

FEBRUARY 2022



January 9 Service and a visit from Pastor Tracey's grandson.

Justin Payne with Countryside Jazz

Christmas Eve Service

PASTORAL SEARCH COMMITTEE COMMISSIONING

The Pastoral Search Committee, in accordance with our church by-laws, consists of one member selected from each of the CCC boards and three at-large members voted on by the Church Council through a nomination process.

The Pastoral Search Committee will review and utilize the congregation's input from the 2021 discernment process. Additionally, the committee will update the church profile, review the senior minister job description, and work with UCC and Countryside leadership as we seek our next settled pastor.

The following members were commissioned on December 5 to serve on the Pastoral Search Committee:

Mallis Bonner, Shelley Boyd, Bob Davis, Mark Draper, Mimi Goings, Kris Hess, David Hubbard, Cathy MacInnes, Sharon Royers, Adam Steinbach, and Elaine Wiles



Kris Hess
Board of Christian Outreach
Chair



Mark Draper
At-Large
Vice Chair



Cathy MacInnes
At-Large
Correspondence Chair



Shelley Boyd
Board of Christian Education
Recording Chair



Mallis Bonner
Board of Youth / shared



Bob Davis
Trustees



Mimi Goings
Board of Deacons



David Hubbard
At-Large



Sharon Royers
Board of Life Ministries



Adam Steinbach
Board of Arts Ministry



Elaine Wiles
Board of Youth / shared

SUNDAY WORSHIP



WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN US IN WORSHIP AT 9 AND 11 AM ON SUNDAYS

We invite you to join us in person at 9 AM and 11 AM on Sundays. Our services are also streamed live online through YouTube live ([countrysideucc.org/live](https://www.countrysideucc.org/live)). We still require masks inside the building. Thank you for continuing to LOVE your neighbor!

WE WILL CONTINUE TO MASK INTO 2022

We will still be wearing masks inside the church as the omicron variant makes its way through the U.S. The omicron variant is HIGHLY transmissible and multiplies much more quickly. Even if it turns out that the disease from omicron is not more severe than delta, with the ability to quickly multiply and infect others, we will continue to overwhelm our hospitals.

Please vaccinate yourselves and your families when you are able to, and take precautions such as masking and social distancing when in public. Also, stay home when you are sick. Let's all pray together, for the health and safety of our healthcare workers, as they have been on the front lines of this pandemic for almost two years now.

COUNTRYSIDE 101 ORIENTATION CLASS

We will be having a Countryside 101 orientation class on Sundays, February 27 and March 6, from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. in the Chapel.

Since our move to the new building, many have said "This building is everything I hoped it would be - and then some." Now is our opportunity as a congregation to attract and nurture new members. Three great things about Countryside are: (1) our involvement with the Tri-Faith Initiative; (2) our warm and inclusive welcome of the whole human family, not just parts of it; and (3) the number of ways Countryside makes faith relevant in everyday life.

If the present is any predictor of the future, Countryside's future will be everything we hope it will be - and then some. Why not invite your friends to be part of it? These classes are designed to educate newcomers and visitors about the church, the church staff, and the many church programs. Indicate your interest by signing up on Sunday morning or contact Robyn Hubbard at 402-391-0350 ext. 224 or robynh@countrysideucc.org.

BOLD CONVERSATIONS ON RACE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Small Group

On Wednesday evenings at 6 PM., Pastor Tracey Perry is leading a small group - Bold Conversations on Race and Social Justice. We will engage in truthful, open and honest conversation on racism, the impact on Black people and people of color, and society. We will discuss each other's perspective, hear from white people, their beliefs on race, the impact of racism on the universal church, in society, and in our world. We will dispel myths that only condone and bring harm to race relations.

This is your opportunity to hear from an African American woman's subjective experience with racism, and the impact on Black people. So come and share in the conversation that is long overdue, but supports the mission statement and words that are carved in cement at the front door of Countryside - All Are Welcome Here.

