by Wendy Goldberg, published on May 20, 2021. To read entire article go to trifaith.org/straight-talk-intumultuous-times

The current crisis in the holy land of the Abrahamic faiths is unfolding against the backdrop of historical, cultural, spiritual, and existential conflict. The pattern is painful. There is perhaps no more heated political issue in our American landscape for which we seek common ground among the Tri-Faith Initiative partners.

Our shared religious and moral values require an embrace of peace and justice, especially when our views and perspectives differ. The alternative is oppression and conflict without end. As long as the violence continues. we will continue to see a rise in global Islamophobia and anti-Semitism. Injustices and inequalities feed this conflict. The resulting polarization harms our personal relationships, sparks violence motivated by racial or religious prejudice, and even undermines our democracy. We must disrupt the pattern.

The power of positive contact between members of our Tri-Faith communities can have ripple effects: Research suggests that as we get to know each other, we form more positive attitudes toward the other's community.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Women of Tri-Faith Virtual Lunch Monday, June 7 and June 21, and July 5 at Noon

Let's share a meal and check in. It will be good to "see" all of you!

Stay home safe to help our community lower the curve — Invite a friend to the Women of Tri-Faith Virtual Lunch! Registration required - go to trifaith.org/events to register.

Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Conversations: Courageous Leadership with Dr. Maryanne Stevens Thursday, June 10, 12 - 1 PM, online

Join Wendy Goldberg and Dr. Maryanne Stevens, President of the College of Saint Mary and former Tri-Faith Board Chair, for this Open Conversation about spiritual wellness and courageous leadership.

Dr. Stevens will share her path to becoming a Sister of Mercy, her work ensuring that religion is a protected class in faith-based higher education, and why religious pluralism is an asset to be celebrated.

Registration required - go to trifaith.org/events to register.

Seen/Unseen: What do you Believe Now? with Filmmaker Sarah Feinbloom Thursday, June 10, online

Film Screening: 4:45 PM - 6:00 PM, Discussion: 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM

What happens to your spiritual and religious beliefs over time?

Seventeen years after the 2002 documentary What Do You Believe? In which six diverse American teenagers shared their spiritual struggles and aspirations, we revisit them to reveal how their beliefs have changed.

In this new "before and after" film What Do You Believe Now? A Catholic, Pagan, Jew, Muslim, Lakota, and Buddhist offer their deeply personal faith journeys, life challenges, and evolving ideas about higher powers, life purpose, the nature of suffering, religious intolerance and death. They do so against the backdrop of a society in flux and amidst growing religious polarization and disengagement.

Designed to be a stand-alone film, What Do You Believe Now? is an invaluable addition to any discussion on religious diversity and millennial spirituality in America.

You are invited to join Amanda Crichlow Silva for this special film screening followed by discussion with Director Sarah Feinbloom as she shares about the film making process and why she chose to explore Millennial religious beliefs.

Registrants will receive a link to watch What Do You Believe Now? Two weeks before the event and may watch the film privately beforehand, or join Tri-Faith online for a pre-discussion screening.

Registration required - go to trifaith.org/events to register.

Heroes of Scripture: The Unnamed Woman - A Tri-Faith Clergy Conversation Tuesday, June 22, 6:30 - 8 PM, via Zoom

Join us for our second session of "Heroes of Scripture: A Tri-Faith Clergy Conversation," an example of real-life interfaith dialogue in action. Through this four-part series, each Tri-Faith community on the Commons will take turns hosting a discussion about prominent figures from scripture.

Countryside Community Church's Pastor Anna Crews Camphouse will describe a Christian perspective on unnamed women in scripture, focusing on the story of the woman who anoints Jesus with perfumed oil in the Christian gospels. Afterward, clergy from Temple Israel, Countryside Community Church, and American Muslim Institute will engage in a panel discussion highlighting differences and similarities in their views of unnamed women's stories.

Registration required - go to trifaith.org/events to register.

