

AUGUST 2022



NEW INTERIM PASTOR

Countryside welcomes Rev. Dr. Keith D. Herron as Intentional Interim Minister. An ordained UCC minister and certified in both Interim Ministry and Intentional Interim Ministry, Keith brings deep experience in helping congregations prepare for a new, settled minister. He'll also help lead worship and support pastoral care. Keith and his wife, Wanda, live in Lawrence, Kansas. They have two adult children, Ben and Alex, and two granddaughters. He has served as a pastor for more than 25 years, most recently as an interim pastor for churches in Missouri and Illinois. He holds a doctorate in pastoral counseling and psychotherapy from Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary.

"Keith is a facilitator," said Interim Minister Search Committee member Pam Kregg, "not an authoritarian. He's a good listener and has a calming presence. He'll be able to foster meaningful conversations to prepare the congregation for our next called senior minister." Keith has a progressive theology and believes being free to be your real, authentic self is essential to faith development. He's a prolific writer of social, ethics and religious articles and commentary. His most recent major work is *Living a Narrative Life: Essays on the Power of Stories* (Smyth & Helwys, 2019). Keith begins his ministry with us on August 8.



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BIRTHS, WEDDINGS AND MEMORIALS

Baptisms:

Victoria Scarlett Higgins was baptized on June 26. She is the daughter of **Whitney and Jack Higgins**

Births:

Luke Gregory Martin was born on May 10. He is the son of **Joel and Katie Martin**. He joins siblings Lauren and Cameron.

Theodore (Theo) Jacob Bender was born on May 31. He is the son of **Jon and Ashley Bender**. He joins his big sister, Maggie.

Memorials:

Ed Huddell, long-time, devoted Countryside member passed away on May 17. His funeral was held at Countryside Community Church on May 26.

Sara Sellgren passed away on Sunday, June 5. She was a long-time member of Countryside.

A memorial service for **Cathy (Rick) MacInnes's** sister, **Diane Eicher Caulkins** was held at St. Mark's Methodist Church in Lincoln Saturday, June 11 (she passed away on April 9).

Don (Bev) Sartton's sister, Anna, passed away on Monday, June 20.

Marcia (Tim) Kerrigan's mother, Brenda Kapustin, passed away in Philadelphia on June 28. Her service was held on June 30 in Southampton, Pennsylvania.

Janelle Nash passed away the morning of July 4. Her dear friend and attorney, Bob Lannin, wants Countryside to know it was Janelle's personal Independence Day and that God has welcomed home this amazing firecracker. There will be no service per Bob and her sons.

Bill Besack passed away July 6. His service was July 19 at 11 AM at Countryside Community Church.

Shelley (Dave) Boyd's mother, Ellen Shaw, passed away on July 8. She is also the grandmother to **Emma Boyd**. Her service was on Wednesday, July 13 at Sacred Heart Catholic Church.

Ken (Nan) Hutton passed away July 5. His service was July 9 at John A Gentleman.

Phyllis Miller passed away on July 20. A visitation was held Wednesday, July 27, and her funeral on July 28.

BOARD OF PASTORAL CARE AND STEPHEN MINISTRY

***I Have Been There* - A New Program from The Board of Pastoral Care and Stephen Ministry**

I Have Been There helps congregation members going through difficult times in their lives. Rabbi Azriel had great success with this at Temple and we greatly appreciate his mentorship with Countryside's program. *I Have Been There* matches members who just need to talk about a difficulty in their life with someone who's "been there." The commitment isn't great for either member or Stephen Minister. It can be as simple as a conversation over coffee. The program rolls out on August 28 during the Ice Cream Festival. Participation is voluntary and confidential. We're excited to bring this program to the congregation and invite you to stop by the table for more information on *I Have Been There*. If you have any questions reach out to Debbie Vihstadt at 402.578.2900 or debbiev@countrysideucc.org.

Staff

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PHOENIX AFFIRMATIONS

Phoenix Affirmations classes resume in September. This is a 6 to 8-week study on the fundamentals of progressive Christianity. We've added a presentation on Faith, Homosexuality and the Bible to the study, which you can sign up for as a one-time participation event. Contact Diane Scott (dianes@counttrysideucc.org or 402-707-1556) if interested in either or both. If you want to talk about Phoenix Affirmations in person, be sure to visit with Diane at the table during the Ice Cream Festival/Small Group Fair on August 28.

