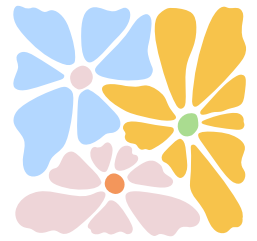


COUNTRYSIDE CURRENTS

The monthly newsletter of Countryside Community Church



As Fate Would Have It

by Rev. Dr. Keith Herron

Ever found yourself carried on the capricious winds of circumstance? Ever feel as though your life is a whimsical feather blowing aloft above the treetops where you might land ... who knows where? Life is a like a box of chocolates, mind you, no telling what you might get. Maybe it's as simple as being in the right (or wrong) place at the right (or wrong) time, or meeting someone who steers you in a new but unpredictable direction. As meaning-making people, we choose the interpretive key to interpret these events to suit our need for meaning. We call these events luck (good or bad), fate, free will, God's will, or even God's reward or God's punishment. Even though we think it's our willful determination that guides our lives, life has another wisdom afoot and we are somehow inspired, guided or managed (even mismanaged) by unseen forces outside our control. Even though we exert our free will and make plans and set goals and proceed with full confidence as though we are in control, it also seems true that there is a larger hand at work in directing us through life. Call it fate or blind luck, call it destiny, or call it the hand of God.

In the Bible story of Joseph, as fate would have it, his brothers were tending

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June

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Welcome to Countryside!

Let us offer you a warm Countryside welcome. As a community, we place 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're an inclusive, open, and affirming family of faith, welcoming all to God's table of love and acceptance. We're 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 promote peace, equality, and justice in our conflicted world.

New Visitor to Countryside? If you're a first-time visitor to Countryside, please let us know! We'd like to present you with a gift of our gratitude for visiting with us. Please stop by the Welcome Center in the Church foyer!

A brief look at Countryside

- Sunday Service – 10 a.m. in person or streaming online.
- Nursery – Child care is available at Sunday service and Wednesday Recharge evening programs. The Nursery is located on the main level along the south hallway.
- Common Grounds Coffeehouse – Join us before or after Sunday service in the Commons for coffee and fellowship.
- Amplified Hearing Devices & Hearing Loop are available at the Information Station in the Foyer.
- Community Worship & Children's Church offered.
- Countryside Email list – If you'd like to receive Countryside's weekly e-newsletter, contact the [church office](mailto:office@countrysideucc.org) at office@countrysideucc.org or call 402-391-0350.

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Welcome New Members!!!!

The 15 new members below joined Countryside Community Church on May 21, 2023. They joined for many of the same reasons current members are so dedicated to Countryside. They embrace the Tri-Faith Initiative, the feeling of belonging and sharing values and beliefs. They strive to live an authentic life not just on Sundays but every day. Take a moment this (and every!) Sunday to welcome them and get to know them. Not pictured: Linda Spencer, Sarah Abegglen, and Nick Abegglen.



Kathleen Gradina



Adam Witte



Ross Harrison



Jocelyn Harrison



Nicole Chipy



David Svingen



Julianne Svingen



Alyssa Silhacek



Trevor Spanel



Chloe Spanel



Erik Andersen



Steve Girvan

If you're considering becoming a member of our community, we invite you to attend new member orientation classes, on Sept. 10 & 17. They'll provide you with information about our church, staff, and programs. They also give you the opportunity to ask questions and get to know us better.

During the orientation classes, you'll meet church

staff and learn about the programs, involvements, volunteer opportunities, and activities that are available to you. You'll also learn about our values, beliefs, and mission as a church, and how we strive to live out our faith in our daily lives.

For more information, contact Robyn Hubbard at Robynh@countrysideucc.org, or 402-884-8024.

Summer Sermon Series

First Stories

June 4: Genesis 1:1-24, The Creation Story

For this summer's sermons, we'll draw upon the lectionary cycle of stories from Genesis. As they will all come from the first book of the Bible, we're referring to the sermon series as The First Stories. These are narrative tales that grow episodically from week to week. There are many ways to approach these stories, but in our summer sermon series, you can think of them like pearls on a string that tell a larger story. We begin on June 4 with the creation in Genesis 1-2. Pastor Keith

The Box: June

Florence Home and Healthcare Center

The Board of Christian Outreach has identified the Florence Home and Healthcare Center, 7915 North 30th St. as the recipient of our June Box donations.