Abraham's Whiteboard: African American and Jewish Connections in Samuel Bak's Holocaust Art Thursday, July 1, 6:30 - 8 PM, ZOOM

In this special session of Abraham's Whiteboard, Dr. Jeannette Gabriel of UNO will lead us in a presentation on the topic, "African American and Jewish Connections in Samuel Bak's Holocaust Art." This exploration of recent Jewish history and identity will draw on the work of Samuel Bak, a Lithuanian-born American painter, writer, and Holocaust survivor who uses allegory and artistic devices in his works to depict challenging subjects. Registration required - go to trifaith.org/events to register.

CARING TOGETHER

IN MEMORIAM

Molly (Mitch) Anderson's stepmother Ruth Riley passed away at age 99 on May 5, 2021.

BIRTHS

Diane and Don Scott are delighted to be grandparents again! Atlas Jon Bailey was born to Jon Bailey and Molly O'Reilly on May 1, 2021. Atlas is also welcomed by his big sister Megan.

Mary and John Windle's grandson Collin Jude Windle was born May 4, 2021, to Dan and Emily. Luke, Collin's older brother, is also excited for this new little playmate.

Hannah and Tom Reilly's baby girl Juniper Quinn was born May 22, and her big sisters Violet and Elsie are happily taking turns holding her.

BAPTISMS

Natalie Mae Summers, daughter of Vanessa and Kellen Summers, was baptized on Saturday, May 8. Pastor Tracey and Pastor Anna both helped officiate.

STEPHEN MINISTRY

There is no Peer Support in June or July. We'll be meeting on June 26, though:

JOY! A Retreat for Stephen Ministers

Facilitated by Jane Cavanaugh, Minneapolis

Saturday, June 26, 9 AM - Noon, with lunch after, Marys' Hall and Abraham's Bridge, Countryside (There is no charge for this event, but we do need Stephen Ministers to register.)

MERCY ME, COUNTRYSIDE!

As we move forward together with two new amazing pastors after a global pandemic which might be loosening its grip, let's consider the win-win of showing one another mercy. Here's a reminder of what that might be and look like:

Mercy: Compassion or forgiveness toward someone whom it's within our power to punish or harm.

Why is it a win-win?

- Because it's exhausting to keep a list of grievances.
- Because we need peace in our hearts, families and church.
- Because we are leaders and can set the tone for others of all ages.
- Because it's within our own locus of control.
- Because the Spirit gives it to us every single day.
- Because we got skills, Countryside!

Some Markers of Mercy:

- 1. Be patient with people's quirks (What? That's a big ask!)
- 2. Help anyone around you who is hurting (The whole family, team or community)
- 3. Give people a second chance (No tally marks)
- 4. Do good to those who hurt you (Responding to a microaggression with pause and popcorn)
- 5. Build bridges of love to the unpopular (Notice when someone is outside the circle of trust and pull up a chair).
- 6. Value relationships over rules (Another way to word this: people over tasks)
- 7. Don't assume harm was intended. (This helps us mentally recall positive traits about a person instead of negative ones).





Your "The Box" donations in action! On the left is Bonnie Leiserowitz posing with the Tri-Faith garden donations and on the right is Mallis Bonner and her mom, Heidi Neumann-Bonner with donations for 100 Black Men of Omaha. Thank you Countryside!



THE BOX FOR

The Intercultural Senior Center is again going to be The Box for June. The Intercultural Senior Center, believes that elders deserve dignity, wellness, and the opportunity to share their talents and wisdom with others

Their mission is to improve the dignity, quality of life and physical well-being of seniors from around the world through advocacy, education, access to social services, and cultural enrichment activities that benefit the entire community. They envision an Omaha that values the wisdom and experience of our diverse elders and creates opportunities for them to embrace and enhance our community. To find out more check out their website at interculturalsenior.org.

Countryside will be collecting items for seniors at the center. Items include sticker books, coloring books, yarn, colored pencils, sanitary napkins, toothpaste and toothbrushes, shampoo, toilet paper, body wash, paper towel and watercolor paint and brushes. A list of items can be found on Amazon on our website at countrysideucc.org/give and click The Box.

