

DECEMBER



JINGLE AND MINGLE

Countryside Staff would like to cordially invite you and your family to the first ever Staff Open House on Saturday, December 10, from 6 to 7 p.m. Take this opportunity to explore the inner sanctum of Countryside Church and find out where Countryside employees spend their days.

You will find office staff and ministers upstairs in the church offices and music staff downstairs in the choir rooms. Youth pastors will be here as well as staff from Life Ministries, Pastoral Care and the Center for Faith Studies. Meander through the church enjoying light hors d'oeuvres and drinks while chatting with staff.

After meeting the staff, plan on getting together with your friends at Countryside's Jazz Christmas in the Coffee House at 7 p.m. A jazz ensemble including the beautiful voice of Julia Olynyk will

be getting everyone in the Christmas Spirit. There is a \$5 charge which includes coffee drinks and Christmas treats. All ages are welcome.

Information on all of Countryside's Advent Activities can be found throughout this newsletter and at countrysideucc.org/advent.

Christmas Service Schedule

December 24

5:00 PM Jazz Worship
10:00 PM Candlelight Evensong

December 25

11:00 AM Family Worship

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WELCOME TO COUNTRYSIDE



Church Office

8787 Pacific Street, Omaha NE 68114
Phone - 402-391-0350
Email - office@countrysideucc.org
Website - www.countrysideucc.org
Facebook - www.facebook.com/CountrysideOmaha/

Program Staff

Contact information for program staff can be found on individual ministry pages.

Ministers

Rev. Eric Elnes, Ph.D.
Senior Minister, ext. 113
erice@countrysideucc.org

Rev. Chris Alexander
Associate Minister, ext. 130
chrisa@countrysideucc.org

Executive Admin. Assistant

Robyn Hubbard
Executive Admin. Asst., ext. 103
robynh@countrysideucc.org

Business Office

Dan Loven-Crum
Dir. of Admin. & Communication, ext. 102
[danl@countrysideucc.org](mailto:d anl@countrysideucc.org)

Shari Garder
Financial Secretary, ext. 123
sharig@countrysideucc.org

Steve Gomez
Administrative Assistant, ext. 101
steveg@countrysideucc.org

Debbie Vihstadt
Administrative Assistant, ext. 100
debbiev@countrysideucc.org

Jerry Gray
Church Clerk
jerryg@countrysideucc.org

Brian Palmer
Building/Property Coordinator
brianp@countrysideucc.org

Audio/Visual

Nicholas O'Bradovich
AV Tech Leader
nicholaso@countrysideucc.org

Ben Semisch
Videographer
bens@countrysideucc.org

Minister of Spiritual Direction

Rita Otis
Minister of Spiritual Direction, ext. 129
rmotis@outlook.com

WELCOME

We would like to take this opportunity to offer you a warm Countryside welcome. We are a community that places great value on welcoming ALL to an open and affirming community where we celebrate and rest in a God who loves us beyond our wildest imaginations. We invite you to journey with us as we work together with the guidance of the Spirit, seeking those places where we are called to participate with God toward the fullest expression of who we are created to be. As a congregation of the United Church of Christ we believe the greatest expression of the Body of Christ is found in the local congregation, and each person in our community has a unique conversation with God that serves the whole. Countryside is a place where God is still speaking to us and to our community. Each of us is called to discern that voice and act on that discovery. We welcome you and invite you to participate with us in this calling.

OUR MISSION

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 and justice in our conflicted world.

I AM NEW TO COUNTRYSIDE

Sunday Services - 9 AM Classical Service and 11 AM Jazz Service

Nursery - child care (ages 0-2) is available at both Sunday services and for Wednesday evening programs. The Nursery is located on the upper level along the main hallway toward the church's northwest entrance.

Common Grounds Coffeehouse - Between services from 10 AM to 11 AM we invite you to the Commons directly off the Foyer for coffee, donut holes and fellowship.

Information Station is located in the Foyer. If you have any questions or would like to sign up for any church activities, please stop by the Information Station.

Amplified Hearing Devices are available at the Information Station in the Foyer.

Sunday School/Children's Church - see Children's Ministries, page 7.

Free Gift - If you are a first time visitor at Countryside, we invite you to introduce yourself to one of the pastors in the Foyer after the services so we might offer you a gift of our gratitude for visiting with us.

Box, Basket and List - The Box, Basket and List are three ways that Countryside shares our gifts with one another and our community. The Box is a way to share our material possessions with one another and is located in the Foyer. The Basket is Countryside's way of sharing financial offerings with our community for the support of our ongoing program ministries. The baskets are located at the back of the Sanctuary. And the List is the way we share of our time and talent with one another and is printed in the Order of Worship.

Restrooms - Restrooms are available on the main level by the offices and on the lower level by the elevator and by the gym.

Countryside Email list - If you would like to be on Countryside's weekly email list, please contact the church office at office@countrysideucc.org or call 402-391-0350.

STEWARDSHIP - GIVING MADE SIMPLE

We have exciting news about stewardship! The way you're used to thinking about stewardship is changing. The new vision is based on using Giving Made Simple (GMS). GMS is the automated payment of your stewardship support, in whatever interval you want. You can let Countryside pull your funds, use a credit card, push your funds, use donor directed gifting, write an annual check or give stocks to fulfill your financial commitment to Countryside.

What will it do for you? Primarily, it will make your life simpler and it will give you total control to increase or decrease your support. GMS gifts will be considered on-going monthly support rather than annual pledges. Nobody stops their stewardship just because the calendar says December 31. We need everyone to participate in GMS.

