

MARCH



Sweet Sunday



Annual Meeting



Taste of Tri-Faith



Chili vs. Chocolate



Taste of Tri-Faith

LENT HAPPENINGS

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, March 1, and concludes on "Holy Saturday" – the day before the joyful celebration of the resurrection of Jesus on Easter Sunday, April 16. At Countryside, the ashes used on Ash Wednesday are made from the burning of palm leaves from the previous year's Palm Sunday and are accompanied by the words from Genesis: "You are dust, and to dust you shall return".

Christians often believe that Lent is a time for giving something up. This is only partially true. True Lenten practice is more about taking something on than giving something up. What is given up is only done so for the sake of taking something new on. During Lent, Countryside provides three different opportunities to adopt a special spiritual practice. One of these is a daily reading that takes only a few minutes (see page 2 for information on our Lenten Devotional booklet). The other two take more of a time

investment but take place just once a week on Wednesday evenings. All three practices work together quite well if you are willing to cut something out of your weekly routines to make room for them.

Parables, Prayer, and a Pesky Pastor: Wednesday evenings during Lent Dr. Elnes will be leading a rousing, six-week exploration of parables and prayer in which his goal is to poke and prod you until you come face-to-face with the holy. Join in on five consecutive Wednesdays, March 8-April 5, 6:45 to 8:00 PM in the Sanctuary. Note, too, that our March 1, Ash Wednesday Service (7 PM) will follow a similar format so everyone can get a taste of what will be happening on the subsequent Wednesdays.

Our Table: To add to the fun, come between 6 and 6:30 PM for dinner, storytelling and conversation during a new program of fellowship called "Our Table" in Memorial Hall!

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Welcome - Page 2
- Pastoral Care - Page 3
- Center For Faith Studies - Page 4
- Journey Groups- Page 5
- Youth Ministries - Page 6
- Children's Education - Page 7
- Music Ministries - Page 8
- Christian Outreach - Page 9
- Relocation Update - Page 9
- Life Ministries - Page 10
- Get Connected - Page 11

WELCOME TO COUNTRYSIDE



Church Office

8787 Pacific Street, Omaha NE 68114
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. 113
erice@countrysideucc.org

Rev. Chris Alexander
Associate Minister, ext. 130
chrisa@countrysideucc.org

Executive Administrative Assistant

Robyn Hubbard
Executive Administrative Asst., ext. 103
robynh@countrysideucc.org

Business Office

Dan Loven-Crum
Dir. of Admin. & Communication, ext. 102
danl@countrysideucc.org

Shari Garder
Financial Secretary, ext. 123
sharig@countrysideucc.org

Steve Gomez
Administrative Assistant, ext. 101
steveg@countrysideucc.org

Kris Hill
Administrative Assistant, ext. 100
krish@countrysideucc.org

Debbie Vihstadt
Communication Assistant, ext. 125
debbiev@countrysideucc.org

Bonnie Buckland
Church Clerk
bonnieb@countrysideucc.org

Brian Palmer
Building/Property Coordinator
brianp@countrysideucc.org

Audio/Visual

Ben Semisch
Videographer
bens@countrysideucc.org

Minister of Spiritual Direction

Rita Otis
Minister of Spiritual Direction, ext. 129
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 - child care (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 toward 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, donut holes and fellowship.

Information Station 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 Station.

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.

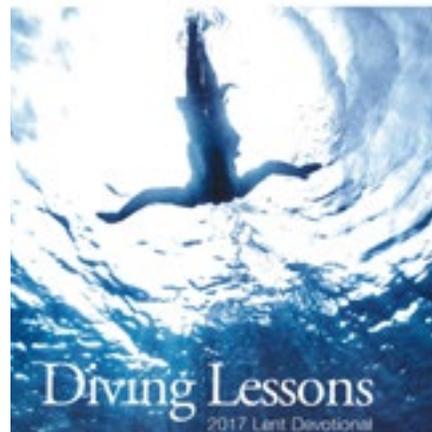
Box, Basket and Journey - The Box, Basket and Journey are three ways that Countryside shares our gifts with one another and our community. The Box is a way to share our material possessions with one another and is located in the Foyer. The Basket is Countryside's way of sharing financial offerings with our community for the support of our ongoing program ministries. The baskets are located at the back of the Sanctuary. And the Journey is the way we share lives together through Journey Groups.

