



Currents

From the Desk of Rev. Chris Alexander | Associate Minister

One of the things that strikes me when I meet with folks from the Tri-Faith Initiative is how much easier it seems to talk to our Jewish and Muslim brothers and sisters than it is to talk to some of our Christian brothers and sisters. It seems counterintuitive, doesn't it? One would think, because of our common language and sacred texts, that it would be easier to talk to Christians, since there would be so many common assumptions within our conversations. But I suppose it's more about the topics we talk about that makes the conversations difficult. When it comes to things like poverty, malnutrition, and even education (for the most part), these are issues that span both the ecumenical and the interfaith traditions, so they are easy to get behind and build partnerships around and collaborate in our actions together within the community.

But when it comes to civil liberty issues like gender, race, and sexual orientation, or environmental issues, or issues of leadership and polity, it is much harder to find common ground for conversation. And in my experience, it's harder to find common ground within the Christian tradition on these issues than it is with the progressive Jews and Muslims with whom we partner within the Tri-Faith Initiative.

Why is that? What is it about us Christians that we have such a broad spectrum of understanding about what it means to follow Jesus? That's exactly the question posed by Bill Sellgren, one of the members of the Adult Education team, last February. He brought this question to Kelly Keller and myself and asked if maybe we could put a class together around this issue, bringing folks together from other Christian denominations that might help us better understand some of the differences between us. So we did.

The class is called ***What Brings You Joy? Conversations Across The Christian Spectrum***. It will meet on **Wednesday evenings during the month of June, beginning at 6:30p.m. in (ironically) the Common Grounds Coffee House at Countryside**. We have asked representatives from the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME), the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), The Catholic Church, and the Evangelical Traditions, to join Dr. Elnes and me, from the UCC perspective, in conversation around some key themes. Topics for discussion include worship traditions and practices, the private and the public faith of each tradition, the person of Jesus, and thoughts around salvation and eternal life. Each of the traditions will have a chance to speak to each of these themes from their own experience, and then we will open the discussion to the community for a question and answer period.

So bring your own faith backgrounds and any questions you might have for others, to be a part of the discussion. It's a fabulous opportunity to learn about other Christian traditions. And in our new role as the primary Christian representative at the Tri-Faith campus, we will need this information, since we will no doubt be asked about this broad spectrum of understanding within Christianity by our interfaith partners and the larger Omaha community!

Hope to see you there.

Shalom, Salaam, Peace,

Chris



CONVERGING PATHS MINISTRY

With the departure of Rev. Bruce Van Blair, the Board of Christian Education and the personnel committee have been working with Dr. Elnes and the BTS Center to fill the vacant Converging Paths position. Countryside is excited to announce that Terri Vincent has accepted a part-time position as the Converging Paths Ministry Administrator.

Terri Vincent will be providing leadership to the Disciple Band small groups and provide support to the Disciple Band leaders at Countryside Church and in Converging Paths test communities. Disciple Bands are small groups that form for the purpose of study, following, and engaging in a way of life that is lived in conversation with the Holy Spirit.

If you are interested in participating in a Disciple Band, feel free to contact Terri at terriv@countrysideucc.org or 402-391-035, ext. 121.



Terri and her husband, Dan Hackett, moved to Omaha in July of 2014, when he took a job here as a nuclear plant procedure writer. They started attending Countryside right away and became members last November. Terri owned and managed a small business in Phoenix, Arizona, before becoming an attorney in South Carolina. She graduated from Eden Theological UCC Seminary with a Masters in Divinity in May of 2014. She is a Member in Discernment in the Nebraska UCC Conference and is on the path to ordination. She has been active at Countryside, attending the weekly worship team meeting and joining in small groups.

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN OUTREACH

In June and July, the BOX will again partner to support **Countryside Community Cupboard**. In past years, we have supported Cupboard clients as they started the school year by providing school supplies. This year, we are helping with a different fundamental need: **socks and underwear**. With your help, we can equip students for the school year by providing these foundational garments which allow them to feel that they are like everyone else. Children of poverty do not wear underwear because it is what does not show, so it is what is left out for clothing economy. Adults may not notice, but other kids do, especially in the restrooms, locker rooms, etc. These boys and girls are embarrassed, and it prevents them from full participation in school life and activities. Underwear would help immensely for their dignity.

