



# CURRENTS

Every year around this time, a swirl of Christmas memories tickle my thoughts and as the season progresses, one memory inevitably floats to the top and is afforded a cozy, living space for rumination and devotion.

Last year, it was the Christmas that I spent alone. Completely isolated from even my neighbors, who had made it out of the neighborhood while the getting was good—and broke my shovel as they went. After an hour or so of chipping away at the snow with a cookie sheet, I had to admit that the loss of my snow shovel had cemented my location for the next three days.

My dog, Henry, and I stayed put in my studio apartment. Our Christmas tree was decorated, we had power, we had heat, I had coffee, and we had food. It was our first Christmas together after finding one another seven months earlier at the animal shelter and I had already taken steps to make this Christmas special for my animal friend. Henry had presents under the tree and a stocking, which I stealthily stuffed after he had fallen asleep on Christmas Eve.

We had a fine time together! We hunkered down on our sofa and watched as the Grinch's heart grew, as Santa discovered his true self, and were reminded never to lick a cold, metal flagpole—even under the triple-dog dare. We watched Billy Jack and Jean fight the establishment and I made a 36-foot paper chain. Yes, I measured it.

As this situation was unfolding, I tried to tell myself to make the best of it. Well, at least for the first 30 minutes to an hour. After that, I don't recall having to remind myself to find things to enjoy—it just happened. It was a great Christmas. So last year, this memory stuck for one reason, I'm sure of it. I was again alone. It was the first Christmas without Uncle Nick, who had passed less than two months before, and my folks were planning to visit my brother in Seattle. My expectations of that Christmas were further crushed when in the late afternoon on Christmas Eve, one of my chickens was attacked and nearly killed by a dog. A dog I had let into the yard. I made the chicken as comfortable as I could and left for work. I had to work the pageant that night.

After setting the sanctuary to rights, I hurried home, expecting to have to bury the chicken. Expecting to have an already difficult Christmas officially ruined. Expecting to be steeped in despair.

The chicken was alive! I brought her inside, treated her wounds as best I could, and made her comfortable. I assumed that she would be dead by morning. When I rushed to her kennel on Christmas morning, she was still alive. Again, I was staying home alone on Christmas, snowed in by the need to care for this animal. To this day, she still lives! She spent her convalescence in my bedroom and after 30ish days, was returned to the flock. The whole event forever dubbing her "Inside Chicken."

I can't claim that it was a great Christmas like the other that I spent only with my dog. I will claim that in both cases, my expectations could have influenced the days. They did, in some respects, but as I recall them now, I am touched by the joy that could be found in each situation. The paper chain and the Ramen Christmas dinner. The relief each morning as I found the chicken alive and recovering. The grief of the missing life. The peace and comfort I found in the company of a dog and wounded chicken. Christmas reminds me of joy. In big and small remembrances, that I know stem from the joy of a new mother and father, and a baby. A baby who would grow to change the world with his love and teachings. A baby who forged a Path I now struggle to follow. A baby whose life and loss has changed me.



# CHRISTIAN OUTREACH

If you would like more information regarding Countryside Christian Outreach, contact [christianoutreach@countrysideucc.org](mailto:christianoutreach@countrysideucc.org).

Greetings! It is the time of year when Countryside's Board of Christian Outreach (BOCO) selects the annual Christmas offering recipient. This offering serves as an opportunity for our congregation to award a monetary gift to an organization demonstrating great need within our community. BOCO is pleased to announce **The Community Cupboard**, Countryside's community outreach food pantry, as this year's recipient for the Christmas offering.

**The Community Cupboard** needs your help to continue serving local families. The need for food is on the rise as the cost of living continues to increase. Unlike larger nonprofit organizations with large administrative and advertising expenses, monies raised for the Community Cupboard go towards purchasing food for local families in need.

BOCO thanks you in advance for your generous support of this ministry, helping us care for individuals, families and children in our area. Your donations can be mailed to the church or you can use the Christmas Offering envelopes in the church pews or give through the Countryside website at [www.countrysideucc.org](http://www.countrysideucc.org). Make checks payable to Countryside Community Church.

Please prayerfully consider the impact you can make and submit donations by December 31.