Six Week Series

Beginning on Saturday, January 22, Pastor Tracey is facilitating a six-week series on Bold Conversations on Race and Social Justice on Saturday afternoons at 1 PM. There is an urgent need to discuss race and racism in all areas of life - personally, within families, in churches, in the workplace, in society, and in our world. The six-week series will be held at Countryside with a different topic each week. There will be time for Q&A and an opportunity to speak and engage in these conversations with an African American woman.

This series is open to members and non-members of Countryside, so feel free to bring your neighbors, family, and anyone who would like to learn to engage in this conversation, and seek to be an agent of change and advocate for racial justice.

Staff

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COUNTRYSIDE CONNECTED



RACE IN AMERICA

For the last year and a half, Countryside has offered book studies, in various forms with various facilitators, on the subject of Race in America. We continue to offer multiple opportunities, as our congregation has shown a genuine eagerness to learn and grow their understanding. Due to the popularity of these studies, we will continue to offer them into 2022. Some of the books we have read are White Fragility, Caste, How To Be An Anti-Racist, The New Jim Crow, So You Want to Talk About Race, The Autobiography of Malcolm X as told to Alex Haley, My Grandmother's Hands, White Feminism, See No Stranger and more. All of these have served a purpose in continuing in our attempt to grasp this complex subject. Some of these books will be revisited this year and new ones, such as Four Hundred Souls and The Sum of US will be added. Please join us. If you are interested or have questions, please contact Diane Scott at dianes@countrysideucc.org or text 402-707-1556.

MINDFUL MEDITATION SITS WITH CARLOS, WEDNESDAYS AT 6 PM

Mindful Meditation Sits with Carlos Figueroa are continuing Wednesday evenings from 7-8 PM via Zoom. You can access these sits through the Zoom link on the church calendar. If you have any questions or would like more information about these opportunities, please contact the church office at office@countrysideucc.org.

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

Join a fun group of seniors every Friday at 10 AM at Countryside for an art project, a yummy treat and to listen to some good music. We may also have visitors from time to time. It is a great way to get out of the house and enjoy time with friends for an hour. Everyone is welcome. No reservations are required. Masks are required right now for our indoor activities.

DESIGNATION GROUPS

Most of the Designation groups are up and running and will be followed by Immigrant-Welcoming during February. During a Sunday service the Fate/Creation Justice group offered gardening tips, answered questions and extended an invitation to join the Tri-Faith garden team. In addition, they (in conjunction with Earth University and CFS) have put together a wonderful opportunity, on Zoom, for two classes by Benjamin Vogt: "A New Garden Ethic" for Thursday, February 17 and "Prairie UP, Starting Your Native Plant Garden" Thursday, March 3, both classes to be offered on Zoom from 7 to 8 PM.

After much thoughtful consideration, W.I.S.E. (mental health) made their recommendations to BOCO for the Easter offering. The Anti-Racist group has met and now scheduled a brainstorming session for ideas on how they move forward to that Designation. If you feel a passion to join in on any of this important work, or simply have questions, please contact Diane Scott at dianes@countrysideucc.org or text anytime to 402-707-1556.

GENESIS TO REVELATIONS BIBLE STUDY WITH PASTOR TRACEY

Get ready and get excited! On Saturdays 10 - 11 AM in the Chapel, Pastor Tracey leads an extensive examination of the Word of God from Genesis to Revelations. Scripture will be examined through exegesis, hermeneutics, archaeological evidence and discussion of Jesus the Man and Jesus, the divine being, as the Son of God. Come with your Bibles and let's study the word of God together. Study materials are provided. Email Pastor Tracey at Traceyp@countrysideucc.org for more information.

PRAYER WARRIORS MINISTRY

Thursday mornings at 10AM. Pastor Tracey is leading a Prayer Group Ministry. You are invited to come together to develop the spiritual practice of group prayer. We 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 and not shared. Contact Pastor Tracey at Traceyp@countrysideucc.org.