But about half of us are not using GMS and we need your help to convert everyone. How can you help? Sign it up and talk it up! If you are using GMS, please share with your friends that it works. Please sign up for GMS or get with someone to help you sign up if you want assistance. (Dan Loven-Crum, [danl@countrysideucc.org](mailto:d anl@countrysideucc.org) or Shari Garder, sharig@countrysideucc.org in the church office, 402-391-0350, are available if you have any questions).



ANNOUNCEMENTS

December 6: Stephen Ministry Leadership Team at 5:30, Jan's office. Also from 6-7:45, Stephen Ministry Peer Support in the Chapel.

December 7: Pastoral Care Board's holiday gathering from 4:30-6:30 at Spezia. RSVP to Jan by December 4 please.

CONCERNS

We continue to lift the following people in our prayers: Jack and Lucille Brawner, Barry and Liz Larson, Mary Mitchell, Ray Huelskamp and Kristabelle Denglinger.

IN MEMORY

Ursula Gardner's husband Bill, 75, passed away October 18. The funeral was at Countryside with Rev. Chris Alexander officiating.

Karen (Jim) Follon's father Cal Haarhues passed away in early November. The funeral was in Colorado.

Shirley Henry, Syd Carne's wife, passed away the week of November 7.

Longtime Countryside member Dottie Otis died November 12. Rita is survived by four adult children and their families: Don (Rita), Tom, Nancy (Keith) Knight and Carol Stolp. There will be a Countryside service on December 20.

Trish Hoffman Ahrens' mother Patricia Hoffman died November 14, and her Countryside funeral was November 22, with Rev. Chris Alexander officiating.

FOR THOSE WHO ARE GRIEVING



Countryside is a caring congregation that offers support to its members in numerous ways. Along with our pastors, who are always willing to provide you with compassionate direction, care and advice when called upon to do so, we have a wonderful support system with our Care Team and Stephen Ministers.

Care Team

The Care Team consists of thoughtful, generous members of the congregation who provide various types of comfort or assistance to those in our church family experiencing times of hardship.

Stephen Ministry

Stephen Ministry is an active lay ministry program within our church that provides confidential Christian support and hope to those who are facing difficulties in their lives.

AGAPE

The AGAPE group has been a ministry of love and support for many decades, providing a warm and loving fellowship opportunity following memorial or funeral services.

QUESTIONS?

For more information about Pastoral Care contact Jan Brown.

Office Phone: (402) 391-0350 ext. 117

Email: janb@countrysideucc.org



Wednesday Night Alive is for all ages! Enjoy a community meal, choir rehearsals and educational opportunities. This is a perfect way to connect with church friends, create new friendships or take time just to breathe!

WNA SUPPERS

Meals are \$5/person or you can purchase a month's ticket for \$20/person not to exceed \$80/family. Place reservations at the Information Station. Meals are served from 5:00 to 6:20 PM. Reservations are greatly appreciated.

See page 10 for the menu.

GRADE/MIDDLE SCHOOL

Choirs

- Joyful Noise (Pre-K): 5:15-5:30 PM
- Carol Choir (gr K-2): 5:15 - 6:00 PM - rm 114
- Pilgrim Choir (gr 3-6): 5:15 - 6:00 PM - rm 117
- Covenant Choir (gr 7-8): 6:15 - 7:00 PM - rm 117

Programs

- Holy Moly (gr K-2): 6:30 - 7:30 PM - rm 112
- Holy Moly (gr 3-4): 6:30 - 7:30 PM - rm 114B
- Core 56 (gr 5-6): 6:30 - 7:30 PM - rm 110
- Confirmation (gr 7-8): 7:00 - 8:00 PM - rm 119

Adult Choirs

- Chancel Choir : 7:30 - 8:45 PM
- Spirit of Grace : 6:20 - 7:20 PM

ADULTS/HIGH SCHOOL

In The Commons

Come hear live music, enjoy barista drinks, and connect with good friends. Occasional programming events, too!

DECEMBER PROGRAMS

- November 30 - December 14- Rabbi Azreal on Jewish traditions, symbols, and culture.

**NO WNA
DECEMBER 21
DECEMBER 28**



SPRING CFS COLLABORATIVE EVENTS

Mark Your Calendars

Sunday, February 26 - Sami Yusuf US Campus Tour- Performance and Q&A, Strauss Performing Arts Center at UNO, tickets are \$30



Sami Yusuf

A Collaborative Event with UNO and Creighton University Muslim Student Associations and Islamic Studies. The Guardian named him “the biggest British star in the Middle East”, Time Magazine dubbed him “Islam’s Biggest Rockstar”, while the United Nations has appointed him a UN Global Ambassador Against Hunger. From the beginning of his career some fifteen years ago, Sami’s music has conveyed a profound sense of the

sacred. Given his strongly held belief that all the world’s traditions are expressions of the same essential spiritual truth, it is natural for him to turn to traditional music as a means to communicate this message. Music for Sami is an expression of Divine love, and this love shines through in all his musical endeavours.

Links for tickets on the Center for Faith Studies website www.centerforfaithstudies.org

March 25-26 - Lisa Sharon Harper, author & Sojourners staffer

Friday night and Saturday interactive workshop on concepts of shalom, race, and working to piece together this broken world.

Institute for Holocaust Education’s Week of Understanding

Tuesday, March 29 at 7 PM - Survivor Speaker: Marion Lazan Blumenthal. Subject of Marion’s Triumph, and Four Perfect Pebbles as featured on PBS.

