

DECEMBER



CHRISTMAS AT COUNTRYSIDE THROUGH THE YEARS



MERRY CHRISTMAS

JOY To the World!

Countryside wishes you and your family a joyful Christmas season!

Join us
Christmas Eve

Monday, December 24

5 PM Family Worship | 10 PM Candlelight Worship

We invite you to celebrate our last Christmas in our present church as we anticipate new Christmas experiences at Tri-Faith Commons.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Welcome - Page 2
- Pastoral Care - Page 3
- Center For Faith Studies - Page 4
- Engaging in Worship - Page 5
- Youth Ministries - Page 6
- Children's Education - Page 7
- Music Ministries - Page 8
- Christian Outreach - Page 9
- Relocation Update - Page 9
- Life Ministries - Page 10
- Get Connected/Tri-Faith - Page 11

WELCOME TO COUNTRYSIDE



Church Office

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

Executive Administrative Assistant

Robyn Hubbard
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debbiev@countrysideucc.org

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bonnieb@countrysideucc.org

Brian Palmer
Building/Property Coordinator
brianp@countrysideucc.org

Audio/Visual

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. 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.

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.

ADVENT DEVOTIONALS

Through the chaos and strain of these days, in the busyness and violence of this world, our Advent prayer pleads, "Come, Lord Jesus!"

The United Church of Christ is offering an advent devotional through The Stillspeaking Writers' Group. This year's theme, "Come, Lord Jesus!", is echoed in the plea of Revelation 22:20. If you long for a world that is illuminated by God's love, join in praying this Advent, "Come, Lord Jesus." If you can long for the renewal of humanity and the end of violence, join in praying this Advent, "Come, Lord Jesus."

The booklet is a unique collection of devotions that includes Scripture and prayer for each day of Advent beginning on December 2 (first Sunday of Advent) and continuing through Christmas Day.

2018 CONTRIBUTION DEADLINE

Please remember to submit your final contributions of 2018 to the church before the end of the year. The IRS looks closely at charitable giving, and we want you to understand that in order for your contribution to be deductible in 2018, your contribution must be postmarked or physically received at the church office by December 31, 2018. Please note that your check date alone will not control which year your contribution applies to.



2018 Advent Devotional, "Come Lord Jesus"



STEPHEN MINISTRY

December 4 - 5:30 PM Leadership Team and 6 PM Peer Support

December 18 - An "Appetizing" Christmas Gathering with the Pastoral Care Board at Linda Bannister's House. See emails for details.

STAFF APPRECIATION

Thank you, Countryside, for joining the Pastoral Care Board in honoring the church's program staff with our trivia game on October 21 between worship services. Who knew that one of the staff had ever been hit by a car?! Then, for round two on November 15, the entire Countryside staff enjoyed lunch together and shared gratitude stories.

FAME(OUS) GRATITUDE

Thank you to our talented and caring FAME group for their dedicated fellowship, and also for contributing artwork for our birthday cards, sympathy cards and seasonal greeting cards. The Pastoral Care Thanksgiving card this year was designed by Gloria Ried. And a very special thank you to Margie Bolte and Pam Kregg for their amazing leadership of this treasured Friday morning community. Interested in joining? FAME meets on Fridays at 10 AM in Memorial Hall, and all are welcome.

IN MEMORIUM

David (Karen) Peterson's mother, Arlene Peterson, passed away November 15; her funeral was at First Lutheran Church in Blair.

It is with sadness that your Board of Christian Outreach shares that Toshihiro Takami, the founder and Honorary President of the Asian Rural Institute (Nasushiobara, Tochigi, Japan) (ARI) passed away on September 6. He was 91 years old. ARI was the recipient of Countryside's 2017 Christmas Offering. Rev. Roger Manners, the founding pastor of Countryside, was Rev. Dr. Takami's mentor, and was instrumental in helping Takami set up ARI. Rev. Manners was the primary fundraiser for ARI in North America for many years. Countryside has been a major benefactor of ARI ever since.

LET'S STAY TOGETHER (ISN'T THERE A SONG?)

