

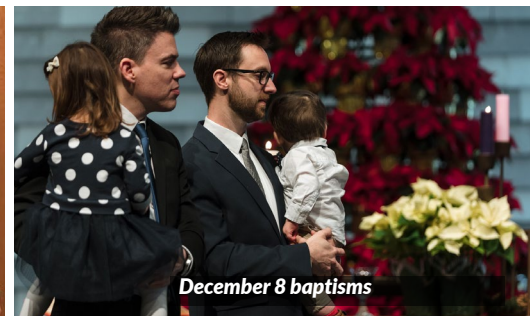
JANUARY 2020



Eric working on podcasts



Christmas concert poses



December 8 baptisms

CHRISTMASTIME AT COUNTRYSIDE



Welcome to Countryside!



Mary Beth's retirement party



Mary Beth's retirement party

NEW RECYCLING EFFORTS UNDERWAY

This week, you might notice some new waste and recycling bins throughout the building. Earlier last year, we received a grant from the Nebraska Recycling Council to acquire the appropriate infrastructure necessary for achieving Zero Waste. Zero Waste means diverting at least 90% of our waste from the landfill by reducing, reusing, recycling, or composting. In accordance with best practices in the industry, we have set up centralized waste and recycling in many areas and color-coded the system for clarity (see below and back page).

Blue = Recycling

Black = Landfill

Green = Compost

Red = Cardboard

Gray bins/orange bags = Soft plastics
(Hefty Orange Bag program)

For the congregation, the primary location for waste and recycling will be in the coffee house, where there will be compost, recycling, and landfill bins under the counters with signage indicating which items belong where. Setting up this system is a multi-step process, so please bear

with us as we get all of the containers and signage in place and set up composting service with our partner, Hillside Solutions. See their website www.hillside.solutions to learn more about composting and recycling.

In January, we will host a training session for the congregation to ensure our community knows where to place items and to answer any questions you may have. As many have read in the news, the recycling industry has hit some rough patches in the past couple of years. Moving forward, sorting waste correctly will be critical; if recycling is too contaminated it will go to the landfill, but if it is clean, it will be easy to recycle and will help reduce our environmental impact.



Diane Scott shows off the new recycle bins in the Common Grounds Coffee House. Each waste stream is color coded to help us all in our efforts to recycle and lead by example.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Welcome - Page 2

Pastoral Care - Page 3

Center For Faith Studies - Page 4

Engaging in Worship - Page 5

Youth Ministries - Page 6

Children's Education - Page 7

Music Ministries - Page 8

Christian Outreach - Page 9

Countryside Corner - Page 9

Life Ministries - Page 10

Get Connected/Tri-Faith - Page 11

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
Dir. of Admin. & Communication, ext. 226
danl@countrysideucc.org

Shari Garder
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sharig@countrysideucc.org

Steve Gomez
Administrative Assistant, ext. 222
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Administrative Assistant, ext. 221
krish@countrysideucc.org

Debbie Vihstadt
Communication Assistant, ext. 225
debbiev@countrysideucc.org

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 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.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED BYLAW CHANGES FOR THE FEB. 9, ANNUAL MEETING

ARTICLE V - MEMBERSHIP.

Section 5. Termination of Membership or Change of Status.

- The prescribed role of the Board of Deacons changes from actively considering each request for transfer or dismissal to simply receiving a summary of such requests from the Clerk at least once a year.
- The Board of Deacons will also no longer be charged with contacting those individuals for the purpose of attempting to secure their continuation as Countryside members. Instead, church staff will inform each requester that, if desired, he/she may discuss the contemplated change with a minister or with the Chair of the Board of Deacons.

ARTICLE X - BOARDS:

Sections 1 through 9:

- Changes the name of the "Board of Arts and Music" to the "Board of Arts Ministry."
- Standardizes the wording of how many adult members will serve on each Board:
- The Board of _____ shall consist of at least ____ (##) adult members, one-third of whom shall be elected annually to serve a term of three (3) years, ...
- Retitles the leader of the Arts Ministry program from "Minister of Music" to "Director of Arts Ministry."
- Expands the focus of the Board of Arts Ministry to "help[ing] develop and sustain multidisciplinary arts programming for all ages, including, but not limited to, musical, visual and performance arts and education..."
- Expands the minimum size of the Board of Pastoral Care from six (6) to twelve (12) members.
- Adds the Agape Team to the groups that will have representation on the Board of Pastoral Care.

