



Pandemic Projects from some of our youngest members: Mara's fairy garden and Olivia's cross.

WORSHIP TO REMAIN ONLINE THROUGH JUNE

Thinking back on Sunday mornings in church, sitting shoulder to shoulder, hugging, happy kids running around in the foyer, sharing coffee between services - that is what going to church felt like for the Countryside congregation. Figuring out how to offer our congregation a safe place to worship while coming together in a way we are accustomed to, is going to be challenging. It has been three months since our last in church service and we are all feeling the ache of missing being together in person but we need to move forward slowly as information is ever evolving and the safety of our congregation is our top priority.

Many churches in Omaha and across the nation are struggling with decisions about restarting public worship in their buildings. Rev. Eric Elnes was quoted in the Omaha World Herald on May 24, "I feel that it's absolutely not safe for churches to be opening again," the Rev. Eric Elnes said. He continued on to discuss his recent battle with the COVID 19 virus, "All I had was a mild cough and it turned out to be something much more," he said. "It stinks because I miss my congregation".

The United Church of Christ leadership on both the national level and our Iowa, Nebraska, and South Dakota Tri-Conference (TCM) level have asked that our churches remain closed until ALL safety concerns have been addressed. Our conference minister, Rev. Brigit Stevens, sent out a letter saying, "The number of people in our congregations who are at high risk, the way the spaces in which we gather for worship are set up, and what we do when we are together, make it unlikely that it will be safe for us to gather

for some time." In her letter, she continued on, by encouraging each congregation to set up a task force to help share the burden of making some of these hard decisions. You can read the full letter on the TCM website - ucctcm.org.

Countryside's Church Council met on Thursday, May 21, and in response to the many concerns over when and how to re-start public worship, the Church Council requested Aubrey Fitzke, Vice-Moderator Elect, and Dan Loven-Crum, Director of Administration and Communication, to form a Re-Start Task Force. The task force assignment is to communicate back to the church council, and to the congregation, with recommendations and plans for restarting public worship.

Task force members include: Bob Buckland, Mitzi Cardona, Laurel Preheim, John Windle, Mary Windle, Pat Gomez, Rick MacInnes, Ed Schwartz, Aubrey Fitzke and Dan Loven-Crum. Please lend your support and prayers to this group as they address this serious undertaking.

Our staff and Church Council will assess the situation at the June 18 Church Council meeting along with future meetings during the suspension of Sunday morning public worship. While the church remains closed, we will continue to provide alternative worship experiences and ways of connection. We are currently broadcasting our Sunday worship via the church's website (Livestream or YouTube) at 10 AM. Note our 11 AM KMTV Channel 3 broadcasts ends on Sunday, June 14.



The Isigny-Omaha Commune encompasses Omaha Beach, famous for its importance in the Allied invasion of Normandy.

BELLS WILL RING ACROSS OMAHA JUNE 6 AT 11:44 AM

Due to health restrictions, no commemorative gatherings will be held as part of the 76th anniversary of the D-Day landings. Nicolas Bellée, co-founder of the Normandy Victory Museum in Catz, asked that the bells of the Normandy churches ring at the same time, on June 6, to pay a collective tribute to their liberators. Omaha is the sister city to Isigny-Omaha Intercom, a region of 59 townships, in Normandy France, and Mayor Stothert, the honorary chair of Omaha Sister Cities Association, enthusiastically received the invitation from Isigny-Omaha, and has encouraged Omaha's religious groups and civic organizations to participate in this solemn observance of the heroes of D-Day. Countryside Community Church will be participating along with the Archdiocese of Omaha and the University of Omaha Bell Tower. We urge you to step outside Saturday, June 6 at 11:44 AM (6:44 PM in Normandy, France), to absorb the pealing of the bells, and to recall the heroic sacrifice of Allied servicemen on Omaha and the other beaches of Normandy. That memory still binds our countries and countrymen 76 years later.

HEARING FROM COUNTRYSIDE



COMMUNITY CUPBOARD STILL GOING STRONG

CountrySide's Community Cupboard is still going strong and like everything else had had to make adjustments. Currently, our clients now drive through and a pre-packaged box of food for each family, along with bags of produce are placed in their vehicles. Checkpoints are set up along the parking lot to keep people and cars socially distanced. It has been a difficult transition for the volunteers of our Community Cupboard, as they are one of the largest groups of volunteers in the congregation. They often need over 60 volunteers to help provide groceries to 250-300 families. As you can see by the pictures, the pantry has adjusted but everyone is looking forward to the day when all of the volunteers can be involved again. The Community Cupboard takes place at CountrySide Community Church from 9:00 AM -11:30 AM on the first Saturday of each month.