Blessings and Peace,

The Board of Christian Outreach



**In December, the BOX will benefit our Christmas Offering recipient: The Countryside Cupboard (Cupboard).** Each month, the Cupboard provides food for 250 to 300 families – up to 1,000 individuals! The Cupboard purchases the food items that are distributed and, as you can imagine, each month it can be challenging to provide a variety of healthy foods. **In conjunction with the Christmas Offering, we will collect donations of peanut butter to be distributed at a future Cupboard event.**

In addition to being the foundation of many folks' favorite sandwich, peanut butter is a well-rounded food option. Did you know:

- Peanuts have more protein, niacin, folate and phytosterols than any nut.
- Peanuts and peanut butter contain over 30 essential nutrients and phytonutrients.
- One of the many great advantages of peanuts and peanut butter is long shelf life. If held at average ambient temperature without great change in heat or humidity, peanuts and peanut butter can be safely stored for several months.
- Peanuts contain no cholesterol. Recent studies show that the combination of monounsaturates and polyunsaturates such as are found in peanuts may be helpful in reducing cholesterol levels in the body.

We hope that you will consider purchasing an additional jar or two of peanut butter in December to donate to the Cupboard.

*A follow up on our BOX for October: Thank you to all who donated warm clothing items to help those in our community as the cold weather approaches. We dropped off six sweaters/sweatshirts, eight blankets, 16 pairs of gloves/mittens, 18 coats, 35 hats, 37 scarves and 46 pairs of socks (and a box of hand/toe warmers) to the Siena Francis House! We appreciate your generous donations to the many individuals who will benefit.*

## Coming Soon!

Coming in January we are moving away from a weekly "Here's What's Happening," normally provided on Sunday mornings to a monthly "Here's What's Happening" and combining it with the *Currents*. These will be available in the Foyer on Sunday mornings for those seeking more information on activities available each month. The *Currents* will become your resource guide to all of Countryside's activities.

# LIFE MINISTRIES

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

## ALL CHURCH ACTIVITIES

**Where do your Faith and environment intersect?** Are you concerned about climate change and just don't know what to do about it? **FATE** is a dedicated group of Countryside members who are motivated by the love of God's creation to advocate, educate and commit small acts to mitigate the effects of global warming in our church and homes. FATE will not meet in December but will resume on Tuesday, January 5, 2016, 5:30 p.m. in the COYO Youth Room.

**T'ai Chi Chih®** is a series of gentle movements that may be done by anyone. Classes are held on Thursday mornings from 10:00 - 11:00 a.m. Suggested donation is \$10.00 for drop in or \$50.00 for six weeks. As a reminder, there will be not classes held on December 24 and 31. For information, contact Rita at [RMOTIS@outlook.com](mailto:RMOTIS@outlook.com).

**InterPlay** will be held on Saturday, December 12, beginning at 9:30 a.m. in the Foyer.

**LGBT 101** will meet in Memorial Hall on Thursday, November 12, at 6:00 p.m. For additional information on this educational small group, contact Joni at [jws@spsattorneys.com](mailto:jws@spsattorneys.com).

## EDUCATIONAL GROUPS

**Smart Money Smart Kids** is a series of six practical, video-based lessons in which Dave Ramsey and daughter Rachel give parents a step-by-step approach to being intentional when they teach their kids about giving, spending, saving, debt, and contentment. You will learn how to help your kids make wise money choices and build character qualities. Be watching for additional information on this class, which will be offered in late January or early February.

## SOCIAL GROUPS

**Mom's Morning Out group**— This new Mom's group is meeting for a planning session on Tuesday, December 1, at 10:30 a.m. in the Commons. If you would like to learn more about this group, please come join us! The group is open to all Moms or caregivers of children ages birth through sixth grade. Stop by the Information Station and chat with Mary Beth if you'd like more information.

**Mahjong anyone?** Jeri Lundblad has graciously volunteered to lead this group of Mahjong beginners! Mahjong is a game of Chinese origin using 144 small tiles bearing various designs, played by four people around a square table. The winning player is the first one who completes a particular pattern using 13 tiles. They will have their initial meeting on Wednesday evening, December 2, at 6:00 p.m. in the Family Life Office. If you are interested in learning more about this activity, please stop by.

**Family Activities Committee members** will meet in Memorial Hall on Saturday, December 5, 1:00 p.m. to set up for the Advent Workshop. If you have questions, contact Mary Beth.

