

Many of us are ready for 2020 to be over, but finding reinvigoration is not as simple as flipping the calendar page. We are still in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, but hope is on the horizon.

Our Church of the Cross congregation is vibrant, enthusiastic, talented, and creative. In 2021, we are excited to share new worship experiences, praise God with more beautiful music, listen to different perspectives, learn together in classes, and improve the lives of others with our mission outreach.

Our weekly Tuesday and Friday Bible studies will resume on Zoom in January - new members are welcome! Confirmation class will get back to work preparing to join the church, and a new member class will happen on Zoom. Throughout January, an online series of speakers will share perspectives on race.

While we may not be gathered within the walls of the church just yet, we can be gathered in Christ. We hope you will join us outdoors and online in 2021!

Epiphany Vespers



January 6 at 5:30 p.m. on the Patio

At Christmas, we celebrated the birth of Christ - the arrival of Emmanuel, God with us. With Epiphany, we celebrate Jesus coming to all humanity. Just as the Magi followed the bright star to find the Christ child, we are called to be witness to God's true light in Christ.

In the dark days of winter and the pandemic, we will celebrate the light with a special Epiphany gathering on the back patio. We will share scripture, music, and candlelight. Please join us!

January at a Glance

- Sunday Worship - online each week – anytime!
- **New time starting Jan. 3!** Sunday Virtual Coffee Fellowship – 11 a.m. on Zoom each week
- Preschool and elementary Sunday School is online (video lesson each week) unless noted below
- JHF/SHF Sunday School and Youth Group activities will be communicated by email
- Start dates of resuming classes and special event dates are listed below.

Sunday, January 3

10:00 a.m. — Perspectives – Charles Wilson
10:00 a.m. — K-5 Sunday School on Zoom

Wednesday, January 6

5:30 p.m. — Epiphany Vespers – details below

Thursday, January 7

9:00 a.m. — PW Morning Circle on Zoom

Friday, January 8

7:00 p.m. — Bring Your Own Bible on Zoom resumes (repeats weekly)

Sunday, January 10

10:00 a.m. — Perspectives – Preston Love
12:30 p.m. — New Member Class on Zoom

Tuesday, January 12

1:00 p.m. — Tuesday Bible Study on Zoom resumes (repeats weekly)

Wednesday, January 13

Confirmation Class on Zoom resumes (repeats weekly)

Sunday, January 17

10:00 a.m. — Perspectives – Camille Metoyer Moten
3:00 p.m. — Online Vespers Concert

Thursday, January 21

10:00 a.m. - *Evolution and Your Faith* class starts

Sunday, January 24

10:00 a.m. — Perspectives – Carmen Tapio
12:00 p.m. — Annual Meeting on Zoom

Sunday, January 31

10:00 a.m. — Perspectives – Dr. Franklin Thompson

Time to Listen - Perspectives on Race

As a follow-up to the “Courageous Conversations About Race” class in the fall, the participants invite all PCOC members to join them for a special January series. We will welcome and thoughtfully listen to guests from our Omaha community. Together we can grow in understanding and expand our own perspectives.

Their insights, information, and stories will be shared on Sunday mornings in January at 10 a.m. on Zoom. Each Sunday offering will be unique in scope and format, so join us each week by using the following Zoom link.

Zoom meeting website: <https://zoom.us/join>

Meeting ID: 983 7874 3677 **Passcode:** 639576

January 3 - Charles Wilson

An Interview with our mission partner:
Insights from Omaha Street School, Director of Care

January 10 - Preston Love

“Community Engagement” director of Black Votes Matter Institute and 4urban.org.