Sacred Prism: Tri-Faith Prayer Retreat- March 31 and April 1

Deepening your own sense of the sacred while discovering beauty in the spiritual practices of all three Abrahamic Traditions. Imam Bashar Arafat, Rabbi Shefa Gould, and Father Masud Syedullah will lead us through a weekend interfaith prayer retreat exploring the sacred texts, music, chants, and prayers in all three traditions that mark the beauty, mystery,

Great Decisions 2017. Wednesdays from 7 to 8 PM- January 25 through March 22, Chapel.

Great Decisions is America’s largest discussion program on world affairs. The program model involves reading the Great Decisions Briefing Book, watching a 30 minute DVD and discussing the most critical global issues facing America today. After discussions, you can add your opinion to The National Opinion Ballot Report which is presented to the White House, members of Congress, the departments of State and Defense and the national media - a valuable way of sharing the informed opinions of citizens with the people who shape U.S. foreign policy. 2017 topics: European Union, Trade, South China Sea, Saudi Arabia, Oil & Foreign Policy, Latin America, Afghanistan & Pakistan and Nuclear Security. Sign Up at the Information Station starting December 4. Briefing Books are \$25 .

WNA SERIES

A Taste of Judaism- November 30, December 7 and 14

Wednesday Night Alive in the Commons will feature our scholar-in-residence, Rabbi Azriel. Starting at 6:45, come to the Commons and learn a little about Jewish traditions, symbols, and culture. No sign ups necessary – free and open to all.



Rabbi Arieh Azriel



QUESTIONS?

For more information about Center for Faith Studies contact **Kelly Keller**.

Office Phone: (402) 391-0350 ext. 119

Email: kellyk@countrysideucc.org

Website: www.centerforfaithstudies.org

Face book: Center-for-Faith-Studies

JOURNEY GROUPS



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Current Worship Series-Ego Eimi - I Am

We invite our Journey Groups to continue to follow along with the Gifts of the Indigo Tent worship series. The third part of this series which begins November 27 takes us through Advent and Christmas. It is titled Ego Eimi which means "I Am."

This series provides some preliminary answers to Jesus' question, "Who do you say I am?" by exploring how the early Christian community answered the question in the Gospel of John, through Jesus' famous "I am" (ego eimi) statements. What we will find is that the same beauty and majesty that inspired the early Christians and shifted the course of the world a step closer to the Promised Land is still very much alive and may serve as a resource for our journey today.

If you do not presently participate in a journey group and would like to learn about them, please contact Rev. Chris Alexander at Chrisa@countrysideucc.org. She will get you some information and let you know how you might join a group that is already meeting, or how you might start your own group.

We provide each group with resources for discussion each week including group discussions questions, a link to the video of the week's sermon and an attachment with Pastor Eric's weekly commentary on the week's message or a transcript of the sermon. You are never on this journey alone.

Let us know how we can get you started on your journey!

Journey Groups

Journey Groups are small groups that meet weekly to discuss and discover what our still speaking God is calling us to do in our lives, community and the world. In the process, we form deep relationships offering support to one another through life's journey.

New Journey Groups are regularly forming that meet to discuss the current sermon series, watch and discuss Darkwood Brew videos or engage in special small group studies. Join in and dig into some provocative theological discussions while developing lasting relationships. Contact Rev. Chris Alexander to get plugged into a Journey Group.

Free Darkwood Brew Membership

Did you know that as a member of Countryside you have free access to the entire Darkwood Brew video library? You can watch any of the 28 series with topics ranging from forgiveness to the environment at www.darkwoodbrew.org. Use the username: CCCUCC and the password: tryside8787.

QUESTIONS?

For more information about Journey Groups contact Rev. Chris Alexander.

Office Phone: (402) 391-0350 ext. 130

Email: chrisa@countrysideucc.org

Giving Made Simple

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT
COUNTRYSIDEUCC.ORG/GMS

STEWARDSHIP: SEE PAGE 2 FOR DETAILS



December 3 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

COYO stockholders get free childcare to go Christmas shopping without the kids.

Non-stockholders can use our services too, for a small donation.

COYO students will be in the youth room to meet your kids.

see page 6 for details

DISCERNMENT
#40 DAYS
Sunday, December 4 -
Wednesday, January 11

COUNTRYSIDEUCC.ORG/40DAYS

Workshops and panel discussions
Community conversations
Open prayer times and guided meditations
Please contact Rev. Chris Alexander or any member of the Board of Life Ministries for more details.

Visit countrysideucc.org/40days
for a calendar of discernment opportunities.



YOUTH MINISTRIES

COYO SR HIGH

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jersey Shore Mission Trip 2017 , June 10 - 18, 2017

Work with St Bernard Project (sbpusa.org) to rebuild homes on the Jersey Shore that were destroyed by Hurricane Sandy. You will be painting, hanging drywall, cleaning, roofing, siding, and other jobs alongside AmeriCorps members. You will stay at Camp Evans in Township, NJ and work in nearby communities. Cost will be \$500 before fund-raising

Parents Day Out (a benefit of the COYO Stock Sale)

Come take care of the kids of those who supported your summer trips. 11:00AM-4:00PM in the Youth Room (and around church).

UPCOMING EVENTS

Fast Food Progressive Dinner - Sunday, December 18 6:00PM - 9:00PM

Drive around town eating a 4-course "meal" at 4 different restaurants. Ends at church with a White Elephant gift exchange. A White Elephant gift is one that is valued at \$5 or less and is kind of funny. It is not trash. Cost is \$10.