Thank you again, Countryside, for taking the time to read our prayer chain or the Joys and Concerns each week and for lifting the needs in loving prayer. You are each ministering to the Countryside community but also to the wider one, anywhere in the country or the world. Here are some special 2018 memories for which we can be especially grateful:

- Your smiles when you see each other – whether it's in the Commons or in a hospital room.
- All of our new members and the unique gifts they will be sharing with us in the years to come.
- Experienced and brand new Stephen Ministers and how they've served in some unique ways this past year: praying with others during Lenten services, sitting with Jerry Brown for a few weeks, and learning about "wholly, holy listening" at a fall retreat.
- Your dedication to helping each other with rides, medical equipment, meals, visits, Agape service and prayers are truly humbling to see every single week. Pastoral Care is indeed a church-wide activity.
- The humility of a manger, the majesty of how far God travels to find us, and the hope that lives in our hearts.
- 8787 Pacific: As we celebrated our last Thanksgiving, and as we celebrate our last Advent Season and Christmas in our current and beloved building, thank you to this faith community. For decades or maybe just a few years or weeks, you've been doing God's work – an act of faith which has required your trust. So thank you for trusting that our work will continue and expand into 2019 as we venture, together, further west and further into love. Praise be.

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

NEW MEMBERS

Countryside Community Church is thrilled to welcome the following people as new members following their induction on Sunday, November 11 at the 11 AM service:

Marcia Blum	Dale Jones
Lillian Chapman	John Kohler
Michael Free	and Dave Wingert
Joyce Gamble	Chase Kratochvil
Allie Green	and Kristen Patterson
Amanda and Jason Harvey	Linda Ashley Leamer
Amelyka Hendrix	Gloria and Rich Mannel
and Erin Mommsen	Kim and Ed Schwartz
Linda Hines	





The Center for Faith Studies provides learning opportunities for the faithfully inquisitive Countryside Community. We encourage lifelong learning, growth and deepening understanding utilizing current scholarship through the CFS community lecture series, adult education classes and community partnerships.

Sunday Adult Forum

Meets at 10:10 AM in the Pilgrim Room. Currently studying "The Era of the Crusades."

Adult Ed Brown Bag Lunch

Mondays at 12:15PM in the Chapel, bring a lunch. Currently studying *The Celtic World* by Great Courses.

Racial Justice

Currently reading Malcolm Gladwell's *Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking* and/or *Blind Spot: Hidden Biases of Good People* by Mahzarin Banaji and Anthony Greenwald. Contact Mary Jo Weiss (mjbarbeiss@gmail.com) for meeting information.

Books Bible and Beyond

Wednesdays at noon in the Chapel. Studying *Days of Awe & Wonder* by Marcus Borg.

Convergence University

If your group is interested in Convergence University curriculum and would like access to additional resources provided from the *This We Affirm* website, please contact Chris Alexander at chrisa@countrysideucc.org for login information.

Darkwood Brew Membership

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.

Username:CCUCC Password: tryside8787

QUESTIONS?

For more information about Center for Faith Studies contact Rev. Dr. Chris Alexander

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

Email: chrisa@countrysideucc.org

or Courtney Holiday, CFS Admin. Assistant

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

Email: courtneyh@countrysideucc.org

Website: www.centerforfaithstudies.org

Face book: Center-for-Faith-Studies

CFS UPCOMING EVENTS

Silent Sacrifice -The Story of Japanese American Incarceration in California's San Joaquin Valley and Beyond - Thursday, January 17, 2019, 7 PM

A documentary film sharing the experience of Japanese Americans before, during and after WWII and the ramifications of Executive Order 9066, which authorized the internment of tens of thousands of American citizens of Japanese ancestry and resident aliens from Japan. Free and open to the public!



Dr. Joe Starita - A Warrior of the People: The Story of Dr. Susan La Flesche Thursday, February 28, 2019, 7 PM



On March 14, 1889 – 31 years before women could vote and 35 years before Natives were considered citizens in their own country – Dr. Susan La Flesche overcame enormous racial and gender barriers to become the nation's first Native American doctor. Her story is one of unimaginable courage and extreme devotion to her beloved Omaha Indian people. Tickets are \$10 on eventbrite.com or at the door.

CFS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Center for Faith Studies is finalizing its lecture series for 2019-2020, and beginning to look to the 2020-2021 program year. We are discussing the possibility of changing our structure a bit to allow for individual events on specific social justice and environmental concerns and how best to present these issues to our community. We are also considering the possibilities for beginning an annual conference on spirituality which might include a combination of speakers, workshops, experiential opportunities and learning new practices from a broad spectrum of traditions. If you are interested in these planning discussions we would love for you to bring your imagination and suggestions to the conversation. Please leave your name and contact information at the Information Station of contact Rev. Dr. Chris Alexander at chrisa@countrysideucc.org



CENTER FOR FAITH STUDIES

ADULT EDUCATION

Sunday Adult Forum - Sundays, 10:10 AM, Pilgrim Room

New Study Beginning - The Era of The Crusades - Great Courses

What were the forces that led to one of history's most protracted and legendary periods of conflict? How did they affect the three great civilizations that participated in them? And, ultimately, why did they end and what did they accomplish? In these lectures, you'll look at the "big picture" of the Crusades as an ongoing period of conflict involving Western Christendom (we would now call it Western Europe), the Byzantine Empire, and the Muslim world. From this perspective, you'll study the complex but absorbing causes of the Crusades, which include the many political, cultural, and economic changes in Western Europe after the fall of the Roman Empire.