COUNTRYSIDE EVOLVING



LRC COMMITTEE



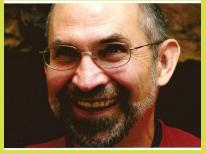
Emily Wadhams



Annette Sterling



Al Cardona



Tom Scates

THE CHURCH COUNCIL CREATES LEADERSHIP RELATIONS COMMITTEE

At its April meeting, the Church Council created an ad hoc committee of the Church Council, the Leadership Relations Committee. This is Countryside's version of a Pastoral Relations Committee. You may remember when Countryside had a Pastoral Relations Committee, or know other churches who have one. Countryside had one until about 12 years ago. Having a committee like this is highly recommended by the United Church of Christ. With two new ministers to acclimate to Countryside and support in their work, it seemed like just the right time to bring such a committee back to Countryside. As part of the discernment process, the congregation will assess the merits of the committee, and make a decision of whether to continue it past our next Annual Meeting.

The Leadership Relations Committee will include the two ministers, Pastor Tracey Perry and Pastor Anna Crews Camphouse, plus Dan Loven-Crum, as our Executive Leadership Team, hence Leadership Relations Committee (LRC). They will mainly serve:

- As an advisory group to the Executive Leadership Team: sharing ideas, dreams, expectations, and concerns of the congregation with the leaders;
- As a support group for the Executive Leadership Team: interpreting roles, functions, boundaries, opportunities, and needs of the leaders to the congregation.

With this Executive Leadership Team using the Interim Model of Collaborative Leadership, another key part of the LRC's work will be helping to develop how the Collaborative model works best, whether there are any tweaks in job descriptions or roles that will help it work better, and keeping the Church Council informed of how the Collaborative Model is working.

Church leadership exists to build up the congregation as part of the Body of Christ and to equip the congregation for the mission of the church.

"And these gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of Christ, to become mature, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." Ephesians 4:11-13

The particular relationship between a leader and congregants should be tended deliberately, so that the ministries of both leaders and congregation can complement each other and further God's grace in the world. As with any relationship, it must be respected and nurtured to grow in healthy and productive ways. For this reason, the Leadership Relations Committee exists to advise, assist, and promote the growth of this vital relationship.

The UCC recommends that people who serve on the Leadership Relations Committee have skills and attributes such as good Christian character, discernment and prayerfulness, integrity, maturity, patience, ability to maintain confidentiality, ability to reconcile differences, and ability to engage questions of authority, covenant, and accountability with wisdom and care. The Transition Leadership Committee (TLC) and the Church Council recommended several candidates, and the Church Council selected the following individuals:

- Emily Wadhams
- Annette Sterling
- Al Cardona
- Tom Scates

The Leadership Relations Committee and the Executive Leadership Team will meet at least monthly, and more often now as they get to know each other. Please keep them in your prayers, to support our leadership, and encourage the best relationship between them and the congregation.

COUNTRYSIDE EVOLVING

COUNTRYSIDE'S NEW INTERIM MODEL OF COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP MODEL IS AN EXCITING WORK IN PROGRESS

First of all, it is important to know that this is the Interim Model of Collaborative Leadership at Countryside. It will continue to be a work in progress throughout our interim time and our congregational discernment process will be our opportunity as a community to evaluate how this model fits us, and decide what changes need to be made before the search committee for our new ministers is formed.

The Transition Leadership Committee (TLC) took a lot of time to discern the three main public facing responsibilities the Senior Minister position had led in the past, and divide those evenly among the three leaders. They intentionally chose the two main distinct areas of leadership and responsibility for each individual leader, to not overload any one of the three leaders, but allow all three to have input in every area.

"When Chris Alexander first brought up a Collaborative Model as the TLC was first being formed, I thought, this sounds crazy," said Aubrey Fitzke, a member of the TLC group. "How can an organization function without a 'designated leader' in the case of a church, that person being the Senior Pastor. But then as we started to discuss how this could be structured, it really started to make sense for me.

Why should one person be responsible for everything that happens inside and outside of the church walls? How can one person be able to help our congregation with their spiritual and care needs, be the leader of the Christian presence of the Tri-Faith and all that is associated therein, and also take care of all of the physical needs of the church and staff? It's too much to ask of any one person. I think we saw some of that in the old model, where some things just didn't get addressed until they reached critical status."