The non-profit Home provides long term care and rehab, assisted living and memory care for seniors. Many residents have limited means and Enrichment Director Ann Burke is delighted that Countryside is ready to bring some fun and happiness to the senior adult community at Florence Home.

Residents play bingo twice per week and they award 20 prizes per session. The games are a favorite activity that increases mental wellness



and contributes to their quality of life. They need prizes that can be awarded to bingo winners, including candy bars, boxed candy, assorted canned soda, snack foods (Little Debbie), and small stuffed animals

Other Items on the residents' needs/wish list include Zesto ice cream gift certificates, sunglasses, Wii video games, and short-sleeved shirts/blouses (sizes 3X-5X).

Please put your donations in the Box in the church entryway. You can also order items from [Amazon wish list](#) and have them sent to the church office.



Accesible to All (A2A) Committee

Did you know? Countryside has:

- Large print service bulletins
- Hearing amplification devices
- Mobility items like wheelchairs, walkers, bath stools, canes & crutches

**Educating
Advocating
Assisting**

How else can we support you? Please stop by the Welcome Table in the foyer and let us know!



Special Guests: United Theological Seminary

Dr. Molly Marshall and Dr. Munjed M. Murad



Be sure to mark your calendars for a very special weekend as Countryside welcomes Rev. Dr. Molly Marshall and Dr. Munjed M. Murad, June 17 & 18.

Join us for a Welcome Reception, Sat., June 17, 4-6 pm. We'll have light refreshments to welcome

Rev. Dr. Marshall and Dr. Murad.

Rev. Dr. Marshall will deliver the sermon at morning worship service on Sunday, June 18 at 10 a.m.

Theologian Rev. Dr. Molly Marshall is president of United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities, a welcoming, ecumenical school that embraces all denominations and faith traditions on the cutting edge of progressive theological thought leadership. United trains leaders who dismantle systems of oppression, explore multifaith spirituality, and push the boundaries of knowledge.

Rev. Dr. Marshall was the first female theology professor and associate dean at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., but she was forced out in 1994 after fundamentalists who oppose women in ministry gained control of the SBC. She then served 25 years at Central Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Kan., 16 as president, before retiring and coming to United Theological.

Rev. Dr. Marshall was the focus of the 6-part podcast series, [Brother Molly](#), which explores her life and ministry.

Dr. Munjed M. Murad is assistant professor of world religions and intercultural studies supported by the Johnson-Fry Endowment at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities.



Dr. Murad is United's first full-time Muslim scholar and faculty member, and program director for the school's new Eco-Justice concentration. His research interests include Islam, Christianity, mysticism, comparative religion, and the natural environment. He holds a Master of Environmental Management degree from Yale School of the Environment, where he studied religion and ecology.

For his doctorate of theology at Harvard Divinity School, he defended a dissertation entitled "A Tale of Two Trees: Unveiling the Sacred Life of Nature in Islamic and Christian Traditions."

Board of Life Ministry Presents

Tai Chi for Health and Wellness

Aug. 9, 16, 23 & 30
10 a.m. or 6 p.m.

Free Will Donations Accepted!

- Healing the body with gentle movements and visualizations
- Designed to be done standing or seated
- Honoring the spirituality and uniqueness of everybody

For Information and registration contact:
Sharon Royers sroyers@centurylink.net or
Rita Otis RMotis@outlook.com



Get Connected!

Countryside Community Church offers many opportunities to connect with one another and the community. Read the weekly C-10 for current and expanded information on these and other groups, events, and programs.

Social groups meet for the sheer joy of connecting with friends old and new. Some gather at the same location week to week, like Fellowship Arts and Music Etc. This group meets each Friday in the Rahab for – you guessed it – activities that revolve around arts and music. Others, like the Lunch Bunch, meet once a month at various venues. A devoted small group of young Dungeons and Dragons aficionados meets each Friday evening for gameplay. On Sundays, a small group of junior high school students meets just for the joy of fun and games!