You can find the proposed changes on our website or get a printed version at the Connection Link.



STEPHEN MINISTRY

January 7, Tuesday, Ruth Conference Room – At 5:30 PM, Monthly Leadership Team, all are welcome as we complete plans for the new class.

January 7, 6 - 8 PM - Monthly Peer Support will meet in Ruth Conference Room to help one another in our roles as caregivers.

January 27, 6 - 8:45 PM - Those who are called to become Stephen Ministers begin their 15-week training in Ruth.

INTERESTED IN BECOMING A STEPHEN MINISTER? - IT'S NOT TOO LATE!

- Do you have empathy and consider it a gift when others confide in you?
- Are you trustworthy?
- Do you believe that we are here to help one another?

If these questions compel you, please think about speaking to Jan Brown or a Stephen Minister soon. We'd love to have you in our next round of classes where you'll develop amazing friendships and hone your listening skills to benefit others. You don't have to have any special skills because you'll learn them! We're so very grateful to Countryside Community Church for supporting and trusting this program since 1985.

PASTORAL CARE BOARD

For new members to our board, please come to the All-Board Retreat in Marys' Hall on Saturday, January 2, 9 AM- Noon.

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

BIRTHS

It's Grandparent Season!

Aideen (Aidy) Emaline Link, born October 8 to David and Theresa Link, made **Mary Beth** and **Jim Link** the happiest of grandparents.

Tom Scates and **Ann Huxtable-Scates** recently became grandparents again when their daughter Jessica and her husband Mamadow were blessed with the birth of their third child, Malik.

Tom and **Lori Korth** have recently been doubly blessed as grandparents! Lori's daughter Danika and her wife Marie Shuett are the proud parents of their son Bowen Nicholas, born November 28. Tom's daughter Kelly and her husband Chad are the happy parents of their son Nolan James, born December 15.

MARRIAGES

Tracey Halvorson and **Greg Olsen** were married November 22, 2019; Rev. Dr. Eric Elnes was the officiant.

IN MEMORIAM

Delbert Huddleston passed away November 25, and his service was officiated by Rev. Dr. Eric Elnes at Heafey-Heafey.

Jim Frey, a former member, died November 28, and his service was out of state.

Betty Start, a long-time Countryside member, died December 7, and her memorial service was out of state.

(**Valerie**) **Jean McIntosh** passed away December 7, and her service was officiated by Rev. Dr. Chris Alexander at Countryside.

Robert Walker, Jr., died December 16, and his service was held at Heafey-Heafey.

ODE TO JOY - CORE 56

The Pastoral Care Board and Stephen Ministers find joy through serving others. We thank you for your trust in us, Countryside, and we look forward to working with you in the New Year. Here's a photo from our holiday gathering!

FROM THE DESK OF JAN BROWN

Thank you, Countryside congregation and staff, for being integral to our family's support system this past year. Our family had some health challenges, and my biggest one came when we were packing 8787 Pacific for our move. Such amazing help then, such loving gestures throughout the year! My heart is full of gratitude for all your prayers, cards, meals, visits, messages, and constant reassurances that we were not alone in our journey. May 2020 be full of that constancy as we all continue to minister to one another.

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@countrysideucc.org



Pastoral Care Board and Stephen Ministry Holiday Party



UPCOMING EVENTS

More Than a Joke Symposium - Now-April 2020

A weekly educational opportunity done in collaboration with our Tri-Faith Partners.
Topic: Yes, Even You Can Carry a (Spiritual) Tune: Music & Art as Pathways to God
Wednesday Lunch-and-Learns, January 15, 22, 29, 12:00-1:00 PM
Tuesday Evening Panel Discussion, February 4, 6:30-8:00 PM

At The American Muslim Institute

Dinner is included in the Tuesday evening discussion. 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 Book Group with Anji Stanek:

Braiding Sweetgrass by Robin Wall Kimmerer
Starting January 27, 2020. Mondays, 7-8:30 PM for 6-7 weeks.