SATURDAY MORNING ZUMBA CLASSES VIA ZOOM

These sessions are free, introductory classes, open to all ages. Saturday mornings at 8:00 AM. For more information, contact Cynthia Lindenmeyer at cynthia@sacredactivismtoday.org.

MEN'S BREAKFAST, TUESDAYS AT 8 AM

Looking for fellowship and great conversation? Check out the weekly Men's Breakfast at First Watch on 72 and Pacific. Every Tuesday morning at 8 AM feel free to stop in and have breakfast. 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

Lunch Bunch meets on Mondays, but will be on hiatus in January and February. If you're interested in joining this group, which is our traditional "circle" group from way back, please contact Gloria Ried at g-g.ried@cox.net. Thank you to Gloria Ried for her ongoing leadership of this program!

TRI-FAITH INITIATIVE



RELIGION@WORK PODCAST

Religion@Work, a podcast from Tri-Faith Initiative, brings together diverse voices to share stories and discussion on the intersections of religion, faith, and spirituality in our work lives.

Join Tri-Faith Deputy Director Erik Servellon as he interviews diversity, equity, and inclusion experts, scholars, and workers from a range of industries. They'll talk about how we can better integrate religious diversity into the workplace by bringing our whole selves to work.

Listen to our premiere episode, "Pushing Interfaith Work Forward" with Wendy Goldberg, Executive Director of Tri-Faith Initiative, on Apple, Google, and Spotify Podcasts.

Go to trifaiith.org/ourwork/religion-at-work to learn more.

UPCOMING EVENTS

ABRAHAM'S WHITEBOARD: THE SAMARITANS - PAST AND PRESENT

Thursday, February 3, 6:30 - 8:00 PM CDT

Zoom (Registration required) - go to trifaiith.org/events to register.

While Samaritans may be most known in the context of Christian scriptures, this ethnoreligious group originated from the ancient Israelite people and still has a surviving population that interacts with Jews, Christians, and Muslims today. This session of Abraham's Whiteboard will explore the history and current status of Samaritans, their religious teachings, and their connections to other Abrahamic traditions.

Abraham's Whiteboard is a monthly educational class led by Tri-Faith's Education Director, Jeremy Fricke, on a wide variety of special topics, historical moments, and world religions. For example, a session could focus on definitions of religion or on non-Abrahamic religions like Hinduism or Buddhism. All Abraham's Whiteboard sessions are open to all people regardless of background, but will connect the content to Judaism, Christianity, and/or Islam.

WOMEN OF TRI-FAITH VIRTUAL LUNCH

Monday, February 14, 12 - 1 PM, online

The Women of Tri-Faith Virtual Lunch is an opportunity to meet new friends, stay connected, and build intergenerational bonds between women of all faiths and identities.

Join us for sisterhood and casual conversation over lunch!

Registration required - go to trifaiith.org/events to register.

MAKING THE FAMILIAR STRANGE: THE STORY OF PURIM WITH ARIELLA ROHR

Tuesday, February 15, 12 - 1 PM CST

Zoom (Registration required) - go to trifaiith.org/events to register.

Join Education and Program Associate Ally ZimmerMas and Ariella Rohr, member of Temple Israel, for this session of Making the Familiar Strange as we explore the story of the Jewish holiday Purim as told in the Book of Esther. Using Purim as our example, we will discuss creative ways to use food and drink to celebrate holidays and concepts.

Read or review the story: Esther 1-10 (scripture or summary)

Ariella Rohr's background includes both formal and informal Jewish education, from teaching Hebrew in a classroom to traveling with teenagers on cultural exchange trips between Israel, Lithuania, and America. She has worked with a variety of ages, from infants to high schoolers. Ariella spent one year as the interim Religious School principal at Temple Israel, was the Associate Youth Director at a synagogue in Los Angeles, and was in charge of community engagement at another synagogue in Omaha. She currently partners with PJ Library as a Parent Connector, helping to create programming for local families with young Jewish children.