While it may seem early, we hope you will keep these items in mind as you are shopping and possibly planning for school shopping. **We are looking for new underwear and socks of all sizes for boys and girls of all ages.** The items will be provided to the Community Cupboard volunteers for distribution at an upcoming pantry distribution. This is another chance for us to support our Cupboard partners as part of their outreach to our community. Thank you for your continued support of the **BOX** and of the **Community Cupboard**.

April follow up: Thank you for your support of COuntryside YOuth (COYO) and their upcoming mission trip. Your donations to the BOX resulted in 23 over-the-counter pain medications and creams, 11 bottles of vitamins and numerous school supplies, including nearly 175 pens and 175 pencils, 150 crayons and 25 glue sticks. These items will be distributed by COYO to the orphanages and infirmaries they visit on their trip to Dionne's Children's Home in Bamboo, Jamaica. Thank you!

The Board of Christian Outreach (BOCO) thanks you for your generous support of our outreach efforts through the 2014 Christmas and 2015 Easter offerings. With your help, at our services on February 8 we presented a check for **\$19,957.25 to Los Chavalitos**, continuing our commitment to the people of this community in Nicaragua that started with the founding of the clinic in 1994.

More recently, on May 10 we presented a check for **\$11,725 to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) of Nebraska** as they support this underserved segment of our local community.

BOCO appreciates your continued support of our board's mission, "To direct the financial and volunteer resources of the board to further the work of the Lord in the community, the nation and the world." It is only through the financial and spiritual resources of the entire congregation that these results are reached. Thank you.

MUSIC MINISTRIES

Faith Singers 2015 Summer Mission Tour



HOME CONCERT

Sunday | June 14 | 4:00 p.m.

TRI-FAITH UPDATE

On April 12, 2015 at a special congregational meeting, Countryside Community Church voted to become the Christian partner in the Tri-Faith initiative and move Countryside to the campus at 132nd and Pacific Streets. In response to this vote and a directive from the Church Council, the Tri-Faith Coordinating Committee was tasked with moving forward with the selection of an architectural firm that will help us with the design of our new church. All of the input from the Visioning Process will be used in the conceptualization phase of this exciting project.

The Tri-Faith Coordinating Committee has met twice in May and discussed possible avenues to pursue with determining an architect to design Countryside Community Church. Once the Architect is selected, they will provide us, as part of the Pre-Design, a determination of project requirements and schedule relative to the conceptual diagrams we have in the report presented to the congregation. From there, Schematic Design is the next phase – including the development of alternative concepts of design options.

In addition, by directive of the Church Council, new committees will be formed along the way and at various phases of this 3-5 year project. This will allow us to concentrate on specific aspects of the design and implementation first. As has been done in the past, the congregation will be given regular updates on the progress being made in worship services, the newsletter, C-10 and the church bulletin.

The Tri-Faith Coordinating Committee is excited about entering this new phase and making this next chapter in the Countryside Community Church story a reality. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact moderator@countrysideucc.org.

Grace & Peace,
Rick MacInnes, *Moderator*



American Muslim Institute Ceremonial Groundbreaking

The American Muslim Institute held a Ceremonial Groundbreaking on the future site of their new building on the Tri-Faith Campus, featuring guest speaker Dalia Mogahed. The tent was literally overflowing with support from many members of the local Muslim community as well as representatives from all of the Abrahamic faiths. It was truly an evening to remember and a huge step toward completing the Tri-Faith Campus!

Excerpt from guest speaker Dalia Mogahed's talk:

"... The American Muslim Institute is just one more example of this. No doubt, this is an ambitious project, a daunting task and a long road. There is so much to deter us and to discourage us. The Naysayers, those who suspect us, those who say it can't or shouldn't be done. Yet it is exactly these moments that demand leadership.

The leadership of tree planters at the end of time. What am I talking about?

The Prophet taught us this: "If you are planting a tree and the end of the world comes, finish planting your tree."

Let this profound statement just sink in for a moment. While some may push for the algebra of apathy: why bother, the chances of success are small, it can't be done... the future belongs to those whose actions are fueled by the resilience and irrational optimism of the tree planter at the end of time. The algebra of apathy says its never been done so why try. The calculus of compassion says its never been done, so we better get started."

Dalia Mogahed's full talk can be found at <http://countrysideucc.org/about-us/our-mission/tri-faith/>.