**ETC members** will not meet in December.

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

**Lunch Bunch Circle** will meet at the home of Gloria Ried on Monday, December 14, for a Christmas gathering. This will be a pot luck luncheon. A good-will offering will be taken for Project Harmony. You may call Gloria Ried at 402-333-3115 for more information.

**Women's Lunch Group** will meet on Monday, December 7, noon at First Watch, 1222 S 71st St. Come for lunch, a cup of coffee or just good fellowship. This group is open to all women. Looking forward to seeing you there!

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

**Friend to Friend** will meet on Thursday, November 12, at 11:00 a.m. in the Moderator's Room kitchen. If you have questions, contact Pam Kregg at [pamgg@cox.net](mailto:pamgg@cox.net).

**Attention Young at Hearts!** - The Christmas season is coming and we are making plans to get into the holiday spirit! **Mark your calendars** for THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10! We will meet at the Market Basket (90th and West Center Road) for brunch at 10:00 a.m. **NOTE THE CHANGE IN TIME!** You will have your choice of entree off the Market Basket menu. After a delicious brunch, we will car pool to the Durham Museum to see the beautiful Christmas tree and seasonal exhibits. Admission to the museum is \$7.00 per person. Brunch cost is dependent upon what you order. Reservations are a must for this event. Contact Mary Beth Link (402) 391-0350 or Pam Kregg (402) 896-3866 to make a reservation. Deadline for reservations is Sunday, December 6th. Ho, Ho, Hope you can join us!

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

**Family Activities Committee** members are looking for 6 **additional volunteers** to assist young children in the making of Christmas ornaments at this year's Advent Workshop. There is a flyer with the workshop information in this newsletter. The crafts are simple, but our participants hands are small! If you would like to help, stop by the Information Station to chat with Mary Beth.

**Looking for 3-4 dedicated volunteers** who would take responsibility for Countryside's kitchens on a weekly basis. This would involve putting dishes away, wiping counters, emptying dishwasher and keeping an inventory of necessary supplies. If this speaks to you, stop by the Information Station Sunday morning.

**Conscientious Dishwashers Seeking Same.** Volunteers are needed to help with dishwashing mugs after the 11:00 a.m. worship service. It is easy and many hands make light work -- but

we really need the hands! Contact Mary Beth to be added to the list.

**The Community Cupboard Food Pantry** is signing up volunteers for the **December 5 pantry**. Any and all age groups are welcome. Ability to lift, bend and stand on your feet for extended periods of time are appreciated. Contact Mary Beth or Andi Lawlor at [lalalawlor@cox.net](mailto:lalalawlor@cox.net) for additional information.

**Thanks to the Board of Pastoral Care** for hosting coffee hour throughout the month of November. Be sure to chat with one of the members to learn about the activities and events they provide in for our church families.

**Mobile Meals** has been an integral part of Countryside's community outreach for over 25 years. On the first and second Wednesday each month, Countryside members have driven to St. Timothy's Lutheran Church on 93rd and Dodge to pick up the meals which they deliver to between 8-12 shut-in, elderly and or disabled people. This caring, monthly ritual takes roughly 2 hours' time, but truly feeds not only those who receive the meals, but definitely those who deliver them. We are currently looking for 2-3 more volunteers who would be willing to give of their time so that others may be fed. The schedule for January-May of 2016 is now being created. If this opportunity speaks to you, stop by the Information Station to chat with Mary Beth.

# PASTORAL CARE

*For more information about Pastoral Care, contact Margie Bolte at the church office or [margieb@countrysideucc.org](mailto:margieb@countrysideucc.org)*

## Congratulations:

Emily and Dan Lucas welcomed son, Benjamin Walter, on October 31. Benjamin joins big brother Harrison and big sister Beatrix. Proud grandparents are France and Bruce Blanchard.

## Stephen Ministry Training Starts Soon!

Stephen Ministry is an active lay ministry program within our church that provides confidential Christian support to those who are facing difficulties in their lives. Stephen Ministers receive special training to become good listeners and to provide caring support to others as they work through a difficult transition. At certain times, we all need comfort: family crisis, death, divorce, illness, loss of job, or simply an unexpected lifestyle change. When we open our hearts to the compassion of another, we feel less alone.

A new Stephen Ministry training class will begin in January. If you are interested in being part of this wonderful ministry, or would simply like more information, contact Margie Bolte, Pastoral Care Coordinator, at (402) 391-0350 ext. 117.