Restrooms - Restrooms 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 or call 402-391-0350.

LENTEN DEVOTIONAL BOOKLET AVAILABLE

This year's United Church of Christ Lent Devotional booklet is called "Diving Lessons" and offers that "Lent can be a time to think about Christ diving down into human life, into service and sacrifice. How did he do it? What lessons can we learn from it?" Get your copy of "Diving Lessons" in the Foyer. Suggested donation is \$4.





ANNOUNCEMENTS

Stephen Ministers will be meeting on March 7 for Leadership Team (5:30 PM) and Peer Support (6-7:45 PM). This is a change from the original plan of March 14.

JOYS

Kristabelle Denzlinger, one of our Countryside children, has been receiving treatment for post-transplant cancer at UNMC. Thankfully, her scans in mid-February showed that her tumors are decreasing in numbers and size. Kristabelle celebrated by handing out valentines to all her doctors and nurses; she and her parents are grateful for Countryside's many prayers, too. *Thank you, Lord, for the hope in our children and their parents.*

For many new board members who will be leading us through the Tri-Faith move and who attended the Board Retreat February 11, we thank you, Lord.

CONCERNS

David Davis has been hospitalized at Methodist since mid-January with Acute Myeloid Leukemia, and he anticipates moving to Brookstone Meadows to regain his strength by the beginning of March. David, the "Snickers Guy" for many years, enjoys his Countryside friends' visits, calls and cards. *Dear God, we thank you for the cheer which David shares with others, and may we love him well during this trial.*

We continue in prayer for our Countryside friends Karen Reynolds, Annette Pitzer, Deb and Curt Hickman, Laura Streeter and Dave Hubbard's mother, Janette. Lord, you know each worry, each need, each road. *Thank you for being our constant companion and for giving us loving friends who pray.*

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. 117

Email: janb@countrysideucc.org

**NO WNA ACTIVITIES
ON ASH WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1**



Wednesday Night Alive is for all ages! Enjoy a community meal, choir rehearsals and educational opportunities. This is a perfect way to connect with church friends, create new friendships or take time just to breathe!

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. Reservations are greatly appreciated.

See page 10 for the menu.

GRADE/MIDDLE SCHOOL

Choirs

Joyful Noise (Pre-K): 5:15-5:30 PM
Carol Choir (gr K-2): 5:15 - 6:00 PM - rm 114
Pilgrim Choir (gr 3-6): 5:15 - 6:00 PM - rm 117
Covenant Choir (gr 7-8): 6:15 - 7:00 PM - rm 117

Programs

Holy Moly (gr K-2): 6:30 - 7:30 PM - rm 112
Holy Moly (gr 3-4): 6:30 - 7:30 PM - rm 114B
Core 56 (gr 5-6): 6:30 - 7:30 PM - rm 110
Confirmation (gr 7-8): 7:00 - 8:00 PM - rm 119

Adult Choirs

Chancel Choir : 7:30 - 8:45 PM
Spirit of Grace : 6:20 - 7:20 PM

ADULTS/HIGH SCHOOL

In The Sanctuary - Parables, Prayer & A Pesky Pastor

March 8 - April 5, 6:45-8:00 PM

Need help understanding Jesus' parables? Need help with your prayer life? Receive both kinds of help Wednesday evenings during Lent as Dr. Elnes leads a rousing, six-week exploration of parables and prayer in which his goal is to poke and prod you until you come face-to-face with the holy. The first half of each session will focus on one of Jesus' most intriguing parables, followed in the second half with guided meditation based on a combination of ancient Jewish and modern mystical practice that Dr. Elnes personally uses to seek guidance from the Holy Spirit and draw closer to God. No prior experience with prayer or Bible study is required. But an open mind and heart is highly recommended.