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Website - www.countrysideucc.org
Facebook - www.facebook.com/CountrysideOmaha/

Program Staff

Contact information for program staff can be found on individual ministry pages.

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erice@countrysideucc.org

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Minister of Spiritual Direction
rmotis@outlook.com



THANK YOU FROM BOARD OF CHRISTIAN OUTREACH

A heartfelt thank you to the congregation, and friends of the church, for your support of The Box through these challenging times. The coronavirus has made for even more need in our community and the social distancing has made it more challenging to shop and deliver goods to the church. Many have used Amazon or another outlet and had items delivered to The Box at the Church. Others have taken advantage of being able to drop off their donations in the vestibule directly to The Box without entering the church. This possibility exists 8:00 AM-6:00 PM. You are able to drop off for The Box without encountering anyone. Once you have entered the Main Entry, you need go no further. You have arrived. You were extremely generous for the St. Andrews/Sienna Francis House lunch program. You helped them feed many in need. You are greatly thanked.

-France Blanchard, Board of Christian Outreach
(The Box for June information is on page 5)



The Box now sits right inside the double doors at the main entrance of the church.





GOING BACK TO WORK IN THE OFFICE

by Debbie Vihstadt, Communication Assistant and Countryside Member

March 8 seems like a lifetime ago. It was the last Sunday Countryside held services with actual people inside. People who were still deciding if it was OK to give each other hugs. There was a ton of food out in the coffee house because we were saying goodbye to some near and dear members, Mary Jo Barbush-Weiss and Larry Weiss. The time between services that day was filled with people talking, partaking in the overabundance of cookies and cake and no one really had a clue this was going to be the last time we would all be together for awhile under one roof. Sure, we were already talking about the coronavirus. There were already posters around the church warning about covering your cough, extra hand sanitizer was out at strategic points and conversations were being had with each other, "should we really give each other a hug? Well maybe just today but then I think we should probably stop for awhile, just until this thing passes."

That day there was also a small celebration in the James T. Hicks Memorial Library with cookies and lemonade to let people know it was filled with lots of books and videos available for the congregation to use for bible studies or personal use. Balloons and signs marked the path to the library which sits in the back corner of the building and boasts a beautiful view of the Tri-Faith Commons.

So much happened at Countryside the following week and turned our world upside down. Eric came home from Spain and unfortunately, so did a case of coronavirus. By Saturday, Eric, along with most of the staff, the Tri-Faith Board meeting and some people who had gone to the Tri-Faith Spain planning trip were placed into a 14 - day quarantine. The church was physically shut down. Without missing a beat, though, an online service was put together for March 15 and that has been where we have been worshipping ever since. The good news from all of this is Eric made a full recovery and through quick reporting and quarantining no one else contracted the virus.

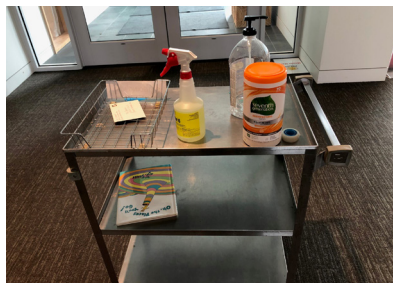
Fast forward to May 18, my first day working back in the office. (The staff has the option of working at home or working from the office as long as we are able to maintain the correct social distancing procedures put forth by the Mayor and Governor.) I had called Dan Loven-Crum the week before and told him I just cannot work from home anymore. I had talked it over with my husband and he was fine with me going to work with the right precautions being taken. The decision was made and I was so looking forward to going back to work. That Sunday, I spent the whole day cooking so I would have my lunches made - it felt like the first day of school! The first thing that changed was I was placed in a different cubicle, two back from where I used to sit, to make sure I was as far back from the reception desk as possible. The second thing I noticed, is ALL of the wipes, sanitizers, sprays, more signs, and rules for operating around a once familiar office where we used to stand around and share food, hugs and lots of laughter. The laughter is definitely still there, but we have to do it from farther away. We are also assigned our own restroom and lucky me, I was the last one in so I am all the way across the church!