Journey Groups meet weekly to discuss and discover what our Still-speaking God calls 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. Journey groups meet in person, although some groups offer a hybrid Zoom option. Journey Groups are always being formed. If you're interested in joining a Journey Group, contact the church office.

Study & Interest groups meet to expand their horizons on specific or narrow topics of interest. Some move beyond deepening their understanding and awareness to become involved in the greater community. Some of the existing purpose-driven groups that meet in person include the Sunday Morning Racial Justice Book Group, Banned Book Lovers Group (third Monday of each month), and Banned Books Small Group (Tuesdays at 6:30). Race in America, a weekly Wednesday night group, meets on Zoom only. Phoenix Affirmations groups delve into the 12 principles that guide Progressive Christianity. There's even a new poetry-focused group!



Bible Study groups focus on developing and deepening our understanding of what it means to be a Christian in today's world. Some meet on a regular schedule, others for a specific period of time. Rev. Don Sarton's extremely popular Bible Study group's current series is *Understanding Our Roots*, a 10-week study focusing on Luke's work organizing the many oral and written accounts of Jesus.

Educational small groups, like Adult Forum, meet to hear about and discuss various topics of interest. This group meets each Sunday after church service. Its most recent series focused on the history of world economics. Some small group opportunities are less structured. For example, the Impact Speaker program brings in outside experts on trending and important topics, like the impact of immigration on Nebraska's economy. Impact Speakers are presented on Recharge Wednesdays.

Volunteer Opportunities

Countryside has so many events and programs that offer volunteer opportunities, including office staffing, the Garden of Hope, Countryside Pantry, and special events such as the Ice Cream Festival, United We Walk, and Pride Parade. Contact the [office](#) at 402-391-0350, or check the weekly C-10 for the latest opportunities to get connected and make a difference!

BOOKS CHANGE LIVES

Be a friend of the Countryside Library!

Help build the new Anti-Racism Section by donating a book!

For more information, text Diane at 402-707-1556 or email dianes@countrysideucc.org



Small Groups

Core 56

Core 56 meets all summer, 6–8 p.m. on Wednesdays. for movies, games, outside activities, art and more!

Dungeons & Dragons, Fridays, 5:30–8:30 p.m. Sr. High-age students, in the Youth Room. Jr. High-age students, Tamar.

Jr. High Youth Group, Sundays, 5–6 p.m. Open to ALL Jr. High-age students, grades 7 & 8.

Men's Breakfast, Tuesdays, 8 a.m. at First Watch, 72nd and Pacific Streets. Everyone is welcome!

Fellowship Arts and Music Etc. (FAME), Fridays, 10 a.m. in Rahab. No reservations are required!

Mindful Meditation, Thursdays, 7 p.m. Zoom only, link is available on the church calendar.

Adult Forum, Sundays, 11 a.m. in the Deborah Room for an educational exploration of various topics and books. A Zoom link is also available on the church calendar at countrysideucc.org/calendar.

Groups on Summer Hiatus

The following small groups are on hiatus for the summer:

- **Sunday Morning Racial Justice Book Group**
- **Books, Bible & Beyond**
- **The Banned Book Lovers Group**
- **The Banned Book Study Group**



Adult Forum Tackles New Series: *How Jesus Became God*

The Adult Forum's new series features Great Courses videos on the topic, "If Jesus never called himself, God, how did he become one?" Adult Forum meets Sundays, 11 a.m.–noon, in Deborah. A Zoom link is available on the [church calendar](http://countrysideucc.org/calendar), countrysideucc.org/calendar.

From Great Courses:

"The early Christian claim that Jesus of Nazareth was God completely changed the course of Western civilization. In fact, without the Christian declaration of Jesus as God, Western history as we know it would have never happened.

If Jesus had not been declared God, his followers would have remained a sect within Judaism, and the massive conversion of Gentiles, the Roman adoption of Christianity, and the subsequent unfolding of the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the Reformation, and modernity would never have taken place. For that reason, the question of how Jesus became God is one of the most significant historical questions of Western civilization."