**Beginning November 29**, Rev. Chris Alexander will be conducting a survey open to all Countryside members over the age of 18, as part of her research toward her Doctor of Ministry studies at Luther Seminary in St. Paul MN. The purpose of the research is to evaluate which spiritual practices are actually being utilized by our Countryside community, and which of our practices are most helpful in informing our communal decisions for ministry. To participate in this survey you may either follow the digital link on our website ([www.countrysidecommunitychurch.org](http://www.countrysidecommunitychurch.org)) or pick up a printed copy of the survey from our church office. All surveys must be completed and returned by December 31, 2015. If you would like to be a participant in a one on one interview regarding spiritual practices and whether or not they are helpful to you in making decisions concerning our ministry at Countryside, please email Chris at [chrisa@countrysideucc.org](mailto:chrisa@countrysideucc.org) and let her know. These interviews will be done by appointment during the month of January 2016, and you must have completed the survey prior to participating in the interview. Thanks for helping Chris with her research and for helping Countryside to expand our discernment processes in more helpful directions.

# COYO (Countryside YOutH)

For more information about Youth Ministries, contact Will Howell at [willh@countrysideucc.org](mailto:willh@countrysideucc.org) or 402-391-0350 ext. 111.  
Get Connected! <http://countrysideucc.org/coyo>

## COYO Sr High December Event

### COYO Christmas Party

December 13 \* 6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.



Come play Christmas games and end the night with a white elephant gift exchange. Lots of fun on the last night of COYO for 2015.

Bring friends. Dinner is at 6:00 p.m.

Sign up at: <http://countrysideucc.org/coyo/srhigh>



### COYO Sr High & Faith Singers Winter Retreat

Come refresh and renew and have some fun too

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

## COYO Jr High December Event

### Fast food Progressive Dinner

December 11 \* 6:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m.

Cost is \$10



Meet at church at 6:00 p.m. for 5 different stops at fast food restaurants. Bring a white elephant gift for the gift exchange at the end. You are also free to bring any friends that you want to introduce to COYO Jr High. Cost is \$10.

Sign up at <http://countrysideucc.org/coyo/jrhigh>



### COYO Jr High Outreach \* December 6 \* 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Come help kids make Christmas ornaments and have fun with the church community. This counts as a Confirmation Outreach! <http://countrysideucc.org/coyo/jrhigh>

**Important DATE!**

**Sunday, December 6**

**6:00 p.m. Parent Fund-Raising Meeting**

Meet in Memorial Hall for a very important fund-raising meeting to determine the 2016 fund-raising plan, all students and parents of COYO Jr High & Sr High are invited!

# COUNTRYSIDE COMMUNITY CHURCH



## LEGENDS OF CHRISTMAS

Please Join Us for the

# Advent Workshop

SUNDAY, DEC 6, 2015  
1:00 PM - 3:00 PM  
AT MEMORIAL HALL

*oh what fun!*

*Cookies & Refreshments*  
served throughout the afternoon

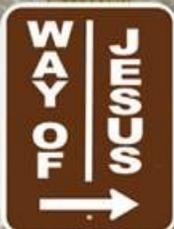
*Children's Craft Time*  
arts and crafts activities for the kids  
plus a special visit from SANTA!

*Share the Spirit of Giving*  
no cost to attend but we are  
accepting free will donations to  
benefit the Make-A-Wish Foundation

## *Christmas Eve Worship* *December 24*

5:00 p.m. Jazz Candlelight Service  
Accompanied by the Countryside Jazz  
ensemble, this family-friendly service  
presents the Christmas story through  
experiential worship and song.

11:00 p.m. Classic Candlelight Service  
Candlelight service of carols, anthems  
by the Christmas Eve choir, and a  
pastoral message.



# MUSIC MINISTRIES

For more information or if you have questions about Music Ministries, contact Bruce Blanchard, Interim Music Coordinator, at [bblanchardh@gmail.com](mailto:bblanchardh@gmail.com) or 402-609-0943.

The Music Ministry Search Committee is at work surveying members of various choirs and boards at Countryside, as well as consulting with various professionals in the area of church music and also multiple websites. Work has begun on crafting a job description, as well as researching nationwide sites where we will post the position. Members of the congregation will also be given an opportunity to give the committee feedback in the near future. The committee may be reached at [musicsearch@countrysideucc.org](mailto:musicsearch@countrysideucc.org).