Here is a bit more about the book:

"Drawing on her life as an indigenous scientist, and as a woman, Kimmerer shows how other living beings—asters and goldenrod, strawberries and squash, salamanders, algae, and sweetgrass—offer us gifts and lessons, even if we've forgotten how to hear their voices. In reflections that range from the creation of Turtle Island to the forces that threaten its flourishing today, she circles toward a central argument: that the awakening of ecological consciousness requires the acknowledgment and celebration of our reciprocal relationship with the rest of the living world. For only when we can hear the languages of other beings will we be capable of understanding the generosity of the earth, and learn to give our own gifts in return."

If you are interested in joining this discussion, please sign up at the Connection Link or contact Anji Stanek at anjistanek1@gmail.com

SAVE THE DATE

"Face to Face with Black History" **Worship Service - February 16, 5:30 PM**

"Face to Face with Black History" Worship Service based on the Black History Tour led by Preston Love, Jr. Join us to hear the experiences of those who encountered American history unfiltered, from the eyes of those living during the Civil Rights in Memphis, Birmingham, Montgomery and Selma. We will host a combined dinner with Countryside Youth and those from Claire United Methodist and First United Methodist. Our goal is for this service to bring you hope for our future.



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! Starts Wednesday, January 15.



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

Carlos Figueroa will presents 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 - starts January 27

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

ENGAGING IN WORSHIP



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 Growing Seed (Mark 4:26-29)

January 5: NO COYO due to ski trip
January 8: PODCAST taped by Tri-Faith (TF) Clergy, released the following week
January 12: MORNING WORSHIP 9 and 11 AM
Podcast released sometime after January 12

Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13:1-23 / Mark 4:1-20)

January 12: COYO session with TF Clergy 6:30 - 7 PM
January 15: PODCAST taped by TF clergy, released the following week
January 19: MORNING WORSHIP 9 and 11 AM

Parable of the Mustard Seed (Matthew 13:31-32 / Mark 4:30-34)

January 19: COYO session with TF clergy 6:30 - 7 PM
January 22: PODCAST taped by TF clergy, released the following week
January 26: MORNING WORSHIP 9 and 11 AM

Parable of the Net (Matthew 13:47-52 / Weeds Among Wheat Matt 13:24-30)

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

Change to Day One Schedule - Effective Immediately

Day One Service is transitioning to a once-a-month schedule, gathering on the second Sunday of each month. Our next Day One service will be held at 8 PM on Sunday, January 12. We hope to see you there!

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

Day One
Second Sunday of each month
8 PM
Starting January 12

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

details page 4

Conversation with Chris
in the coffeehouse
Join Chris Alexander Wednesday evenings 6:30 - 7:30 PM starting January 15.



YOUTH MINISTRIES

COYO ACTIVITIES

CoYo resumes January 12

January 2 - 5

Senior High Ski Trip - follow along on our Facebook page for updates on the trip and pictures! facebook.com/coyosrhigh/

January 12 - 6 PM - 6:45 PM All families Dinner (All CoYo)

Come, bring the whole family and get an update on second semester CoYo activities and leadership.

FAITH SINGERS

Faith Singers Practice resumes January 12

CONFIRMATION

Classes resume January 8, 2020.

Affirmation 4: Expressing our love in worship that is as sincere, vibrant and artful as it is scriptural. (Love of God)

- **January 8:** What is Sincerity in Worship? - Guest speaker: Rev. Dr. Chris Alexander
- **January 15:** Board of Arts and Music - Guest speaker Christy Sue Palmer
- **January 22:** Mask Painting
- **January 29:** Visit Hindu Temple

INTERIM YOUTH LEADERS NAMED

Anji Stanek and Morgan Lenigan. have been named as Interim Youth Leaders. Both Morgan and Anji have been youth volunteers for several years as well as volunteers on The Board of Youth and have agreed to step into the position until a Youth Director is found. Both women have been very active for the past few years, attending Faith Singers Tours, Mission Trips, the annual Worlds of Fun trips as well as attending weekly COYO jr. and sr. high meetings. Anji is also one of our Confirmation teachers. We are very fortunate at Countryside to have two dedicated women to keep our youth programs going without missing a beat.