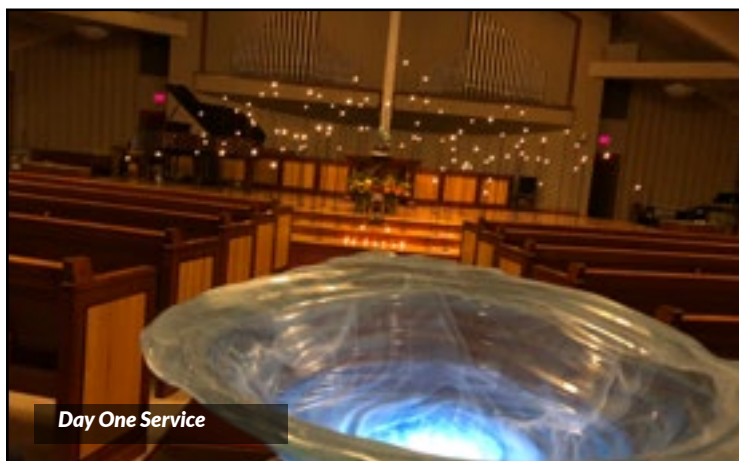
LtQ2 (Living the Questions)

Wednesdays, 6:30-7:30 PM

LtQ2 is an open-minded study that strives to create an environment where participants can interact with one another in exploring what's next for Christianity. LtQ2 consists of 21 sessions including: "Invitation to Journey," "Honoring Creation" and "Call to Covenant." LtQ2 includes a 20 minute video with leading voices of faith, plus weekly readings and discussion questions. Rev. Dr. Chris Alexander facilitates a group discussion following the video. For more information contact Chris at chrisa@countrysideucc.org.



ANNOUNCEMENTS



Day One Service

Advent Series: Christ in Seven Carols

Join us in Advent to contemplate the significance of Christ's coming through Advent and Christmas Carols, both familiar and unfamiliar. Each service will feature a carol, its scriptural and historical background, and a reflection on what the carol tells us about Jesus and his significance for our world today. You may find something old and familiar about Jesus in an unfamiliar carol, and something new and exciting in an old favorite. In a sense, this series embodies what we are experiencing as we celebrate our last Christmas in our present church building; discovering something new in the familiar, and, as we anticipate new Christmas experiences at Tri-Faith Commons, discovering something old in the unfamiliar. This promises to be an enchanting and inspirational series. Why not bring a friend?

December 2: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

December 9: O Morning Star

December 16: Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

December 23: Down to Earth

December 24 CHRISTMAS EVE: Joy to the World and Silent Night

December 30: A Stable Lamp Is Lighted

Travel to Israel with Rev. Dr. Eric Elnes in 2019

Is a trip to Israel on your bucket list? If so, we have the trip for you. Rev. Dr. Eric Elnes is leading a trip to Israel and the Palestinian Territories November 3 through 16, 2019. This may be one of the most remarkable tours you will ever consider.

An ancient historian once wrote, "the land itself is the fifth gospel." He saw the impact of ancient trade routes and crossroads upon Bible literature; how the land itself influenced people's understanding of themselves, their relationship with others, and even their relationship with God.

Standing at breath-taking vistas, viewing ancient crossroads, walking ancient Bible paths that Jesus and the prophets knew provides an exciting step toward making the pieces of the Bible fit together. In Dr. Elnes's words, visiting this land "turns reading the Bible into a 3-D experience for the rest of your life."

Drawing on Dr. Elnes's profound biblical and historical knowledge (Ph.D. in Biblical Studies from Princeton Theological Seminary), as well as an in-country guide who is a legend among guides in Israel (Dr. Stephen Langfur), we will travel everywhere from the Dead Sea in the south to the town of Dan in the furthest north.