COYO Sr High & Faith Singers Winter Retreat -Saturday, January 7 at 9:00AM through Sunday, January 8 at 5:00PM

Winter fun at YMCA Camp Kitaki. You'll be staying in the Leadership Lodge and sledding on the hill right behind it. Pray for snow! Cost is \$30. Bring bedding and a snack to share. Please bring winter clothes. We will be outside in the cold! Sign up by December 18.

COYO JR HIGH

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Confirmation Break

Confirmation will be on break Wednesdays, December 21 and December 28. Class resumes on Wednesday, January 4.

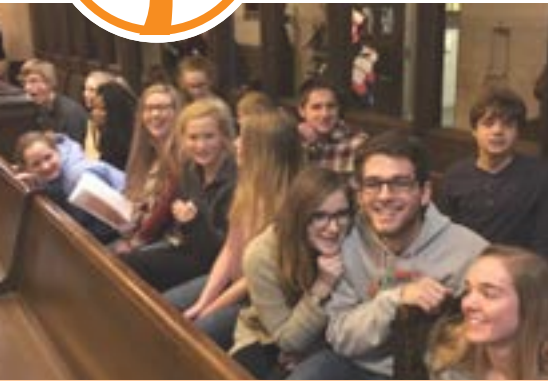
UPCOMING EVENTS

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Drive around town eating a 4-course "meal" at 4 different restaurants. Ends at church with a White Elephant gift exchange. A White Elephant gift is one that is valued at \$5 or less and is kind of funny. It is not trash. Cost is \$10.

Confirmation Outreach at the Community Cupboard - December 3 8:30-11:30 AM

Come help set up the pantry and help people get the food to their cars. This counts as a confirmation outreach. You need 4 per year.



Countryside Youth (CoYo) serves students in grades 7-12. Junior and senior high students are encouraged to participate in a wide variety of activities that develop community, encourage spiritual growth, and serve the wider community in Omaha. Monthly events and summer trips are offered to enhance youth experiences.

Confirmation

Confirmation meets Wednesdays at 7 PM during the school year. It is a two-year program for 7th and 8th graders to explore the Phoenix Affirmations, the Bible, and the church.

Mission Trips

Mission trips help students get hands-on faith experiences. Mission trips include Pine Ridge, inner city, foreign country, and wilderness trips that explore God's creation.

COYO Sr High

COYO Sr High meets during the school year on Sunday evenings from 6 PM to 8 PM, including dinner at 6 PM. The purpose is to build strong and welcoming friendships and serve the community.

COYO Jr High

COYO Jr High meets during the school year on Sunday afternoons from 4:30 PM to 6:30 PM, including dinner at 6 PM. The purpose is to build strong and welcoming friendships, serve the community together, and grow in faith.

QUESTIONS?

For more information about Youth Ministries contact Will Howell.

Cell Phone: (402) 960-0818

Office Phone: (402) 391-0350 ext. 111

Email: willh@countrysideucc.org

www.countrysideucc.org/coyo



CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING FOR DECEMBER WORSHIP SERVICES

December 4- Family Worship

Children remain in the sanctuary with their families.

December 11 - Sunday School

Shepherds and Ancestors and Good News: The author of Luke tells us that the exciting news of Jesus' birth was given first to humble shepherds. We needn't be rich or powerful to be a beloved member of God's family. We celebrate that we are all God's children.

December 18 - Sunday School

Journey of the Wise Men: Wise men studied the stars and studied sacred texts; then they followed their hearts seeking the child whom they believed was born "King of the Jews." We remember their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh...and we think about the gifts we can make to this King.

December 25-Family Worship - 11 AM ONLY

Children remain in the sanctuary with their families.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Wednesday Night Activities

Our Holy Moly and Core 56 groups will meet on December 7 and December 14. We will not meet again until January 4.

Advent Wreath Lighting

Each Sunday in Advent, we will invite a family to come to the Chancel to share a short reflection and light the candles on the Advent Wreath. Please join us every Sunday as we celebrate the season together.

Nursery Ministry-Diaper Changing

Parents we will no longer offer diaper changing while your little one is in the Nursery. Please be sure to leave your cell number when you sign in so that we can contact you for diaper duty. Thanks!

VOLUNTEERS

Nursery Ministry

Our Nursery Ministry is a volunteer-based ministry that is sorely in need of reliable Countryside members to meet this need. This is probably one of the least glamorous volunteer opportunities at Countryside nevertheless—it needs to be done to help create a loving space for not only those members in the nursery but also those members in the Sanctuary, a Center for Faith Studies Talk, and various activities on Wednesday nights.

SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSROOMS

Lower Level

(take stairs or elevator one floor down)

9:00 Service

Room 114A – Grades K-6

11:00 Service

Room 117 – Grades 2-3

Room 114B – Grade 4

Room 112 – Grades 5-6

Upper Level

(same as the sanctuary, chapel, and nursery)

9:00 Service

Room 215 – Pre-Kindergarten

11:00 Service

Room 214 – Pre-Kindergarten

Room 213 – Grades K-1

Children's Education offers programs designed to inspire, explore, and develop a solid faith foundation. Through story, discussion, and experiential activities, our students embark on a Christian path encouraged by enthusiastic study, adventurous approach to Scripture, and cultivation of a strong faith community.

Nursery

Childcare is available during Sunday worship for infants and toddlers ages newborn to two-year-olds. Our nursery volunteers are trained and have passed background checks.