Anji is currently a math specialist, teaching in the Millard Public Schools and Morgan will start her Masters degree in teaching in 2020.

If you have any questions for them or about our current youth programs, Anji can be reached at Anji at anjis@countriesideucc.org or Morgan at morganl@countriesideucc.org.



Anji Stanek



Morgan Lenigan



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@countriesideucc.org



Jr. High shopping for Pine Ridge and fast food progressive dinner.



CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING FOR JANUARY

January 5 - Worship together in the Sanctuary

January 12 - Sunday School

January 19 - Children's Church - Children dismissed to chapel

January 26 - Sunday School

Baptism: Water and Light-- Jesus meets John the Baptist who is announcing the Kingdom of God along the Jordan River to all who will listen and baptizing people in the New Covenant with God. The ritual of baptism connects us to our history; this celebration gives life to the meaning of this ritual.

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

Our second semester schedule is a little more complicated than the first, to accommodate Ash Wednesday (March) and Holy Week (April). The schedule for each month will be available in the newsletter and in the Children's Ministry weekly email.

JANUARY SCHEDULE: HOLY MOLY AND CORE 56

Wednesdays

We will meet on January 15, January 22 and January 29

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



Pre-K Temple



Community Coloring



Baby feet!

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

Volunteer hosts for choir members needed

We are looking for volunteers to host two or more choir members overnight after the concert. If you are interested in serving as a host family, please contact Amy Kampfe for more information (kampfam@cox.net).

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.

December was filled with beautiful music from all of our choirs!



Confirmation Singers, Childrens and C4 Choirs



Faith Singers



THE BOX FOR JANUARY

In January, we are collecting items an organization called Restoring Dignity. They are asking for help teaching persons of different nationalities how to use American cleaning products, along with the actual cleaning products. English may not be their primary language so all the products need to be marked in both languages so they can safely use the cleaning supplies in their homes. They are requesting Clorox Kitchen Cleaner Spray, Greased Lightening, Clorox Toilet Bowl Cleaner w/Bleach, Windex Glass Cleaner, Simple Green All Purpose, Clorox Bathroom Cleaner, Tupperware sets any brand, sets of Cleaning Gloves any brand. This will not only help them to know the products to use safely, but will also help with learning a new language. At the heart of Restoring Dignity is the belief that someone needs to see to the needs of refugees in our city. To find out more about this unique cause you can check out their website at rdomaha.com.

BOCO DONATES TO TEMPLE ISRAEL CEMETERY

The Board of Christian Outreach recently donated \$1000 to our friends and neighbors at Temple Israel to help repair the Temple Israel Cemetery after it was vandalized in early November. Countryside and BOCO received the following letter from Temple Israel thanking us for our support:

Dear Countryside Community Church and BOCO,

Thank you so much for your generous donation to the Temple Israel Cemetery Improvement Fund. The funds will be used to assist our team with the implementation of a master plan to enhance and protect this sacred space. We have been overwhelmed by the support from our congregation, the Omaha Jewish community and the larger community during this difficult time. Please know that we hold your gift in sacred trust and that it will be used to ensure we uphold our obligation of caring for everyone who is buried in our cemetery.

With much gratitude,

Andie Gordman, *President*, Dennis DePorte, *Executive Director*, Rabbi Brian Stoller, Rabbi Deanna Sussman Berezin, Cantor Joanna Alexander

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

JAMES HICKS MEMORIAL LIBRARY

James Hicks, Alyce Hicks', died in a car crash in 1958. Alice is a former member of Countryside .The photo on the wall in the Library is his high school graduation photo. Tim and Jinnie McCormick, church members who own Billings Photography Studio, enlarged and framed it and donated it to the Library. A year after James died, Alyce read a magazine article that told about a woman who established a church library as a memorial to a family member who had died. Alyce decided to establish Countryside's Library as a memorial to her son. The first library collection was located in a room on the upper level of the former church. It is now located in the Lydia room with a view of the Tri-Faith Commons. There had been several members of the Women's Fellowship Executive Board who served as librarians, including Marilyn Hale and Janet Summers.