Along the way, we will focus on the center of Jesus's public ministry around the regions and shores of the Sea of Galilee. We will sail the sea on a double scale replica of a fishing boat found in our lifetime on the northern shore. In Jerusalem we will sit on the Temple Steps in the Ophel Ridge and reconsider the Kingdom Parables of Jesus in Luke 19-21. One prominent Jewish scholar insists this is the one place where we may say with certainty that Jesus actually was and where He taught parables. We will walk on the ancient Herodian pavement that was familiar to Jesus, adjacent to the Western Wall. All this and more! More information at the Information Station or contact Robyn Hubbard, robynh@countysideucc.org

WORSHIP

Worship Planning team meets 9-Noon on Wednesdays in the Conference Room

For more information about Worship contact Rev. Dr. Eric Elnes

Office Phone: (402) 391-0350 ext. 113

Email: erice@countysideucc.org

FIRST WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH

WEDNESDAY NIGHT DINNER



Next Dinner: December 5, 5 - 6:15 PM

MEMORIAL HALL [details page 10](#)

Travel with Rev. Dr. Eric Elnes to:

ISRAEL

NOVEMBER 2019



[details page 5](#)



YOUTH MINISTRIES

COYO SR HIGH

UPCOMING EVENTS

Progressive Dinner and Gift Exchange - Sunday, December 16 - 6:00-10:00 PM

This year COYO Sr High will be going to 4 homes of COYO families for dinner. Let Will know if you would like to host a course. Bring a white elephant gift to exchange (funny gift valued at \$5 or less, not trash).

Toys for Pine Ridge - Sunday, December 2 - 6:00-8:00 PM

COYO Sr High dinner at 6:00PM, then shopping for toys for Pine Ridge. You can bring money to donate to increase the amount of toys we buy.

COYO Sr High leaves for the Ski Trip! -Wednesday, December 26 - 8:00 AM

You can follow the ski trip at <http://facebook.com/coyosrhigh>

COYO Sr. High and Faith Singers

No COYO Sr High or Faith Singers on December 23 or 30. Resumes on January 6.



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.

COYO Jr High

COYO Jr High is taking a break from the Sunday afternoon group sessions for the short term. Stay tuned for more information. The purpose is to build strong and welcoming friendships, serve the community together, and grow in faith.

Confirmation

Confirmation meets Wednesdays 6:30 -7:30 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.

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.

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.

Choirs

Faith Singers (high school) meets 4:45- 6:00 PM Sundays and sings twice a month in church. They also go on tour every summer.

Confirmation Singers (7-8 grade choir) meets Wednesdays 5:45 - 6:30 PM and sings once a month in church.

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

COYO JR HIGH

UPCOMING EVENTS

Fast Food Progressive Dinner - Friday, December 21 - 6:00-10:00PM

Come have dinner one course at a time at 4 different fast food restaurants. Bring \$5 and a white elephant gift to exchange (funny gift valued at \$5 or less, not trash). Maybe bring Pepto too!

Confirmation

No Confirmation on December 26 or January 2. Confirmation resumes January 9.

COYO Jr High on Sunday evenings

COYO Jr High is taking a break from Sunday afternoons. Stay tuned for more information.



A COYO meeting in Nov.



Will treats at Coneflower



Is Kyle actually sleeping?



CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING FOR DECEMBER SERVICES

December 2 - Family Worship

Our children remain in the Sanctuary for the Worship service! Activity bags and books are available to borrow on a cart in the Foyer.

December 9- Sunday School

The Beauty of the Magnificat—Mary emptied herself of her worries and fears, making herself open to God within her. Once she accepted God's invitation, she celebrated with song!

December 16 - Children's Church

Children will process together to the Chapel for child-centered worship.

December 23 - Sunday School

The Innkeeper and the family-- Today, we imaginatively enter Mary and Joseph's trip to Bethlehem and the events leading to the birth of Jesus using scripture, history and our imaginations to expand the story and bring it alive to each of us.

December 30 - Children's Church

Children will process together to the Chapel for child-centered worship.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY REGISTRATIONS

To register your student for Sunday School, Holy Moly or Core 56, please check the website: countrysideucc.org/learning-together/childrens-ministry/.

CORE 56 LOGO IDEAS

Check out these new logo ideas for Core 56! Get a good look because in January—we'll vote on the one we like best.



NURSERY

Open Position

The Nursery ministry is looking for a new staff member! If you know anyone who is 18 or older, enjoys spending time with children, and can pass a background check, please have them visit countrysideucc.org/about-us/openpositions/. Applicants need not be members of Countryside. In the meantime, we are looking for a few folks who would be willing to help fill in the gaps on Sundays and Wednesday evenings. This is a paid position so if you'd like to earn a little extra dough, contact Rebecca!



TRI-FAITH KIDS

Visit trifaith.org/events/interplay-events/ for information about this year's schedule. For more information, please contact Anji Stanek at anjistanek1@gmail.com and put Tri-Faith Kids in the subject line.

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 and Wednesday nights from 6-8 PM for infants and toddlers ages newborn to two-year-olds.

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.

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.