Great Courses favorite professor and *New York Times* best-selling author Bart D. Ehrman is one of America's most widely read scholars of early Christianity and the New Testament. At age 15, he became a born-again fundamentalist evangelical Christian. After attending the Moody Bible Institute, he studied at Princeton Theological Seminary, which introduced him to texts and interpretations that led him to a more liberal form of Christianity. Eventually, he left the faith altogether.

Ehrman takes you deeply into the process by which the divinity of Jesus was first conceived by his followers, demonstrating how this conception was refined over time to become the core of the Christian theology that has so significantly shaped our civilization.

As Fate Would Have It

by Rev. Dr. Keith Herron

Continued from page 1

to their father's flock of sheep when they saw a group of wandering traders. The brothers conspired against Joseph and decided to sell him to the traders. They stripped him of his iconic coat of many colors and threw him into a pit.

The brothers then flagged the caravan down and cut a deal for 20 pieces of silver to sell Joseph off for the slave markets in Egypt. It wasn't the death penalty they intended. But it was the price Joseph paid for their resentment of all the little acts of favoritism Rachel had given him as her late-life born favorite.

When Joseph was hauled out of the pit, his life was spared. And in that slight turn of the story, everything changed. All of us are brought into the story knowing a delicious irony that the lives of Jacob *and* the 11 brothers had been spared.

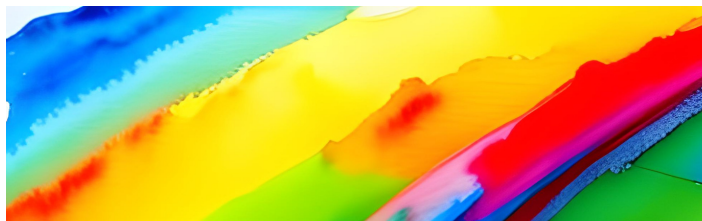
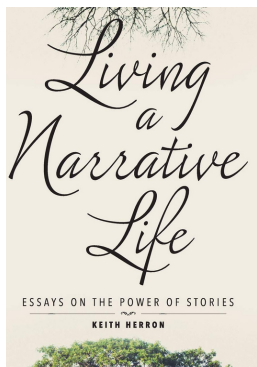
Workshop: Living a Narrative Life

June 3 & 10, 2023,
9-11 am, Chapel

Join us in June for "Living a Narrative Life!" This 2-day workshop celebrates our everyday, ritualized lives by exploring our stories across the

arc of life. It's about how we change and grow from moment to moment, from year to year, and from one stage of life to another. Using principles derived from narrative therapy.

[Register online here](#) or scan the QR Code



The phrase, "as fate would have it," is a robust way of observing that sometimes we twist and turn on the events that occur in our lives recognizing that sometimes they are good events and sometimes they're tragic. But on occasion, more often than we can know, even tragic events have a tendency to act positively in our regard. Isn't that how life turns for us as well?

Sometimes we make the smallest imperceptible turn and our lives are spared. A job is offered, or a job is taken away. We get a phone call and with it our lives are changed. Inexplicably our lives take a turn here, or a twist there, and the arc of our lives unpredictably shift and twist in a new direction. In this dance, it is not God's job to keep bad things from happening. They do happen: Brothers turn against brothers. People are bought and sold. Famine devastates the land.

Invitation to Quilts of Valor

Honoring the service of Countryside Veterans

June 11, 2023, 1-2 p.m.
Sanctuary

The Countryside congregation is cordially invited to attend a Quilts of Valor ceremony on June 11 from 1-2p.m. The ceremony honoring the military service of Robert Buckland, Thomas Welch, Michael Free and Tim Ekberg will be held in the Sanctuary. These four veterans will receive a handmade quilt and other honors for their service. The ceremony will include music and light refreshments in the Commons for an opportunity to thank these veterans and their families.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Pastoral Search Committee

We had high hopes that we would be announcing a candidate to you by now. Sadly, that is not the case. Recently, we finalized a candidate to put forth to the congregation to recommend for our settled senior minister. Unfortunately, this candidate subsequently withdrew their application due to personal reasons.