Alyce was generous and donated funds to purchase new library books. Her older son, John, and his family have also donated money for books. The money given to the church for Alyce's memorial fund was given to the Hicks Memorial Library and continues to support it.

Here are some great books that have been discussed recently at Countryside through sermons, book groups and Center for Faith Studies. All of these are available in our library.

- *A Warrior of the People: How Susan LaFlesche Overcame Racial and Gender Equality to Become America's First Indian Doctor*, by Joseph Starita
- *The Second Mountain: The Quest for a Moral Life*, by David Brooks
- *Lies We Believe About God*, by Wm Paul Young
- *Sacred Writings: Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism, Islam, Confucianism*, by Jaroslav Pelikan, et al
- *God: A Human History*, by Reza Aslan
- *Why I am an Atheist Who Believes in God: How to Give Love, Create Beauty and Find Peace*, by Frank Schaeffer
- *We Crossed a Bridge and It Trembled: Voices from Syria*, by Wendy Pearlman
- *Who Do We Choose to Be?: Facing Reality, Claiming Leadership, Restoring Sanity*, by Margaret Wheatley



James Hicks Memorial Library



COUNTRYSIDE COMMUNITY CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



LIFE MINISTRIES



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Countryside's annual Soup 'r Sweet - Saturday, February 2 in Marys' Hall beginning at 12:15 PM Haul out the cookbooks or unlock the family's secret recipe for your favorite soup, stew, chili and/or dessert! The winners of the soup, stew, chili category as well as the dessert will be determined by your personal vote (tickets, 5/\$1). Look for more information coming soon!

SOCIAL GROUP UPDATE

Ladies Lunch group will meet on Monday, January 6, 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 resumes on Saturday, January 11, 2020. For additional information or questions, please contact Rita Otis at rmotis@outlook.com.

WHERE DO I GO FOR HELP NOW THAT MARY BETH IS RETIRED?

Chris Alexander is in charge of small groups and social events. If you need help or have questions about any of these ministries, please contact Chris at chrisa@countrysideucc.org or contact her at 402.391.0350 ext. 230. Mary Beth is staying on as staff liaison for Countryside Community Cupboard and can be reached at marybethl@countrysideucc.org.



CONNECTION LINK

Welcome Debbie Vihstadt to the Connection Link on Sunday mornings between services. She will be there to assist you with any questions about activities and to help with sign-ups. In March of 2020, Debbie will be celebrating her fifth anniversary of being a staff member with Countryside. She started as a church receptionist and graphic designer and now works a Communication Assistant and graphic designer. She is responsible for many of the visual aids and graphics you see in church, including the monthly newsletter and Sunday slides. She is also a church member and has a husband James and two children, Christian (15) and Jessica (14) who both attend Millard North.

Please stop by and introduce yourself, she is excited to get to know people and help church members and new visitors get "linked" into all the events that happen in our church throughout the year.



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, January 4, 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 Youth for hosting coffee hour throughout the month of January. Be sure to stop one of the board members to learn more about what Board of Yputh is responsible for and how you help.

Sunday Youth Dinner Coordinators

Every Sunday night a meal will be hosted 6:00-6:30 PM for COYO Jr High, COYO Sr High, and Faith Singers. The meal coordinators will need to prepare a meal for about 40 people. All receipts will be happily reimbursed. Donations will also be gladly accepted. About once a month we will invite all the families of the youth ministry to come have dinner. As the coordinator, you are in charge of that night, you don't have to do everything. You may enlist as many people as you would like to prepare, set-up, serve, and cleanup.

Please email Morgan Lenigan at morganlenigan@gmail.com for more information or see Debbie at the Connection Link on Sunday morning between services for the schedule. 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@countysideucc.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@countysideucc.org.

Lunch Bunch Circle

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

TRI-FAITH INITIATIVE RECEIVES NATIONAL RECOGNITION

On Thursday, December 12, the Tri-Faith Initiative received The Maurice N. Eisendrath Bearer of Light Award, the highest honor given by the Union for Reform Judaism, at its 75th biennial convention in Chicago, Illinois.