9:00 Service - Upper Level
Nursery - Pre-K
Room 114A - Grades K-6

11:00 Service - Upper and Lower Level
Room 117 - Grades 2-3
Room 114B - Grade 4
Room 112 - Grades 5-6
Room 214 - Pre-K
Room 213 - Grades K-1

Children's Church

Upper Level in Chapel - 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.

Wednesday Night Programming - Holy Moly

Lower Level - During the school year on Wednesdays from 6:30-7:30, 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

Lower Level - On Wednesday nights from 6:30-7:30, our 5th and 6th grade group delves into scripture study of Jesus's ministry and work. We also enjoy fellowship at lock-ins, movie nights, and group suppers.

QUESTIONS?

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

Email: rebeccam@countrysideucc.org



MUSIC & ARTS MINISTRIES

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Hanging of the Greens

The Board of Art and Music is seeking volunteers for our annual Hanging of the Greens on Saturday, December 1, from 9 to 11 AM. We will be decorating trees, hanging greens and preparing our church for the season of Advent. What a great way to start the Advent Season! To volunteer, please sign up at the Information Station or visit the link to sign up in the C10 weekly email.

Staff Open House and Coffeehouse Jazz Christmas, Saturday, December 15

Staff Holiday Open House, 6 - 7 PM

You're cordially invited to visit the staff of Countryside Community Church on Saturday, December 15. Starting at 6 PM, the Countryside Staff staff will be hosting a progressive open house. Wander from office to office, meet and greet each staff member and enjoy a variety of delectable Christmas treats. The Open House ends at 7 PM, just in time for you to attend the Jazz Christmas Coffeehouse in the Common Grounds.

Jazz Christmas Coffeehouse, 7 PM

Join us on Saturday, December 15, at 7 PM for an evening of Christmas jazz performed by Countryside's jazz band. You'll hear all of your old favorites with that smooth jazz vibe. Specialty coffee drinks and Christmas cookies will be served. This popular event fills up fast so come early! Get there early enough and you can also make the rounds at the Staff Holiday Open House. Childcare is provided for this event. Please RSVP your childcare needs to Rebecca at rebeccam@countrysideucc.org by Friday, December 15, at 12 PM.



Advent Shadow Boxes - CANCELED

The artistic offering has been delayed to Advent 2019. Unfortunately, there are more days in the Advent Calendar (16 to be precise) than there are artistic offerings. To those who expressed interest, we appreciate your willingness to participate this year and hope you will sign-up next year. We're excited to continue this artistic practice in our new building!

Christmas Eve Choir, December 24, at 10 PM

Chancel Choir and Spirit of Grace cordially invites anyone who loves to sing but doesn't have the time to commit to a weekly rehearsal schedule to join them in singing at the 10 PM service on Christmas Eve. This includes former adult choir members and Faith and Confirmation Singer Alumni returning from college and work to visit family and friends. There are two rehearsals for your convenience: Wednesday, December 19, 6:30 - 7:45 PM and Sunday, December 23 12:30 - 2 PM. We'll be singing three to four pieces, all of which will be familiar to you. No need to sign-up, just show up at the rehearsals or on Christmas Eve as we will be rehearsing ahead of time. Rehearsal time on Christmas Eve is yet to be determined. Please join us for this wonderful musical Christmas homecoming!

Staffing Plan for Art and Music Ministry

The Personnel Committee and the Board of Art and Music announces staffing plans to support current art and music ministries. The plan ensures current programming is staffed appropriately to continue as originally scheduled while enabling a thorough discernment period to evaluate our current situation, plan for the future, and provide a smooth transition into our new building. The plan has three phases: Stop-Gap, Interim Period, and Long-Term Solution. During the Stop-Gap period, which runs from November through January 2019, Alex Ritter will act as the Artistic Director providing artistic direction, program administration, and personnel management. The Chancel Choir and Spirit of Grace will be lead by Bruce Blanchard and Tyler Gruttemeyer respectively, and the Arts Affirmation Program will be administered by Will Howell.

Phase 2, the Interim Period, runs from February 2019 through March / April 2020. During this time, a team consisting of Moderators, Ministers, Staff and Board members will develop a staffing structure to support current and future needs. This is followed by recruitment of new hires and plan implementation. The Interim Period aligns with the relocation to the Tri-Faith Commons and the installation of our new Buzard Pipe Organ.

Updates will be provided as the plan develops.

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.

Arts Affirmation

Children in K through 6th grade will have opportunities to explore all types of performance and media arts in a project-based arts curriculum. All projects are designed around the twelve Phoenix Affirmations. Sunday afternoons 4:30 - 6:00 PM.