December 20<sup>th</sup> at the 9:00 Classical service there will be a brass Quintet in addition to the organ and choir. Come and enjoy the festive music of this joyful season.

People often ask me "When is the best time to join choir?" OK I'm lying, nobody EVER asks me that. But regardless, the answer is always "right now". In January we begin new music and would welcome additional singers. Our Chancel Choir sings for the 9:00 service and sings both historic and newer music in the classical tradition. The Spirit of Grace sings once a month for each service. The Faith Singers are our high school singers and usually sing at the 11:00 service. You can gain a greater knowledge of music, form new friendships, deepen your sense of faith and service, and have a good time. If you are not asking "When is the best time to join choir" then the question is "Why aren't you?"



**Christmas  
Jazz  
Coffeehouse**

**December 5  
5:00-7:00 p.m.  
Commons**

**December 5**

**Christmas Jazz Coffee House**

5:00-7:00 p.m.

Come and enjoy the beginning of the Advent/Christmas season with Countryside Jazz in The Commons for an evening of enjoyable Christmas jazz. With vocals by Julie Olynyk, Rick Avard and the band will sing and play old favorites and fresh settings of familiar tunes of the season. The cost is \$5 per person at the door with a free-will donation for specialty coffees at the bar. Early enough to come and enjoy before your evening dinner/party plans!

**December 13**

**Christmas Choir Concert Service**

9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

Our choirs, from Kindergarten through adults, will lead the Sunday morning worship with a wonderful hour of Christmas music and Scripture.

**Countryside Choir  
Sunday Worship**

**December 13**

**9:00 a.m.**

**and**

**11:00 a.m.**



# RELOCATION UPDATE

*If you have questions or comments, please see one of the committee members*

*(Rick MacInnes, Tim Kerrigan, Cyndi Kugler, Paul Nelson, Pam Kregg and Nancy Behringer) or email [crc@countysideucc.org](mailto:crc@countysideucc.org).*

After the 11:00 a.m. service on Sunday, November 8, 13 members of Countryside Community Church (Rick MacInnes, Jennifer Hamann, Paul Nelson, Anji Stanek, Phil Johnson, Russ Schertz, David Holtzclaw, Bruce and France Blanchard, Eric Elnes, Dan Loven, Chris Alexander and Pam Kregg) drove up to Minneapolis, MN to meet with members of our architectural firm Alley-Poyner-Macchietto and HGA Architects to view six examples of architecture in the twin cities area. The group visited Colonial Church, St. Peter Lutheran Church, Christ Church, the American Swedish Institute, Lakewood Mausoleum and the Bigelow Chapel at United Theological Seminary. The group was able to view first hand various sanctuary, chapel, community, music, youth, children, kitchen, columbarium and administration area designs. The tours of the churches were guided by members of those churches so questions regarding usage that the committee members had could be addressed by those who use the facilities.

The day after the architectural tour, everyone gathered at the HGA offices to view preliminary conceptual designs and discuss pros and cons of the various facilities that were visited. Questions regarding sustainability, position of our church on the property, parking, entrances, placement of rooms within the building, accessibility, functionality, and outdoor areas were among the myriad of discussion topics.

The members of Countryside who traveled to Minneapolis all arrived home exhausted from an intense three days and simultaneously enthusiastic and energized about the design phase of our relocation. It was exhilarating touring the various facilities with our architectural team and exchanging ideas while at the locations. The discussion on Tuesday at HGA was electric as ideas flowed and brainstorming took place. The APM and HGA personnel are as excited and animated about this new venture as is our Countryside team. The architectural team is now back at work busily incorporating ideas gleaned from our "road trip". Feel free to talk to any of the above members of Countryside who traveled to Minneapolis and experience their enthusiasm first hand! It's a great time to be a member of Countryside Church!



**COUNTRYSIDE**  
— RELOCATION —

## REMINDER!!

Thank you for those who have turned in your pledge of support for Countryside. The campaign has come to an end and we are still anticipating another 175 more pledges. If you have not turned in a pledge card for 2016, we would like to hear from you. Even if you are currently giving through Giving Made Simple, please still fill out a pledge card.

Do you need a new pledge card, want to pledge over the phone or online?