SPRING CFS EVENTS

March 24-25 - Lisa Sharon Harper, author & Sojourners staffer

Friday, March 24 at 7 PM The Very Good Gospel Lecture and Book Signing Saturday, March 25 8:30-3 PM Workshops led by Ms Harper

A collaborative event held at First United Methodist Church – 7020 Cass Street. Friday, March 24 6:30-9 PM – Lecture & Book Signing ; Saturday, March 25 – 8:30 AM – 3 PM – Workshops

Full weekend registration, \$45 if postmarked on or before March 15; \$65 if postmarked after that date. Friday evening lecture and reception only: \$15.00.

Institute for Holocaust Education's Week of Understanding

Tuesday, March 28 at 7 PM - Survivor Speaker: Marion Lazan Blumenthal. Subject of *Marion's Triumph*, and *Four Perfect Pebbles* as featured on PBS.

Links for tickets on the Center for Faith Studies website www.centerforfaithstudies.org



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.

Racial Justice Book Group

Racial Justice Book Group – Meets Mondays at 7:00 PM in the Commons. Explores books, articles and podcasts around the racial landscape of America. Come anytime, but let us know so we can inform you of cancellations due to weather or other conflicts.

Adult Ed Brown Bag Lunch

Mondays at 12:15 PM in the Chapel. Bring a lunch. Currently studying *Living History: Experiencing Great Events of the Ancient and Medieval Worlds*.

Books Bible and Beyond

Wednesdays at noon in the Chapel. Finishing *Living History: Experiencing Great Events of the Ancient and Medieval Worlds* and will begin

Sunday Adult Forum

Meets at 10:10 AM in the Pilgrim Room. Currently Studying *Living History: Experiencing Great Events of the Ancient and Medieval Worlds*. In March, the group will start a new study, *Native Peoples of North America*.



Lisa Sharon Harper



Marion Lazan Blumenthal

Sacred Prism: Tri-Faith Prayer Retreat- March 31 and April 1

Deepening your own sense of the sacred while discovering beauty in the spiritual practices of all three Abrahamic Traditions. Imam Bashar Arafat, Rabbi Shefa Gould, and Father Masud Syedullah will lead us through a weekend interfaith prayer retreat exploring the sacred texts, music, chants, and prayers in all three traditions that mark the beauty, mystery, and transforming power of God. \$35 ticket includes lunch on Saturday.

CFS Presents; Desmond Egan, Irish Poetry and Music - March 13 at 7 PM



Desmond Egan

Desmond Egan will join Countryside from County Kildare, Ireland. Founding Director of the Gerard Manley Hopkins Festival, Egan is a prolific and accomplished poet. Invited to Nebraska for a private reading in Lincoln, he has graciously offered to do a public reading at CFS! Enjoy poetry and perhaps, as authentically Irish a rendition of *Danny Boy* as you may have ever heard! No tickets – free will offering will be collected to offset CFS costs.

Rabbi Aryeh Azriel - Judaic Tradition

Rabbi Aryeh Azriel will be teaching another class on the Judaic Tradition during Lent. It will be in Memorial Hall on Monday mornings from 10:00-11:30. The schedule is as follows:

March 6: Prayer and Religious Intimacy

March 13: Theology and the Human Condition

March 20: Chosenness – Between Otherness and Exceptionalism

March 27: What is an American Jew?

April 3: Forms of Jewish Identity: Biology, Covenant, Memory

QUESTIONS?

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

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

Email: kellyk@countrysideuuc.org

Website: www.centerforfaithstudies.org

Face book: Center-for-Faith-Studies

JOURNEY GROUPS



ANNOUNCEMENTS

New Worship Series-Reclaiming Eden

Ash Wednesday (March 1) welcomes us to the season of Lent. During the second worship series in "Gifts of Eden", we will continue to explore some harmful interpretations of scripture that have led to misunderstandings and wrong assumptions about our Christian traditions. The first worship series in the "Gifts of Eden" explored some erroneous assumptions we have about the image of God and creation.

The second series, "Christus Victor: The Second Adam", will explore the misinterpretations of Jesus through the lenses of the seven deadly sins and the seven lively virtues. The divine and human character of Jesus, his calling as the Messiah, and his revelation to us for reconciling with God, neighbor and nature will be among the topics discussed as we step into the season of Lent to prepare ourselves for the celebration of Easter Sunday.