Dr. Maryanne Stevens, Rabbi Brian Stoller, Rev. Dr. Eric Elnes, Imam Jamal Daoudi, Wendy Goldberg, and Rabbi Aryeh Azriel were there to receive the prestigious award in front of 5,000 leaders in attendance that evening. Dr. Stevens, Tri-Faith Board Chair, gave the acceptance speech saying, "So, given the freedom we have to practice our differing religions, the challenge Tri-Faith offers is to further understand one another and thus, hopefully, realize that affection and peace between and among one another is a sign of being in communication with our God."



FAITH MATTERS: ASMA UDDIN

Thursday, January 30, at 6 PM - 7 PM

W. Dale Clark Main Library, 215 S 15th St.

Join the Tri-Faith Initiative in welcoming author Asma Uddin as our first speaker for the 2020 Faith Matters series.

Asma Uddin is an Inclusive America Project Fellow at the Aspen Institute, where she is leading a project on peace-building in the US culture war. She was formerly Counsel at the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, and has held fellowships at Georgetown, UCLA, and Brigham Young University. Ms. Uddin is also an expert advisor on religious freedom to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and a term-member of the Council on Foreign Relations. Ms. Uddin is the author of "When Islam Is Not a Religion: Inside America's Fight for Religious Freedom." The book can be purchased ahead of time on [Amazon](https://www.amazon.com).



facebook.com/TriFaithInitiative/

facebook.com/AmericanMuslimInstitute/

facebook.com/templeisraelomaha/

TASTE OF TRI-FAITH

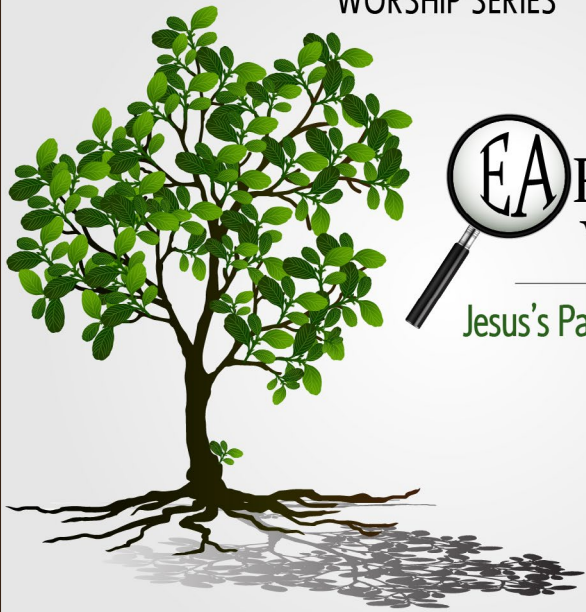
Sunday, February 23, at 4 PM - 6:30 PM
AMI, 13140 Faith Plaza

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

New worship series begins on January 12. See page 5 for all of the details including a weekly podcast that goes with it!

Countryside Recycling EFFORTS
COLOR KEY

see front page for details



MIXED RECYCLING

Paper
Aluminum Cans
Plastic Containers



LANDFILL



COMPOST

Food Scraps
Napkins
Paper towels



CARDBOARD



ENERGY BAGS

Soft Plastics
Styrofoam
Plastic Silverware



Annual Meeting
and
SOUP LUNCH

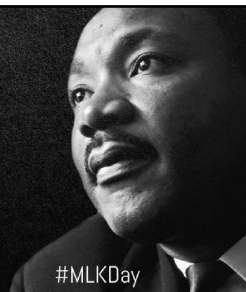
February 9
following the 10 AM
Youth Sunday Worship

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



MONDAY, JANUARY 20, 2020
SERVE ON MLK DAY & BEYOND



#MLKDay

COUNTRYSIDE COMMUNITY CHURCH
WILL BE CLOSED ON JANUARY 20
IN OBSERVANCE OF
Martin Luther King Jr. Day

"What are you doing for others" - MLK
Consider donating a few hours of your
time to honor Dr. King on January 20.

*Local charities you can give your time
to on January 20 or any day of the year!*

Together

"We are a homeless services organization"
togetheromaha.org

Food Bank for the Heartland

Provides emergency food to people in need.
foodbankheartland.org/

Bethlehem House

Not a shelter, but a home for pregnant women.
bethlehemhouseomaha.org