Quotes from Countryside's:

"At the ground breaking ceremony, listening to all the beautiful prayers and comments, I was struck by the realization that we will have unlimited opportunities to share, learn, and grow with our new Muslim and Jewish friends." Mary Johnston

"Seeing the children participating in the ground breaking really highlighted the positive impact the Tri-Faith will have not only for us now but for our future." Pam Kregg

"I was amazed at the outpouring of support from other faith communities. Neha Khalid, a teenager of the American Muslim Institute, blew me away with her thoughts of what the Tri-Faith Initiative means to her now and what it will mean to others in the future. Joining hands across Hell Creek is definitely a step in the direction of understanding and peace." Randy L. Sanders



Youth Ministries

COYO (COUntryside YOuth)

Get Connected! <http://countrysideucc.org/coyo>

COYO Sr. High Refugee Support

Working with Lutheran Family Services, COYO Sr High collected items to set up a two-bedroom apartment for a family of four from Burma. Thank you to all who donated furniture, dishes, and bedding! And thanks to BOCO who supplied an SSG grant to buy mattresses and kitchen items.



COYO Sr. High Jamaica Updates

June 19-27



You can follow the COYO Sr High mission trip on Twitter!

@CCC_COYO

Or go to the website

<http://countrysideucc.org/coyo/srhigh>

Or on Facebook

<http://facebook.com/coyosrhigh>

Or texts: type "Follow CCC_COYO" to 40404

And do not reply to any messages

2015 Garage Sale Drop Offs

Annual Garage Sale Drop Off Information

Please remember to **donate** your second-hand furniture, appliances, clothing and other household items to **Countryside Youth** for our **Garage Sale**.

When/Where?

10 am - Noon

April 25 • May 9 & 23 • June 6 & 20 • July 11

Drop off at Millard Lumber

12900 I Street

(Customer Entrance Indoor Lumber Yard - See map below or on back)

Questions?

Call Tim Kerrigan at 402-290-6868.

NO OLD
TV'S

NO OLD
TV'S

COYO Jr. High in June

Sundays 4:30-6:00 p.m.

June 7:

Stay for a **Cookout** after COYO Jr High

June 14:

4:00 p.m. Faith Singers Concert

5:00-6:30 p.m. COYO Jr High

June 21:

NO COYO Jr High



COYO Jr. High Hangouts

Wednesdays at 1:00 p.m.

COYO Jr. High will meet up online during the summer. All you need is a Google account with Google + activated. Every Wednesday afternoon, you are invited to Hangout with other COYO Jr. Highers and leaders. Email willh@countrysideucc.org from your Gmail account and you will be added to the Hangout.

8th Grade Welcome to COYO Sr. High

August 3, 2015

COYO Sr. High will welcome the new Freshmen class on a trip to Worlds of Fun. Leave at 8:00 a.m. from the church and return by midnight.



More details to come...

ADULT EDUCATION

Sundays Adult Education Forum—led by Nancy Knight, this is a larger class of about 25-35 people. The group has just started *The Other Side of History: Daily Life in the Ancient World*. Taught by Robert Garland, PhD of Colgate University, the course looks at history from a “nontraditional perspective, that of the weak and the marginalized—the poor, the sick, the disabled and elderly, as well as the refugees, the slaves, serfs, women and children from the Neanderthal period to the Pilgrims. This group meets every Sunday at 10:00 a.m. in the Moderator’s Room—enjoying coffee, donuts and stimulating education and conversation. Participants can check out the DVD to catch up on the classes they may have missed—but it is not required in order to enjoy the course. Anyone is welcome to drop in at any time, but please register your email with Nancy so she can apprise you of changes and include you in discussions about future topics. Her email address is Noknight@live.com.



CENTER FOR
Faith Studies

Mondays Adult Education Brown Bag Lunch—Resuming June 8, every Monday at 12:15 p.m. in the Chapel, the Brown Bag Adult Ed Group gets together to study *The Other Side of History: Daily Life in the Ancient World* (see above description). It is never too late to join in! You are welcome and will be able to fully participate. If you desire, you can also check out the DVD and guidebook to catch up on classes you may have missed.



Conversations Across The Christian Spectrum

Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m.

June 3, 10, 17 and 24

Common Grounds Coffee House at Countryside



THEMES:

Prayers and practices: Worship Traditions and Spiritual practices

Public/Private Faith: Nature of the Tradition in the Community

The Person of Jesus

Salvation and Eternal Life

PANELISTS:

Dr. Eric Elnes and Rev. Chris Alexander – UCC

Victoria Parker – Bethel AME

Candace Gregory, Steve Frazee – Evangelical, Open Door Mission

Fr Mike Eckley – St Pius Catholic (June 10 – Joe Higgs will substitute)

Rev Jan Peterson – Lutheran ELCA (June 3 – John Fredricks will substitute)

Brought to you by the Faith & The Environment (FATE) Group: Did you know?