Please join us in an extended conversation of these topics by joining one of our 17 already existing Journey Groups, or beginning your own. There are groups who meet at a variety of times and locations throughout the week, so let us know your schedule and we'll help you get connected. Contact Rev. Chris Alexander, chrisa@countysideucc.org, for more information.



Journey Groups

Journey Groups are small groups that meet weekly to discuss and discover what our still speaking 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.

New Journey Groups are regularly forming that meet to discuss the current sermon series, watch and discuss Darkwood Brew videos or engage in special small group studies. Join in and dig into some provocative theological discussions while developing lasting relationships. Contact Rev. Chris Alexander to get plugged into a Journey Group.

Free Darkwood Brew Membership

Did you know that 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. Use the username: CCCUCC and the password: tryside8787.

QUESTIONS?

For more information about Journey Groups contact Rev. Chris Alexander.

Office Phone: (402) 391-0350 ext. 130

Email: chrisa@countysideucc.org

COYO JR. HIGH URBAN PLUNGE
MAY 3 - 5

Bring a sleeping bag, pillow, work clothes and work gloves.
Cost is \$20 for food.

see page 6 for details



SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Sunday, March 19
12:30 PM (after service)

Proposed Sale of the Church




Annual Holocaust Survivor Speaker

Tuesday, March 28
7:00 PM

Event is free Courtesy of



Marion Lazan Blumenthal
Subject of *Marion's Triumph*,
and *Four Perfect Pebbles*
as featured on PBS

CIRCLES: RESISTANCE IN THE JEWISH GHETTOS

Sundays - March 5-19
4:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Taught by Scott Littky
Program Director, Temple Israel





YOUTH MINISTRIES

COYO SR HIGH

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Restore the Shore

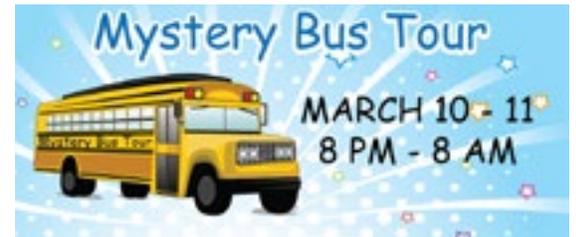


Donate today to help build and rebuild homes on the Jersey Shore, where COYO Sr High will be working this year on a mission trip. You can write a check to Countryside, use Countryside's online giving at <http://countrysideucc.org/give>, or donate on GoFundMe at <http://gofundme.com/cccrestoretheshore>. Spread the word by sharing GoFundMe on your Facebook timeline and with your friends.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Mystery Bus Tour - March 10-11

Drive around the city doing various activities all night. Activities may include bowling, mini-golf, service project, broom ball, pool, scavenger hunt, hike in the woods, truck stop breakfast, laser tag, roller skating, ice skating, or other things.



Spring Retreat at Camp Kitaki - April 8-9. 9 AM - 5 PM

Spring fun at YMCA Camp Kitaki. You'll be staying in the Leadership Lodge. Activities include hikes, climbing tower, games, and faith discussions. Cost is \$30. Bring bedding, a favorite game, and a snack to share.

Garage Sale

The garage sale is on June 2-3 this year. Collections will start on March 15 at Millard Lumber (12900 I St, Omaha, NE 68137) 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM. You can bring items to Millard Lumber or request a pickup through the Countryside website.

COYO JR HIGH

UPCOMING EVENTS

Urban Plunge Omaha-March 3-5, 5:00 PM - 12:00 PM

Meet at church at 5:00PM on Friday to do various service projects around the city. Ends at 12:00 PM on Sunday. Bring a sleeping bag and pillow and work clothes and work gloves. Cost is \$20, basically for food during the weekend. This counts as a full year of outreach for Confirmation.



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 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 during the school year on Sunday evenings from 6 PM to 8 PM, including dinner at 6 PM. The purpose is to build strong and welcoming friendships and serve the community.