Our committee was surprised and deeply saddened by this. We felt a little like we'd been running a marathon, but when the finish line came into view, it was abruptly moved further away.

We'd like to summarize our process so far to help you understand better where we are.

We spent the first 10-12 months of the process holding town hall-style meetings and conducting surveys to ensure your voice would be heard and included in the new church profile.

In December, we completed and posted Countryside's profile and immediately began to receive several pastor profiles.

We developed rubrics to evaluate candidates and decide if they warranted an initial interview. We developed consistent questions for these interviews. We then created questions and processes for second interviews, evaluating sermons and reference checks.

Although this whole process felt long, please remember that as of this writing, it's only been five months since our church profile was posted. Hopefully, this will help us all keep a realistic perspective.

Throughout the search process, the Pastoral Search Committee dedicated itself to identifying a candidate for our settled senior minister position the congregation would feel excited about – both in terms of enriching our spiritual journeys and in providing leadership both within this Church and outside this Church as the Christian partner in the Tri-Faith Initiative.

The Pastoral Search Committee continues to be as open with the congregation as we can be about the progress of our search process. We want you to know



we've hit a bump in the road, but the processes are solidly in place and the search will continue. The Pastoral Search Committee remains committed to the stewardship of this sacred process and steadfast in our work to identify the right settled senior minister for Countryside.

Personnel Committee

The search committee's process for finding a settled minister has been extended unexpectedly. The Personnel Committee and Countryside congregation appreciate the work they have done and will continue to do. It's a challenging task. They approached it with care, mindfulness, and diligence. One of the personnel committee's objectives is to support them in their work throughout the search process.

As such, the personnel committee met with Pastor Keith about his contract extension to support Countryside through the search and transition process. We have agreed on an extension, and Keith has affirmed his commitment to Countryside as an interim minister. We are grateful to him for his dedication to helping Countryside in this transitional process and the many gifts he brings to our congregation and staff.

Again, we want to express our gratitude to the search committee for all the hard work they have put in and will have to continue doing. Please continue to pray for wisdom and strength for our search committee members. We also want to thank Keith for his commitment to Countryside, providing stability to us as a congregation and our Tri-Faith partners throughout the search process. And we are grateful to each of you as such a supportive congregation to the church's lay leadership. Thank you for your faithful spirit and support.



Heartland Pride Parade 2023

Join us at Heartland Pride in downtown Omaha on Saturday, July 15, and show your support for the LGBTQ+ community!

Heartland Pride is a two-day celebration that takes place in downtown Omaha at the CHI Center. It includes a parade and a festival with food, music, and entertainment.

By volunteering or walking in the Pride Parade, you can help make a difference in the lives of LGBTQ+ people in our community and beyond. Countryside's participation demonstrates our commitment to creating a safe and welcoming space for all, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, and helps raise awareness about the importance of inclusivity and tolerance.

"Heartland Pride is an opportunity to express a belief extremely unique to a faith community," said Countryside Engagement Coordinator Diane Scott, "that we fully accept, without exclusion, every member of the LGBTQ+ community."

Assuring the community that Countryside provides an inclusive, accepting, and safe environment is especially important to younger members of the LGBTQ+.

"At Pride, we have the ability to share this belief, one-on-one, with young people who have been made to believe that there is no safe place for them," she said.



"It is my strongest feeling that we have a responsibility to these young people to express the idea that they are loved beyond their wildest imagination and our yearly participation in Heartland Pride affords us that opportunity."

The event is also a great opportunity to connect with other members of the community, make new friends, and have fun! Let's come together and celebrate diversity, equality, and love. Will you join us?

For more information or if you'd to participate or volunteer, email Diane Scott (dianes@countrysideucc.org), or text her at 402-707-1556.