- Pledge cards are available in the pews and at the kiosk in the Foyer.
- Request a new card, or make a pledge by calling the Shari Garder, Financial Secretary, at 402-391-0350, ext. 123 or emailing [sharig@countysideucc.org](mailto:sharig@countysideucc.org).
- Download a printable pledge card at [www.countysideucc.org/pledgecard](http://www.countysideucc.org/pledgecard)
- Pledge Online at [www.countysideucc.org/ACT](http://www.countysideucc.org/ACT)

Your support is greatly appreciated!

- Countryside Community Church Stewardship Committee

STEWARDSHIP 2016



ALL COUNTRYSIDERS TOGETHER

## 2015 Contribution Deadline

Please remember to submit your final contributions of the year 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 2015, your contribution must be postmarked or physically received at the church office by December 31, 2015. Please note that your check date alone will not control which year your contribution applies to.

# CENTER FOR FAITH STUDIES/ ADULT EDUCATION

For more information about Center for Faith Studies and Adult Education,  
contact Kelly Keller at [kellyk@countrysideucc.org](mailto:kellyk@countrysideucc.org) or 402-391-0350 ext. 119

## LISTEN FOR CHANGE

Sacred Conversations for Racial Justice

January 21-23, 2016

TI2016



CENTER FOR  
Faith Studies

You're invited to attend **Trinity Institute (TI2016)**, an annual conference that takes place in New York City—but you can attend at **Countryside Community Church!** We bring all the elements of the NYC conference to you via webcast.

Trinity Institute (TI) explores the most pressing issues of our time, focusing this year on **structural racism, mass incarceration, and policy change**. Come with open ears and willingness to dialogue with other people across Omaha – networking to build a better Omaha for all. Ask about scholarships and CEUs. Registrations limited.

### FEATURING

Nicholas Kristof

Anna Deavere Smith

Emilie Townes



*New York Times* columnist and two-time Pulitzer Prize winner



Actor, playwright, professor, and 1996 MacArthur Fellow



Dean of Vanderbilt Divinity School

**ALSO FEATURING: EDUARDO BONILLA-SILVA, MICHAEL CURRY, GARY DORRIEN, KELLY BROWN DOUGLAS, MICHELE NORRIS, AND VICTOR RIOS**

REGISTER ONLINE at EVENT BRITE <https://www.eventbrite.com/myevent?eid=19364515788>

Countryside Community Church, 8787 Pacific Street Omaha 402-391-0350 [kellyk@countrysideucc.org](mailto:kellyk@countrysideucc.org)

Thur. Jan 21 5:00-8:30 p.m. features Mass with Bishop Michael Curry, Netsayi; Keynote: Michele Norris

Fri. Jan 22 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. & Saturday Jan 23 8 a.m.-2 p.m. features above speakers, panelists, local Omaha panel, facilitated conversations and networking

See detailed schedule at [www.centerforfaithstudies.org](http://www.centerforfaithstudies.org)

\$10/session or \$20 for all 3 days. Includes meals & materials, thanks to our co-sponsors Bethel AME





**6:30-7:15 p.m. program, 7:15-8:00 p.m. optional fellowship, dialogue and refreshments**

“In the Commons” has a double meaning – describing the place and the programming itself. A “commons-based” worldview emphasizes the concept that there IS such a thing as the common good, and that bringing people together in dialogue is essential to the sustainability of the human community. We will begin at 6:30 p.m., with baristas/snacks and an invited guest presenting for about 15 minutes, and

then continue with casual but surely engaging dialogue with the speaker and each other. You can come for the speaker only—but most like to stay for the dialogue! Come whenever you can!



**December 2—Cynthia Lindenmeyer. Star Wars is an Echo of Advent.** Rev Lindenmeyer is an associate pastor at First United Methodist and a true Star Wars, Star Trek and Lord of the Rings fan! Lindenmeyer will discuss the faith themes found in the Star Wars saga and their relationship to the themes of Advent.

**December 9—Dr. John O’Keefe: The Roots of Christian Ecology** O’Keefe, Ph.D. is a Professor of Theology and the holder of the A.F. Jacobson Chair in Communication at Creighton University. His academic research has focused on the history and theology of ancient

Christianity, especially in the area of ancient interpretation of the Bible. He is currently interested in early Christian theologies of nature and the Christian theological contribution to the environmental movement. He is also the founding director of the Center for Catholic Thought at Creighton University and co-host of the popular podcast Catholic Comments.