COYO Jr High

COYO Jr High meets during the school year on 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 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: wilh@countrysideucc.org

www.countrysideucc.org/coyo



CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING FOR MARCH WORSHIP SERVICES

March 5- Family Worship

Children remain in the sanctuary with their families.

March 12 Sunday School

The Samaritan Woman at the Well: In the mystical, symbolic book of John, Jesus, a Jew, breaks a "rule" and asks a Samaritan woman for a drink from the well. In turn, Jesus promises her "living water" (spiritual insight) which brings a relationship with God, whose love encompasses all. Her joy became a testimony to Jesus as the Messiah.

March 19- Children's Church

Children will process together to the Chapel for child-centered worship.

March 26- Sunday School

Jesus Heals a Man with Leprosy: Our story tells of a man with leprosy asking Jesus for healing. God desires our health and wholeness as much as we do.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Wednesday Night Activities

March 1:

Holy Moly- No classes - Ash Wednesday

Core 56-No classes - Ash Wednesday

March 8:

Holy Moly-The Widow's Mite Mark 12:41-44

Core 56-Love For Enemies Luke 6:27-36

March 15:

Holy Moly-Man Through the Roof Luke 5:17-26

Core 56-The Mission of the Seventy Luke 10:1-11

March 22:

Holy Moly-The Good Samaritan Luke 10:25-37

Core 56- Do Not Worry Luke 12:22-34

March 29:

Holy Moly-Mary and Martha Luke 10:38- 42

Core 56- The Narrow Door Luke 13:22-30

UPDATE! 2017 Vacation Bible School will be held July 17-21. More details to come.

NURSERY

OPEN POSITION - Nursery Worker

Countryside is looking for a part-time Nursery Worker to provide childcare for children ages infant to 2 years old during Sunday Worship schedule as well as Wednesday Night Activities (Sundays 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. and Wednesdays 6-8 p.m.). If interested in applying, please contact Rebecca Morello at rebeccam@countrysideucc.org or 402-391-0350 ext. 109.

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)

11:00 Service

Room 214 -Pre-Kindergarten

Room 213 - Grades K-1

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 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.

Wednesday Night Programming - Holy Moly

During the school year, 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

On Wednesday nights, our 5th and 6th grade group delves into scripture study of Jesus's 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

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.

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 five years old through 6th grade.

QUESTIONS?

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

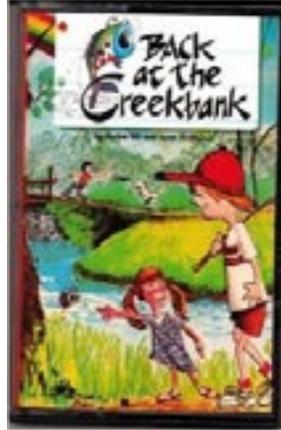
Office Phone: (402) 391-0350, ext. 109

Email: rebeccam@countrysideucc.org



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Children's Musical - Back at the Creekbank - April 23



The children's choirs will present their spring musical, Back at the Creekbank, during services on April 23. Rehearsals take place during regular choir times on Wednesday evening. There are a number of supporting materials to help kids learn their speaking parts and the songs online. Please visit countrysidemusicandarts.weebly.com/creek.html for the full list of resources. Details on costuming and props will be provided during rehearsals this month. If you have questions, please contact Vicky Palmisano at vickypalmisano@cox.net.

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.

Kids Music

Joyful Noise (Pre-K), Carol Choir (K-3) and Pilgrim Choir (4-6) are designed to allow younger musicians to develop their new music skills for worship. Rehearsals for the Carol and Pilgrim Choirs are on Wednesday evenings 5:15-6:00 PM. Joyful Noise rehearses from 5:15-5:30 PM. Each group sings monthly in worship.

Covenant Choir

Covenant Choir is for youth in grades 7 and 8. They rehearse on Wednesday evenings 6:15-7:00 PM before Confirmation Class in the Junior Choir Room. The choir sings monthly in worship.

Faith Singers

Faith Singers, for high school students, rehearses each Sunday from 4:45-6:00 PM. The choir sings most weeks during the school year.

Spirit of Grace

Spirit of Grace choir for adults explores a variety of contemporary choral literature and sings once or twice per month. Rehearsals are Wednesdays, 6:20-7:20 PM.