Last time *Did you know?* addressed the staggering amount of food waste that ends up in landfills where it creates all sorts of problems. Composting your food waste at home is a way you can help mitigate this problem. There are four ways composting benefits the environment: 1) compost enriches the soil 2) composting "cleans up" contaminated soil 3) composting helps prevent pollution and 4) composting makes sense economically. We will explore more about composting in the future. Now you know.



Oh man—we have so many exciting things coming up in Children’s Education! Our Countryside community works hard to provide a positive environment for questioning and exploring our Christian faith, and now we are taking it to the next level!

Our Lil’ COYO group will see a name change (yes, again) as well as some formatting changes, in the hopes of creating a more valuable and focused experience for our 5 and 6 graders and more opportunities for parent involvement. This summer we will also offer a prayer retreat for this group.

This fall our Sunday School program will continue to focus on building our Countryside children’s faith foundations with rich storytelling from both the Old Testament and New testament books of the Bible. While our students are exploring these stories with guided group discussions and focused experiential activities, our parents will have access to a collection of lesson-based topics, with scripture references and questions to help facilitate continued conversations at home!

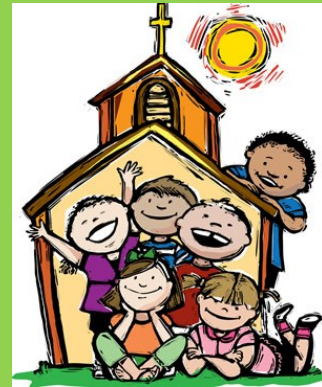
So keep your eyes on the C-10, the Countryside Currents Newsletter, and the Sunday bulletins to stay up to date on coming changes!

Summer 2015 Worship Schedule:

June 7—Family Worship
June 14— Children’s Church
June 21— Family Worship
June 28— Children’s Church

July 5— Family Worship
July 12— Children’s Church
July 19—Family Worship
July 26—Children’s Church

August 2—Family Worship
August 9— Children’s Church
August 16—Family Worship
August 23— Children’s Church
August 30— Family Worship



Vacation Bible School 2015



CCC Vacation Bible School, G-Force[®], is scheduled for July 6-10 from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon . Please visit <http://2015.cokesburyvbs.com/CountrysideCommunityUCC> for some downloadable coloring sheets and a sneak peek at our music for the week! **Online registration is now open!** We still need volunteers to help pull this off, so contact Rebecca—rebeccam@countrysideucc.org— if you are interested!

LIFE MINISTRIES

For more information about Life Ministries or to register for an activity, contact Mary Beth Link at marybethl@countysideucc.org or 402-391-0350 ext. 112, or sign up on Sundays at the Information Station in the Foyer.

Omaha's Pride Fest 2015 will be held on Saturday, June 20, at Stinson Park in Aksarben Village. Diane Scott has volunteered again this year to coordinate Countryside's involvement for this event. For information on how you may help, contact Diane at twang56@aol.com.

Where does your Faith intersect with the environment? If you are concerned about environmental issues and have considered how you could incorporate caring for our earth into your faith life, then consider attending our next meeting on **Monday, June 1, 5:30 p.m. in the Youth Office**. We are pleased to have Rev. Kim Morrow, Minister of Sustainability at First Plymouth UCC and a member of Interfaith Power and Light, as our guest.

T'ai Chi Chih® is a series of gentle movements that may be done by anyone. Classes are held on Thursday mornings from 10:00 - 11:00 a.m. Suggested donation is \$10.00 for drop in or \$50.00 for six weeks. Mark your calendars—NO CLASSES on June 18 or July 23 this summer. For information, contact Rita at RMOTIS@outlook.com.

InterPlay will be held on Saturday, June 13, beginning at 10:00 a.m. in the Foyer. Contact Rita Otis for additional information.

LGBT 101 will meet in Memorial Hall on Thursday, June 11, at 6:00 p.m. For additional information on this educational small group, contact Joni at jws@spsattorneys.com.

Finding Balance will resume in August. For additional information on this group, contact Diane Scott at twang56@aol.com or 402-895-5486.

SOCIAL GROUPS

Wednesday Night Alive! Suppers brainstorming session will be held Wednesday, June 10, 5:30 p.m. in the Commons. Join us if you are interested in helping with this ministry.