SUNDAY MORNING RACIAL JUSTICE BOOK GROUP

The Sunday Morning Racial Justice Book Group will resume after Labor Day. Contact Sharon Royers (sroyers@centurylink.net) or Diane Scott (dianes@counttrysideucc.org or 402-707-1556) if interested.

RACE IN AMERICA

Race in America book studies resume in August and September. Watch for new books, new times and blended formats. Contact Sharon Royers (sroyers@centurylink.net) or Diane Scott (dianes@counttrysideucc.org or 402-707-1556) if interested. There will also be an opportunity to ask questions and sign up at the Small Group Fair, in conjunction with the Ice Cream Festival, on August 28.

MINDFUL MEDITATION SITS, WEDNESDAYS AT 7 PM

Mindful Meditation Sits on Zoom continue Wednesday evenings from 7-9 PM You can access the sits through the Zoom link on the church calendar at counttrysideucc.org/calendar. If you have any questions or would like more information, please reach out to the church office at office@counttrysideucc.org, or call 402-391-0350.

FAME (FRIDAY ARTS & MUSIC EXPERIENCE) EVERY FRIDAY AT 10 AM

Join a fun group of seniors every Friday at 10 AM for an art project, treats and good music. We may also have interesting visitors from time to time! It's a great way to get out of the house and enjoy time with friends for a while. Everyone is welcome! No reservations required!

FATE (FAITH AND THE ENVIRONMENT CLIMATE JUSTICE DESIGNATION)

The fear that comes with knowing we're at a critical point of climate change can be paralyzing. But it doesn't have to be. There are simple actions we can take to make a difference. We can find simple but consequential actions in University of Delaware Professional Entomologist Doug Tallamy's book, *Nature's Best Hope: A New Approach to Conservation that Starts in Your Yard*. The 2020 publication is FATE's book read coming in September. It's about "the little things that run the world" (E.O. Wilson), the things we can do in our own yards that make a difference. It's not just a great summer read, it's a great read anytime. Watch for details on this FATE-sponsored book read in upcoming C10s.

COMMON GROUNDS COFFEE HOUSE VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

As we move into fall and events pick up there will be many volunteer opportunities at the Common Grounds Coffee House. If you've ever dreamed about being a barista, now's your chance! Be sure to sign up for the training, coming in late summer. If you've signed up at the Coffee House already, you'll be contacted later this summer about training dates and times.

DID YOU KNOW?

Interior Secretary Deb Haaland recently announced that over the next decade the Interior Department will begin to phase out sales of plastic water bottles and other single-use products at our national parks and other public lands. This will help curb the millions of pounds of unnecessary disposable plastics that pollute our public lands every year.

MEN'S BREAKFAST, TUESDAYS AT 8 AM

Come out and make some new friends! Good food and great conversation – what a great way to start your day. Join us Tuesday mornings, 8 AM for the weekly Men's Breakfast at First Watch on 72nd and Pacific. You can come every week or stop in once a month, it's up to you! All are welcome to attend!

LUNCH BUNCH - SECOND MONDAY OF MONTH

In August the Lunch Bunch meets at noon at Brother Sebastian's (119th and Pacific). If you're interested in joining this group, please contact Gloria Ried at g-g.ried@cox.net. Thank you to Gloria Ried for her ongoing leadership of this program!

PRAYING FOR COUNTRYSIDE - THURSDAYS AT 9 AM

Dan Loven-Crum leads a Prayer Group Ministry on Thursday mornings at 9 AM. You're invited to come together to pray for our church, our families, our community, our country and the world. We come together of one accord to pray for any and all prayer needs and requests, for ourselves and others. All prayer requests are kept confidential. Contact Debbie Vihstadt at debbiev@counttrysideucc.org if you would like us to pray for you or someone you know.

COUNTRYSIDE UPDATES



CHURCH COUNCIL

We value your candid feedback on our church.

If you have topics of concern or would like the church to reach out to you, please write to churchcouncil@countrysideucc.org.

We want to hear from you and we appreciate you taking the time to comment.

COUNTRYSIDE MISSION STATEMENT

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, equality and justice in our conflicted world.