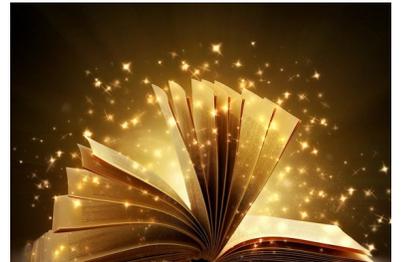


**December 16—Dr. John Kugler: Patient Centered Care — An Empowering Movement in Improving Health Care.** Patient centered care is replacing physician centered care; it is a method of care with a basic premise that a partnership between physician and patient improves patient care outcomes and satisfaction. This also can lead to a decrease in unnecessary costs.. John Kugler is a pediatric cardiologist at Children’s Hospital & Medical Center and a faculty member at the University of Nebraska College of Medicine and Creighton University School of Medicine.

**ADULT EDUCATION SMALL GROUPS:**

**Sunday Adult Forum, Monday Brown Bag and Books Bible & Beyond** groups will take a break for December and resume in January.

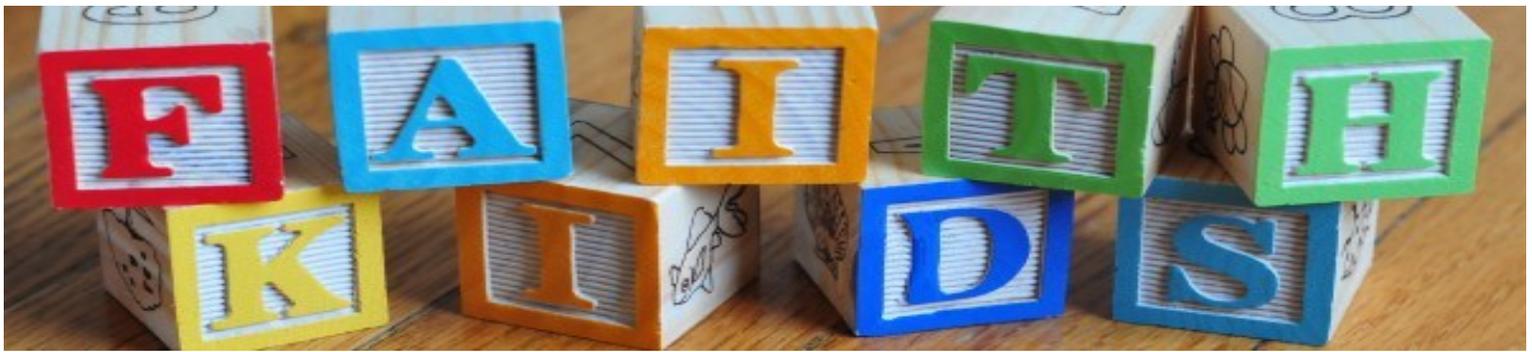
**Racial Justice Study Group**—meets every Monday at 7:00 p.m. in the Commons. For December, the group will be finishing Ta’Nehisi Coates’ *Between the World and Me* and then read James Baldwin’s classic *The Fire Next Time*. The group also attends community events around the topic. Want to start coming on Mondays? Can’t attend Mondays but want to stay informed? Contact Mary Jo Barbush Weiss at [mjbarbeiss@gmail.com](mailto:mjbarbeiss@gmail.com)



# CONVERGING PATHS MINISTRY

For more information about Converging Paths Ministries or to register for a Journey Group, contact Terri Vincent at [terriv@countrysideucc.org](mailto:terriv@countrysideucc.org) or 402-391-0350 ext. 121.

Sometimes the news seems overwhelming. It is difficult to know how to respond. Life’s journey is full of challenges. We should not travel it alone. Journey Groups are a safe and inviting place for taking in the problems of the world piece by piece with friends we can trust to help us develop a plan for your life’s journey. As Christians, Disciples of Christ, we need to have a faithful response to the world, we need to be able to articulate it, and we need to put it in action. Be a part of the change you want to see in the world. Join a Journey Group.



**Mark Your Calendar:**

**December 6 — Family Worship**

**December 9, 6:30-7:30 p.m. — Wednesday Night Alive**

Holy Moly and Core 56

**December 13 — Sunday School**

**December 16, 6:30-7:30 p.m. — Wednesday Night Alive**

Holy Moly and Core 56

**December 20 — Children’s Church**

**December 23 — No Wednesday Night Alive**

Merry Christmas

**December 27— Sunday School**

**December 30 — No Wednesday Night Alive**

Happy New Year

The [Children’s Education Calendar](#) is also available on the CCC website!