Making the Familiar Strange is an opportunity for interfaith dialogue that inspires people of different religious and nonreligious backgrounds to read the same text together. Rather than providing answers, creating arguments, or shutting down conversation, Making the Familiar Strange gives attendees an opportunity to investigate and share different perspectives on the same texts.

While not required, the program is best if you have access to the stories, which can be through a physical copy or online copy of a Bible, Tanakh, and/or Quran.

COUNTRYSIDE CARES



MEMORIALS AND BIRTHS

Memorials:

Steve (Kris) Hess's father, Norman Hess, passed away January 5 at his home in Dillsburg, PA. His service was held on January 11 in Franklintown, PA.

Jacqueline Sorrels's (Alex Ritter) mother, Michele Sorrels, passed away on January 7 in Port Neches, Texas.

Roy Dinsdale passed away December 29. His service was held at Countryside on January 6.

Dona Stueckrath, mother of Kari (Paul) Nelson, passed away on January 15. Her service was held on January 22nd, at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Millard.

Bruce Van Blair, former Interim Minister at Countryside Community Church, passed away on January 21.

Births:

Dave and Shelley Boyd, welcomed a granddaughter, Aurora Dawn Boyd, who was born on January 11, 2022. Juliana and Jerry Johnson are proud to announce the addition of their new grandson Emmet Fifield. Emmet was born January 19 to parents Sara and Grant Fifield of Lake Forest, IL and he joins sisters Adelyn, Scarlett and Connor.

FLOWERS ARE BACK!

One of the joys of gathering in person is seeing our beautiful Sanctuary. And seeing the altar enhanced with lovely, live flower arrangements is a beautiful welcome. We still won't be able to smell them because of our mask policy but we can enjoy them with our eyes.

These beautiful flowers are paid for by donations from congregation members in honor or memory of loved ones. The cost is \$40.00 per week. The name of the donor and their honor/memorial is listed in the Sunday bulletin. To sign up to sponsor flowers for a particular Sunday, there is a flower calendar on the bulletin board in the front office immediately to your right as you walk in. Please sign up on the calendar and give your check to the person at the front desk.

Many thanks to our flower girls Amy Kampfe, Kim Schwartz and Pam Kregg who select and arrange the flowers.

STEPHEN MINISTRY

February 1, 5:30 PM Leadership Team at Countryside

February 1, 6 PM Peer Support at Countryside

LUNCH BUNCH

They will be on hiatus in January and February as bad weather usually occurs during those months. They will meet again on March 14. If you have any questions about this group call Gloria Ried at 402-333-3115.

FEBRUARY'S BOX RECIPIENT

The Box for February is RISE.

RISE's vision statement is that all people will find freedom from cycles of incarceration. At RISE, transformation starts pre-release and continues post-release. Our inside/out model bridges incarceration to the community and considers all the critical steps in that journey. We prepare and train people for each phase through intensive character development, employment readiness, job creation through entrepreneurship and case management. We transform people in the community by building awareness and empathy that leads to support and opportunity. These connections heal families, create employment pathways and lower recidivism.

For more information go to www.seeurise.org.

THE BOX FOR FEBRUARY

The Box for February is RISE.
Wish list items include:

- Gift Cards:
 - Walmart
 - Coffee Shops
 - Restaurants
- Bus Passes (Omaha and Lincoln)
- Warm Winter Gear
- Fleece Throw Blankets
- Laundry Detergent Pods
- Dryer Sheets
- 24oz Body Wash
- Deodorant
- 2 in 1 Shampoo / Conditioner
- 21oz Body Lotion
- Toothpaste
- Shaving Cream
- Dental Floss
- Mouthwash
- Socks
- Sunscreen
- Feminine Products
- Disposable Razors
- Hair Brushes
- Hair Combs
- Travel-sized Hand Sanitizers

To donate go to:
countrysideucc.org/give

YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S EDUCATION



SENIOR HIGH YOUTH SUMMER 2022 YOUTH TRIP - SEED ST. LOUIS

From July 8-16, Countryside Youth and Youth Leaders will partner with Seed St Louis to work in school and community gardens. Here is a quote from their website:

"Our organization was established in 1984, the founding mission was to increase sources of affordable fresh food for St. Louis residents, to support the use of vacant lots for urban agriculture. Over the past 37 years, and the evolution of our organization, the number one priority has always been the commitment of cultivating people and places for food freedom!"