Chancel Choir

The adult Chancel Choir sings selections from the Classical Choral Repertoire weekly in worship. Regular rehearsals are Wednesdays, 7:30-8:45 PM.

Recital Concert - Thursday, March 2 at 7:30 PM

Countryside will host a concert of sonata masterpieces for violin and piano by noted artists, Sonja Harasim and Jay Hershberger on Thursday, March 2 at 7:30 PM. The program will include works by Robert and Clara Schumann and Johannes Brahms. Both Sonja and Jay have performed all over the world and love to share their music-making in an intimate, chamber-music setting like our sanctuary.



Sonja Harasim

Sonja's recent activities include performances at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. and a recital at the Bergan (Norway) International Chamber Music Festival. Jay's recent successes include a tour of China and performances at the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C. Jay is president of the American Liszt Society. Both artists are on the faculty of Concordia College in Moorhead, MN. The concert is free and open to the public.



Jay Hershberger

Calling All Comedians!

The Board of Arts & Music invites you and your friends to the first (annual?) NOODLE REVIEW on April 2. "What's that?" you ask? It is a pasta dinner (noodles) and a humorous entertainment (review), starring your favorite Countryside Comedians. Dinner starts at 6:30 PM followed by the show and interrupted by a dessert auction. The event benefits the Faith Singers Summer Tour. \$10/person; \$40/family. Reserve your seat at the Information Station after church!



QUESTIONS?

For more information about Music & Arts Ministries contact Amy Luckenbill.

Amy Luckenbill
Office Phone: 402.391.0350 ext. 115
Email: amyl@countrysideucc.org
www.countrysideucc.org



Spirit of Grace singing "All Good Gifts"



THE BOX FOR MARCH

When you go to the grocery store this month, would you please pick up a couple extra jars of peanut butter? Reason? During March, BOCO is collecting peanut butter for distribution at our Community Cupboard on the last Saturday in March. (please note this time change for March) Why peanut butter? It is a good source of protein that most kids will eat almost anytime. It has a relatively long shelf life so nearly every bite finds a hungry mouth! Please send ideas for the 2017 BOX to christianoutreach@countrysideucc.org

SSG RECAP FROM 2016

Countryside Christian Outreach awarded Small Service Group grants during 2016. Highlights included:

- Bi-lingual children's books, Spanish/English +French/English dictionaries distributed through the Community Cupboard
- Rewards for elementary students who reached their goals with Partnership 4 Kids
- Vegetable seedlings that were distributed by Plant-One-More to gardeners who donated the harvest towards feeding local homeless through Together and Youth Emergency Services
- Composting Bins that Faith and the Environment incorporated into the vacation bible school program and uses to collect and repurpose coffee grounds and food waste at Countryside
- Paint-a-thon materials and refreshments for volunteers
- Christmas gifts for the children of Pine Ridge Reservation; purchased & delivered by Countryside Youth
- Solar panel and part of a tiny winter cabin (through BOLD Nebraska) to support the Standing Rock Sioux south of Bismarck, ND in the effort to preserve their sacred land, water and human rights.

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 front doors.

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.

RELOCATION UPDATE

SPECIAL MEETING INFORMATION

Dear Members of Countryside Community Church,

Countryside's Board of Trustees and Church Council have called a Special Congregational Meeting for Sunday, March 19, 2017, at 12:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary at Countryside Community Church. The purpose of this meeting is to vote to approve an offer to buy Countryside Community Church's building and property located at 8787 Pacific Street. Designated church treasures (e.g., pipe organ, cross, bell, stained glass, etc.) are not included in the offer.

In a letter to the congregation on October 14, 2016, we announced our intention to provide a complete information package to prospective buyers beginning in November, provide ample time for them to review, and then have a 'Call for Offers' from any interested parties on a date between January 15 and February 1, 2017.

