



Cross Currents

Volume 57 Issue 3

March 2016

**PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF THE CROSS**
1517 South 114th St
Omaha NE 68144-1799

PHONE: 402-333-7466
Fax: 402-697-9084

WORSHIP
9:00 & 11:10 A.M.
Education 10:00 a.m.

SUMMER WORSHIP
JUNE THROUGH
LABOR DAY
ONE SERVICE AT 10:00 A.M.

WWW.CHURCHOFTHECROSSOMAHA.ORG

Inside this Issue:

Christian Education	2
Pastor's Message	3
Task Force	4
Mission	5,6,7,8
Membership	9
Associate Pastor Message	10
View from the Office	11
Our Church Family	12
Birthdays	13
Presbyterian Women	18
Getting to Know You	20
Calendar	21

ELDERS

Class of 2017

Mary Lynn Bennett
Jim Miller
Sarah Grady
Bruce Cramer
Jim Schnabel
Darold Bauer
Danny Whitlow
Matt Will

Class of 2018

Dave Gazzetta
Jeremy Gerot
Mary Ann Pederson
Ben Miller
Sharon Sievers
Clarence Waters
Erin Erickson
Sherryl Shannon

Class of 2019

Mike Howland
Scott Stalnaker
Larry Frederickson
Anne Wattles
Dennis Boesen
Staci Voss
Paul Holubeck
Marietta Morhardt

Moderators of Committees are:

Building and Grounds -Jeremy Gerot
Christian Education -Mary Lynn Bennett
Communication -Jim Miller
Congregational Life -Mary Ann Pederson
Finance -Ben Miller
Membership - Jim Schnabel
Mission - Danny Whitlow and Matt Will
Worship and Music - Erin Erickson
John Morey -Personnel

Deacons

Class of 2017

Katherine Braunlich
Loren Davelaar
Skip Decker
Mary Reid
Euloge Sekle
Patti Sparks
Teresa Thorson
Missy Throckmorton
Greg Ritter

Class of 2018

Heather Berry
Jean Carey
Thomas Gerot
Belinda Greiner
Deb Mazgaj
Lynette Olsen
Sandi Stuckey
Judy Arms

Class of 2019

Paula Allen
Lauren Ballou
Ethan Bennett
Susan Emmert
Ally Hopp
Linda Matson
Bill Ritchie



(Mothers of Preschool Children)

Registration forms are available at the Information Center.

MOPS membership includes MomSense Magazine, Weekly Mom-email, a MOPS Reusable Shopping Bag, MOPS Bookmark and Magnet and Exclusive Access to MYMOPS Online

Childcare is provided for meetings.

If interested in joining MOPS contact Sheri Sessions, 402-333-7466 or ssessions@pcoc.us or Amanda Stalnaker 402-214-9663 or astalnaker@mpsomaha.org

Director, Sunbeams
Betty Baddley

Director, Credo Choir
Kristi Treu

Director, Carol Choir
Holly Baddley

Carillon Choir
Kristi Treu

Chamber and Alleluia Singers, Trinity Brass, CrossChords
Kristi Treu

Director, Youth Bell Choir
Anne Laws

Orchestra
Patty Ritchie

www.vesperconcerts.org

Christian Education

**NEW for 2016.... A LENTEN WORKSHOP!
MARCH 6th at 12:15 PM**

Sponsored by the Christian Education Committee

If you enjoyed our annual Advent Workshop, then we know you'll want to participate in our **NEW Lenten Workshop!** On Sunday, March 6th after the 2nd service, everyone is invited to attend a luncheon served by our junior and senior high youth. Immediately following the lunch, a variety of Lenten crafts will be available in rooms down the hall near the office. There will be crafts for the young children, a food craft and a more advanced craft for older children and adults to make and take home. This is a smaller version of the Advent Workshop but another multigenerational event for families, couples, singles, EVERYONE! There will be a free will donation for the lunch with the proceeds going to the junior and senior high mission trips this summer. The sign-up sheet is located on the Information Desk. Please let us know how many are attending so we are sure to have enough food!

SENIOR HIGH MISSION PROJECT – Your support is needed!

On **March 6th and 13th**, the senior high youth will be collecting the following items to take to the Omaha Street School.

They have gone on several occasions to help clean the building but wanted to do something different this time.

They will be taking these items to the Omaha Street School on Sunday evening March 13th, so there's only two weeks to collect them.

Heavy duty dinner size paper plates

Paper/plastic bowls, smaller size for cereal or salads

Paper towels

Granola bars, pop tarts

Bottled water

\$5, \$10, \$20 gift cards for Walmart and Target

Please help the senior highs make a difference in the lives of the students at Omaha Street School!

Look for the plastic tubs in the Lobby and the Narthex. Thank you for your continued support for all of our mission projects!

VACATION CHURCH SCHOOL is coming this summer!

July 11 – 15, 9:00 – 12:00 noon

Save the dates!!!

Theme: "Cave Quest: Following Jesus The Light of the World"

Ages: 3 year old through 4th grade (the grade they have completed)

Watch for more information and registration forms!



A letter from your Pastor



“Halfway Through Lent”

by Marshall Ziemann, Pastor and Head of Staff

As the calendar turns to March, our Journey to Jerusalem continues as we count down the weeks to Easter. The Season of Lent is meant to be a time of reflection, of self-examination and introspection.

Here are a few words on Lent from Frederick Buechner’s *Whistling in the Dark*, later published in *Beyond Words*.

“In many cultures there is an ancient custom of giving a tenth of each year’s income to some holy use. For Christians, to observe the forty days of Lent is to do the same thing with roughly a tenth of each year’s days. After being baptized by John in the river Jordan, Jesus went off alone into the wilderness where he spent forty days asking himself the question what it meant to be Jesus. During Lent, Christians are supposed to ask one way or another what it means to be themselves.

If you had to bet everything you have on whether there is a God or whether there isn’t, which side would get your money and why?

When you look at your face in the mirror, what do you see in it that you most like and what do you see in it that you most deplore?

If you had only one last message to leave to the handful of people who are most important to you, what would it be in twenty-five words or less?

Of all the things you have done in your life, which is the one you would most like to undo? Which is the one that makes you happiest to remember?