When you walk around you can see parts of the church that are literally frozen in time. There are the deflated balloons in the library from the last service. There are confirmand white robes in the youth room just waiting for confirmands who have already been confirmed remotely (although I know they are planning to be acknowledged when we all meet again). The choir room still has lists of hymns on the white board the choirs were planning on singing in March. What really gets you is the absolute quiet of the building. Marys' hall in particular. It still smells so new, and is not being used for storage of anything so it looks like it is ready to be used tomorrow for a pancake breakfast, or an all church dinner. But it is so very quiet in there.

Walking around the church like this, you would think, could fill a person with despair but I find a calm in it. Since, I am not just a staff member, I am also a part of Countryside's congregation I know that our church is not an empty, soundless building. It is a loud, happy, boisterous congregation. I know so many people are meeting on Zoom, talking on the phone, helping each other with tasks and meeting at 10AM on Sundays to come together for worship. It is different, for now. I know we are waiting and working to be together again. I know it will happen and I know when it does our building will be here for us to fill back up, with all the love, laughter and, I am praying so hard for also, all the hugs it can handle.



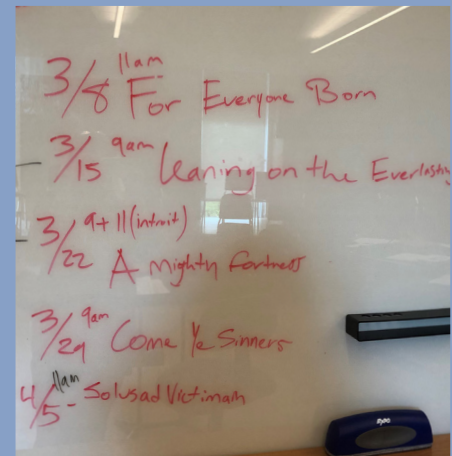
Marys' Hall silently waiting for its next big event.



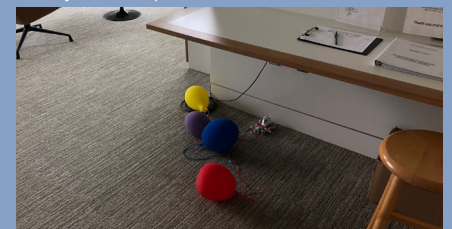
This is the cart that greets anyone that steps inside the front double doors. A cart filled with every kind of sanitizer as well as face masks. The mail goes in and out from here. Not many people come all the way into the office anymore.



Peeking through the COYO window and past the COVID-19 poster you can see Confirmand robes waiting in the corner.



Hymn lists for the choirs in March



Deflated balloons in the James T. Hicks Memorial Library

WORSHIP AND GROUP CLASSES IN JUNE



THE SHOW MUST GO ON!

We are excited to present a series of concerts via live-stream over the summer and possibly beyond. In-person performing arts won't be back for a while, so we hope that we can fill a valuable gap for Countrysiders as well as the broader community with these offerings. It is a chance for us to support local musicians. These concerts will cover a wide range of genres - from jazz and classical to Broadway, folk music, and ethnic music.

Be sure to join us starting Friday, June 13 at 7 PM for Countryside Jazz! Mark your calendar, grab dinner to-go and have a night out on the town from home. Stay tuned for more dates and information.



WORSHIP ONLINE AT 10 AM OR KMTV CHANNEL 3 AT 11 AM

During the month of June, there are two opportunities to catch Countryside Community Church on Sunday mornings. The first, and what is recommended for our church community, is online at 10 AM (this service is more personalized for Countryside). If you happen to oversleep, you can turn on KMTV channel 3 at 11 AM. **Starting June 21 make sure you have adjusted back to online services online at Countryside as our contract with KMTV will have ended.**

HOPE: A PESSIMIST'S GUIDE - WILL RUN THROUGH JUNE 14

Worship Series: Easter is about HOPE. A Global Pandemic fosters DOUBT. What happens when HOPE and DOUBT have a conversation? You get a new worship series and congregational Bible study called "Hope: A Pessimist's Guide"! If the name sounds familiar, Countryside originally produced this series in 2011, only we're totally updating it to allow it to speak powerfully to our day.

