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Countryside Community Church Receives Grant from Nebraska Environmental Trust

OMAHA, Nebr. (May 30, 2018)— Countryside Community Church announced today that it will receive \$125,000 from the Nebraska Environmental Trust (NET) for the “Bridging Faith and the Environment – church campus as a restored, biodiverse plains ecosystem” project. The Trust Board announced funding for the project at its meeting on April 5, 2018 in Lincoln. The project is one of the 105 projects receiving \$18,301,819 in grant awards from the Nebraska Environmental Trust this year. Of these, 66 were new applications and 39 are carry-over projects.

Countryside Community Church is an identified environmental leader with members and church leaders engaged with such organizations as Interfaith Power and Light, the Citizens Climate Lobby, and EcoAmerica, where our Senior Minister sits on its Board of Advisors. Due to Countryside’s involvement with Omaha’s Tri-Faith site at 132nd and Pacific Streets, national environmental leaders see a unique opportunity in Omaha to make a strong statement to the world that environmental care is not just a political or economic issue, but a faith issue. Because of the widespread publicity of the Tri-Faith Initiative, both presently and which is expected well into the future, environmental leaders recognize that the environmental movement can leverage Countryside’s environmental example with Tri-Faith publicity on behalf of the environment. From 1924 to 2010, the Tri-Faith site (Tri-Faith Commons) was part of an 18-hole golf course. Given that history, the site’s existing condition does little to aid

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biodiversity, sustain ecological health, or improve water quality in this watershed. With an emphasis on connection of the three faiths and connection with creation, a landscaping master plan was developed to simultaneously unify the 35-acre site and invite all members of the public to take in its visual messaging, walk along its inviting paths, and learn about the elements included in its restored plans ecosystem. This project involves the implementation of a sustainable landscape plan on Countryside's portion of the Tri-Faith Commons. The plan includes water conservation, storm water management, native plants, and improved habitat and soil health. In addition, the project will educate and inform people about landscape stewardship, including members of the three Tri-Faith congregations, residents of the greater Omaha community, and anyone who wants to visit from across the state and nation.

The Nebraska Legislature created the Nebraska Environmental Trust in 1992. Using revenue from the Nebraska Lottery, the Trust has provided more than \$289 million in grants to more than 2,000 projects across the state. Anyone – citizens, organizations, communities, farmers and businesses – can apply for funding to protect habitat, improve water quality and establish recycling programs in Nebraska. The Nebraska Environmental Trust works to preserve, protect and restore our national resources for future generations.

About Countryside Community Church

For more than 65 years of ministry, Countryside Community Church has served the wider Omaha community. Joining the Tri-Faith Initiative is a strong and powerful assertion of leadership that makes Omaha a kinder, more compassionate and spiritually deeper place to live.

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