Is there any person in the world, or any cause, that, if circumstances called for it, you would be willing to die for?

If this were the last day of your life, what would you do with it?

To hear yourself try to answer questions like these is to begin to hear something not only of who you are but of both what you are becoming and what you are failing to become. It can be a pretty depressing business all in all, but if sackcloth and ashes are at the start of it, something like Easter may be at the end.”

Yes, most definitely, Easter comes at the end of Lent. What began with the sign of the cross on our foreheads will culminate with resurrection joy Easter morning. Use the remaining weeks in this last half of Lent to spend time with God reflecting on the person God is making you to be.

And rejoice, “for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.” - Philippians 2:13.

Your pastor and friend,

Marshall Ziemann

Pastor

Marshall Ziemann, D. Min.
Ext 23—marshall@pcoc.us

Associate Pastor

Lynda Dinsdale, M.Div.
Ext. 22—lynda@pcoc.us

Minister of Music

Kristi Treu, M. M.
Ext. 24—kristi@pcoc.us

Director of Christian Education

Sheri Sessions
Ext. 25—ssessions@pcoc.us

Organist/Vesper Concert Director

Dana Sloan, M.M.
Ext. 40—dana.sloan@pcoc.us

Business Administrator

Rock Sumner
Ext. 32—rock@pcoc.us

Administrative Assistant

Julie Hansen
Ext 10-
churchofthecross@pcoc.us

www.churchofthecrossomaha.org

Tips to a Happy and Holy Lent

- Set aside a regular time to meet with God.
- Pray more, and then spend more time listening to what God is saying to you.
- Get a Lenten guide book, or use *Spirituality for the Rest of Us* as your guide.
- “Lighten the Load” – cut something out that weighs you down.
- Choose a new way to serve someone else.

Coming Soon! - Sunday Mornings in April STUDY ON CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

In March, 2015, the Presbyterian Church (USA) ratified a change in the church constitution to allow same-gender marriage. In June, 2015, the Supreme Court of the United States ruled that same-gender couples can marry. Then, in September, 2015, a request was made to the Session of Church of the Cross for approval to hold a same-gender wedding at Presbyterian Church of the Cross.

In November, 2015, Dr. Zieman wrote a letter to the congregation (in Cross Currents) **explaining the circumstances and the decision by the session. He wrote, "Since our Session and congregation has not formulated a policy on this issue (same-gender marriage), the Session wisely decided that they were not ready to make a decision at this time. But they realized, as is the case with every PCUSA Session, this decision will eventually need to be made. It is a local decision for every Session to consider. To this end, your Session...created a Task Force to map out a process to help us study the biblical principles of Christian marriage. The members of this Task Force chosen by the Session are PCOC members Keith Allen, Karen Morey, Sheri Sessions, Jean Waters, Darold Bauer, and Brad Gibson."**

The Task Force has now completed its work and the Session has approved a 5-week study on Christian marriage.

The study will

- Review foundational guidelines for faithful biblical study of the same-gender marriage
- Explore scripture related to Christian marriage and homosexuality
- Study how to faithfully disagree so that we can walk arm-in-arm even when we do not see eye-to-eye
- Provide opportunity for meaningful group conversation to achieve sharing, listening, understanding, and collective insights on the matter of same-gender marriage

The study will take place on Sunday mornings during the education hour from April 3 – **April 24, and with a lunch and "Conversation Café" after church on Sunday May 1, 2016.** All church members are encouraged to attend. Watch for sign-ups to begin March 13 before and after worship services.



Spirit of Mission

SAVE THE DATE!

The Adult and Youth Mission Trip has been set!!

**When?....
July 10 - 16,
2016**

**Where?....
Boulder,
Colorado**

**Purpose?....
2013 Flood
Relief**

**Cost?....
\$120
(Scholarships
available)**

**Min Age?....
14**

Contact Clarence Waters at:
Cwaters2@unl.edu

PCOC Members Provide over 350 Gifts for Annual HHM 'Christmas in South Omaha' Celebration

PCOC members provided gifts for 11 – 14 year old boys and girls again this year at Heartland Hope Mission’s annual 'Christmas in South Omaha' celebration on Saturday, December 19th. Approximately **150** angel ornaments were taken from the Giving Tree in the narthex with over **350** gifts returned to the church for the event!

Nearly **1000** children with their parents or guardian attended one of the two 3 hour shifts. At the beginning of each shift, families were greeted and given punch and cookies. Children were accompanied by volunteers to do face-painting, balloon animal-making, games, picture-taking booths and a bounce-house, while their parents “shopped” for their children in the next room. Tables full of gifts were categorized into male and female and by age group. Each child received 2 gifts.

As the family left the event with their bag of free new gifts for their children, they were also given a ham for their Christmas dinner. This event took place in Heartland Hope Mission’s new building at 21st and ‘U’ Street. Thanks to the Junior High youth group for helping create and hang the angel ornaments and setting up the Giving Tree. Also, thanks go to the generosity of the congregation who provided the gifts for these local area children in need.

For more information or to get involved, contact John Bennett at ml_jbennett@cox.net.





Spirit of Mission

January Family 'Mission Saturday' a Huge Success

A big shout out to all of the wonderful PCOC bakers and volunteers who helped make our January family 'Mission Saturday' activity a success!

We had so many donated baked goods (Thank you! Thank you!) that we were able to deliver to several fire stations -- Station #52 at 107th & Pacific and Station #53 at 168th & Pacific, plus the Omaha Southwest Police Precinct. Several PCOC families used their creativity to make Thank You cards and poems that were delivered with the baked goods.

The PCOC baked good donations were much appreciated by the firemen and police officers. Families were even able to get a first-class fire station tour from Station #52's captain upon delivering the baked goods. All the kids had a chance to sit in a fire truck and a few brave souls were even hooked up to heart and oxygen monitors.

The day was a huge success and we couldn't have done it without your help. Stay tuned for future family 'Mission Saturday' projects!

For more information or to get involved, contact Sandi Stuckey at sandi_stuckey@yahoo.com

Sponsored by Membership and Mission Committee





Spirit of Mission

Page 7

Habitat for Humanity's Home Dedication

Another home dedication is in the books for the Interfaith Coalition and for new homeowners, Rose Wani and her 6 children. The dedication was held at their new home (2430 S. 19 St.) Saturday, December 12th.