SACRED ACTIVISM - WHAT IS IT? HOW ARE WE PARTICIPATING IN IT?- JUNE 21 - 28

Sacred Activism is described by Andrew Harvey as follows: "Nothing is more important than restoring public service in our communities. Modern life separates us from each other, and this increases suffering immeasurably. It has never been more essential for all of us to recognize that we are all in the same boat, that our local communities reflect the emotional, physical, social, political, financial problems of the larger world. Think globally, but act locally. I recommend that you follow your heartbreak—determine which one of all the causes in the world really breaks your heart. Once you have identified this cause, act immediately in your local community, so your heartbreak doesn't remain abstract but becomes a living force of practical compassion in your daily world."

Rev. Dr. Chris Alexander will be leading this two-part online series with guest Rev. Dr. Cynthia Lindenmeyer.

ADULT EDUCATION AND SMALL GROUPS

Adult Education and small groups are still available to everyone but through ZOOM teleconferencing via our church calendar. If your group would like to continue meeting but is not sure how to set it up or how to connect via the calendar, please reach out to Chris Alexander at chrisa@countrysideucc.org and she will set you up!

CONTEMPLATIVE PHOTOGRAPHY RETREAT LED BY RITA OTIS, JUNE 13

With a camera we take the energy of intimacy and make it manifest. That is contemplative photography. Please bring your own camera, laptop computer to upload your pictures, and paper for journaling. This workshop will take place at St. Benedicts Retreat Center on June 13 from 10 AM - 4 PM.

Plans are being worked out for social distancing while attending the retreat. If you are interested in attending, please make your reservation with the Benedictine Center: retreats@StBenedictCenter.com

Here is the plan at this point in time:

- The retreat is limited to ten participants.
- All participants will be required to wear a mask when they are indoors and around other people.
- When we gather together we will be in a room that allows for six foot social distancing.
- Most of our activities will be done individually rather than in a group.
- Each person will have their own table for computer work.

Registration begins at 8:30 AM. Lunch is available at the Center for \$11.02 (includes tax), if you pay for it BEFORE the program starts. Program fee is \$35.

GET MOVING WITH ZUMBA CLASSES!

Zumba moves to Countryside! Rev. Dr. Cynthia Lindenmeyer is moving her Zumba classes to Countryside on Wednesday evenings (6:30 PM) and Saturday mornings (9:30 AM) via Zoom. If you have never heard of this form of exercise, Zumba is a fitness program that combines Latin and international music with dance moves. Routines incorporate interval training — alternating fast and slow rhythms — to help improve cardiovascular fitness. These sessions are free, introductory classes, open to all ages. Links to join the sessions can be found on the Countryside Calendar www.countrysideucc.org/calendar. For more information, contact Cynthia at cynthia.lindenmeyer@me.com

QUARANTINE COOKBOOK TO SUPPORT PANTRY

We are putting together a cookbook, inspired by the creativity of meal planning during these challenging times. Please share any new, odd (especially odd) interesting (like eyebrow-raising interesting) etc. recipes by the end of June to Diane Scott at Twang56@aol.com

CARING TOGETHER



IN MEMORIAM

Marianne (Tom) Campbell's mother Patricia Adams passed away on May 2; a Catholic service was held for her. **Elyce Azriel, wife of our Rabbi Azriel** died on May 8 and there was a virtual service for her at Temple Israel. **Tim Kerrigan's** mother Juanita (Nita) May Kerrigan passed away on May 12.

BIRTHS

Jeri and Dave Lundblad are grandparents! Their daughter Laura and her husband Alex are the happy parents of Veronica, born April 27, in Omaha.

MARRIAGE

Leslie Summers and David Day are delighted to announce the wedding of her son Jack Matuella to Natalie Strawhecker on May 23, in Omaha.

STEPHEN MINISTRY NEWS

The new Stephen Ministry class will be completed with their training after June 1, and Countryside will have a Commissioning Ceremony for them when we can hold worship together again. In the meantime, let's welcome the following 12 people as Stephen Ministers. We're deeply grateful for our leaders, Linda Bannister and Knolan Hudson!

