

Countryside Community Church WORSHIP



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July 20, 2025

† Indicates those places where those who are able are invited to stand.
Text in **bold** indicates places where the congregation is invited to join in response.

Gathering

COMMUNITY TIME (9:55)

Dan Loven-Crum

PRELUDE

Speak No Evil

Wayne Shorter

WELCOME

Rev. Don Sarton

†CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Come, people of many paths, to a shared journey of hope.

Many: We gather not as strangers, but as neighbors and friends.

One: In our differences, we find strength; in our unity, compassion.

Many: Let us worship the Spirit that moves through every open heart.

†PASSING OF THE PEACE

One: The Peace of God be with you.

Many: And also with you.

Peace I leave with you:
my peace I give you. I do not
give to you as the world gives.
Do not let your hearts be
troubled and do not be afraid.
John 14:27

†HYMN OF RESPONSE

All Are Welcome (vs. 1)

CHILDREN'S TIME

Heather Moran

Children are invited to come forward for a lesson at the chancel. Nursery care is available for children 0-4 years.

SUNG RESPONSE

Go Now in Peace X 2

Go now in peace, go now in peace,
may the love of God surround you
everywhere, everywhere
you may go.

Hearing the Word

FIRST LESSON:

Reader: Nancy Cohen

May it be Your will that any anger I feel or express be used only for constructive ends and in service to just causes. May my anger lead, ultimately, to greater humility, wisdom, and justice. May I be called to account for any anger that is used for destructive or self-serving ends. May any anger I feel or express be held in balance with love and compassion for all humanity and offered with purity of motive. Amen.

Rabbi Pamela Wax, *The Mussar Torah Commentary*, ed. Rabbi Barry H. Block

MUSICAL REFLECTION

Gentle Rain

Luiz Bonfá

SECOND LESSON: Numbers 25:10-13

Rabbi Ben Sharff

The Lord spoke to Moses, saying: "Phinehas son of Eleazar, son of Aaron the priest, has turned back my wrath from the Israelites by manifesting such zeal among them on my behalf that in my jealousy I did not consume the Israelites. Therefore say, 'I hereby grant him my covenant of peace. It shall be for him and for his descendants after him a covenant of perpetual priesthood, because he was zealous for his God, and made atonement for the Israelites.' "

MESSAGE

The Power and Danger of Moral Certainty

Rabbi Ben Sharff

Responding to the Word

PRAYER

Rev. Don Sarton

Eternal Spirit, Source of all that is and shall be, may we honor your presence by how we live. May love and justice flourish on earth as they are dreamed in heaven. Give us what we need for this day—food, hope, and compassion. Forgive us when we hurt one another, as we seek to forgive with grace and courage. Lead us away from fear and hatred, and guide us always toward peace. For the world is yours— And so are we. Amen.

MUSICAL REFLECTION

In A Sentimental Mood

Duke Ellington

SHARING OUR GIFTS

Rev. Don Sarton

The Social Justice and Outreach Board has designated OmahaForUs for the July Box donations.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (unison)

Holy One, We offer these gifts with open hands and open hearts.

May they be used to heal, to help, to build bridges where there are walls.

Bless our giving, that it may grow love in every corner of the world. Amen.

Sending

†SENDING HYMN

Hymn #453 *Called As Partners in Christ's Service*

†BENEDICTION

Rabbi Ben Sharff

POSTLUDE

Tough Talk

Joe Sample / Nesbert Hooper / Wayne Henderson

Matt Wallace, saxophone - Alex Ritter, organ and piano

Carlos Figueroa, drums - Steve Gomez, bass

Sunday Flowers This Week

Flowers were given today by Trisha Hoffman-Ahrens
in honor of Lindsey and Spencer Polk's fourth wedding anniversary.

Joys & Concerns

Join us as we pray for our congregation members and their loved ones who are on our Joys and Concerns list every week on Thursdays at 9 am in the Sanctuary. If you have someone who would benefit from prayer, want to share a joy or be included on the bulletin list, and /or be included on Countryside's Prayer Chain, contact the church office at 402.391.0350 or email office@countrysideucc.org.

Prayers of Gratitude for the following Joys:

God of the Deep, we thank You for the Spirit-led work of UCC General Synod 35 held in Kansas City this past week. You called the Synod into the deep— to welcome new communion with Puerto Rico and Germany, to affirm rural churches, human rights, and mental health dignity and to stand in solidarity with all who long for peace in the Middle East. You stirred bold witness for justice, compassion for migrants, and care for Your creation. May the resolutions take root in the ministries, conferences and churches of the UCC.

Please join in praying for the following new and ongoing concerns:

Continued prayers for **Margaret (Tim Ekberg) Hayford's** brother and sister as they navigate their individual treatment plans for lung cancer and breast cancer.

Continued prayers for **Jenny and Shannon Shultz-Thomas** and Quinn and Sage as they travel during Jenny's July sabbatical. May this be a time of renewal for Jenny's body, mind, and spirit.

Loving God, you are present even in the quietest cries of our hearts. Draw near to those who are healing from illness or surgery, those mourning profound loss, and those burdened by life's many trials. Surround them with your peace, restore them with your healing, and renew them with hope. We place our trust in your faithful care and lift each one into your loving hands.

Loving Our Neighbor (when the world seeks to divide us)



Senior Rabbi Benjamin Sharff Temple Israel Omaha



Rabbi Benjamin Sharff joined Temple Israel in 2023. He is the son of Rabbi Robert and Linda Sharff. He grew up in Houston, TX, where he was raised in the Reform Movement and regularly attended URJ's Greene Family Camp in Bruceville, Texas.

He graduated from the University of Texas in 1996 with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology. He did his Graduate Studies in American History at

Sam Houston State University and then attended Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati and was ordained in 2004.

Prior to joining us at Temple Israel, Rabbi Sharff served congregations in Tucson, AZ; Baltimore, MD and Nyack, NY. He is passionate about helping people explore their own Jewish journeys. He is also a Brickner Fellow and a passionate advocate for all things social justice.

In addition, Rabbi has played rhythm guitar in several worship bands and is a fan of movies, comic books, and baseball.

Rabbi Sharff is happily married to Dr. Joy Sharff and together, they have three children Emily, Noah, and Alex.



Next Week

July 27 – Dr. Leah Georges, Creighton University / Countryside Vice-Moderator, Dr. Georges is an associate professor and program director in Creighton University's Interdisciplinary Leadership doctoral program. With a Ph.D. in social psychology, she researches leadership through a social psychological lens. She's an advocate for inclusive leadership and serves as Co-Moderator at Countryside.