

DECEMBER 2021



CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES AT COUNTRYSIDE COMMUNITY CHURCH

Christmas Eve services are back in person this year, the church is decorated and waiting to welcome you! Christmas Eve will be filled with song, scripture and candlelight beckoning everyone back to this special time of year. There will be familiar Bible verses about the birth of Christ and carols to embellish the special words. Services will be held at 5:00 PM and 10:00 PM on Friday, December 24. There are no reservations needed to attend services, although masks are required inside the building. Please join us for this special celebration. The Tri-Faith Institute, Temple Israel and American Muslim Institute will hand out candy canes after the 5:00 PM service to add to the festivities and their participation in our Christian traditions.

On Sunday, December 26, 2021, Rev. Norm Pavey, will lead the 9 AM and 11 AM worship services.

On January 2, 2022, Rev. Judy Waible will lead the 9 AM and 11 AM worship services.



CHRISTMAS CARDS CREATED BY FAME

They're back!!! The FAME Christmas cards are here and ready for purchase. For only \$10 you can purchase a pack of 10 cards with original designs by FAME members and a Christmas pen to go with them!

The cards will be available for sale between services on December 5 and 12 and also at the Jazz Coffeehouse in December 11. Spread some holiday cheer with Countryside Christmas cards!



SUNDAY WORSHIP

SPECIAL CHRISTMAS WORSHIP BROADCAST ON KMTV AT 10 P.M.

Find us on KMTV 3 at 10 PM for a broadcast on Verses and Hymns

ADVENT SERIES: THE GIFT OF THE LIGHT

For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6

The season of Advent has arrived! The first Sunday of Advent started November 28, and culminates with the celebration of Christ's birth on December 24 - Christmas Eve! Do you sense a shift in the atmosphere? Can you imagine the anticipation and excitement of Mary, Joseph, the Wise Men and the Angels, that the Messiah was soon to enter into the world? It had been prophesied by the Great Prophet, Isaiah, one of the Major Prophets of the Tanakh - the Hebrew Bible, (the Old Testament, for Christians). Isaiah prophesied the coming of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, 700 years before His birth. It is the event that is the foundation of Christian faith. Jesus, as Savior, entered the world in human flesh.

During this Advent season, we are going to celebrate the birth of Christ with adoration and praise. Our worship services will be filled with beautiful holiday decorations, music, and fellowship each Sunday to enjoy with our church family. This will be a spectacular, uplifting, and encouraging Advent season! Come join us during this Advent season as we end the year with gratitude for each other, Countryside, and the many Blessings of 2021 and those to come in 2022!

BLUE CHRISTMAS INVITATION

Hello My Countryside! As we start this Advent season, I have asked everyone to really live into the themes of Hope, Peace, Love and Joy. Jesus is the hope of a better world, inviting Christians, and all people to walk in Love, Peace, Grace and Mercy, and to respect and acknowledge the humanity in each human being we encounter. To love each other, as Christ/God, Creator of All, loves us.

In the Church, society, and the world, there have been many trials and tribulations, that have caused and are causing, a collective anxiety, depression and feelings of hopelessness. People are experiencing their own personal issues with the ups and downs of life that are impacting their health - mentally, physically, spiritually and emotionally. COVID-19 personal loss due to death of family and friends, unemployment, loneliness, marital issues, raising children and a host of other issues. Therefore, the season of Advent doesn't bring the joy that it is meant to bring, with the celebration of the arrival of Christ into the world.

On December 22 at 7 PM, Countryside will be having a Blue Christmas Worship Service. This is time to come together as a church family, and be revived and encouraged to know that there is Hope, Peace, Joy and Love, available to you. You are not alone. God is with you, and so are our prayers, love and support. Please feel free to bring family, friends, and acquaintances, that could benefit from being together, and feeling the love and embrace of the Holy Spirit and Jesus' invitation to heal.

Please know that whether you are a member of Countryside or not, I am available to speak with you, at anytime, providing confidentiality and pastoral care. Please join us for Blue Christmas, on Wednesday, December 22. We Love You, and want you to know - You and All are Welcome Here! Come home and let's fellowship, as a church family.

*****There will be refreshments after the Blue Christmas Worship Service.

Be blessed always,
Pastor Tracey

Staff

Dan Loven-Crum, ext. 226
Interim Director of Vision & Stewardship
danl@countysideucc.org

Rev. Tracey Perry, ext. 231
Interim Minister of Worship & Congregational Care
traceyp@countysideucc.org

Emma Boyd
Youth Programming Coordinator
emmab@countysideucc.org

Will Carnazzo, ext 206
Building Property Coordinator
willc@countysideucc.org

Shari Garder, ext 223
Financial Secretary
sharig@countysideucc.org

Steve Gomez
Administrative Assistant, ext. 222
steveg@countysideucc.org

Kris Hill
Administrative Assistant, ext . 221
krish@countysideucc.org

Robyn Hubbard
Executive Administrative Asst., ext. 224
robynh@countysideucc.org

Rebecca Morello
Director of Youth and Family Ministries, ext. 230
rebeccam@countysideucc.org

Alex Ritter
Director of Arts Ministries, ext. 215
alexr@countysideucc.org

Diane Scott
Community Engagement Coordinator
dianes@countysideucc.org

Debbie Vihstadt
Pastoral Care Coordinator, ext . 225
debbiev@countysideucc.org

Roxanne Wiles
Educational Program Coordinator
roxanne@countysideucc.org

TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE CHRISTMAS OFFERTORY, please donate on line at countysideucc.org. We are looking for volunteers to help with the offering. If you are raising children and a host of other issues, please contact the church with me. Christmas offering 2021. Thank you!