In the Interim Model of Collaborative Leadership, TLC also prioritized our existing staff resources, especially Dan Loven-Crum, and although new voices will lead worship and discernment, congregational care, engagement and faith formation, they expect the voices and talents of Dan to be a strong influence in the planning and implementation. Dan will act as the Interim Director of Vision and Stewardship, lead our financial stewardship and growth, and oversee operations, visioning, Countryside Foundation, and staff development.

The new Interim Associate Minister of Engagement and Formation, Anna Crews Camphouse, will lead our Tri-Faith Initiative partnership and faith formation, through work with youth and family ministries, Center for Faith Studies, member engagement, and represent Countryside on the Tri-Faith Initiative Board.

Pastor Tracey Perry, the new Interim Minister of Worship and Congregational Care, will lead worship, arts and music, pastoral care and discernment processes. She will also be administering the sacraments of communion and baptism, and officiating at weddings and funerals. For example, although Pastor Tracey is responsible for the worship, Pastor Anna and Dan Loven-Crum will help support worship and will step in and cover if Pastor Tracey is unavailable. The leadership team agrees with lending support to assist and serve each other and the members of Countryside. "The new Interim Model of Collaborative Leadership makes me smile. I see this as a way for us to fully live into our faith and what we profess. What better way to teach our children? What better way to show who we are?" said Emily Wadhams, another member of TLC. "I'm so excited to see it in action. We are a denomination of 'firsts.' We take pride in this. Let's be one of the first to discard the old patriarchal model and embrace a more progressive, loving, Jesus-like collaborative model."

Aubrey continued to explain why this leadership model is exciting for Countryside as we move forward. "One of the big advantages of a collaborative model is the way that it utilizes the skills of the other employees. Collaborative leadership allows staff to learn from each other, it almost forces members to maintain an open mind based on others' input and skills. By having open discussion, it focuses on the strengths of the employees and reduces the wasted effort in trying to communicate 'up the ladder' to someone who hasn't a clue about what is really going on behind the scenes.

"We have some excellent staff at Countryside and now we have the opportunity to maximize each of their skill sets."

With the collaborative leadership team now having been in place for one month, the conversations are transitioning to the interim process and next steps through summer and into fall. Look for more communications in June.



FELLOWSHIP CONVERSATIONS

Our new Pastors are excited to get to know and talk to the Countryside congregation in smaller settings. Starting June 10, Pastor Anna, Pastor Tracey and Dan Loven-Crum will be available on Thursday mornings at 10:30 AM for fellowship and conversations. We just ask you please register at countrysideucc.org/register so we know how many people to plan on for that day. They are both looking forward to getting to know everyone!



May meet and greet



May meet and greet.



Pentecost Sunday



YOUTH UPDATE

COYO Service Trip

July 30- August - Headed to Grizzly Creek Primitive in the Black Hills, our group of adventurous youth will focus our service around showing love to ourselves by resting and recouping from a long year apart. We'll hike and enjoy Creation, spend time in prayer practice, and other fun stuff! In order to prepare for our trip, we'll offer a number of activities at the church to help us hone our skills. We'll set up tents at night, build fires, and learn more about the area including different wildlife and vegetation that we're likely to find. We practice sharing space with the wild and learn about our impact on the natural world around us.



Grizzly Creek Primitive in the Black Hills

Core 56

Core 56 will continue meeting over the summer! Any kids who have completed 4th grade are welcome to attend and our outgoing 6th graders are welcome to continue through the summer until Confirmation begins. We will incorporate a few outdoor activities that we can do in person but will keep up with the Zoom. Please encourage your Core 56 student to work on their prayer practices!

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CONGRATULATIONS COUNTRYSIDE SENIORS!

Congratulations to all of our high school graduates! We hold you all in our prayers as you begin new adventures!

Abe Madson **Genevieve Graner** Morgan Beutler **Colton Johnson Zach Goldner** Madalvn DiPrima Olivia Weiss **Megan Eurich** Lauren Eurich

Jackson Farho Travis Prinz Alexis Bauer Grace Buckland Logan Kuehne **Sophie Wray Elena Panton** Rachel Radloff **Elliot Evans**