Rose is committed to providing a safe, stable environment for her six children, Manwa (5), Debit (9), Stephen (15), Rebecca (10), Agnes (20, not pictured) and her oldest son, and co-applicant, John (22). When asked about her proudest accomplishment, Rose said that coming to America from her native country of South Sudan and seeing her children attend school in a safe place is what makes her so happy.

Rose works full time at Nebraska Beef but has dedicated her weekends over the last several months to preparing herself for homeownership. Her son, John, has been with her every step of the way, interpreting for his mother during workshops and on the construction site.

All the children attend Omaha Public Schools and are very active in school life. During the summers the kids spend time at the Salvation Army Summer Programs. John enjoyed the experience so much that he eventually became a camp counselor there. The boys enjoy the sports camps and all the kids attend the music camp. John said they love to sing together as a family and each kid plays a different instrument.

PCOC volunteers and the Interfaith Coalition worked very hard over the summer. PCOC was very involved with Habitat for Humanity again this year, logging over 180 hours on the build. We also hosted a build weekend October 9th and 10th and served warm lunches and snacks to the volunteers. Thank you, Janneane Gerot and Linda Miller, for serving delicious and hearty lunches over that weekend.

Interfaith Coalition and Habitat for Humanity

Interfaith Coalition is a nondenominational Christian organization dedicated to building affordable housing for low-income families. We rely on volunteer labor and donated materials and funds.

Homes are sold at cost to families in need. Partner families receive interest-free mortgages and contribute their own labor, or "sweat equity," to building homes for themselves and other partner families.

The Interfaith Coalition is comprised of the following 9 congregations:

- Maplewood United Methodist Church**
- First United Methodist, Springfield**
- First Presbyterian Church**
- Morning Star Lutheran Church**
- Kountze Memorial Lutheran**
- Rockbrook United Methodist Church**
- St. Andrew's Episcopal Church**
- St. Pius X Catholic Church**
- Presbyterian Church of the Cross**

To learn more about Habitat for Humanity or the Interfaith Coalition please visit. <https://www.habitatomaha.org>



Spirit of Mission

Page 8



Janneane Gerot and Linda Miller serve lunch



Rose Wani and her family



Thomas Gerot at work

Here are some other opportunities to get involved with Habitat for Humanity in our community.

Habitat ReStore - Habitat ReStore is a home improvement discount outlet that sells donated items for 20-70 % off the retail price. Think Lowes or Home Depot, but at much cheaper pricing. Locations are near 24th and Leavenworth and near 108th and Maple. They can always volunteers for sorting donated items, stocking shelves, keeping the store organized and helping customers. They especially need a few retired guys on a regular basis who are familiar with hardware.

HabiTour- HabiTour is the perfect opportunity to learn about Habitat for Humanity of Omaha's mission and efforts in the community. The tour begins with a brief overview of the organization at their main office, 1701 N. 24th Street. Participants watch a short film that highlights how Habitat operates firsthand; they also hear about the experience of the homeownership process from a Habitat Omaha homeowner's point of view. Lunch is provided by Habitat for Humanity. After lunch participants take a short bus tour of Habitat's Builders Blitz and Women Build sites as well as build sites under construction. (If we can get a large enough group, we can schedule the tour on Sunday after church.)

For more information or to get involved, contact Matt Will at:
Matt.Will@RNDC-USA.COM.

Membership Committee News

THANK YOU 2015 MENTORS!

The Membership Committee would like to thank those who volunteered as mentors to the majority of our 47 new members who joined in 2015! Please help us thank the following mentors in showing our appreciation for their time & energy in the mentoring program:

Erin Erickson, Ed Ticknor, Caitlyn Ticknor, Jonathan & Carla Fritz, Chris Voss, Darold & Mimi Bauer, John Morey, Nancy Drews, Angie Holdren, Judy & Larry Keating, Judy Schafer, Doug & Joanie Hartman, Ardys Hansum, AJ & Judy Sundberg, Tim & Sandy Johnson, Chuck & Elaine Krumme, John Behrens, Dennis & Amy Boesen, Patty & Bill Ritchie, Annie Wattles, Don Howland, Amy & Ben Miller, Peg Hiles and Don & Sharon Sievers.

This program provides a helpful way for new members to feel welcomed & better acquainted in our growing church. The mentors become a go to friend to answer questions & help new members find their niche in our PCOC family. This can be as simple as inviting them to a fellowship group, an education class or serving on a committee.

A new member class has been scheduled for April 9th for those interested in exploring membership at PCOC. Please consider volunteering as a mentor for this valuable program. Questions? Contact Jim Schnabel @ 402-697-9518, Darold Bauer @ 402-290-5656, Staci Voss @ 402-290-0458 or Sharon Sievers @ 402-289-3390.

OVERLOOKING THE OBVIOUS

“How to Join” At our January meeting Lynda presented us with a “How to Join” brochure she acquired from a Methodist church in Texas. It simply stated, “If you would like to join our church here are the steps you may take.” Why didn’t we think of that? With all of our efforts to outreach to visitors, we never created a simple tri-fold brochure that could be placed in the pews, or Information Desk, to address some questions visitors may have regarding membership. So the next step for us was to create such a brochure. At our February meeting, a prototype was presented to our committee members for their review of the text and input for any changes. Coming soon! A simple tri-fold PCOC membership brochure that will be available at the Information Desk, in the pews and to be given to friends, or those you know who may be looking for a new church home.

NEW MEMBERSHIP CLASS

The Membership Committee is hosting a new member class Saturday, April 9th from 9:00 AM to 12:00 Noon. The class has been scheduled for those interested in exploring membership at PCOC. Please contact Pastor Lynda Dinsdale in the Church office @ 402-333-7466 or by email Lynda@pcoc.us for additional information and to receive advance materials.