Confirmation Singers

Confirmation Singers is for youth in grades 7 and 8. They rehearse on Wednesday evenings 5:45-6:30 PM 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 twice a month during the school year.

Spirit of Grace

Spirit of Grace choir for adults explores a variety of contemporary choral literature and sings twice per month. Rehearsals are Wednesdays, 6:45-7:45 PM.

Chancel Choir

The adult Chancel Choir sings selections from the Classical Choral Repertoire weekly in worship. Regular rehearsals are Wednesdays, 5:30-6:40 PM

QUESTIONS?

For more information about Music & Arts Ministries contact:

Alex Ritter
Acting Artistic Director
Email: alexr@countrysideucc.org

www.countrysideucc.org



THE BOX FOR DECEMBER

The Box for DECEMBER will be Omaha's Indian Hills Elementary School. We are collecting warm hats, gloves, scarves, mittens and coats for the children. Indian Hills Elementary is the oldest public school building in Omaha. It continues to include some families of parents and grandparents who also attended the school. Indian Hill continues to serve a naturally integrated and diverse group of students. Of the approximately 650 students, 24% are African American, 64% are Hispanic, 8% are Caucasian, and 2% are Native American. Your help is needed to ensure these children will be warm and safe throughout Omaha's wintery months.

YOUR BOARD OF CHRISTIAN OUTREACH 2018 CHRISTMAS OFFERING

Your Board of Christian Outreach (BOCO) is pleased to share with you that Los Chavalitos is the recipient of the 2018 Christmas Offering. During this Christmas season, please help us continue our dedication to the members of the Los Chavalitos community and make a financial gift to support health and hope for families who rely on this clinic. Los Chavalitos provides life-saving measures, and they need our help.

Since its inception 26 years ago, Los Chavalitos has served thousands of patients, the majority of them residing in nearby poverty-ridden barrios (neighborhoods). The focus of the clinic has evolved into a strong community outreach, with an active casa base (base house) program and physician services offered in the clinic five days per week. The 18 female owners of the base houses are respected members and leaders of their communities. They receive ongoing training and support from Los Chavalitos in recognizing and treating early signs of diarrhea, pneumonia, dengue fever, and other common diseases. They are supplied with suero (oral rehydration salts), which can be dispensed with instructions to the caretakers of the dehydrated children.

Countryside's assistance is needed to ensure that Los Chavalitos can continue this programming and make a difference in their community. Donations can be made through special offering envelopes found in the pews on Sunday mornings, by mailing in your donation or by visiting countrysideucc.org/give for your online donations.

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 9:00-11:30AM. 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)

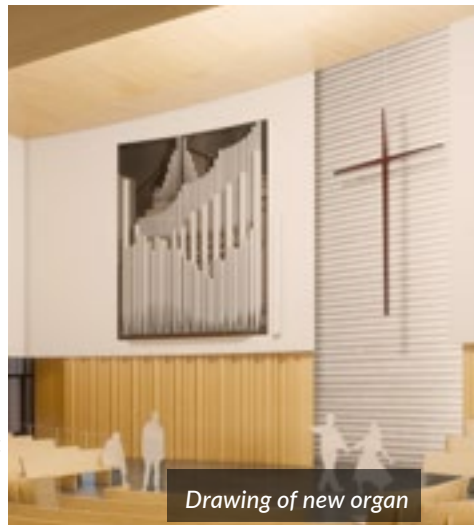
Countryside members who volunteer with local groups/ events may apply for a small service grant (SSG) of less than \$500 to cover materials and supplies. Contact us or find the SSG request forms on the church website.

RELOCATION UPDATE

DECEMBER UPDATE - NEW ORGAN

The CRC and the Organ Committee were presented with a virtual tour of our sanctuary with the new organ design in place. Our response was...well, we were blown away!

David Wilson of the architectural firm, HGA, joined us online from Minneapolis to show us the continuing fruits of their collaboration with organ builder, John Paul Buzard. Rick MacInnes, CRC chair, shared photos of the design with the congregation at both church services on November 18. The new organ features more than 2000 pipes. Additional pipes can be added in the future. The contemporary design of the organ compliments our sanctuary design. The cross continues to be the focal point of the chancel. This most generous gift made by Gloria and Roy Dinsdale to Countryside will be one of the finest organs in Omaha. We have much to look forward to and be thankful for this holiday season.



Drawing of new organ

ATTENTION COOKIE BAKERS!