Lunch Bunch Circle will meet for lunch at noon on Monday, June 8, at the Market Basket, which is now located at 90 & Center in the Loveland Centre. We will have a program from the Bookworm. Call Gloria Ried for more information, 402-333-3115.

Reel Faith will resume in September. Be watching for a schedule of outstanding movies.

Men's Breakfast Group meets on Tuesday mornings, 7:00 a.m. at the Garden Café in Rockbrook Shopping Center (108th and Center). This is open to all men of the church.

Women's Lunch Group will meet on Monday, June 1, 12:00 noon at First Watch, 1222 S 71st St. Come for lunch, a cup of coffee or just good fellowship. Rev. Chris Alexander will be with us. This group is open to all women. Looking forward to seeing you there!

Knit-n-Wit meets on Wednesday evenings at Whole Foods. If you would like more information regarding the group, contact Jeannie Cunningham at jkcunningham@cox.net.

Family Activities Committee members will meet on Sunday, June 28, at 10:00 a.m. in the Family Life Office.

ETC members will meet on Tuesday, June 9, 6:00 p.m. at Mary

Beth's home. You are asked to bring an hors d'oeuvre to share. We will begin planning the golf tournament.

Countryside's Angels bicycling group is getting ready to get out and enjoy the springtime weather! Contact Mark Stursma at mastursma@yahoo.com for more information.

The Young at Hearts will meet for brunch on Thursday, June 11 at noon. This will be our last get together before we break for the summer. The menu will feature a brunch casserole, fresh fruit salad, and pastries. Call Mary Beth Link at 402-391-0350 or Pam Gregg at 402-896-3866 to make a reservation. We hope to see you there. Rumor has it we may be discussing forming a group that goes "on the road" to explore various historical, art or just plain fun venues. Hmmm - are you interested?

Interplay Saturday, June 13 In Interplay we often use the phrase "Have It for Yourself," as we bring movement to completion. It calls us to be in stillness – breathing into the shape we hold with our hands and body – letting appreciation for who we are in this space at this time settle into our psyche. Lately I've been realizing that "have it for yourself" is a spiritual practice all by itself. When we don't perform for others, but instead live life authentically, we are open to all that is there in the moment. It creates a bit of stillness even as we move through the day; certainly something good to practice. Come practice "have it for yourself" at our next Interplay gathering, June 13th, in the Foyer at Countryside Church, 9:30 - 11:30 a.m. Donations are accepted. Contact Rita Otis 402-556-1856, RMOTIS@outlook.com for questions or to register.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

Countryside Craft Boutique...A meeting time has been designated for Wednesday, August 19, 5:30 p.m. in the Commons. Anyone interested in planning, organizing and executing a craft boutique at Countryside, contact Mary Beth at 402-391-0350 ext. 112.

Annual Golf Tournament benefiting Together will be held on Sunday, September 20, 2:00 p.m. at Miracle Hills Club. Sign ups will begin mid-June, so start putting those foursomes together!

Brush Up Nebraska Paint-a-thon will be held on Saturdays, August 8 and 15. Be watching for upcoming information.

Community Cupboard needs your help for June's pantries

Due to the July 4th holiday falling on the same Saturday as our July pantry—we find it necessary to bump the July pantry up one week to June 27. As a result, we are asking for additional volunteers this month! Please contact Andi Lawlor at lalalalawlor@cox.net if you are interested in helping.

LIFE MINISTRIES continued..



GET INVOLVED...VOLUNTEER...SHARE THE STORY

PlantOneMore.org, coordinated by Vicky and Eva Houston, is a new Countryside project for 2015! PlantOneMore is specifically designed to help those who are food marginalized. They ask those of us who plant vegetable gardens to "plant one more" plant

of your choosing. The produce from that plant (and any other additional vegetables that you may wish to donate) will then be brought to Countryside Church on Sunday mornings, July 12 through September 6, from 8:30-11:00 a.m. This produce will be donated to various organizations throughout the city (i.e. YES, Together, Community Cupboard). "Our mission at PlantOneMore.org is to plant a little more than you can use, so it can be shared with the community."

Looking for 3-4 dedicated volunteers who would take responsibility for Countryside's kitchens on a weekly basis. This would entail

putting dishes away, wiping counters, emptying dishwasher and keeping an inventory of necessary supplies. If this speaks to you, stop by the Information Station this morning and speak with Mary Beth.

Conscientious Dishwashers Seeking Same. Volunteers are needed to help with dishwashing mugs after the 11:00 a.m. worship service. It is easy and many hands make light work -- but we really need the hands! Please contact Mary Beth to be added to the list.