Moderators of
Committees

Building and Grounds
Jeremy Gerot

Christian Education
Mary Lynn Bennett

Congregational Life
Mary Ann Pederson

Finance
Ben Miller

Membership
Jim Schnabel

Mission
Matt Will/Danny Whitlow

Worship and Music
Erin Erickson

Communication Committee
Jim Miller

Deacons

Moderator
Patti Sparks

Secretary
Teresa Thorson

Treasurer
Belinda Greiner

Home Meals Coordinator
Missy Throckmor-
ton, Ron Vlcek

Prayer Shawls Information
Missy Throckmor-
ton

PieceMakers
Karen Morey
Debbie McMullen

Cross Care

Contact
Rock Sumner

Cross Care is a care giving ministry of the Deacons of Presbyterian Church of the Cross and is made up of a group of trained caregivers who are ready to provide visitation, friendship, prayer, fellowship, support, and assistance to members of Church of the Cross who are:

Home bound due to illness or mobility issues
Hospitalized
Recently home from the hospital and in need of a little extra help

- Dealing with a long term illness
- Dealing with the loss of a loved one
- Going through a difficult life transition (loss of job, divorce, new baby, etc.)
- In need of occasional transportation to appointments or in running errands
- Just need someone to talk to

If you or someone you know is in need of Cross Care, you can file a request using one of the white Care Cards located in the sanctuary pews. All requests will be kept confidential. If you would prefer to speak with a pastor directly, please contact the church office at 402-333-7466

PASTORAL MESSAGE

This winter the cold snowy days have been perfect for sorting through the boxes in the basement left over from our move in 2014. These are the boxes with the special coding written on them....the decoded meaning that I've long ago forgotten! So, off to the basement to go through the boxes!

Drew discovered his household goods from his time in Seattle before his accident. These were well used items from his apartment and some of them needed replacement. He paired down his boxes from eleven to six! Not bad! Then he turned to his childhood toys which received a sorting, and only the special items were saved! Baseball cards. Star Wars toys.

Dick found boxes with his name on them -- his childhood memories. A Cub Scout pinewood derby car, some Dinky toys and photos from school showing a fifth grader with a nice crew cut. He sorted out the good items and soon he had reduced his number of boxes!

Lynda opened her boxes to find a very well loved teddy bear, a Tiny Tears doll, baby shoes made into brass looking book ends, an autograph book with notes and signatures of relatives no longer living. It was time to let some things go and just keep a few treasures that would fit in one box.

All the sorting and tossing made me wonder— what if I were to do that with me? What if I took all of my self-centeredness, jealousy, anger, and envy, and tossed them out of my life. Then what if I pulled down the boxes stuffed with old painful moments in life, so that I would never feel the discomfort from them again. If I could put all these things in a box, seal it up and put the box out for the trash pick-up— they would finally be gone and out of sight -- out of my life and mind forever!

Then I could take another box and fill it with all the treasured moments in my life. It could be filled with moments of joy, love, faithfulness patience, and kindness. I could open that box often to rediscover the moments of grace in my life that God has given me. Now that would be a box worth keeping!

What about you? Are you in need of a throw-away box for sadness, pain, jealousy and anger? Is it time to let all of these things go once and for all? Pack up that box and tape it shut for the trash pick-up! Then find one more box to fill with all the treasures in your life. Gently place them in the box where you can retrieve them over and over—letting God remind you of his great love for you!

This just might be a Lenten activity we could try this year as we prepare for the joy of Easter by tidying up those “works of the flesh” as Paul calls them in Galatians 5: 16-26. Saving all the gifts of God’s spirit and grace, our new uncluttered lives will revel in the joy of Easter morning!

-blessings,
LKD



The View from My Office

As a church, we've recently moved into the Lenten season - a time for preparation and penitence. It seems I'm always preparing for an activity in this office. All of us are so very busy, being pushed and pulled every which way, seldom having time to catch our breath. I was thinking of focusing my thoughts on the forty days that Jesus spent in the wilderness following his baptism (Matthew 4) for Lent this season. Jesus fortified his purpose and will during those 40 days; I thought I might give that a try by setting aside some quiet time for prayer, meditation, and spiritual recommitment.



Many of the preparations our church has made over the last few years are now bearing fruit:

The mailman recently delivered the PAID IN FULL loan papers from Security National Bank for our church loan. Then I received a check from the Ryckmans' real estate closing repaying that debt to our church. Those funds are now deposited in our Manse Fund Investment, and Kirk and Debbie have moved into their new home and are enjoying retirement!



The West Side Lighting Design task force has been meeting regularly with Doug Nelson of Leo A Daly. On February 11, 13 hearty members met at 7pm to view light temperature options, placement of new outdoor fixtures, and lighting the inside hallway of the circle drive entrance. The plan is gearing up for new street lamps (perhaps up to 7), sidewalk lighting, and spot lighting for each of the crosses on the west end of our property and atop the cupola. During March the task force will be working with a 65% rendering as we move through the process towards completion.

During one of our recent blizzard weeks that included snow days, I noticed that our ice machine in the kitchen was not functioning properly. By week's end, we'd run out of ice. A service call was made, they verified the unit had worn out, and a new unit was installed that same afternoon. Your B&G committee was anticipating this at some point, and with Music & Movement's help, funds had been set aside for its replacement.

I've been blessed to be able to work with the Worship & Music committee this winter. They've been discussing serving communion by Intinction up to six times in 2016. I helped commission local artist and potter John Dennison to design new chalices and serving plates, as well as a new pitcher and bread plate to use during the worship services.

And finally, a NEW PEW ENVELOPE is being designed for our use. We will replace the regular blue pew envelope and all our special giving envelopes with ONE envelope that will incorporate many types of contributions. Session gave a head nod at the February meeting to move forward.

Our younger gives have also shown great interest in having their own box of envelopes to write their own name and make their own contribution to the church. If you have a young giver that would use envelopes see Sheri or Rock in the office for a box.

Rock Sumner - Business Administrator

Our Church Family



Hadley Ann McDaniel, born on January 27, 2016. Parents are Caleb and Heather McDaniel.



Addison Naomi Hansen Holdren, born on December 8, 2016, baptized on February 7, 2016. Parents are Sally Hansen and Angela Holdren.