PASTORAL SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Pastoral Search Committee (PSC) met twice in June and participated in a Saturday retreat in July. Dave Hubbard represented our Committee at the June 10 Church Service by providing an update on our recent meetings and progress.

We received 268 survey responses and, as we compile the data and move forward, look for monthly updates in the newsletter as well as the first Sunday of each month from a member of our committee.

The PSC Committee is so appreciative of the honest and thoughtful responses from members of our Congregation. We collected your input with in-person participation for the discernment meetings, a Town Hall Forum following a church service and now the responses received from our Survey. We're compiling all the data and are moving forward in developing a Profile for Countryside Community Church's settled pastor. We truly recognize this feels like a lengthy and slow process but know that our Congregation's comprehensive input and the importance of methodical and thoughtful data gathering is truly the focus of our Pastoral Search Committee.

We value your questions and feedback so please email any questions, comments or concerns to pastoralsearchcommittee@countrysideucc.org. The Pastoral Search Committee looks forward to continuing to represent the members of CCC in our intentional search for a settled minister.

Kris Hess

Mallis Bonner

Sharon Royers

Mark Draper

Bob Davis

Adam Steinbach

Cathy MacInnes

Mimi Goings

Elaine Wiles

Shelley Boyd

David Hubbard

THE BOX FOR AUGUST

Back to School for Teachers!

The Box for August provides classroom supplies to teachers working in Omaha schools where extra, interesting learning tools are not always available. Many teachers must use their own money to bring these enhancements to their classes. They need Paper Mate® Flair felt tip pens - fun colors, Sharpie® markers - fun colors, Paper Mate® InkJoy gel pens (colored and blue/black), Sticky notes- fun colors, shapes, etc., sticky notes with lines, Play-Doh brand in 4 oz. containers, dry erase markers, Mr. Sketch® scented markers, shelf-stable, individually packaged snacks like granola bars, trail mix, sugar free gum and chocolate! Deposit your donations in the Box in the church entryway, or go to the church website countrysideucc.org/give, and indicate deliver to Countryside Community Church.

UPCOMING CONCERTS AT COUNTRYSIDE

Nebraska Festival Singers

Saturday, September 10, 6:30 PM

Résonance presents Mozart's

Requiem Thursday, October 6, 7:30 PM

Halloween Organ Concert

Sunday, October 30, 4 PM

Jazz Coffeehouse

Saturday, December 3, 7 PM

Christmas Pipe Organ

Extravaganza

Sunday, December 11, 4 PM

A Festival of Lessons and Carols

Sunday, December 18, 4 PM

COUNTRYSIDE CONNECTIONS



BIBLE STUDY

Why are Christians located on the Tri-Faith campus? Why is Countryside involved in this experiment? What is in my Christian heritage that supports my decision to become involved in the Tri-Faith Initiative? If you've been challenged by any of these questions, your faith does provide you with ways to respond to them. Join us Wednesday evening, September 14, as we begin a 6-week session to explore the depth of our Christian faith and discover the values that call us as Christians into this unique and exciting relationship. We invite you to come with your questions and concerns as we engage in this educational venture. Countryside member Rev. Don Sarton will lead the sessions and provide an opening presentation each evening before we move into small discussion groups. This promises to be an exciting series - we hope you'll join us!

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

In preparing for the holiday season ahead, we noticed the big tote of Christmas tree lights has gone AWOL. If you've seen them, or perhaps inadvertently stored them off-site, please feel free to let the office know.

TRI-FAITH INITIATIVE ACTIVITIES

TRI-FAITH UNITY GARDEN AND HOPE ORCHARD (South of Temple Israel)

Help nourish the Omaha community by volunteering at the Tri-Faith Garden and Orchard! Volunteers are needed year-round to assist with preparing soil, planting, watering, tending, harvesting, and transporting fresh fruits and vegetables to local food banks. Get dirty and dig in by signing up to volunteer! Email info@trifaith.org for details. The Tri-Faith Garden and Orchard is located next to Temple Israel on the Tri-Faith Commons.