Thank YOU!!!

Thanks to the Community Cupboard Focus Committee for hosting coffee hour throughout the month of June. Be sure to chat with one of the members to learn about the activities and/or events they provide in for our church families.

PASTORAL CARE

Save The Date!

Living Well Past 50...

Body, Mind and Soul

August 15, 2015 – 9:00 -11:30 a.m.

Carolyn Scott Chapel

People are living longer than ever with the help of modern medicine, but are they living well? The Pastoral Care department at Countryside will be hosting a workshop addressing the whole-person approach to optimal aging. Jeannie Hannan, PhD, HFD, and Wellness Manager with the EngAge Wellness program at UNMC, will be presenting information on the six dimensions of wellness (social, physical, intellectual, spiritual, emotional and vocational). We hope you'll plan to join us to gather information and resources for your personal wellness journey.

For more information about Pastoral Care, contact Margie Bolte at the church office or margieb@countrysideucc.org

In Loving Memory:

Jim Watke – Jim passed away on April 27 here in Omaha. A memorial service was held at Countryside on May 1, officiated by Dr. Eric Elnes. Jim's wife is Mary. Daughters are Trish (Rich) Barmettler and Joni (Clark) Stacy. Jim was grandfather to Beth, Maria & Sarah Barmettler and Jake, Kate & Jimmy Stacy.

Daniel Wadhams - Daniel passed away on April 27. A memorial service was held at Countryside on May 2, officiated by Rev. Chris Alexander. Daniel's parents are Jeremy and Emily Wadhams. Daniel was baby brother to Valentine and Madeline.

Elizabeth Forbes – Elizabeth passed away April 28 here in Omaha. A memorial service was held at Countryside on May 1, officiated by Rev. Chris Alexander. Elizabeth's daughter is Annette Pitzer.



Countryside
Community Church

United Church of Christ | 8787 Pacific Street | Omaha, NE 68114

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Return Service Requested

402-391-0350 | countrysideucc.org

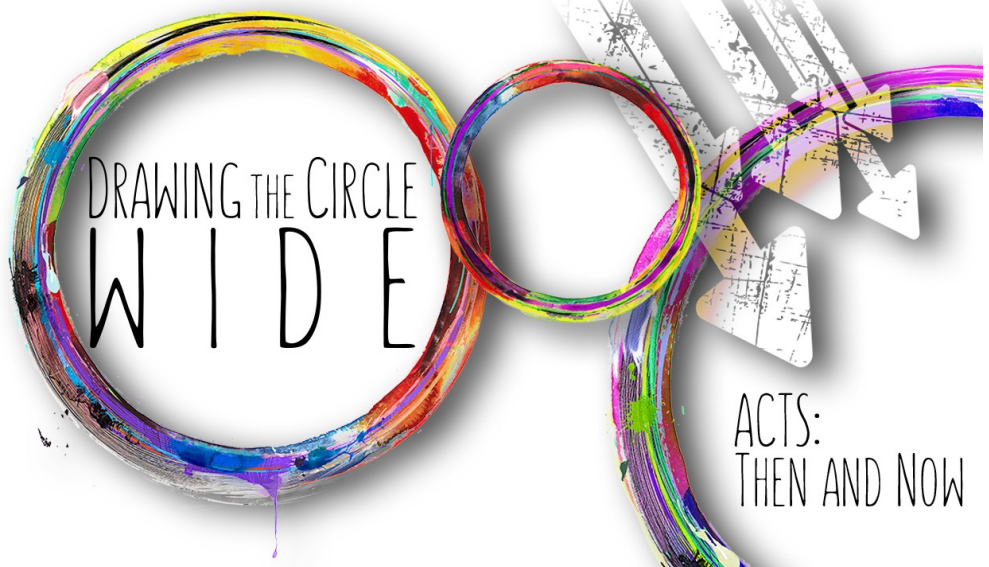
Drawing the Circle Wide

Acts: Then and Now

To find, join, or lead a small group: Contact
Terri Vincent (402-391-0350 ext. 121 or
terriv@countrysideucc.org),

or sign up at the

Information Station on Sundays.



Office Hours -

Church office hours are 8 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Only the main office door will be open during that time. For night activities, access to the church after 4:00 p.m. will be through the northwest door (upstairs by the gym) only.



Countryside
Community Church

Connect with us on Countryside's Facebook at - www.facebook.com/CountrysideOmaha