Acolytes

Our Fireflies bring the light of Worship into the Sanctuary each Sunday morning at 9:00 AM. If you are interested in your child becoming an acolyte, contact Rebecca.

Vacation Bible School

Vacation Bible School is a short summer camp designed to immerse our students in a community experience of scripture stories and activities.

Wednesday Night Programming - Holy Moly

During the school year, K through 4th grade students meet for Holy Moly! A Sparkhouse curriculum teaches Bible stories with multimedia, crafts, activities, and storytelling.

Wednesday Night Programming - Core 56

On Wednesday nights, our 5th and 6th grade group delves into scripture study of Jesus's ministry and work. We also fellowship at lock-ins, movie nights, and group suppers.

Sunday School

Our students and teachers engage with scripture and activities with our in-house curriculum through Countryside's theology and faith practices. Sunday School is offered for students pre-K through 6th grade.

Family Worship

Typically held on the first Sunday of each month, Family Worship offers the opportunity to share scripture, message, and communion as a family! Children's Bibles, books, and age-appropriate activity bags are available.

Children's Church

This child-centered Worship celebrates our faith stories with songs, scripture, and discussion while honoring faith practices like Communion, prayer, and stewardship! It's open to children five years old through 6th grade.

QUESTIONS?

For more information about Children's Education contact **Rebecca Morello**.

Office Phone: (402) 391-0350, ext. 109
Email: rebeccam@countrysideucc.org



MUSIC & ARTS MINISTRIES

Countryside has one of the most celebrated music and arts ministries in Omaha. We have excellent opportunities for expressing our faith through the creative arts. Our halls are bustling with activity on weekdays and Sundays as everyone brings their unique creative talents to worship services.

Kids Music

Joyful Noise (Pre-K), Carol Choir (K-3) and Pilgrim Choir (4-6) are designed to allow younger musicians to develop their new music skills for worship. Rehearsals for the Carol and Pilgrim Choirs are on Wednesday evenings 5:15-6:00 PM. Joyful Noise rehearses from 5:15-5:30 PM. Each group sings monthly in worship.

Covenant Choir

Covenant Choir is for youth in grades 7 and 8. They rehearse on Wednesday evenings 6:15-7:00 PM before Confirmation Class in the Junior Choir Room. The choir sings monthly in worship.

Faith Singers

Faith Singers, for high school students, rehearses each Sunday from 4:45-6:00 PM. The choir sings most weeks during the school year.

Spirit of Grace

Spirit of Grace choir for adults, explores a variety of contemporary choral literature and sings once or twice per month. Rehearsals are Wednesdays, 6:20-7:20 PM.

Chancel Choir

The adult Chancel Choir sings selections from the Classical Choral Repertoire weekly in worship. Regular rehearsals are Wednesdays, 7:30-8:45 PM.

QUESTIONS?

For more information about Music & Arts Ministries contact Amy Luckenbill.

Amy Luckenbill
Office Phone: 402.391.0350 ext. 115
Email: amyl@countrysideucc.org
www.countrysideucc.org

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Invitation – Come Sing with Us!

Each year, former Faith Singers (alums) and congregation members who are not able to sing throughout the regular choir year are invited to sing the special music holiday services at Countryside. There are two opportunities and many supporting materials to help you prepare. See the Special Rehearsals heading and the schedule below for details. Contact Amy for additional information and to have a set of materials prepared in advance.

Special Rehearsals

Saturday, December 17 – 10:00 AM to Noon, in preparation for December 18, Sunday Services.

Thursday, December 22 – 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM, in preparation for December 24 Candlelight Evensong Service.

Choirs Schedule for Advent

December 4 at 9 AM enjoy music from Joyful Noise and the Pilgrim choirs. The 11 AM service will include the Covenant Choir, Carol Choir and Faith Singers

December 11 - 9 AM Our Chancel Choir performs. The 11 AM Service will feature Spirit of Grace.

December 18 - at both 9 AM and 11 AM will be the Choral Service. It includes the Chancel Choir, Spirit of Grace, Faith Singers and a brass sextet.

Choirs will be off the weeks of December 25 and January 1.

Details on the choir schedule can be found under Series III at www.countrysideucc.org.

Open House & Coffee House

December 10 is a celebration day at Countryside. Next Saturday evening, beginning at 6 PM, the staff will open their offices and provide light hors d'oeuvres for a progressive open house. Simply start at one of the staff offices and progress through the building until you have visited everyone! Jingle and mingle as you are able, but the rule is NO SHOP TALK! No boards, no budgets, no matching funds (that will be over anyway) - just enjoy each other's company!

When you are finished, make your way to Common Grounds where Countryside Jazz will be playing the Christmas Jazz Coffeehouse. All of your holiday favorites with swinging style. Admission is \$5 at the door. The concert is come and go as you please, but runs from 7 to 9 PM.

THANK YOU

Hanging of the Greens - Visual Arts

The Visual Arts team was hard at work during the weeks leading up to Hanging of the Greens on November 26. They pulled and reworked all of the greenery in the Sanctuary, Foyer, and Common Grounds. The team is still in need of skilled hands to implement visual designs for the sermon series beginning in January. Contact Amy for details on how you can help.

Thank you to all of the volunteers who helped dress the sanctuary and meeting spaces for Advent and Christmas. Special thanks to Bob Newell for doing major construction for the last 4 weeks and Mary Jo Barbush-Weiss, Marian Kaiser, and Ashley Tyler for helping to prep the materials prior to the event.