Jack E. Jackson, died on January 28, 2016.
Carmen Jensen, wife of Sam Jensen, died on February 12, 2016
Dale TeKolste, died on February 13, 2016

Flower Dedications

March 6

Joanie and Doug Hartman in memory of brother, Gordy Graves
Jerry and Kathy Klein in memory of loved ones

March 13

Patty and Bill Ritchie in memory of our niece, Becky Kelsh

March 20

Keith and Carole Engelmann in memory of our mother, Darlene Whittlesey

March 27

Easter Flowers

DEACONS' ENVELOPE FUND

One of the special offerings the congregation supports for the work of the Deacons is the DEACONS' ENVELOPE. Monies from this fund are used throughout the year for the caring ministries at Church of the Cross. Deacons send Valentine boxes to the college-age youth of our church in February. Each year we recognize our graduating high school seniors with a brunch and a gift of a study Bible. Deacons purchase cards and other expressions of care for individuals in our congregation. All of these are paid for from this fund. Perhaps the most visible use of these monies is to provide the lunch and gathering place for family and friends after the funeral of a loved one. This is an important way we show our care and concern in a difficult time of grief and loss.

In addition, the Prayer Shawl Ministry, Piecemakers, and Cross Care all operate under the auspices of our Deacon Board. And, let's remember the wonderful Advent Dinner celebration held at Church of the Cross that happens due to our Deacons efforts.

Since not every family has requested an envelope box for their contributions, we are highlighting this fund during the month of February with extra envelopes in the pews and an article in Cross Currents. Of course, you can simply note 'Deacons Envelope' in the memo portion of your check.

Gifts Memorials

- Additional handbells with cases @\$2500.00 each
- Intinction Serving Pieces \$600.00
- Cookie Ministry
- Educational Material Endowments
- Garden Ministry Maintenance Fund
- Mission Funds
- Musicians for Special Services
- Printed Music for Choirs
- Youth Program Funds
- Facility Fund
- 40 Bread Baskets for Kitchen \$250.00
- 5 Adult Choir Robes \$750.00

Reminder :
Call the church office when you or a family member is hospitalized.
402-333-7466

Prayer Chain

Contact Judy Arms
402-333-9501
Gerry Reid
402-498-0507 or use the Care Card in the pews.

- 3 Mary Cramer, Ethan Vlcek
- 4 Katherine Braunlich, Adam Goodwin, Drew Ritchie
- 5 Stan Garner, Mike Howland, Ashley Weber
- 6 Austin Curtis, Dottie Esbenshade, Sandra Johnson
- 7 Michael Juarez
- 8 Robbie Baddley, David Gazzetta, Marsha Smith,
Grant Ticknor, Barb Woods
- 9 Elizabeth Swedlund
- 10 Lloyd Meyer, Kathy Nickel, Anna Sumner
- 11 Euloge Sekle
- 12 John Goodwin, Doug Patten, Diane Wetuski
- 13 Pam Lindsey, Mitch Pirnie, Anna Whaley
- 14 Bob Dickmeyer, Ryan King, Chuck Krumme, Camilla Luma, Dan Scanlan,
Bob Thomas
- 15 Paul Cornett, Brenda Soukup, Henry Spann
- 17 Mary Haddock
- 18 Karin Hjerpstedt, Heather McDaniel
- 19 Jennifer Bennett, Peg Conley, Kathryn Harrison, Stan Hille, Dale Kuster
- 20 Dave Berry
- 21 Jill Bobek, Carol Hale, David Moore, Cody Thorson
- 23 Nancy Long, Parker Spann
- 24 Bob Foehlinger, Ed Ticknor
- 25 Shirley Morthole, Gerry Reid
- 26 Darold Bauer
- 27 Karen Butler, John Conley, Paul Kratz, Gladys Kuster, Lissa Treu
- 28 Dave Arnold, Scott Morris, Jill Rath
- 29 Nathen Holdren, Ryan Sherlock, John Swenson
- 31 Elise Arnold, Amelia Treu

**Junior High Leaders**

Jonathan and Carla Fritz
John and Mary Lynn
Bennett, Holly Baddley
Sundays: 4:45-6:30

Senior High Leaders

Kristi Treu, Don Metzger,
Sarah Frederickson,
Dawn and Brad Gibson,
Bob Nicas
Sunday: 4:45-6:30

If interested please contact the church office for more information,
402-333-7466

49ers

Judy Sundberg
402-333-6981
Donna Turner
402-397-3643

Friday Night Gourmet

Curt Field and Launie
Lambert
402-333-8287

Presbyterian Women

Diane Kratz
402-334-1604

Presbyterian Men

Jon Boomgaarden
402-334-1946

Hiking and Birding Club

Tom Stalnaker
402-390-9913

PCOC Book Group

June Fetting
402-333-7466

Music & Movement

Betty Baddley
402-445-9632

THE PCOC SHIRT SALE was a huge success! The SHF youth group thank you for your support towards their mission trip this June.

We have a few shirts left in a variety of sizes and colors that are available for purchase. If you are interested in one of these shirts, please contact Sheri Sessions at the church office. We won't be taking any more orders until spring.

Youth hooded sweatshirt - XL navy
Youth hooded sweatshirt - Large Navy
Youth hooded sweatshirt - Medium navy
Youth hooded sweatshirt - Medium grey
Youth hooded sweatshirt - Large grey
Youth hooded sweatshirt - XL grey
Adult long sleeve t-shirt - small royal
Adult long sleeve t-shirt - medium royal
Adult long sleeve t-shirt - large royal
Adult hooded sweatshirt - medium grey
Adult hooded sweatshirt - large grey
Adult hooded sweatshirt - navy medium
Women's polo shirt - royal medium (2)
Women's polo shirt - royal 2XL (2)

An Overview of Per Capita: Where Does Your Money Go?

Why Do We Have to Pay?

by Mary Newbern-Williams, Presbytery of the Missouri River Valley

[note: Mary Newbern-Williams was installed last year as the “Presbyter for Congregational Vitality” of our presbytery. Mary recently sent this letter to all the churches in the presbytery, and we share this with all our PCOC readers.]