After two years waffling between virtual and in person, we'd like to focus this summer on coming together, so our Youth Summer Trip and Faith Singers Trip will be combined! We already have some pretty great stuff planned, in addition to our work. We'll head out to Laumeier Sculpture Park, visit Ted Drewes and stand in a ridiculously long line for ice cream, and will even be able to meet up with some relocated Countryside Members! Please visit the Seed website for more information about this organization.

YOUTH SUNDAY

Youth Sunday is February 13 just before the Annual Meeting. There's one service that day, at 10am, so please come and support our youth and leaders as they guide our Worship, a call to step deeper into community. Students will offer reflections, scripture readings, music, and prayer. Our students are amazing, creative, and have much experience to offer when it comes to building community amidst climate crisis, a global pandemic, and all the standard self-actualization work that comes with being a young adult. Come listen, come be present, come support. See you then.

CONFIRMATION

Confirmation in February will look at Countryside Community practices like our Annual Meeting, exploring why and how we meet. We'll focus on the Three Great Loves—love of God, love of neighbor, and love of self, considering what it means for our lives to believe that we, and all others, are loved beyond our wildest imaginations. Our scripture focus for these discussion is Matthew 22.

CHILDREN

Our Sunday School lessons this month share stories of Jesus and the Children, Jesus Stills the Storm, and Jesus as Good Shepherd. We will not meet on February 13, as it is our Annual Meeting. The most up-to-date information on the status of our Sunday School meetings is shared via the Children's Ministry weekly email. If you do not receive that email, let Rebecca know as soon as possible.

CORE 56

This month, Core 56-ers will pray together, re-establishing our seated meditation and contemplative prayer practices. We will also begin our quest to find sacred messages in the animated series—Avatar: The Last Airbender. If you'd like to check it out before your Core 56-er attends, the series is available on Netflix.



Since 1984 Seed St. Louis has connected people to the land, to their food, and to each other. We are a 501c3 nonprofit who supports a network of over 250 community gardens, school gardens, and urban orchards in neighborhoods throughout the St. Louis region. Our purpose is to provide communities with the tools, education, and empowerment to grow their own food.

COUNTRYSIDE FUTURE



CHURCH COUNCIL UPDATE

The next regularly scheduled church council meeting is February 17, 2022
Meetings are open to all members and are held in Marys' Hall beginning at 6:30 PM.

BOARD RETREAT AND BOARD CHAIR RETREAT

The board retreat will be on Saturday, February 12, from 8:30 AM to Noon in Marys' Hall. This retreat is for all board members. For those of you currently involved on boards and for those of you who are new, without your time and commitment, Countryside wouldn't be the great place that it is. The retreat will focus on personal goals for 2022 as well as a model for discerning the goals of each board. The opportunity to gather with your individual board will also be available.

You will learn about the nuts and bolts of board service like:

- Board Mission
- Calendar with board meeting dates and events
- Roster of board members with contact information
- Committees and job descriptions

You will also have the opportunity to get to know your fellow board members and learn more about Countryside Community Church and the Tri-Faith during this important year as the search for a settled minister continues. There will also be an opportunity for board chairs to gather on Thursday, February 10, from 6:00 to 9:00 PM.

EARTH UNIVERSITY

Have you noticed that when you drive in the summer, your windshield stays pretty clean? Have you noticed when you walk or ride your bike on the local trails, you don't have to sidestep the grasshoppers and you don't get bugs in your mouth? I have noticed and I think it is because there are fewer bugs. We need bugs!!! Birds need bugs. Plants need bugs. Learn how to create a landscape in your yard that supports bugs, caterpillars and butterflies at two Faith and the Environment/Climate Justice classes on Thursday, February 17, and Thursday, March 3, from 7 to 8 PM on Zoom. You will find the Zoom link on the Countryside calendar. No registration is required. Both classes will be taught by Benjamin Vogt, an expert on landscaping for biodiversity. Please take a look at the full description of the classes below. The classes will not be recorded so don't miss this wonderful opportunity to help nature. You may not like bugs but you will miss them when they are gone!