THE BOX FOR DECEMBER

We are collecting items for “Move-In Kits” that will be distributed through Together. The main items are: Laundry baskets, laundry detergent, dish soap, trash bags, cleaning gloves, buckets and other cleaning supplies. Please pick up a few of these items if you can. If you bring them to Church, they will be given to someone who is moving into new housing and will appreciate your kindness.

SPECIAL CHRISTMAS OFFERING: TOGETHER

Countryside Church was one of several area churches that joined forces after the 1975 tornado disaster in Omaha to help the many families struggling for access to basic needs like food, clothing and shelter. That cooperative effort officially continues today as “Together” helping families who are struggling for these basic necessities of life in Omaha. The funds raised through our Special Christmas Offering are specifically supporting Veterans and their families. You can learn more at togetheromaha.org. If you wish to contribute to this special offering, please make your donation during December using the return envelopes mailed out to members, the special envelopes in the pews, or online: countrysideucc.org/give. Please make checks out to Countryside Community Church with “Special Christmas Offering” on the memo line.

FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR SMALL SERVICE

Countryside members who volunteer with local groups reaching populations in need may be awarded small grants to cover costs of materials and supplies up to \$500. Go to Countryside’s website for the Small Service Groups (SSG) request form and submit your grant application.

QUESTIONS?

If you would like more information regarding Countryside Christian Outreach, email christianoutreach@countrysideucc.org. To find out about how you can volunteer at the food pantry, contact communitycupboard@countrysideucc.org.

Christian Outreach embraces opportunities that reflect appreciation, respect, and love where there was otherwise much neglect - providing funding and service opportunities that nurture lasting change in our congregation, our community, and our world.

The Box

...is where specific items are collected each month to address various needs. “The Suitcase” is where we continuously collect hotel-size toiletries. Both are in the Foyer near the front doors.

Community Cupboard

A large mobile food pantry takes place right here at Countryside on the first Saturday of each month from 8:00-11:30AM. You are invited to come witness this miracle happening!

Holiday Offerings (Christmas and Easter)

Each year the Board of Christian Outreach directs two special mission offerings—the Christmas and Easter offerings. These offerings are given to organizations both locally and internationally.

Small Service Grant (SSG)

Countryside members who volunteer with local groups/ events may apply for a small service grant (SSG) of less than \$500 to cover materials and supplies. Contact us or find the SSG request forms on the church website.

RELOCATION



RELOCATION CAMPAIGN UPDATE

Question: Will our new church building be energy efficient?

The Design Team and Countryside have integrated as many sustainable, high performance features into the existing design as possible within the projected budget.

The value of sustainability has been brought into the design of the building using guidance from LEED, Living Building guidelines, energy code, current building codes and other green building best practices.

Energy - According to computer models our new church design will:

- reduce annual natural gas consumption by 87% over our current building.
- reduce annual electric consumption by 20% over our current building.
- reduce total energy consumption by 60% over our current building.

Materials and envelope - According to computer models our new church:

- exterior wall assembly will be 34% more

energy efficient than new construction code requirements.

- exterior roof assembly will be 58% more energy efficient than new construction code requirements and 45% more efficient than our current building.
- foundation will be 65% more energy efficient than our current building.
- windows will be 18% more energy efficient than our current building.

Water - According to computer models our new church will:

- decrease annual water consumption by 90%.

Emissions - According to computer models our new church will:

- decrease annual CO2 emissions by 59% compared to our current building.

Answer: Yes! Our construction budget (\$23 million of the overall project budget) allows for an environmentally responsible building that meets our current needs and future program needs.



To stay informed of what is happening with the relocation efforts, look for the Relocation icon in Countryside’s communications: the display area outside the church office, weekly C10 emails, monthly newsletter, and the Countryside website www.countrysideucc.org.

QUESTIONS?

If you have questions or comments, see one of the following committee members: Rick MacInnes, Tim Kerrigan, Cyndi Kugler, Paul Nelson, Pam Kregg and Nancy Behringer or email crc@countrysideucc.org.



LIFE MINISTRIES



SOCIAL GROUP UPDATES

Wednesday Night Alive Suppers for December

Dinners run from 5:00-6:20 PM in Memorial Hall. Pre-registration is GREATLY appreciated!

Here is the list of dinners for December (No WNA December 21 or 28).

- December 7: Pizza and salad from Mangia Italiana
- December 14: Tomato Soup and Grilled Cheese provided by FatE committee members.

The suggested donation for Wednesday Night Alive Suppers is \$5/person or you may purchase by the month not to exceed \$80/family. THANKS to Christy Palmer for her organization and coordination of this family-based ministry!

Interplay

Will be held on Saturday, December 10, 9:30-11:30 AM in the Foyer of Countryside Church. For additional information, please contact Rita Otis at rmotis@cox.net.

Lunch Bunch Circle

It's Christmas time and time for Lunch Bunch Circle to take our annual trek to the home of Gloria Ried, 11810 Farnam Street, for our Christmas Pot Luck luncheon. Gloria is the prima donna of hostesses. We play a game, have a devotion, and then make a contribution to the charity of our choice. We have a lovely afternoon. Come and join us. Questions? Marilyn Vincent 402-397-0679

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Holiday Traditions at Countryside...Two for one!

Family Activities Committee members and members of E.T.C. are sponsoring an **Advent Brunch/Workshop** on Sunday, December 4, in Memorial Hall directly following the second service. Advent Workshop has been a long-standing, traditional, family-centered event at Countryside where our children can create hand-made Christmas ornaments. This year, our theme, "Spirit of Christmas Past," centers on ornaments that have been created throughout the years. At the same time, EVERYONE is invited to enjoy a **delicious home-made brunch!** This is a perfect time to share in warm fellowship, the joy of children as they create lasting memories and mementos... and...perhaps we will experience a visit from the "jolly old man" himself! What a beautiful way to begin your Christmas season. Sign up today at the Information Station.