We want to thank the many people working to build our new church home by taking cookies to them the first three Mondays in December. If you would be willing to bring in a dozen or so cookies, please sign up on the sheet by the main office doors. Cookies should be in disposable containers and may be brought to the church office on Sundays. The cookies will be taken to the construction site the next day. Thank you for your help in spreading holiday cheer to our construction crews.



PLEDGE NOW

www.countrysideucc.org/pledge

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



ALL CHURCH FAMILY EVENTS

Advent Workshop 2018 - Saturday, December 1, 9:00-11:00 AM in Memorial Hall join friends and family for the annual Advent Workshop. The children will be creating 6 different craft "treasures" centering around the themes of Faith, Family and Friends! This will be a great morning as the children from the food pantry and our church kiddos come together for the Advent Workshop. We always welcome any additional volunteers who would enjoy working with children of all ages as they create their holiday crafts. What an outstanding start to the holiday season! (Advent Workshop is sponsored by the Family Activities Committee) Sign up/prepay at the Information Station.

First Wednesday Night Supper #3 and the last of 2018 will happen on Wednesday, December 5, 5:00-6:15 PM in Memorial Hall. These monthly dinners provides and opportunity for our church family to gather together, relax after a long day and best of all NOT COOK DINNER! This gathering will feature a pizza supper with salad, and dessert. Cost of the meal is \$8/person and \$2/child. Paid reservations are GREATLY appreciated! Sign up/pre-pay at the Information Station.

LIFE MINISTRY ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES

Equality 101: Orientation and Gender Identity Orientation and Gender Identity will be presented on TUESDAY, December 11, 6:00-7:00 PM in the Commons at Countryside Community Church. This frank and open discussion exploring the basic science surrounding the biology, orientation and gender identity of our sexuality, the impact of bias on these issues and an outline of the services available to families, professionals and organizations. A suggested donation of \$25/person may be paid at the class or you may reserve your seat by emailing: info@EqualityAdvancement.com. (Sponsored by Countryside's Board of Life Ministry.)

SOCIAL GROUP UPDATE

Ladies Lunch group will meet on Monday, December 3 at First Watch at Noon. No need to sign up, just come and be ready to enjoy a great meal, warm conversation with women from Countryside Church, Temple Israel and AMI and lots of laughter! See you there!

Lunch Bunch Circle will meet on Monday, December 10 at the home of Gloria Ried for their holiday pot luck and Christmas party. Marj Sambasile will present a program on her "Hardanger" needle work. Contact Gloria Ried at 402-333-3115 if you would like additional information.

Family Activities Committee members will NOT MEET in DECEMBER. Wishing you all a blessed and family-filled Christmas.

Interplay will NOT MEET in December. information or questions, please contact Rita Otis at rmotis@outlook.com.

Tai Chi Chih classes will NOT MEET on Thursday, December 27. They will be meeting on December 6,13, and 20 in the Foyer from 9:30-10:30 AM. Please contact Rita Otis at rmotis@outlook.com should you have questions.

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@countysideucc.org

VOLUNTEER CORNER

The Community Cupboard Food Pantry

Folks are needed to help set up and distribute food at the pantry on Saturday, December 1. We need 60 volunteers every month. Hours are 7:45-11:30 AM. Contact communitycupboard@countysideucc.org.

Kitchen helpers are needed!

Countryside's four kitchens need a group of folks who are willing to come in weekly to clean countertops, empty dishwashers, wipe down appliances and do some general light cleaning so our kitchens are a healthy and more inviting place to work. Contact Mary Beth for more information.

Thank you!

Thanks to the Board of Christian Outreach for hosting coffee hour throughout the month of November. Be sure to stop one of the board members to learn more about what that Board is responsible for and how you might help.

Family Activities Committee (FAC) and E.T.C. Social Group

Countryside's two social committees dedicated to family life are always open to new people! If you enjoy working with a wide variety of folks, enjoy a good party or just like being around a delightful group of folks then one of these groups is for you. Stop by the Information Station and talk to Mary Beth to learn more.

Volunteers needed for our upcoming move!

Are you a packer? Are you the person who loves sorting and throwing things away? How are you with labeling boxes, packing tape and hysterical church staff? If any of these areas interest you, please stop by the Information Station to sign up as we begin organizing personnel to help us with the move. The Board of Life Ministry is coordinating this adventure and they NEED YOUR HELP!

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 Life Ministries Office. Contact Mary Beth Link at marybeth@countysideucc.org.

Events that are Totally Cool (ETC)

This multigenerational group encourages commitment to making church a priority through active participation in fun, faith and fellowship events. Meets on the 4th Wednesday of the month, 6:30 PM. Contact Mary Beth at marybeth@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.

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 marybeth@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 marybeth@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 Gloria Ried at g-g.ried@cox.net or 402.333.3115.