Countryside Community Church:

- Guy Evans
- Marcia Free
- Joni Hensley
- Michaela Mast
- Linda Schaeffer
- Ardith Stultz
- Leslie Summers
- Debbie Vihstadt
- Roxanne Wiles

Temple Israel:

- Wendy Goldberg
- Gail Knapp

Tri-Faith Initiative:

- Jeremy Fricke

BOARD OF PASTORAL CARE'S SUMMER WISDOM OF THE AGES

Michael Clark enjoys spending time with friends. They like going to the movies, swimming at the pool, staying up late during sleepovers, playing games, and riding bikes outside. "I hope I get a chance to do some of those things this summer, but even if I can't, we can still text each other and play games together online."

He also loves spending time with his Dad while they work on projects. They have spent hours together, getting an '87 Porsche 944s running. Michael shared, "We were finally able to take it for a drive around the block just a few weeks ago!" He also enjoys working with Dad in the backyard.



Mike and GL Clark

WISDOM OF THE AGES, DON GIGER



Don Giger

If you are in my age bracket, you may understand how difficult it is to remember what the enjoyable experiences were, and at what age they occurred. Luckily, many of the pleasant ones are still in my brain's random-access memory, and I can recall such things as...

In 1941 to 1951, some of my favorite memories include Scouting trips, family weekend trips, and family car vacations from our California home to visit my Grandparents in Kansas. On those trips, Dad and I would search Route 66 for "Snake Pit Ahead" signs, and I knew he would certainly stop. I've enjoyed traveling ever since - perhaps in anticipation of the next "snake pit" - or because I'm with Louise, a good travel companion.

Another fond recollection: both my Dad and Grandfather were avid fishermen and would put up with my (level wind) fishing line's frequent "bird nests" and my inability to fillet my own catch of pan fish. No doubt, some of the pleasant memories have improved with an application of nostalgia!

THE BOX FOR JUNE

The June Box is Books for The Pantry. The following is a list of recommendations but you are quite welcome to make your own choices. The books need to be new and appropriate for a variety of ages. Thank you for encouraging children/youth to read. This will be especially appreciated with students not being able to take advantage of their school library or the city libraries at this time. After you have seen the list of recommended choices, if you still have questions; Sheila Hargreaves is the lady to ask. Thank you in advance. There will be a wish list of reading materials available on the Amazon site under Countryside Community Church Book Wish List for June.

WISH LIST:

Board books for toddlers

Easy readers for K- 4th grade

5th grade through High School:
Harry Potter books
The Hate You Give
The Fault in Our Stars or any John Green novel
Divergent series by Veronica Roth
Twilight series by Stephanie Meyer
Graphic Novels
Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins
Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children
Diary of a Wimpy Kid
Diary of a 6th Grade Ninja

****Lots of the classics are out in graphic novels---it is a good way to get kids interested. Of particular interest is the Amulet series and also books by Raina Telgemeier*



TRI-FAITH INITIATIVE

Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Conversation (ZOOM)

Grab your lunch and join Executive Director Wendy Goldberg and the rest of the Tri-Faith Initiative staff for online Zoom discussions. Events are on Thursdays from Noon - 1 PM
(Registration required - go to the Tri-Faith web page at trifaith.org/events or find the link on Tri-Faith Facebook page, facebook.com/TriFaithInitiative.)

- **June 4 Topic: The Power of Allyship** - How can we leverage the privileges we have to advance a culture of inclusion for all? How can we serve our community as true allies by investing our time in lifting up others?
- **June 11 Topic: We've Co-Located: Now What?** - With the completion of the Tri-Faith Center scheduled for summer 2020, Tri-Faith Initiative and our partner congregations have successfully built a one-of-a-kind campus in the middle of America's heartland. After fourteen years, the Tri-Faith Commons will be complete, with a synagogue, church, mosque, and interfaith center housed on the same land, working together as neighbors, partners, and friends. We are creating a space in which religious pluralism is the norm, and we want to hear from you as we embark on the next chapter of our story. This Open Conversation will be a town hall-style meeting hosted by Tri-Faith's Executive Director Wendy Goldberg.
- **June 18 Topic: You Are Tri-Faith: What's Your Story?** - The true heart of Tri-Faith is not buildings, land, or programs; it's people. YOU are Tri-Faith. Join Executive Director Wendy Goldberg for this Open Conversation and tell us your Tri-Faith story as our partners, neighbors, and friends. Who have you met through Tri-Faith, which conversation still sticks with you today? Let's sit down together and share.
- **June 25 Topic: Get Involved with Tri-Faith: What's Happening and How Can I Help** - What's happening with the Tri-Faith Garden and Orchard, or with the Tri-Faith Center? What skills and experience do you have that can help us grow into our next chapter as an experiment in interfaith collaboration? Join us for this Open Conversation to learn about volunteer opportunities and how you can get involved with Tri-Faith's work today.