Nominating Committee Members

Thanks to all those who graciously agreed to share their time and talents in leading Countryside for the next three years. To those individuals, please note that you will be receiving a letter of acknowledgement for your commitment to a board by January, 2017. Within that letter will be information on the Annual Meeting, your role in that and additional necessary board information. Should you have any questions prior to or after receiving your letter, please contact the co-chairs of the Nominating Committee; Pam Kregg (pamgg@cox.net) or France Blanchard (fblanchardh@gmail.com).

Life Ministry supports and improves the quality and "wellness" of family life. Life Ministry strives to engage people in a wide variety of social and educational activities for individuals and families. It is designed to strengthen family bonds and provide outreach in support of family members. Life Ministry also brings strength and continuity to Countryside's volunteer base by advising staff and by serving as a conduit between congregation and Countryside's Life Ministry and Volunteer programs.

QUESTIONS?

For more information about Life Ministries contact Mary Beth Link.

Office Phone: (402) 391-0350, ext. 112

Email: marybethl@countrysideucc.org

VOLUNTEER CORNER

THE LIST

The List is the way we share of our time and talent with one another. Each week we lift up an opportunity to volunteer within a specific ministry at Countryside. Check the Order of Worship each Sunday or the weekly email to learn about the List for each week.

Social Media Help

A person versed in Facebook and social media who would like to post pictures after events, post upcoming events, post to community calendars and develop a list of media. If interested contact Dan at danl@countrysideucc.org.

Kitchen Help

Kitchen helpers are needed on Wednesday evenings, 5:30-6:30 PM and Sunday mornings. Contact Mary Beth.

The Community Cupboard Food Pantry

Folks to help set up and distribute food at the November and December pantries on Saturday, December 3. Hours are 7:45-11:30 AM. Contact communitycupboard@countrysideucc.org.

Volunteer Spotlight

In December, our volunteer spotlight shines on The Board of Deacons and the Sanctuary Arts Team! They are the folks who beautifully decorate our church for the holidays. Together, they do an amazing job! The Board and the Sanctuary Arts team are always open to other volunteers who would like to assist or to join their committee. For additional information on both groups, contact the following folks:

Deacons – Bonnie Buckland, Chair (bonniebuckland@outlook.com)

Sanctuary Art Team – Amy Luckenbill (amyl@countrysideucc.org)

Thank You

Thanks to the Board of Christian Outreach for hosting coffee hour on Sunday mornings throughout the month of December. Be sure to chat with one of the board members to learn all the areas that this board represents.

SOCIAL GROUPS

Family Activities Committee

This group offers educational and social opportunities that strengthen family bonds and support all family members. Open to families with children, birth through 12 years old. They meet on the 4th Sunday of each month at 10 AM in the Family Life Office. Contact Mary Beth Link at marybethl@countysideucc.org.

Events that are Totally Cool (ETC)

This group encourages commitment to making church a priority through active participation in fun, faith and fellowship events. Meets on the 2nd Wednesday of the month, 6:30 PM. Contact Mary Beth at marybethl@countysideucc.org.

Knit-n-Wit

Join in the fun as you learn to knit, continue an existing project or teach others to knit/crochet. Open to knitters of all skill-levels. Meets every Wednesday from 6 to 8 PM at Whole Foods. Contact Jeanne Cunningham at jkcunningham@cox.net.

WNA Supper Group

This group consists of volunteers in our congregation. If there is a meal you and your family really love, then share it with the church on Wednesday evenings. Contact Mary Beth at marybethl@countysideucc.org.

Women's Lunch Group

This multi-generational group, open to all women, meets at noon on the 1st Monday of each month at First Watch, 1222 S 71 St. Contact Mary Beth at marybethl@countysideucc.org.

Nine-to-Dine

Consisting of 9 individuals, this group meets on a monthly basis at various restaurants in Omaha or sometimes someone's home for a nice home-cooked meal. Contact Mary Beth at marybethl@countysideucc.org.

Lunch Bunch Circle

This group meets for lunch as well as special programming on the 2nd Monday of each month, September through May. Contact Marilyn Vincent at darellvincent@cox.net.

FAME (Friday Art & Music Experience)

This group dabbles with watercolor paints and adult coloring books. We listen to music, laugh a lot, share stories and a pot of coffee (or two!) and enjoy being together. Contact Pam Kregg at 402-896-3866.

Men's Breakfast Group

This group of Countryside men (all ages) share their breakfast at 7 AM every Tuesday morning at Rockbrook's Garden Café. Contact Mary Beth Link at marybethl@countysideucc.org.

Countryside's Angels Bicycling

This group is open to anyone (all ages) interested in bicycling. They meet periodically when the weather is calling them to ride! Contact Mark Stursma at mstursma@yahoo.com.

Mahjong

This multi-generational group meets weekly on Tuesday afternoons from 1:00-3:00 PM in the Commons. They teach and play Mahjong with anyone who would like to learn. Jeri Lundblad is the coordinator of this group and you may contact her at jeri62lynn@gmail.com for additional information.

EDUCATION GROUPS

Faith and the Environment (Fate)

This group promotes spirituality through environmental education, advocacy and simple acts of kindness within Countryside and beyond. They meet on the 2nd Tuesday of the month, 5:30 PM in the Youth Room. Contact Christy Palmer at christysuepalmer@gmail.com.