TEMPLE ISRAEL



Rabbi Batsheva Appel - Interim Rabbi

Temple Israel welcomed Interim Rabbi Batsheva Appel on July 1. Rabbi Appel is a certified interim Rabbi. A native of Seattle, she earned her bachelor of arts in biological sciences and economics from Wellesley College and attended Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. Rabbi Appel is passionate about community, especially diversity. She values relationships with people of all backgrounds and is an empathetic, warm, and

compassionate listener. Rabbi Appel's hobbies include reading, playing D&D, doing the New York Times Spelling Bee, hiking, and competitive sock knitting. One of her goals is to go back to the Grand Canyon for a rim-to-rim hike.

AMI

Appropriate Dress

Guests are encouraged to dress respectfully for each service. Long dress pants or skirts are recommended, and long-sleeved shirts for all guests plus a headscarf for women is requested.

CARE, ACT, REACH: OUR JOURNEY BEYOND ABRAHAM'S BRIDGE

Join in three cheers for pantry deliveries—we've been doing this for one year! Thirty-two volunteers from all three Tri-Faith congregations and 252 deliveries, wow! Please consider joining your Tri-Faith neighbors this month, getting food to those who can't come to Countryside's pantry themselves, by either buying food on Friday August 5 or loading or delivering food on Saturday August 6. For more information, contact Jenn Vinton, 402-202-7478, jenniferfitchett@yahoo.com. Many thanks.

NEW BOOKS IN HICKS MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Grieving with Hope: Finding Comfort as You Journey Through Loss by Samuel J. Hodges IV and Kathy Leonard. Practical, straightforward, warm and compassionate, *Grieving with Hope* clarifies the popular misconception that people move through stages of grief. *Step by Step: Practical decisions when a loved one dies*, by Thrivent Financial. While family and friends provide comfort and emotional support when you've lost a loved one, you may still feel overwhelmed by the administrative tasks that lie ahead.

RACE, RELIGION & SOCIAL JUSTICE CONFERENCE 2022

On June, 9 more than 130 people from across the country met on the Tri-Faith Commons for Omaha's first Race, Religion & Social Justice (RRSJ) Conference. This year's theme was Harm, Healing, and Hope. Co-hosted by Tri-Faith Initiative and UNO Religious Studies, RRSJ 2022 brought together a diverse group of interdisciplinary scholars, diversity, equity, access, and inclusion (DEAI) practitioners, community and civic leaders, and corporate executives to spark cross-sector collaboration in the Midwest.



STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS

WELCOME NEW COUNTRYSIDE STAFF MEMBERS

Christine Kasel joined the church staff in June as Communication Manager. She's an experienced communications professional with a background in journalism, public relations, corporate and internal communications, social media and strategic planning. Christine has also taught communication and journalism courses at UNO, Metro and Iowa Western. She's served as managing editor for several community newspapers, editor-in-chief for Omaha Magazine and most recently worked in corporate communications at Securities America and Advisor Group. She has a B.A. in journalism and an M.A. in science and environmental communications. Christine is passionate about poetry, reading, art, deep thought, laughter, traveling, all things outdoors, and her rough collie, Quinn.



Kris Nivens joined the church staff on contract as Special Projects Coordinator in July. He has experience in writing, editing, project management, communications, marketing, and research. He's worked in support of engineering, finance, nonprofits, and institutions. He holds an M.A. in global finance, trade and economic integration, and is currently wrapping up an M.A. in English at UNO. His parents work for Wycliffe Bible Translators in Indonesia, where Kris was born and partly raised. (And yes, he speaks Indonesian, though he's gotten rusty.) Since moving back to the U.S. for college, Kris has lived in Michigan, Washington, Colorado, Washington, D.C., and Nebraska. He expects moving to Portland or Chicago after his time with Countryside. Kris enjoys writing speculative fiction, coffee, travel, walking and hiking, lifting weights, and occasionally yoga and climbing. He also has a silly black cat named Binx who loves snuggles and parkour.



JOB OPPORTUNITIES

We have four staff openings at Countryside. We're looking for an Audio Visual (AV) Technician, Building & Property Management Coordinator, Pastoral Care & Visitation Pastor and a Nursery Care Provider.

The part-time AV tech will help support Countryside's Audio-Visual needs, including Sunday Worship Services, the occasional special worship service, weddings, funerals and other events. The Building and Property Management Coordinator is a full-time position managing church facilities and property. The Pastoral Care and Visitation Pastor is a part-time position to provide ongoing pastoral care to the congregation. The part-time Nursery Care Provider will provide safe care space for children during regular worship times, Wednesday night activities, and special events.