Interfaith Learning: Buddhism (ZOOM)

Interfaith Learning is a monthly class on religious groups, regions, and concepts led by Jeremy Fricke, Tri-Faith Initiative's Education Director. Past topics have included the Baha'i Faith, Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, and Chinese Religious Culture. In this class, we will introduce Buddhism and some of the ways it is practiced around the world.

Thursday, June 4

6:30 pm - 8:00 pm CST

(Registration required - go to Tri-Faith web page at trifaith.org/events or find the link on Tri-Faith Facebook page, facebook.com/TriFaithInitiative.)

John and the Emir: Muslim and Christian Dialogue and Debate (ZOOM)

What can we learn about historical attempts of religions to understand one another and to live peacefully? Where have these attempts fallen short?

The Disputation of John and the Emir is a letter that claims to record a conversation between a Syrian Christian leader named John and a nameless Emir (Muslim leader) of the late 7th century. The discussion contains debates over the interpretation of scripture, the role and purpose of prophecy, who and what Jesus of Nazareth was, and the complex relationship between Judaism, Christianity, and Islam given their shared origins in Abraham's covenant. Even if the conversation was fictional, it reports a meaningful encounter between these three traditions and imagines a peaceful exchange that ends with an exhortation to the Christian readers to pray for the health and wisdom of the Emir.

Tuesday, June 16

12:00 PM

(Registration required - go to Tri-Faith web page at trifaith.org/events or find the link on Tri-Faith Facebook page, facebook.com/TriFaithInitiative.)

PANDEMIC PROJECTS

Hey Countryside! Show us what you have been doing to keep busy during the pandemic! Send us pictures so we can share them with the congregation to help us keep in touch with each other. We would love to see anything creative... baking, sewing, art and if you are brave, include a picture of yourself so we can see your faces too! We also love epic fails! You can send those pictures to office@countysideucc.org and include a description of the picture. We will add it to the July newsletter. For now, enjoy our current batch of Pandemic Projects!



Birds of Paradise -Tom and Marianne Campbell



Chris Gilmore - Quilt of Valor



Robyn Hubbard - Summer Wreath hat



Barb O'Dell - Tins



Mamma Mia cake to celebrate Millard North musical reveal - Debbie Vihstadt #epicfail spelled Mamma Mia wrong



ONLINE APPAREL STORE COMING SOON

New Online Apparel Store - Launching June 3, for a limited time only!

Starting June 3, Countryside Community Church will have an online apparel store! We will be offering t-shirts, crew sweatshirts, hooded sweatshirts, three quarter zip sweatshirts and a few other items in a variety of colors and fabrics. It will be a chance to show your Countryside spirit! The apparel will ship to Countryside where they can will be available to pick up during office hours or for an additional charge, you may have the items shipped directly to your home. The online store will run from June 3 - June 30. Anything that is being shipped to Countryside will be sent 7-10 days after the June 30 closing date and we will notify you when it is available for pick up. The links for the online store will be published in the C-10, on our website and on our social media pages starting June 3. If you have any questions, email Debbie at debbiev@countysideucc.org. We look forward to seeing pictures of you wearing your new Countryside gear!



YOUTH CORNER

COYO Jr. High, Sr. High and Faith Singers are on break for for the Summer.
CORE 56 will still continue to meet during June. Contact Rebeccal Morello at rmorello@countysideucc.org for ZOOM information.

PROJECT IDEAS FROM REBECCA



Meditation Jar Here is an fun project to do with your young friends that not only helps them develop mindfulness practices but can also be used to de-escalate strong and impulsive emotions (like...maybe during a sibling spat?) by inviting the person to shake up the jar and then focus on the falling specks until every bit is still. This exercise creates a pause between experiences and reactions—which as we know is extremely helpful in a number of different scenarios. The meditation jar is a practice that build up our comfort level with that pause so that we can access that skill when we need it. The recipe comes from a book called *Moody Cow Meditates* by Kerry MacLean. If you'd like to put a meditation jar together but can't find some of the supplies, we have some at church! Just let me know and we'll get you set up. (rebeccam@countysideucc.org) Directions for the Meditation jar can be downloaded from our website at countysideucc.org.