LGBTQ 101

LGBTQ 101 is a monthly class held on the 2nd Thursday of each month and is facilitated by PFLAG members. The class covers LGBTQ issues and increases awareness of gender identity and expression. Contact Mary Beth at marybethl@countysideucc.org.

Adult Education

See full listing under Center for Faith Studies on page 4.

Journey Groups

See page 5.

HEALTH & WELLNESS GROUPS

T'ai Chi Chih®

TCC is a series of gentle movements that can be done by anyone. This group meets every Thursday at 10 AM in the Countryside Foyer. Contact Rita Otis at rmotis@outlook.com.

InterPlay

This interactive group meets on the 2nd Saturday of the month, 9:30 - 11:30 AM in the Countryside Foyer. Contact Rita Otis at rmotis@outlook.com.

BOARDS & COMMITTEES

Church Council

Between congregational meetings, the Church Council acts upon all issues facing the Church. They establish the overall policy of the Church and work with the staff on the general direction of the activities of the Church: Meets the 3rd Thursday after the 3rd Tuesday of each month. Contact Jennifer Hamann, Moderator, at moderator@countysideucc.org.

Board of Christian Outreach (BOCO)

This board nurtures outreach projects, coordinates efforts within the church to develop mission themes, and selects organizations to receive special offering grants. Meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 PM. Contact board chair Sarah Miller at swaetzig14@hotmail.com

Board of Christian Education (BOCE)

This board brings strength and stability to Countryside's educational efforts by advising staff and providing both adults and children with educational programs. Meets on the 3rd Monday of each month at 7 PM. Contact board chair Bill Sellgren at sellgren3@cox.net

Board of Arts and Music (BAM)

This board provides sincere, artful and spiritual experiences for the congregation. Meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month, 7:00 PM. Contact board chair Brenda Stursma at brenda.stursma@gmail.com

Board of Life Ministries (BOLM)

This board oversees all social activities, volunteer coordination and family based educational classes held at Countryside. Contact board chair Mary Johnston at zjeesgram@aol.com

Board of Youth (BOY)

This board brings strength and stability to COYO through development, planning and management for our youth programs. Meets on the first Sunday of the month at 6:00 PM. Contact board chair Mike Murphy at mike@nelsonmurphyinvest.com

Board of Trustees

This board oversees the financial and property concerns for Countryside, including stewardship, budgeting process and regular review of the financial position of the church. This board meets on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 6:30 PM. Contact board chair Tim Kerrigan, at tkerrigan@investorsomaha.com

Board of Pastoral Care

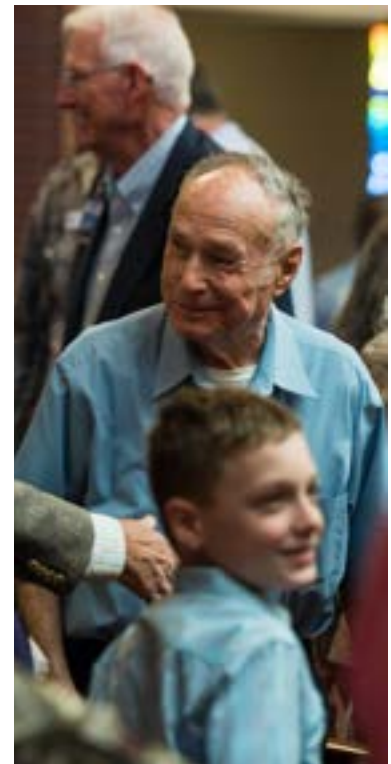
This board promotes staff and lay ministry efforts to support, contact and comfort church and community members, focusing on people facing difficult times in their lives. This board meets quarterly at 5 PM. Contact board chair, Tom Scates at omahascats@cox.net.

Board of Deacons

This board is responsible for any church tasks that are related to worship and fellowship as well as communicating with new members and visitors. Meets on the fourth Tuesday of the month at 7PM. Contact board chair, Bonnie Buckland at bonniebuckland@outlook.com.

Countryside Community Church Charitable Foundation (CCCF)

The Foundation is an independent organization created by the Church to support and supplement the programs and facilities at Countryside. This board is composed of 7 church members. They meet quarterly. Contact Foundation chair, Mike Jones at mjones@ellickjones.com.





Join us this Christmas Season!

December 4 **Advent Workshop**
12:15 p.m. in Memorial Hall
all church brunch and crafts for children

December 10 **Christmas Open House**
6 - 7 p.m. throughout Church
progressive appetizer reception through staff offices

Jazz Christmas
7 - 9 p.m. in the Coffee House
\$5 at the door
jazz ensemble, sweets and treats

December 18 **Choral Service**
9 and 11 a.m. services
featuring adult choirs and brass sextet and organ

see front page for Christmas Service times

Jazz Christmas

December 10
7:00 - 9:00 pm

Coffee House

Join your friends in the Coffee House for Christmas music, coffee and goodies!

\$5 at the door

Advent Workshop

Spirit of Christmas Past

Sunday, December 4
12:15 p.m. in Memorial Hall

enjoy photo-op with our children's
Brunch Surprise Guest Crafts



see page 10 for details

Come enjoy Countryside's

CHORAL SERVICE

Sunday, December 18
9 AM and 11 AM services

Featuring all adult choirs and faith singers with a brass sextet and organ

David Danner's
Arise, Your Light Has Come

Randall Alan Bass
Gloria