January 17 - Camille Moter Moten

An interview with an actor, singer, and member of diversity boards in Omaha

January 24 - Carmen Tapio

Perspective Storytelling Q & A with Carmen Tapio

January 31 - Dr. Franklin Thompson

“Teaching Toward Multicultural Gaps:
An Investigation of What’s Missing” 90-minute presentation followed by Q&A session

New Class! Evolution and Your Faith

Thursdays at 10:00 a.m. - January 21 - February 25

Earlene Uhrig will lead a new class that includes a short lecture, some video clips, and breakout room discussions. Participants will gain a better understanding of the process of evolution, the theory of evolution, and how this relates to your personal thoughts on this process. The group will explore the differences of beliefs along a Creation/Evolution Continuum, from the natural world of evolution to the supernatural realm of faith. As a believer, you can work through the interconnectedness that is the “best fit” for your faith as you progress through this class. We will incorporate the evolution of viruses (nonliving) as well as the evolution of living bacteria, plants, and animals. *Call the church to sign up!*

JANUARY CHURCH BUSINESS

It’s time for the annual business of our congregation.

Annual Meeting

Our annual meeting of the congregation is planned for January 24, 2021, at noon - most likely via Zoom. Details will be coming in our weekly communications on how we will be voting for our new elders and deacons.

Giving Envelopes

Our annual giving envelopes are now available for pick up just inside the circle drive doors. If you would like to have your box mailed, please call the church office.

2021 Per Capita

Per Capita is the annual amount that PCOC pays to our Presbyterian Church (USA) denomination which offsets the administrative costs for our Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly. As a connectional church, we need to maintain effective channels of communication and coordination so that our ministry as Presbyterians works well. The per capita assessment supports this process so that all area and national Presbyterian programs, missions, and ministries may function better.

For 2021, our per capita rate is \$39.68 per member. Most of this amount remains in our local presbytery for ministry to our 42 local Presbyterian congregations. PCOC will pay a total of \$30,791.68 by February 15, 2021 for our 776 members who were on the roll as of December 31, 2019. Many PCOC members decide to give a special gift to cover the per capita cost of their family. This helps Church of the Cross to offset our assessment. That would be: \$39.68 for a single member family, \$79.36 for a two-member family, \$119.04 for a three-member family, and \$158.72 for a four-member family, etc. You are welcome to use the envelope that is included with this mailing, or simply note “Per Capita” on the memo portion of your check.



Spirit of Mission

In Luke 10:37, Christ calls us to care for one another in the parable of the Good Samaritan. Here's how PCOC answered that call with our mission dollars and volunteer hours in the last months of 2020.

- Our weekly pantry and hygiene item donations supported the overwhelming need created by the pandemic for families who rely on Heartland Hope Mission (HHM). Our amazing level of donations in November was matched with a \$500 donation by the Thrivent Corporation.
- Your online Christmas donations and online Amazon gift purchases for HHM made Christmas merrier for kids in need.
- Your Thanksgiving donations supported even more families in need through Completely Kids. Our mission dollars along with the work of 9 mighty PCOC volunteers assembled 536 Christmas bags!
- Your mission tree giving dollars benefited the Omaha Street School, Russian Mission Partnership, and Siena Francis House.
- Our mission dollars helped to support CASA kids. Instead of their annual Christmas party, CASA kids received a goody bag including gift certificates and a board game.
- Our school support dollars supported at-risk students and their teachers in the classroom.

Let's do more good work together in 2021!

CROSS CARE CONNECTIONS UPDATE

2020 has been challenging on both our physical well-being and our spiritual lives. Sometimes, we just need a friend or companion to walk with us. Church of the Cross is reenergizing our wonderful care giving team as Cross Care Connections. Please pray about how these deeply caring members of our congregation can walk along with you. More information will be coming soon, but if you or a loved one would enjoy a Cross Care Connections provider now, please contact Pastor Christine.