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. Meets Fridays at 10:00 AM. 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 marybeth@countysideucc.org.

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.

BOARDS & COMMITTEES

See countysideucc.org/about-us

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 9:30 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.

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 3rd Tuesday of the month, 6:30 PM in the Youth Room. Contact Christy Palmer at christysuepalmer@gmail.com.

Adult Education

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



trifaith.org
americanmusliminstitute.org

templeisraelomaha.com

TRI-FAITH - A FAITH MATTERS TALK

Tuesday, December 11, 12 PM, Temple Israel
-The Other Peace Process: Inter-Religious Dialogue As A Form of Peace Building In Israel and Palestine

During this Faith Matters Talk, Rabbi Kronish will discuss the theory and practice of inter-religious dialogue, education and action in Israel and Palestine. Through memorable incidents and inspirational stories, he offers insights into the obstacles and challenges, as well as the achievements and successes of inter-religious dialogue and action programs.

Tuesday, December 11, 7 PM, Barbara Weitz Community Engagement Center, 6400 University Drive South

This in depth lecture will focus on the complex political, religious and historical issues Israel faces today. A seasoned dialogue-partner with Muslims and Christians, Rabbi Kronish will share his experience building relations with Palestinian Arabs in Israel.

SPOTLIGHT ON CLERGY - RABBI BEREZIN ASSOCIATE RABBI, TEMPLE ISRAEL

Rabbi Deana Sussman Berezin is a native of St. Louis, Missouri. She served as the Rabbi Educator at Central Reform Congregation, a vibrant congregation of 780 households in the city of St. Louis. Rabbi Berezin attended HUC-JIR in Los Angeles. She earned a Master of Arts in Jewish Education and was ordained in May of 2014. In addition to student pulpits at Temple Beth Torah, Temple Beth Shalom, Beth Knesset Bamidbar, and at the China Lake Naval Air and Weapons Station, Rabbi Berezin served as the Harold M. Schulweis Rabbinic Intern at Jewish World Watch, an organization that promotes education, advocacy and action around issues of genocide and mass atrocities. She had a second rabbinic internship at Our House Grief Support Center, providing pastoral care to both children and adults. Prior to her enrollment in rabbinic school, Rabbi Berezin attended Indiana University, graduating Phi Beta Kappa with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Jewish Studies and Religious Studies and a double minor in Hebrew and Psychology. Rabbi Berezin married Jared Berezin in 2016.



HOLIDAYS

Jewish

Hanukkah December 2-10, 2018

Hanukkah (alternately spelled Chanukah), meaning "dedication" in Hebrew, refers to the joyous eight-day celebration during which Jews commemorate the victory of the Maccabees over the armies of Syria in 165 B.C.E. and the subsequent liberation and "rededication" of the Temple in Jerusalem. The modern home celebration of Hanukkah centers around the lighting of the hanukkiyah, a special menorah for Hanukkah; foods prepared in oil including latkes (potato pancakes) and sufganiyot (jelly doughnuts); and special songs and games.

Hanukkah, a holiday primarily celebrated at home, begins on the 25th day of the Hebrew month of Kislev and is observed for eight days. In the Talmud, the rabbis taught that the mitzvah of Hanukkah, the commandment at the heart of the observance of the holiday, is a "candle for each man and his household." Hence, the actual mitzvah, or commandment, of Hanukkah is to kindle the Hanukkah lights in one's home. Blessings are recited over lighting the candles. One candle is lit for each night.



facebook.com/TriFaithInitiative/
facebook.com/AmericanMuslimInstitute/
facebook.com/templeisraelomaha/

Advent Worship Series
December 2 - December 30

Christmas in Seven Carols

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel Silent Night
A Stable Lamp is Lighted O Morning Star
Down to Earth Joy to the World
Lo How a Rose Tree Blooming

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details page 5



Advent Workshop

Saturday, December 1

9:00-11:00 a.m.

Memorial Hall

All Countryside families and children are welcome!

BRING A FRIEND!
Christmas treats will be provided!

Event hosted by
Family Activities Committee members

details page 10



Join us for
*Hanging of
the Greens*

Saturday, December 1
9 - 11 AM

Help decorate the church
for the holiday season
and chili lunch!

Sign up at the
Information Station



**Jazz Christmas
Staff Open House**

December 15
6:00 - 8:30 pm

Enjoy goodies at the staff
open house

6-7 pm through staff offices

JAZZ starts at 7 pm
in the COFFEEHOUSE with
coffee, goodies and your favorite
CHRISTMAS MUSIC

\$5 suggested donation
childcare available