Our denomination’s website (PCUSA.org) shares a brief history of per capita and its purpose. An article on that website states that “the earliest mention of something like a per capita apportionment dates back to the 1700s.” In later years, namely in the 1800s, the Presbyterian Church accepted a “plan of mileage” that helped to defray the costs for commissioners to attend meetings of General Assembly. In that way everyone could participate even if distance and/or financial resources were challenges. (Adapted from the PCUSA website: www.pcusa.org/percapita)

Our denomination describes per capita as being used to fund “ecclesiastical and administrative” functions that are shared by the whole church. In 1995, the following definition was developed: “Per capita is an opportunity for all communicant members of the Presbyterian church through the mid councils to participate equally, responsibly, and interdependently by sharing the cost of coordination and evaluation of mission; and of performing ecclesiastical, legislative, and judicial functions that identify a Reformed Church, while at the same time strengthening the sense of community among all Presbyterians. (GA Minutes, Part I, 1995). (Adapted from the PCUSA website: www.pcusa.org/percapita)

The article continues to explain per capita very effectively. “In essence, per capita is a set amount of money (apportionment) per member that congregations pay to the larger Presbyterian Church USA. Every Presbyterian shares in the benefit of the PCUSA’s system of government, so every Presbyterian is asked to share the expenses associated with coordinating and performing the functions of that system.” (Adapted from the PCUSA website: www.pcusa.org/percapita)

Interestingly enough, most mainline denominations practice some form of “*per capita*”. It may be called something different, but the purpose is the same. Having grown up as a fifth generation CME (Christian Methodist Episcopal Church), and having close family members who were/are pastors and bishops, I became quite familiar with “financial assessment” and “apportionment”. The administrative work of the denomination had to take place, and that was a major way. In addition, the mission giving, or “benevolence” was essential in the community service work and the mission projects. It was merely the cost of being the Church. One gives a little, and all benefit. Becoming Presbyterian merely meant a transfer of certain terms: the theology and the general beliefs and work are the same.

Each year all PCUSA members of congregations are asked to contribute by paying per capita for the good of the whole church system. Each council of the PCUSA, GA, Synod, and Presbytery receives a share of the per capita amount paid by each member. In that way the work of the Church of Jesus Christ continues; this work also benefits all who are part of this denomination.

One important part of the per capita process is this: each member is assessed the same amount. In PMRV, the per capita for 2016 is \$34.58. Of that amount, \$7.12 is set aside and sent to GA, \$5.25 is set aside and sent to Synod, and the remaining \$22.21 is used for PMRV. We encourage each congregation to pay based on membership. If each member pays per capita, the administrative of operating our Presbytery are realized, the cost of operating the synod is realized, and the cost of GA is realized. This small amount of money per member of our congregations around the nation goes a long way, and achieves great goals.

Our presbytery’s Stewardship of Resources Committee goes to great lengths to support the presbytery’s responsible handling of funds. I meet with this fine committee monthly, review how our resources are being received and being spent, and how we can support our congregations. The reason that we engage in this practice is: all of you are precious to the staff, “council”, and leadership of PMRV. Your growth, sustainability, health, and “wealth”, and crucial in all you do in the Name of Jesus Christ. Therefore, the operations of the denomination depend upon our ability to use the funds we receive in a responsible manner. We owe you that, and we owe God that. Most importantly, we must receive those funds so that the operations may continue.

When one really gives thought to the per capita process, \$34.58 is a small amount for the operation of the Church of Jesus Christ. One can spend more than that attending movies, dinner, and/or an evening with friends. This small amount of money divided among three councils of the PCUSA, assures the work and continuation of ministry.

Encourage your members to provide this per capita to the Church each year. If you would like resources or additional discussion about this crucial work of our denomination, please contact me at the PMRV Office. I will be available. God bless you. In Christ, Mary Newbern-Williams.

We Need Your Help

One of the nicest ministries that our church offers is hosting a funeral luncheon following the services of a congregation member who has passed away. It gives the family members and friends an extended opportunity for fellowship.

It takes approximately 20+ people for each funeral to pull it all together. Many volunteers have done this for a number of years, but we are in need of additional help. Therefore, we need to keep this important service intact. Though this falls under the responsibility of the Board of Deacons, you do not have to be a deacon to sign up.

Here are the areas that we would greatly appreciate your help:

- * Make 2-3 dozen bars or cookies for dessert.
- * Help set the tables the day before the luncheon (usually 1-1/2 hours or so).
- * Help prepare the luncheon food/beverages/dessert trays (3 hours morning of the funeral).
- * Help clean up after the luncheon (usually 1 1/2 hours).
- * Take home tablecloths, wash, dry and hang on hangers and cover at church.

As funerals are unpredictable, we need a list of many people who are willing to take a turn and help, generally with 2-3 days in advance notice. That is why it is nice to have a big volunteer pool.

This is a wonderful way to help grieving families. There isn't a lot of time involved, and it is enjoyable and very rewarding. I hope you will consider being a part of this team. Please get in touch with me at your earliest convenience.

Thank you for your consideration.

Debbie Mazgaj, 402-880-5650 or dmazgaj@gmail.com
 Heather Berry, 402-884-0117 or killalrneyberry@gmail.com
 Funeral Luncheon Co-Coordintors

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE COMMITTEE invites members to “embellish” the Sunday Coffee Fellowship hour on **PALM SUNDAY, MARCH 20** with your attendance and special treats. As part of the wonderful special music Sunday, we expect visiting worshippers as well as many extra musicians to join us.

To insure that we have plenty of goodies, please consider bringing sweets and fruits, but also cheeses, crackers, veggies, deviled eggs, even sushi to add to our festive beginning of Holy Week. Please join in!



Palm Sunday Worship Service

The Alleluia Singers will present “Amazing Love,” featuring John Rutter’s *Requiem* and other music for Holy Week on Sunday, March 20th, at 9:00 and 11:10. Join the choir, soloists, and professional orchestra as we prepare for the journey from Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem to his suffering on the cross.

This is a wonderful opportunity to invite a friend or neighbor.

March Music Schedule

March 6 th	9:00	Carillon Bell Choir
	11:10	Children’s Choirs and Fidelis Bells
March 13 th	9:00	Marietta Morhardt, mezzo-soprano
	11:10	Alleluia Singers
March 20 th	9:00 & 11:10	“Amazing Love” featuring <i>Requiem</i> by John Rutter Alleluia Singers, soloists, and orchestra
March 24 th	7:30	MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICE Alleluia Singers & Chamber Singers
March 27 th	9:00 & 11:10	EASTER SUNDAY Alleluia Singers, Trinity Brass, bells, and organ

AMAZING
LOVE



Palm Sunday Worship Service
9:00 & 11:10
Featuring *Requiem* by John Rutter
Alleluia Choir, Soloists, and Orchestra

MONDAY TEAMS!