Great News! The Countryside Relocation Committee (CRC) voted on February 12,

2017 to recommend the Board of Trustees and the Church Council accept an offer of \$4,200,000 from Coram Deo Church Community. As part of this transaction, Coram Deo Church Community will make three non-refundable deposit installments. The first installment of \$50,000 is to be paid five days after full execution of a Purchase Agreement. The second installment of \$250,000 will be paid upon the Countryside Congregation's approval of the offer, and the last installment of \$250,000 will be paid within 180 days after the Congregation's approval of the offer. The balance of the price will be paid at closing, which will occur upon our vacating the property.

Both Countryside's Board of Trustees and Church Council have approved the \$4,200,000 sale offer and recommend the Countryside Congregation approve the offer.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact any one of us. We look forward to seeing you at the Special Congregational Meeting on March 19, 2017.

Grace and Peace,

Rick MacInnes

Countryside Relocation Committee | Chair

Tim Kerrigan

Countryside Relocation Committee | Chair-Finance

Bruce Blanchard

Church Council | Moderator

Tom Korth

Board of Trustees | Chair

QUESTIONS?

If you have questions or comments, see one of the following committee members: Rick MacInnes, Tim Kerrigan, Cyndi Kugler, Paul Nelson, Pam Kregg and Nancy Behringer or email 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@countysideuucc.org

SOCIAL GROUP UPDATES

Wednesday Night Alive Suppers for March

Dinners run from 5:00-6:20 PM in Memorial Hall. Pre-registration is GREATLY appreciated!

Here is the list of meals for March:

- March 1 - No WNA SUPPER-ASH WEDNESDAY
- March 8: Vegetarian Chili & Cornbread with local honey
- March 15: French Toast Casserole and Cheesy Potatoes
- March 22: Nachos Bar & Ice Cream
- March 29: Vegetable Pot Pie & Brownies

The suggested donation for Wednesday Night Alive Suppers is \$5/person or you may purchase by the month not to exceed \$80/family. THANKS to all who generously volunteer their time and talents in creating our meals.

Lunch Bunch Circle will meet on Monday, March 14 at Noon. Should you have questions, please contact Marilyn Vincent at darrellvincent@cox.net or at 402-397-0679

Tai Chi Chih WILL NOT BE HELD on March 2 or 9 this month. Rita will resume her classes on March 16. Should you have questions, contact her at rmotis@cox.net.

Interplay will be held on Saturday, March 11, 9:30-11:30 a.m. in the Foyer of Countryside Church. For additional information, please contact Rita Otis at rmotis@cox.net.

Classics and Conversation – Countryside's in-house movie group will meet on Friday, 7:00 PM. in the Chapel on March 10. The featured movie is *Entertaining Angels*, the story of Dorothy Day, the founder of the Catholic Workers Movement; a collection of autonomous communities of Catholics and their associates founded in the United States in 1933. Its aim was to "live in accordance with the justice and charity of Jesus Christ." This film demonstrates how one woman, following what she saw as a call from the Spirit, shows what Christianity is really all about. Should you have questions or requests, contact Ed Huddell at 402-401-8401 or leave a message in the church office for him.

Financial Peace University will be offered at Countryside Community Church on Sunday mornings, March 26 – June 4 (skipping Easter Sunday and Mother's Day). Classes will be held in the Moderator's Room from 9:30-10:30 a.m. Stacy Ashley-Murphy and Emily Ethington will be facilitating the class. For additional information, contact Mary Beth at marybethl@countysideuucc.org or stop by the Information Station to register today!

LENT ACTIVITIES

Our Table -During WNA Suppers -March 8 - April 5, 6 - 6:30 PM in Memorial Hall We will pause for Lent and gather during WNA dinners for devotion, storytelling, laughter and conversation. This will be a time to gather and reset ourselves as we listen to stories and get to know the people who make up our beautiful congregation. Please join us!

VOLUNTEER CORNER

Kitchen Help

Kitchen helpers are needed on Wednesday evenings, 5:30-6:30 PM and Sunday mornings. Contact Mary Beth.

The Community Cupboard Food Pantry

Countryside's Community Cupboard food pantry will be open TWICE during March; March 4 and March 25. We are actively seeking volunteers to work both pantries this month. If you are interested, please stop by the Information Station to sign up. Thanks in advance for your help! Hours are 7:45-11:30 AM. Contact communitycupboard@countysideuucc.org.