February 17: A New Garden Ethic

Why gardening with native plants is an ethical imperative in a world of climate change and extinction. This deep dive explores ecology, science, psychology, and philosophy as we ponder how to embrace gardens as places to create empowering social and cultural change.

March 3: Prairie Up: Starting Your New Native Garden

For new gardeners and those refreshing older beds, all audiences will learn the A to Z on researching, procuring and designing with native plants. You will cover regional resources, how to use plant communities for ecological resilience, strategies for less maintenance, and then create a simple plan that you can tweak.

Monarch Gardens is a prairie-inspired design firm based in Nebraska. They specialize in lawn to meadow conversions as well as urban shade gardens. Employing 100% native plants, their designs are climate resilient, adaptable, and provide numerous ecological benefits while artistically wilder landscapes. Learn more at monarchgard.com.

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.

RESOURCES FOR DISCERNMENT

During discernment Countryside members will be asking themselves the following questions:

1. How do we want to be challenged spiritually and intellectually?
2. What is our call to serve?
3. What does it mean to be the Christian partner of the Tri-Faith Initiative?

To prepare yourself to better answer these questions here are some resources you can take some time to look over at your leisure before attending a small group session.

Information about Tri-Faith, check out their website at trifaith.org or the Countryside website about their involvement in Tri-Faith, countrysideucc.org/relocation.

Download the Countryside bylaws and the 2020 annual report countrysideucc.org/discernment.



ANNUAL MEETING!

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 13
IN THE SANCTUARY

FOLLOWING THE 10 AM YOUTH SERVICE

PLEASE BE THERE BY **11:15 AM**

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

FEBRUARY 13 - YOUTH SUNDAY SINGLE SERVICE - 10:00 AM ONLY

OFFICIAL NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given, in accordance with Article 6, Section 6.2.5. of the Bylaws, that the Annual Meeting of Countryside Community Church will be held in person in the Sanctuary and virtually on Zoom at 11:15 a.m. on Sunday, February 13, 2022. Members may participate in person or on Zoom*. The purpose of the Annual Meeting is to elect officers and new board members, to receive the annual reports of the officers, organizations, departments, boards and committees, transact business and formulate plans for the new year.

- To best facilitate the hybrid meeting of in-person and online, the online Zoom participation will be restricted to online polls for voting and online questions/comments via the Chat feature.
- The Zoom Chat feature will be used for all questions/comments.
- Questions and comments will be shared with the Moderators leading the meeting.
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NOTE: The Annual Meeting will also be broadcast via the website for viewing only.

We are asking all members to pre-register for the meeting to help with communications about materials being presented and links to the meeting.

Register at countrysideucc.tpsdb.com/OnlineReg/2272 or call/email the church office (402.391.0350/office@countrysideucc.org). Additional links and information available at countrysideucc.org/annualmeeting.

ANNUAL REPORT ACCESS

A copy of the Annual Report will be emailed to all members. A limited number will be printed, contact the church office to get a copy.

How to access your Annual Report, as well as your personal data, in TouchPoint, Countryside's member database:

- Type this link - <https://countrysideucc.tpsdb.com/> - in your computer's browser and then press Enter.
- If you already have a password and can access your record in TouchPoint, proceed below.
- If you are new to TouchPoint, on the opening page there will be a Need an Account? Request Password link.
- After clicking the link, you will be asked to enter the email address that is on your member record in TouchPoint.
- Once you have accessed your personal account click on the Resources tab. Then click on the Annual Report.

For full instructions, go to the church website under Register for Events. If you're having trouble, please call the church office during business hours at 402-391-0350.