We are so fortunate at Church of the Cross to have so many volunteers giving of time and talents to keep our facility looking great! We have another group of volunteers that help keep the kitchen looking spiffy each week.

- 1st Monday TEAM **OPEN**
- 2nd Monday TEAM Lois Morris and Sue Jenkins
- 3rd Monday TEAM Ken and Cindy Nisley
- 4th Monday TEAM Faythe and Lou Harrison, and Kathy Klein
- 5th Monday TEAM Helen McNiven and Sharon Sievers

We are in need of a 1st Monday TEAM and a few people willing to be SUBS. These people wash the Sunday coffee cups and urns, water pitchers, and any serving dishes that were used on Sunday (the previous day). They also restock the supplies needed for the next week and notify the office of items that may need to be purchased.

It has been said that “Kitchen fellowship is the best kind of fellowship.” All these volunteers serve with energy and joy while they keep our kitchen running smoothly. However, they need your help! They don’t get the summer off. Take a moment to consider becoming involved with our kitchen fellowship. Call Rock in the church office, 402-333-7466 and become a joyful part of the MONDAY TEAM.

Curtain Up – It’s Showtime!!

Mark your calendars for a DO – NOT – MISS event at PCOC! An event featuring singing, dancing, storytelling, presented by the youth choirs, and will benefit the Jr. High Mission Trip. “Donkey Tales” brings to life three biblical stories in which a donkey plays a major role - and the audience is sure to be “hee-haw-ing” with big smiles and happy hearts. Come support our young musicians who have worked hard to pull this all together – and as a double bonus, support the Jr. High students as they represent our church in their summer mission project! Go mark your calendar for “Donkey Tales” April 10 at 4:00.



Our entire family expresses deep gratitude for the outpouring of love and support from the congregation during Mia’s accident and recovery. We are grateful beyond words to be part of such a loving and caring community of Christ.

The Treu Family

Presbyterian Women



The Gathering of Presbyterian Women will be March 10 at 11:30 in the Fellowship Hall. Ed Ticknor will be the guest speaker and will be telling us about the Russian trip some of the men took recently. A luncheon will be served. A freewill offering will be taken for the lunch. All the women of Church of the Cross are welcome.

Have you ever wondered what your next step in faith will be?

As you travel down life's highway, it is good to stop and rest a while. You can gather at the river with your fellow travelers, and at that oasis, you can break bread, laugh, sing, worship, listen, and be heard. After lingering at that sanctuary, you and your friends will emerge refreshed, rested and ready to continue on your way, prepared once more to "celebrate the journey and praise the Lord". Hey, weary traveler, the Great Plains Presbyterian Pilgrimage is waiting....for **you**.

The Great Plains Presbyterian Pilgrimage, which is open to all denominations, is a three day journey in Christianity designed to provide all Christians with a renewed faith foundation, and fosters a revitalization of personal spiritual growth for individual and community living. It is held at a comfortable conference center where guests' every need is met. The pilgrimage weekend is open to all ages, all maturity levels and to all Christians.

It *will* change the horizons of your Christian walk!

PILGRIMAGE #19 is April 7 - 10, 2016 at Camp Calvin Crest, Fremont, Nebraska. For detailed information, check out the website: www.gpppilgrimage.org. To obtain a registration form or ask questions please contact Jennifer Bennett at 402-980-3002 or by email at jbennettgppp@gmail.com. Registration forms are also available at the Information Desk.

Friday Night Gourmet

Opa! Come party with the Friday Night Gourmets at the Greek Islands, 3821 Center St. on March 11th at 6:30 p.m. We have a choice of 6 menu items with a Greek flair. A sign-up sheet is available at the Information Center. For additional information, contact Ken and Cindy Nisley at 402-850-0889 or Stan and Carol Hale at 402-965-3722. Come one, come all and enjoy good food and great fellowship!

49ERS

SNOW AND SLEET KEPT US SNUG AS A BUG IN OUR HOUSES FOR OUR FEBRUARY MEETING! **WE ARE BACK FOR MARCH, COME RAIN OR SHINE!**

Tuesday, March 1st, Jerico's Restaurant, 120th & Dodge, shall be our lunch location, meeting at 11:30 a.m. We will order off the menu. Our speaker is Rev. Dale E. Wratchford, BCC, CMP MHA, with the Department of Pastoral and Spiritual Care at Children's Hospital & Medical Center. Rev. Wratchford is the supervisor of the department and has been a chaplain for 18 years. One of his specializations is in the area of therapeutic music for patients, including those little bitty ones in the NICU. Rev. Wratchford was featured in a story by Malorie Maddox on WOWT late last fall which brought his mission and focus to our attention. Please plan to join us for this interesting and informative presentation. For a reservation, please contact Donna Turner, 402-397-3643, or Judy Sundberg, 402-333-6981, by February 29th.

Presbytery Meeting



On February 20th Church of the Cross hosted the Presbytery meeting of the Presbytery of Missouri River Valley. Churches were well represented from throughout our Presbytery which consists of some 47 Presbyterian churches in Nebraska and Iowa. The meeting included a worship service and business meeting. Rev. Dr. Mary Newbern-Williams delivered the sermon. Our own Alleluia Singers joined with the Chancel Choir of New Life Presbyterian Church in presenting the anthems.

The service included the installation of our own Pam Otto as the new Moderator of Presbytery. Congratulations Pam! Pam follows in the footsteps of three other PCOC members – John Morey, Sandi Stuckey and Dr. Kirk Ryckman - who have previously served as Moderators.



Thanks to all of our members who turned out for the meeting. And a special thank you to those members who served as greeters and ushers and to the Deacon luncheon volunteers in providing a delicious meal for the attendees.

Getting to Know You

Name: Christopher Richard Voss, 44 as of January 1, 2016.