Thank You

Thanks to the Board of Christian Education for hosting coffee hour on Sunday mornings throughout the month of March. Be sure to chat with one of the board members to learn all the areas that this board represents.

Volunteer Spotlight

In March we introduce you to the Community Cupboard Focus Group. This group oversees the operational structure and volunteer management of the monthly mobile food pantry held at Countryside on the first Saturday of each month. A very special recognition goes to Andi Lawlor and Karen Staskiewicz, who coordinate everything onsite the day of the pantry as well as contacting all volunteers registered to assist on that particular Saturday. The pantry runs solely on volunteer time and dedication, using roughly a rotation of 40-50 volunteers monthly. Also, a special thanks to Steve Kinkead who brings audiology students to the pantry 3-4 times/year providing free hearing screening for the pantry patrons. We thank ALL leadership and their volunteers for the amazing ministry they provide to an average of 200 families monthly.

SOCIAL GROUPS

Family Activities Committee

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

Events that are Totally Cool (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 at marybethl@countysideucc.org.

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 jkcunningham@cox.net.

WNA Supper Group

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

Women's Lunch Group

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

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 Mary Beth 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 Marilyn Vincent at darellvincent@cox.net.

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.

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 Mary Beth Link at marybethl@countysideucc.org.

Countryside's Angels Bicycling

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

Mahjong

This multi-generational group meets weekly on Tuesday afternoons from 1:00-3:00 PM in the Commons. 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.

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 4th Tuesday of the month, 5:30 PM in the Youth Room. Contact Christy Palmer at christysuepalmer@gmail.com.

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 increases awareness of gender identity and expression. Contact Mary Beth at marybethl@countysideucc.org.

Adult Education

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

Journey Groups

See 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 Thursday at 10 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.

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 Thursday after the 3rd Tuesday of each month. Contact Bruce Blanchard at moderator@countysideucc.org.

Board of Christian Outreach (BOCO)

This board nurtures outreach projects, coordinates efforts within the church to develop mission themes, and selects organizations to receive special offering grants. Meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 PM. Contact board chairs, Sarah Miller at swaetzig14@hotmail.com or Diane Poots at dianepoots@cox.net

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 Jodi Klein at klein.jodi13@gmail.com.

Board of Arts and Music (BAM)

This board provides sincere, artful and spiritual experiences for the congregation. Meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month, 7:00 PM. Contact board chair Marian Kaiser at mkskaiser@cox.net

Board of Life Ministries (BOLM)

This board oversees all social activities, volunteer coordination and family based educational classes held at Countryside. Meets on the 2nd Sunday of the month, 12:30 PM. Contact board chair Dinah Gomez at dinahann@me.com or Shannon Avard at stamper2k@cox.net.

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 7:00 PM. Contact board chair Jan Lambert-King at jenj0702@yahoo.com.

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 6:30 PM. Contact board chair Tom Korth at tkorth2@gmail.com

Board of Pastoral Care

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 Tom Scates at omahascatsat@cox.net.

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 6:30 PM. Contact board co-chairs Shelley Boyd at sboyd@mpsomaha.org, or Donna Rhodes at donna.r.rhodes@emcins.com.

Countryside Community Church Charitable Foundation (CCCF)

The Foundation is an independent organization created by the Church to support and supplement the programs and facilities at Countryside. This board is composed of 7 church members. They meet quarterly. Contact Foundation President, Geoff Kregg at geoffgg1@cox.net.

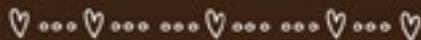




NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Omaha, Nebraska
Permit No. 106

Our TABLE

*community relationships
finding God
storytelling
breaking bread together*



During WNA Suppers
March 8 - April 5
6 - 6:30 PM in Memorial Hall

We will pause for Lent and gather during WNA dinners for devotion, storytelling, laughter and conversation.

see page 10 for details

New Lent Series

PARABLES, PRAYER &

A PESKY PASTOR

WEDNESDAY NIGHTS

March 1 - April 5

6:45 - 8:00 p.m.
with Dr. Eric Elnes

see page 3 for details