For details and to apply for one of these positions, go to the church website, countrysideucc.org/ under Open Positions at Countryside.

VOLUNTEER NEEDED

Looking for a fulfilling volunteer position? Countryside is in need of an AGAPE funeral support coordinator. This volunteer position works with the funeral coordinator (Mary Watke) and helps coordinate the volunteers and fellowship meals for funerals at Countryside Community Church. If you are interested, please contact the office at office@countrysideucc.org. It is a great opportunity to meet people while serving our community.



YOUTH AND FAMILY



Youth Group

- Aug. 7: Youth Group meets from 6-8 PM
- Aug. 12-13: Youth Retreat at Countryside, Friday, 5:30-9 PM, Saturday 10 AM - 9 PM
- Aug. 14: No Youth Group
- Aug. 21: Youth Group meets from 6-8 PM
- Aug. 28: No Youth Group—Ice Cream Festival

We're starting the school year off with a retreat, August 12, 5:30-9 PM and August 13, 10 AM-9 PM. We'll spend time together, set expectations for the upcoming year and discuss how we live into community and our faith. To plan for meals, let us know no later than August 7 if your student plans to attend.

If your child will attend any youth activities this semester we require a signed Youth Release Form 22-23. Please send those in or send them with your student when they come to their first activity! If your student came to St. Louis, you do not need to fill out another form. All students who participate in overnight activities will need to provide proof of Covid-19 vaccination.

D&D group

Fridays, August 5, 19 and 26, 5:30-8:30 PM Please let us know if you're coming as we provide dinner.
Please note: No meeting for August 12 - Youth Retreat that weekend!

Confirmation

Confirmation begins the week of September 18. We'll meet once a week, with groups gathering on Sundays at 4 PM and Thursdays at 5 PM. Please check your email for more information. We'll have a Retreat Day August 20, 10 AM until 10 PM!

Children's Ministries

Starting in September, our Sunday Schedule will alternate between Community Worship (formerly known as Family Worship) and Children's Church.

Here's how Sundays in September will look:

- Sept. 4: Community Worship
- Sept. 11: Children's Church
- Sept. 18: Community Worship
- Sept. 25: Children's Church

Stay tuned for an email about Wednesday night Children's Ministries education classes starting September 14, 6-7:30 PM for Pre-K through 6th Grade (Core 56 included).

Core 56, 6-7:30 PM on Wednesdays

- Aug. 3: Party!
- Aug. 10: Nature Walk
- Aug. 17: Prayer Practices for School
- Aug. 24: Avatar
- Aug. 31: Art Project

NURSERY

Nursery services will remain on pause until COVID numbers are lower. Although the nursery will not be staffed, the room will be available for parents of young children. The room will have toys, rocking chairs and a children's bathroom and changing area, and a monitor to watch the service. This is an option for parents who are wanting some extra space and focus on their children as needed while still having access to watch the worship service. For the record, your baby/toddler/young one is always...ALWAYS...welcome in worship complete with their little sounds, fussiness, giggles, grumps, and wiggles. All are welcome means all are welcome.



SUMMER OFFICE HOURS
8 AM TO 3 PM
MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY

SUMMER WORSHIP
SUNDAYS AT
10 AM

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

COUNTRYSIDE COMMUNITY CHURCH

Ice Cream Festival

SUMMER CELEBRATION
SUNDAY, AUGUST 28
11AM-1PM

Small Group Fair
Face Painting
Balloon Artist
Music & Food
Yard Games
And
Ice Cream Sundaes!



RECHARGE

WEDNESDAYS

BEGINNING SEPT. 14

Impact Speaker Series
Bible Study with Don Sarton
Choir Practice
Small Groups
Youth & Children Education
Mindfulness & Meditation
Fellowship and more!

Child Care, Coffee & Refreshments!

COUNTRYSIDE COMMUNITY CHURCH COVID-19 POLICY

Countryside is following the CDC Community Levels for Douglas County regarding masking.

If the current Douglas County risk level is low (green), masks are optional.

If it's medium (yellow), masks are recommended/requested.

If it's high (orange), masks are required.

For more detailed information on Countryside's new policy, please go to the Countryside website <https://countrysideucc.org/covid19>.