Questions about  
Children’s Education  
Department?



Contact Rebecca at  
[rebeccam@countysideucc.org](mailto:rebeccam@countysideucc.org)



**December Nursery  
Schedule**



Wednesday,  
December 2:  
6:30-8:30 p.m.—  
Breann & Eric

Sunday, December 6:  
8:30-10:30 a.m.— Tim K. & Isaac  
10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.—Jamie & JJ

Wednesday, December 9:  
6:30-8:30 p.m.—Breann & Eric

Sunday, December 13:  
8:30-10:30 a.m.—Breann & Sammi  
10:30 a.m.– 12:30 p.m.— Jessica and  
Johann

Wednesday, December 16:  
6:30-8:30 p.m.— Breann & Eric

Sunday, December 20:  
8:30– 10:30 a.m.— Breann  
10:30 a.m.– 12:30 p.m.— Breann

Wednesday, December 23:  
**NO CHILDCARE**

Sunday, December 27:  
8:30– 10:30 a.m.—  
10:30 a.m.– 12:30 p.m.—

Wednesday, December 30:  
**NO CHILDCARE**

**Our Nursery Ministry is in need of  
volunteers during the holiday season! If  
you are able to fill any of the spots with  
either one volunteer or no volunteers,  
contact Breann Lundblad at  
[lundbl34@gmail.com](mailto:lundbl34@gmail.com) for information.**



**Countryside**  
Community Church

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

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**Ministers**

Dr. Eric Elnes  
Senior Minister, ext. 113  
erice@countrysideucc.org

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

**Interim Assistant to the Ministers**  
Gayle Noble, ext. 103  
gaylen@countrysideucc.org

**Interim Music Coordinator**  
Bruce Blanchard  
bblanchardh@gmail.com

**Dir. of Children's Choirs/Pilgrim/Covenant**  
Vicky Palmisano, ext. 116  
vickyp@countrysideucc.org

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

**Business Office**  
Dan Loven  
Dir. of Administration & Communication, ext. 102  
danl@countrysideucc.org

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

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

Drew King  
Administrative Assistant, ext. 100  
drewk@countrysideucc.org

Jerry Gray, Church Clerk, ext. 119  
jerryg@countrysideucc.org

**Converging Paths Ministry Administrator**  
Terri Vincent, ext. 121  
terriv@countrysideucc.org

**Director of Center for Faith Studies**  
Kelly Keller, ext. 119  
kellyk@countrysideucc.org

**Building & Property Coordinator**  
Brian Palmer  
brianp@countrysideucc.org

**Pastoral Care Coordinator**  
Margie Bolte, ext. 117  
margieb@countrysideucc.org

**Life Ministry**  
Mary Beth Link, Director, ext. 112  
marybethl@countrysideucc.org

**Audio/Visual**  
Nicholas O'Bradovich, AV Tech Leader  
nicholaso@countrysideucc.org  
Ben Semisch, Videographer  
bens@countrysideucc.org

**Director of Youth Ministries**  
Will Howell, COYO  
willh@countrysideucc.org

**Christian Education**  
Rebecca Morello  
Director of Children's Education, ext. 109  
rebeccam@countrysideucc.org

Breann Lundblad, Nursery Coordinator  
blundbl34@gmail.com

**Kindernook Preschool**  
Stacey Carnazzo, Director, ext. 114  
staceyc@countrysideucc.org

**Return Service Requested**

402-391-0350 | countrysideucc.org

**ADVENT SEASON**



**November 29 - December 27**

**Church Holiday Office Hours**

Christmas Holiday—The Church office will close Thursday, December 24, at noon and will reopen Monday, December 28.  
New Years Holiday—the Church office will close at Thursday, December 31 at noon and will reopen Monday, January 4, 2016.

Countryside  
Community Church  
**2016**  
*Annual*  
**MEETING**  
Sunday | February 7 | 12 Noon



**Office Hours -**

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



**Countryside**  
Community Church

Connect with us on Countryside's Facebook at - [www.facebook.com/CountrysideOmaha](http://www.facebook.com/CountrysideOmaha)