- 1 Frank Watt, Chris Voss, Phil Johnson, Linda Dobry
- 2 Dan Olson, Nancy Koehler, Dick Kelley
- 3 Gene Pugh, Meg Whaley, Mason Will
- 4 Conlin Grady, Carol Mason, Jane Miller
- 5 Cindy Nisley, Liz Brechi, Bernice Smith, Kim Banat, June Karges, Josh Murray
- 6 Mary Ann McNeel
- 7 Keith Allen, Tim Johnson, Diane Kratz, Blake Kahler, Diane Holubeck, Madisyn Spielman, Heather Berry, Bill Hanley
- 8 Jeff Quine, Ann Schmidt, Joan Thorson, Marilyn Willis, Quinn McFadden
- 9 Megan Davelaar, Sharon Sievers, Bob Hoisington, Ryan Kort
- 10 Drew Berry
- 11 Jennifer Arnold, Sheri Cunningham
- 12 Linda Bauer, Aurora Quartoroli
- 13 Katie Rock, Sam McClain
- 14 Danial Holdren, Gail Hille, Evelyn Aziamoe
- 15 Taylor Koch, Max Rieke, Dwight Peterson
- 16 Brad Dittman, Stephanie Voss
- 17 Launie Lambert, John Broderick, Allison Weber, Emmie Fuller
- 18 Lois Morris, Sharon Marvin-Igel, Sharon Rich, Anna Ellinghaus
- 19 Dava Hendrickson
- 20 Charlotte Thiessen, Jack Fortner, Alta Empkey
- 21 Loni Williams, William Davey, Michael Anderson
- 22 Mike Dempsey
- 23 Mary Beth Gust, Amy Ellis
- 24 Joan Miles, Kaitlynn Evers
- 25 Quinn McGuire, Kim Hall
- 26 Becky Bianchi
- 27 Tyler Zimmerman, Spencer Kussman, Hadley McDaniel
- 28 Abby Jaeger, Jessa Sherlock, Peg Hiles
- 30 Jonathan Fritz

JANUARY VESPER CONCERT

Our January concert has been moved online! Pianist Sean Chen and clarinetist John Klinghammer will present "French Connection," a program of French/American music recorded in the comfort of Sean's living room in Kansas City. The concert will be available to watch on the Vesper Concerts website on January 17 beginning at 3 p.m. Find a cozy spot in your home to relax and enjoy this special presentation. Specific instructions for watching will be sent in the days prior to the concert.



2021 FLOWER SIGN UP

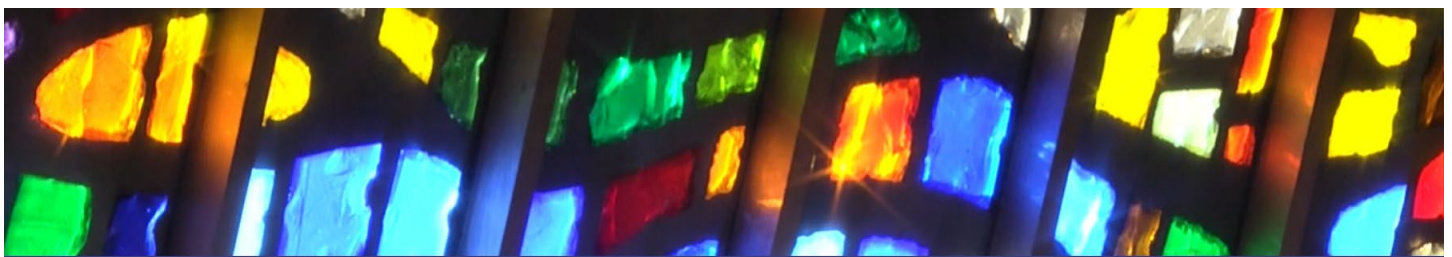
If you are interested in signing up for chancel flowers for the services during 2021, please call the church office at (402)333-7466. We will begin having flower bouquets for the Sanctuary starting with the January 10 service.



NEW MEMBER CLASS - JAN. 10

If you know someone who is interested in joining our church, please let them know about the new member class. It will be held on Zoom on Jan. 10 from 12:30 to 2:00 p.m. Those interested need to call or email the church office to sign up for the class, and they will receive the Zoom class link by email.

Clip and keep our contact information for quick reference. Or, pass it along to someone you know who is looking for a church home!



Find us online! Website: churchofthecrossomaha.org

Contact Us!

Phone: (402)333-7466

Email:

- Office/Julie Hansen: churchofthecross@pcoc.us
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- Rev. Christine Dempsey: Christine@pcoc.us
- Business Administrator, Rock Sumner: Rock@pcoc.us
- Director of Music Ministry, Kristi Treu: Kristi@pcoc.us
- Director of Christian Education, Heather Berry: Heather@pcoc.us
- Communications: Gayle Kerr-McFadden: Gayle@pcoc.us



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