Volunteers Needed for *Team Up to Clean Up*

The Anti-Racism Designation Group is looking for volunteers to join group member Cindy Cronn for the *Team Up to Clean Up* neighborhood cleanup challenge! This initiative, created by the Global Leadership Group, is committed to restoring North 24th Street and making the community a place where strong families live, vibrant businesses thrive and beautiful neighborhoods grow. You can take part in

however many of the following Saturdays you are willing and able: May 20, June 24, July 29, Aug. 26, Sept. 30 & Oct. 28.

For more information, please contact Diane Scott at dianes@countrysideucc.org, or text her at 402-707-1556. [Click here](#) for more information on Global Leadership Group Omaha.



Juneteenth: Important Date in American History

Juneteenth, a combination of the words June and nineteenth, refers to the date, June 19, 1865.

Although President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation to free all enslaved people in 1862, it was years later before hundreds of thousands of African Americans would actually be freed. On June 19, 1865, the Union Army came to Texas and announced the state's slaves were free. While the Fourth of July is traditionally our country's day to celebrate freedom, not all people were free.

Although Juneteenth has been celebrated in the African American community for hundreds of years, it only became a federal holiday in 2021. Juneteenth is a day of celebration for all Americans, for none of us are free until all of us are free.

Why Juneteenth (aka Freedom Day or Emancipation Day) Matters

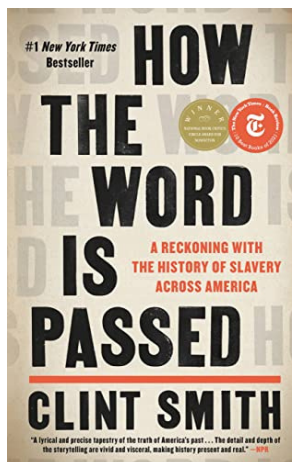
Juneteenth highlights the struggles and contributions of African Americans in American history. It's an opportunity to reflect on the legacy of slavery, the fight for civil rights, and the ongoing struggle for equality and justice.

Juneteenth is an important milestone in American history and provides an opportunity to celebrate and reflect on our shared history and values. It's an opportunity to recognize and honor the contributions of Black Americans to our country's history and culture, and to reaffirm our commitment to building a more just and equitable society.

It's a reminder that freedom and equality are not always guaranteed. They must be continually fought for and defended. It's a call to action to continue working towards a society where all individuals are treated with respect and dignity, regardless of their race, ethnicity, gender, or background.



Racial Justice Book Club: New Book for September



The Sunday morning Racial Justice Book Group, currently on hiatus, will resume via Zoom on Sunday, Sept. 10 with Clint Smith's *How the Word is Passed*.

The book was a #1 New York Times bestseller, winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award for Nonfiction, the Hillman Prize for Book

Journalism, the Stowe Prize and selected by the New York Times as one of the 10 best books of 2021.

Smith is also the June 7 keynote speaker for the [Race, Religion, and Social Justice Conference](#).

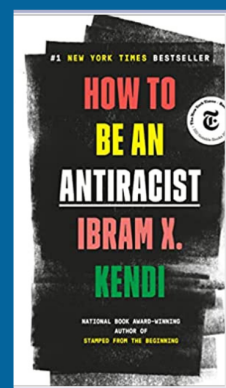
"This compelling #1 New York Times bestseller examines the legacy of slavery in America—and how both history and memory continue to shape our everyday lives.

Beginning in his hometown of New Orleans, Clint Smith leads the reader on an unforgettable tour of monuments and landmarks—those that are honest about the past and those that are not—that offer an intergenerational story of how slavery has been central in shaping our nation's collective history, and ourselves."

Coming in September!

All Church Read

"How to Be an Antiracist gives us a clear and compelling way to approach, as Kendi puts it in his introduction, "the basic struggle we're all in, the struggle to be fully human and to see that others are fully human." ~ Ericka Taylor, NPR



Board of Christian Outreach

Small Service Group Grants

Have you heard about Countryside's Small Service Group Grants? These grants are designed to help local volunteer groups meet human needs in the name of Countryside by providing funds ranging from \$100 to \$1,000.

To be eligible, the group must have a Countryside member as representative or participant, primarily be a volunteer organization, be Omaha-based, and serve a population in need. The funds should be used for materials or supplies, and Countryside will reimburse the organization.