COUNTRYSIDE CHRISTMAS



CHRISTMAS CONCERTS

Jazz Coffeehouse -

It's back! Join us on Saturday, December 11 at 7:00 PM when the Jazz Coffeehouse returns. A Countryside tradition will feature our favorite jazz musicians Steve Gomez, Doyle Tipler, Carlos Figueroa, Rick Avard, and Julie Olynyk performing favorite holiday music. Mask up and join us for a cup of great coffee and smooth jazz in the comfort of Countryside!

Pipe Organ Extravaganza -

On Sunday, December 12, at 4:00 PM our sanctuary will resonate with the sounds of Christmas! A concert of new and old Christmas music will be played on our John-Paul Buzard Opus 47 pipe organ by artistic director Alex Ritter. What a wonderful way to celebrate this special time of year!

Christmas Choral Concert

The Countryside Community Church Choir is presenting a concert on Sunday, December 19 at 4:00 PM. The choir has been busy practicing a variety of holiday music and is looking forward to sharing this music with you and bringing back another Countryside tradition. We hope to see you there! The choir will be masked and all attending the concert are also asked to wear masks.

We are excited to bring back our Christmas Eve Choir this year! This group is open to everyone - whether you have sung in our choirs before or not, we would love to have you. There will be a rehearsal on Wednesday, December 22 at 6:00 PM for anyone in town, and we will meet at 8:30 PM on Christmas Eve to rehearse with anyone joining us from out of town. If you have friends or family who will be in town for Christmas who might like to sing, let them know!

CHRISTMAS SPECIAL OFFERING GOES TO ASIAN RURAL INSTITUTE

The Asian Rural Institute (ARI) is the recipient of this year's Countryside Community Church special Christmas offering. Established in 1973 as a vocational school for training rural leaders in Asia, ARI began its journey with the support of Japanese and Western Christian churches and other organizations. Located 100 miles north of Tokyo, Japan in the countryside of the Nasu region, ARI trains rural leaders from Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Pacific to help grassroots communities become self-reliant. These leaders return home with transformative knowledge to sustainably solve the many challenges in their rural communities, including farming (agriculture and livestock), construction, energy, sanitation, partnerships, and economics. The Asian Rural Institute's community-based learning campus includes an organic farm, classrooms, library, dormitories and a chapel.

We are thrilled to announce that through your donations to the special Christmas offering, the Countryside Off-Grid House will be added to the campus.

The Countryside Off-Grid House will be a one-room demonstration house built to reduce reliance on fossil fuel by using only solar heating and electrical systems. By experientially and collaboratively creating and studying this model house, leader participants will learn about the critical importance of energy self-sufficiency which will enable them to build this capacity in their own communities, fostering independence and strengthening infrastructure.

To contribute to the Christmas Offering, please donate online at countrysideucc.org/give or use an envelope found at the church or in your recent mailing. Make checks payable to Countryside Community Church with memo: Christmas Offering 2021. Thank you!

PASTORAL CARE

Baptism: Bennett Ray Holt was baptized on November 24. His parents are Megan and Conner Holt. Family members are Pat Holt and Jim Gilbert.

Memorials: Barry Larson passed away on November 5 in Omaha surrounded by family. His memorial service was held at Countryside Community Church on Saturday, November 13.

THE BOX FOR DECEMBER

The Box for December is The Asian Rural Institute (ARI) which is also recipient of this year's Countryside Community Church special Christmas offering. You can mail checks with the memo line Christmas Offering 2021 or go to countrysideucc.org/give and click BOCO Christmas Offering. There will also be a box for cash/check donations at the first station at our Follow the Star events. The money we collect will go to build a one-room demonstration house built to reduce reliance on fossil fuel by using only solar heating and electrical systems. It will be called the Countryside Off-Grid House. To learn more about ARI, located 100 miles north of Tokyo, Japan, you can check out their website at ari-edu.org/en/home. To learn more about the BOCO Christmas offering see page 2.

FOLLOW THE STAR

During the week before Christmas we will, once again, present a walk-through Follow the Star Christmas event. Stars will line the floor and guide you through stations set up around the church. The theme this year will be the Nativity: its participants, traditions and history. Walk through the different representations of the Biblical birth place of Jesus and learn more about the traditions of each of those represented in it. Watch for dates and times as we get closer to Christmas week.

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



YOUTH MINISTRY

Outreach

Help our Youth continue to support the organization, Black and Pink, by participating in their Annual Holiday Card campaign. Our students selected Black and Pink as The Box recipients earlier this fall, recognizing the organizations dedicated work providing support and resources for LGBTQIA community members affected by incarceration. Visit blackandpink.org, head to their "Programs" tab, then to "Penpal & Newsletter" to get signed up!

Purple, purple, pink, purple

We have Advent Wreath Kits available to Sunday School families (and others) to guide us through the Advent season. Each kit comes complete with candles and readings that encourage and guide our prayers and help us cultivate mindfulness on hope, peace, joy, and love. Grab one on Sunday or email Rebecca to arrange a pick up/drop off.

2021 CONTRIBUTION DEADLINE

Please remember to submit your final contributions of 2021 to the church before the end of the year. The IRS looks closely at charitable giving, and we want you to understand that in order for your contribution to be deductible in 2021, your contribution must be postmarked or physically received at the church office by December 31, 2021. Please note that your check date alone will not control which year your contribution applies to.



Thank you to Craig Bartling and Kim Schwartz for coordinating the decorating of the church for Advent!