Place of birth: Ponca City, Oklahoma

Immediate family member's names and what they do: Staci Voss School Psychologist for Papillion La Vista School District, Logan Voss (11), Alexander Voss (9) and Garrett Voss (7)



Education: Masters of Science in Bioscience Management, Creighton University 2010; Bachelors of Science in Human Biology, University of Northern Colorado 1998; United States Air Force Active Duty 1990-1994

Occupation: Field Engineer for Diagnostica Stago Inc. a privately held French company specializing in Laboratory instrumentation specifically dealing with Coagulation automation.

Which service do you attend? We generally attend the 9am service unless the boys are singing at the late service

Involvement in PCOC, or other churches: Staci and I originally served as Junior High Fellowship leaders from 2000 to 2007. I have served as a Deacon and an Elder. I am currently active on the Building and Grounds Committee.

Hobbies: I enjoy playing basketball in a men's league (ability to run and jump well aside I enjoy the exercise). I like spending time with my family at the lake swimming and fishing. I love working outdoors in the yard and doing most household upkeep projects. Doing any drywall work and painting are my least favorite and after 18 years of marriage Staci is very generous to understand my disdain for painting and she takes care of most indoor painting.

I have a knack for: Remembering movie lines and other useless trivia.

A bad habit I have is: Late night snacks especially potato chips.

My pet peeve is: I drive approximately 45,000 miles per year for work and have little patience for poor drivers.

What person do you feel had the biggest impact on your life and why? My wife Staci has had the biggest impact on my life. We have been married for 18 years, but I have known her since I was 17. She is very inspirational, she is slow to anger, highly intelligent, very patient, the hardest working mother of three I know and she brings out the best in me. Everyone should have someone in their life that pushes them to be their best and Staci is that person for me.

What is your fondest childhood memory? Up until I was 12 my family spent a lot of time at various lakes sailing, swimming and fishing, I have fond memories of all of those trips.



What would you say is one interesting fact about you that people don't know? I was the first baby born in Ponca City, OK in 1972. My parents received all kinds of baby stuff for having the first baby of the year in that part of Oklahoma. I like to think I brought the Huskers some luck that day as they won their second National Championship that day in 1972.

Most exciting or dangerous thing I've ever done: Other than being from a Husker family living in Sooner country, I'd say spending two months in Belfast Northern Ireland in 1996 was the most exciting thing I've done. Close behind that trip would be parasailing, skydiving and an ill-advised tubing trip down the rain-swollen Platte River in 1993, if you want to hear that story just ask Staci, she loves telling it.

Is there anything in your lifetime that you passed up on doing and wish you had not? I regret not having invested all of my hard earned corn de-tasseling money from 1984 and 1985 in Apple Stock.

March 2016



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 9:45 Staff 11:30 49ers 12:30 PEO 3-10 Anne Nagosky	2 5:00 Youth Bells 5:00 PieceMakers 5:30 Cornerstone 5:30 Chamber Singers 6:00 Dinner 6:30 Disciple Bible Study 6:50 Alleluia Singers	3 9:30 M&M Exercise 11:00 M&M Exercise 5:30 Carillon Choir	4	5
6 9:00 & 11:10 Worship 10:00 Education 12:15 Lenten Workshop 3:45 Credo Choir 4:45 Youth Fellowship	7 9:30 M&M Exercise 11:00 M&M Exercise 5:30 Congregational Life 6:00 Communications 6:30 Bldg. & Grds 6:30 CE 7:00 Worship & Music	8 9:45 Staff 5:30 MOPS 5:30 Membership 6:30 Mission	9 5:00 Youth Bells 5:00 PieceMakers 5:30 Cornerstone 5:30 Chamber Singers 6:00 Dinner 6:30 Disciple Bible Study 6:50 Alleluia Singers	10 9:30 M&M Exercise 11-3 PW Gathering 11:30 Educators Meeting 12-1 OSS 2:00 Lighting Committee	11	12
13 9:00 & 11:10 Worship 10:00 Education 3:45 Credo Choir 4:30 Serve Dinner at Siena Francis House 4:45 Youth Fellowship 5:30 OAYO	14 9:30 M&M Exercise 10:15 Music 11:00 M&M Exercise	15 9:45 Staff 5:30 Finance	16 5:00 Youth Bells 5:00 PieceMakers 5:15 PCOC Book Group 5:30 Cornerstone 5:30 Chamber Singers 6:00 Dinner 6:30 Disciple Bible Study 6:50 Alleluia Singers	17 9:30 M&M Exercise 10:15 Music 11:00 M&M Exercise 5:30 Carillon Choir	18 Cross Currents Deadline	19 7:30-3:30 OSF 10-12 Choir/orchestra rehearsal 9:00-2:30 GPPP 5-10 Parents Night Out
20 Pantry Sunday 9:00 & 11:10 Worship 10:00 Education 3:00-4:30 Children Choir Rehearsal 3:45 Credo Choir 4:45 Youth Fellowship	21 9:30 M&M Exercise 10:15 Music 11:00 M&M Exercise 7:00 Deacons	22 9:45 Staff 5:30 MOPS 6:30 Cross Care	23 5:00 PieceMakers 5:15-6:15 Children Choir Rehearsal 5:30 Chamber Singers 6:50 Alleluia Singers	24 9:30 Ruth Circle 7:30 Maundy Thursday Service Communion	25 Office Closed in pm	26 9-12 Easter Egg Hunt 
27 9:00 & 11:10 Worship E A S T E R 	28 Office Closed	29 9:45 Staff 5:30 Session dinner with Confirmands 7:00 Session	30 5:00 PieceMakers 5:15-6:15 Children Choir Rehearsal 5:30 Chamber Singers 6:30 Disciple Bible Study 6:50 Alleluia Singers	31 9:30 M&M Exercise 10:15 Music 11:00 M&M Exercise 5:30 Carillon Choir 7:00 Lydia Circle		

Presbyterian Church of the Cross
1517 South 114th Street
Omaha NE 68144-1799

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Omaha Ne
Permit No. 833



Next Cross Currents Deadline is:
Third Friday of March
March 18, 2016

Cross Currents

The *Cross Currents* is
published monthly by the
Presbyterian
Church of the Cross,
1517 South 114th Street,
Omaha NE 68144-1799