If you know of an organization in our community that could benefit from this grant and fits the eligibility criteria, please request an application form from the office or any BOCO member. Let's work together to make a positive impact in our community!

Save the Dates: All-Congregation Conversations

August 20
September 24

No one is a mind reader and no one person can know how the members of the church think, feel or believe about the church in its current setting.

The upcoming, guided all-congregational conversations will provide all Countryside members an opportunity to share with one another what they think and feel about the church in the present moment, their hopes for the future, and how they wish to live as a faith community going forward.

Stay tuned! More information will become available in upcoming issues of *Currents* and the weekly C-10.

Library Seeking New Books!

The library had such success with the last book drive, it's making a repeat appeal! We're trying to fill the list of book titles for the new Anti-Racism section. If you'd like to donate a book, please text Diane Scott at 402-707-1556 or email dianes@countrysideucc.org.

Board of Life Ministries

Tai Chi Classes in August

The Board of Life Ministries is excited to announce a special event designed to promote spiritual health and wellness within the congregation. During August, Countrysiders will have the opportunity to participate in a 4-week Tai Chi class led by instructors Rita Otis and Sharon Royers. There is no cost to attend the classes, but free-will donations are greatly appreciated.

Recognizing the importance of accommodating busy schedules, two sessions of the Tai Chi class will be held each day. Participants can choose between attending the morning session at 10 a.m. in the serene front courtyard or joining the evening session at 6 p.m. on the lush lawn behind Mary's Hall. (In case of inclement weather, class will be held in the Chapel.) Offering two classes ensures that everyone can find a time that suits their individual needs.

Tai Chi is a centuries-old Chinese martial art that combines graceful, flowing movements with deep breathing and meditation. It is known for its numerous health benefits, including improved balance, flexibility, and stress reduction. The Board of Life Ministries aims to enhance the spiritual well-being of the congregation and provide us with tools to cultivate a harmonious mind-body connection.

Rita Otis and Sharon Royers, both experienced Tai Chi instructors, will guide participants through the four-week program. Their expertise and passion for this ancient practice promise to make the classes engaging, informative, and enjoyable for attendees of all skill levels. Whether you're a beginner or have some experience with Tai Chi, you'll find these sessions beneficial and fulfilling.

To learn more about the event or to register for the Tai Chi class, contact Sharon Royers at sroyers@centurylink.net or 402-319-2272.

Don't miss out on this opportunity to prioritize your spiritual health and wellness. Join BOLM in August for a transformative 4-week Tai Chi class. Take a step towards finding balance, tranquility, and a deeper connection with your inner self.

Youth & Family Ministries

[Rebecca Morello](#), Director of Youth & Family Ministries, rebeccam@countrysideucc.org, 402-884-8036
[Emma Boyd](#), Youth & Family Ministries Program Coordinator, emmab@countrysideucc.org, 402-884-8035

Sr. High Youth Group

Sundays, 6-8 p.m., Youth Room
 6 p.m. BYOD
 6:30-8 p.m. programming & fellowship

June 4: Memorial Park and Dundee Walk

June 11: Community Service

June 18: No Youth Group – Happy Father’s Day!

June 25: No Youth Group – We’re on our Service Trip!

D&D group

Fridays, 5:30-8:30 p.m. in the Youth Room and Tamar.
 Students grades 7-12 are invited to join a Dungeons and Dragons campaign on Friday nights every week.

June 2: Sr.High and Jr.High

June 9: NO D&D

June 16: Sr.High and Jr.High

June 23: Jr.High Only

June 30: Jr.High Only

Confirmation

Congratulations to our recent Confirmands! Our confirmation class will be offered again in the fall on Sundays at 4 p.m.

Core 56

Wednesdays, 6-8 p.m.

June 7: Outdoor Activities and Turtle Walk

June 14: Movie Night

June 21: Pride Art!

June 28: Avatar (TV show) Marathon

Children’s Ministries

Pre-K – 6th grade, Sundays.