Sacred Space As we continue to stay safe at home, we may feel disconnected from spaces in our lives that we often hold as sacred. While sudden loss of a recognized sacred space may not be the most ideal way to expand our awareness or definition of Sacred, it is, after all, where we are. However, carving out a space that is reserved for recognizing sacredness, need not be intimidating. Personally, I enjoy sitting with the Sacred outside. Surrounded by plant-life, feeling the tickle of little bug legs or antennae on my face and arms, and the sounds of birds and squirrels immediately plugs me into something so much greater than myself and the boundaries that I put between myself and the Spirit seem non-existent. But, I also recognize that I live in Nebraska and that sometimes, the weather does not lend itself well to prolonged exposure. So, I've created a small space in which, upon seeing it, I am reminded of the presence of the Sacred in my life.



Pictured is my current sacred space, that I use for daily Contemplative prayer sits or any time I'm feeling particularly disconnected. As I filled my space, I tried to be mindful not to put too much in. I'm not quite sure I was successful, but everything in the space carries a significant reminder of my connection. My singing bowl and the incense help to signal to my body that I am entering into prayer time. Whatever was happening before this moment and whatever is to happen after are quietly placed on hold. As I write this I want to be perfectly clear that those boundaries are not hard and fast. Much of my prayer sit is spent resetting them and drawing my focus back to God. A gentle reminder that prayer practices are just that...practice. There is healthy representation of nature in the wood samples, the rocks, the shell, the nut, and the photo of Black-eyed Susans from one of my childhood homes. The candle holder was carved for me by my good friend Bruce Van Blair, and it reminds me that our spiritual journeys need study, prayer, discipline, and devotion. What will your sacred space look like? Where would you put it? Is it just for you or for your whole family? I hope that you will enjoy putting together a sacred space for yourself!



BOARD OF CHRISTIAN OUTREACH ANNOUNCED YOUTH EMERGENCY SERVICES (YES) WILL BE THE RECIPIENT OF THIS YEAR'S OFFERING.

Countryside's Board of Christian Outreach (BOCO) holds a special offering each year which serves as an opportunity for our congregation to support local organizations that are making a difference in our community. Typically, this offering would be held around Easter time, however, due to the COVID-19 pandemic it was postponed until the month of June.

The Board of Christian Outreach is pleased to announce that Youth Emergency Services (YES) will be the recipient of this year's offering. Last fiscal year, YES provided high quality services to over 3,000 youth through its continuum of services. The reasons why these youth need these services are unique to each individual, but some common reasons are physical or sexual abuse, neglect, sexual orientation, or pregnancy. YES helps youth who are experiencing homelessness and near-homelessness by addressing their immediate crisis and then providing additional assistance that helps them on a path towards self-sufficiency.

Additionally, about 43 percent of the youth served by YES have been in the foster care system. Once on the streets, many youth don't have anyone they can turn to for help. Being homeless is more than just not having a place to call home; it affects every aspect of a young person's life including their stability, relationships and ability to stay in school and get a job.

Every day, YES helps at-risk and homeless youth turn their lives around and get back on their feet. YES offers a wide variety of resources to meet each individual's needs. YES programs include street outreach, an emergency shelter, and a group home for pregnant and parenting teen moms, a transitional living program, and youth mentoring.

In each of these programs, youth are able to access health care services, advance their education, receive counseling, and work toward specific goals that are established with their case manager.

In the last year, YES was able to:

- Help 2,799 youth through the Street Outreach program.
- Find stable housing for 237 youth who were living on the streets.
- Provide housing and services to 21 young mothers and their children.
- Match 37 youth with mentors.
- Assist 17 human trafficking victims.
- Train 102 youth through the Job Readiness program.