June 4: Community Worship

June 11: Children’s Church

June 18: Community Worship

June 25: Children’s Church



Jr. High Youth Group

Sundays **TIME CHANGE:** 4-6 p.m. Youth Room. All Jr. High-aged (grades 7 & 8) students are invited to attend for games and fun!

June 4: No Jr.High Fellowship

June 11: Outdoor Furniture Project – Community Service

June 18: No Jr.High Fellowship – Happy Father’s Day!

June 25: Movie Night!

Save the Date! Curriculum Night

Sunday night, Aug. 13, 6-7 p.m.
 We’re hosting a curriculum night for students and parents to learn about our goals and exciting plans for the new year. If your student plans to attend our programming, this is a required meeting.

Summer News and Notes

Our youth group stays active throughout the summer! Stay tuned to see how they can enjoy the warm weather together and spend time with the youth of our Tri-Faith partners. If your student has games, performances, or competitions that Rebecca and Emma can attend to support them, please let them know! They love watching them engage in things they’re passionate about. Also, if your student would like to earn service hours over the summer, we have children’s activities or other ways to help them reach their goals.



Core 56

Core 56 meets all summer, 6-8 p.m. on Wednesdays. We watch movies, play games outside, do art, and a bunch of other stuff! Summer hours are extended to 8 pm to accommodate movies and other activities.

Seasons: Taco Bout a Party!



The Wednesday night editions of Seasons were an overwhelming, intergenerational hit!





Clint Smith To Present Race, Religion & Social Justice Keynote Presentation



Clint Smith

Tri-Faith Initiative and the University of Nebraska Omaha’s (UNO’s) Religious Studies department invite you to the second annual Race, Religion, and Social Justice Conference on June 7 and June 8, 2023.

His work reflectively explores the power of narratives and the broader phenomena of public memory – particularly, “how people, communities, and nations should account for the crimes of their past” (“How Germany Remembers the Holocaust,” *The Atlantic*).

As the RRSJ 2023 keynote speaker, Smith's fireside chat will focus on the themes explored in *How the Word Is Passed*, as well as in his articles for *The Atlantic*. A dessert bar and a book signing session will follow the fireside chat.

The RRSJ Conference keynote, featuring author Clint Smith (*How the Word is Passed*) will be presented as a fireside chat conversation at 7 p.m. on Wed., June 7 at Temple Israel.

For his breakout session on the morning of June 8 (Conference Day), Smith will read from his latest poetry collection, *Above Ground*, then participate in a Q&A session and another brief book signing.

Building bridges of hope and healing requires an earnest, often uncomfortable encounter with the past. Perhaps no other contemporary writer has demonstrated their ability to probe, digest, and teach this truth more clearly than Clint Smith.

Click [here](#) for more information or to register for the keynote presentation or conference, or visit the Tri-Faith website at Trifaith.org.

Tri-Faith Garden

A Good Place to Grow Fellowship!



The Tri-Faith Garden is tended by an all-volunteer crew. All produce grown in the garden is donated to community pantries and

families in need.

Volunteers help with gardening, data management, grant writing, and research, writing articles, making phone calls, designing spaces and programs, and taking and organizing pictures.

Interested? Text Marcia Blum 402-871-9039 or email mawblum@gmail.com.



Countryside Fellowship Gallery ~ May

The Gifts of Pentecost: Intergenerational Fellowship

The *Gifts of Pentecost* art installation is a series of acrylic-on-canvas paintings created by Countryside members and their families. It was sponsored by The Board of Arts Ministries and planned in conjunction with the Wednesday night Youth Programming.

This is the first Intergenerational Art Project to be done in our new church. The goal of this project was to promote fellowship between the adults and youth within our congregation and to create meaningful art for the Pentecost season. Countryside youth and adults worked together to creating the art.

The smaller canvases, painted freehand by 4- to 7-year-olds, each depict a gift given by the Holy Spirit to the believers of Jesus. The medium-sized pieces, created by youths in second through fourth grades and several adults, depict believers receiving gifts of the Holy Spirit through tongues of fire. The fire was painted freehand. Adults created the three largest canvases to give the illusion of the fire. The dove was hand painted by a single individual.



The Gifts of Pentecost