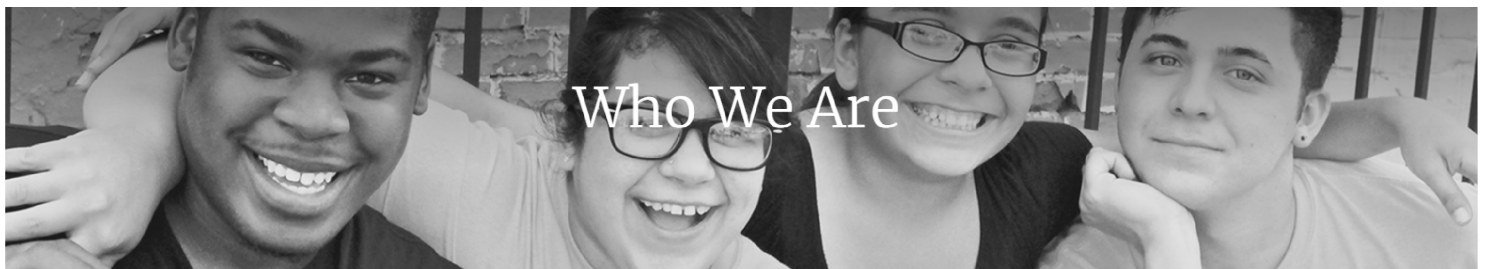
For the last 45 years, YES has been helping young people turn their lives around by giving them stability until they are able to become self-sufficient. With support from generous donors and advocates, YES hopes to continue to expand programming to reach even more youth in crisis.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, procedures have been implemented to continue direct care of vulnerable youth while also protecting the health and safety of the youth, staff and the community. Currently, staff is providing a lot more individual outreach, including mobile pantry and regular check-ins with clients.

Like many organizations, YES has been significantly impacted by the pandemic through lost revenue from events and other fundraising efforts, as well as increased expenses incurred through necessary adjustments in service delivery. Many of the youth YES assists have also been further impacted by the pandemic, requiring increased funding to help meet their immediate needs for housing and other basic needs. In the upcoming months, YES anticipates an increase in the needs of youth as they face lost income and increased competition for jobs.

Your gift will ensure that every young person is provided with the resources they need to get back on their feet. During this unprecedented time, please consider supporting YES and give a youth in crisis a new chance at life!

To donate go to countrysideucc.org/giving and click on the [BOCO Offering](#) button.



CONGRATULATIONS 2020 COYO GRADUATES!

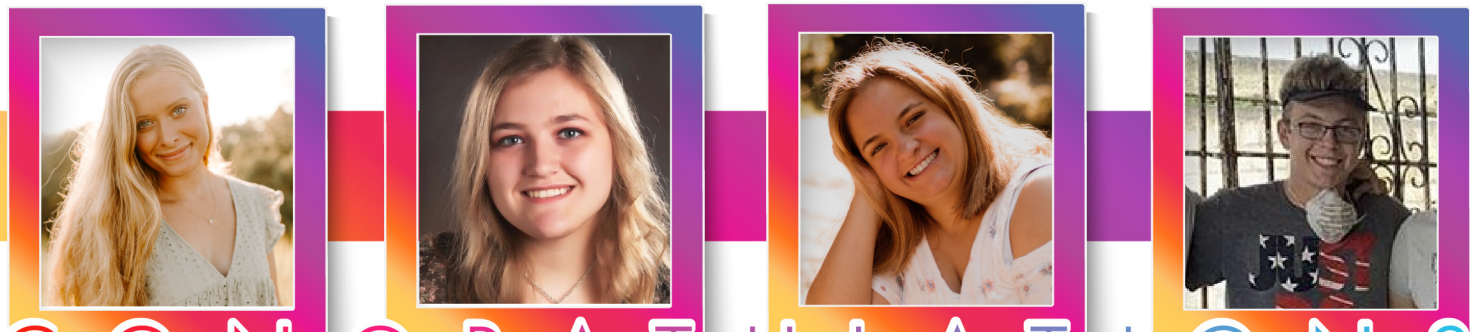
Your youth leaders, ministers and the whole of Countryside Community Church would like to congratulate you. We look forward to walking with, learning from, and supporting you as you start this new chapter in your lives. You are so very loved!

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2020 Graduates pictured below: Top left: Cole Klippenger, Kyle Klippenger, Naomi Harrison-Carlson, Rebecca Kucera, Bottom left: Anna Kuyper, Logan McNemar, Rachel Minor, Baylen Yannone

C L A S S of 2020



C O N G R A T U L A T I O N S