

Join Us for Dedication Sunday!

September 10 after Worship in the New Welcome Center

We have been on an amazing spiritual journey with God in our building project. In many ways, there are distinct similarities to how our congregation responded to our building project in 2007 and 2008 — facing different, but real obstacles, and overcoming them — and our most recent addition.

Church of the Cross constructed the north addition (office, classrooms, choir rehearsal room, etc.) during a recession. We are all familiar with how we started our latest capital campaign just as a worldwide pandemic began and placed everything including worship on pause. Then, the price doubled, and we needed to have another campaign to raise more funds. Together, we have overcome many obstacles as we stepped out in faith to make each addition a reality.

Here we are in 2023, gathering in this wonderful and welcoming new space. As I said at the beginning, God has truly blessed this church with faithful members who have invested in the future of His mission here.

It has been my privilege and honor to have been a part of this amazing journey, and I thank every one of you for your participation and support. It is important for you to know how important Marshall's persistent and constant guidance and counsel have been. I will never be able to thank Rock enough for his endless flow of innovative ideas that generated interest and enthusiasm throughout the entire journey. In addition, we have many of our members to thank for their work in planning and executing events and even videos, that helped keep our members engaged and energized throughout the entire campaign. Some of them are still at work, helping to complete the final touches.

God has truly blessed our church and has given us members who rise to the challenge and respond faithfully. Every gift pledged and given to this effort has been a blessing.

Well done, good and faithful Christians! To the Glory of God!

John Morey, Capital Campaign Coordinator

Enjoy an Extra Sweet Treat

What better way to celebrate our new Welcome Center than with ice cream! Following the dedication ceremony, join us in Fellowship Hall for ice cream sundaes complete with all the toppings. We will have our usual coffee fellowship with donut holes and cookies, too. Hosted by Congregational Life.



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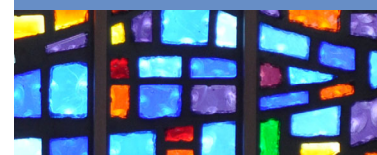
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A New Building... A New Day?

I once served in an organization that met in a really crummy facility. The parking lot was awful and dangerous. The roof leaked everywhere. The building had aged poorly, stuck in a time warp in a faded industrial area. The landlord had long stopped caring. On top of this, our organization had developed a poor reputation itself. Our Agenda was filled with problems, hard issues, and tough decisions. We found ourselves always responding to complaints. I hated going to the monthly meetings. I couldn't wait to get out of there. I think everybody else did, too.

Then, a miracle happened. Out of the blue, a rich donor left a large donation that enabled us to build a brand-new building in a growing area of town. The building had brand new furniture, many spacious rooms, a modern feel, and a fine-looking parking lot. Secretly, I wondered if our organization was worthy of such a beautiful new space, almost as if we didn't deserve it.

Before long, I noticed that another miracle was happening. In a matter of months, morale improved. Smiles appeared. Camaraderie ensued. Confidence returned. I think we all started feeling better about ourselves and our work. Our losing streak was ending. I found myself looking forward to meeting there!

I'm not saying that the new building changed everything, but it sure didn't hurt! I think being in the new building caused our group to see ourselves and our task differently. This new, positive environment helped us to see ourselves more as God sees us – to “Live into Hope” as Jane Parker Huber's 1976 hymn (#772) entreats us. This hymn is based on Luke 4 – when Jesus reads from Isaiah 61 in the synagogue at Nazareth as he begins his ministry. With his arrival, Jesus is proclaiming nothing less than a new day has dawned, a day of captives freed, of sight for the blind, of liberty and justice for the oppressed. Because of this, we should live differently – we can live into hope instead of despair. We can start looking forward to new possibilities ahead.

No, I do not see us as a congregation that lives in despair, but at the same time I also wonder what living into our new building holds in store for us.

Yes, it includes some new rooms and will serve as a wonderful first impression for newcomers on Sundays and for community groups with whom we share our facility. I also wonder what it will do in us as this new space becomes part of our church's ministry. I wonder how we will be different, thanks to our beautiful new space.

Ask God to help you to live into hope!



**Pastor/Head of Staff
Marshall Zieman**
(402)333-7466 Ext. 1
marshall@pcoc.us



Tuesday Bible Studies Begin September 12

This fall, both Bible Studies will begin a study of the Old Testament Book of Exodus. New members are always welcome to join. Just bring your favorite Bible and come prepared to learn and discuss together. The classes are casual and discussion-oriented. A Zoom option is also offered at 1:00 p.m.

- Men's Bible Study at 7:00 a.m. in Room 16
Led by Pastor Marshall Zieman & Keith Allen
Note: This is a men's study only. If you are interested in a women's only Bible study, please refer to the information about Presbyterian Women's Morning Circle on page 7.
- Afternoon Bible Study at 1:00 p.m. in Room 16
Led by Pastor Marshall Zieman

No need to register – just drop in!

Be Involved in the Music Program

There are many ways to be part of the music program at PCOC. Singing, ringing bells, and playing instruments are all vital parts of worship each week. But there is so much more than what we present on Sunday mornings. We enjoy fellowship with each other during weekly rehearsals as we work together to present our best gifts to God. We work hard, we laugh, sometimes we cry...and all the while we become a family in Christ.

Fall is the perfect opportunity to be part of one of the several groups we offer for children through adults. Please reach out to me by calling the church office or sending an email to kristi@pcoc.us if you would like to know how you can be involved.

Music Department Fall Kick-Off Party

Everyone who participates in our music program—children's and adult choirs, handbell choir, brass players and all instrumentalists—is invited to the Fall Kick-Off Party on Monday evening, September 4 from 5:00 – 7:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. Families are invited, too! We'll provide the main dish and are asking you to bring a side dish or dessert. Sign up using the QR code or by emailing Kristi at kristi@pcoc.us. Last date for RSVPs is August 30.

Vesper Concerts' 35th Season Begins on September 8 at 7:00 p.m.

Romanian native and international performer Cristian Fatu joins with guitarist Beau Bledsoe in a program featuring musical styles from around the world, from classical to tango and eastern European rhythms. Fatu and Bledsoe will perform works from composers Dinicu, Ravel, Gardel, Kovacs, Granados, and Piazzola.

Fatu is recognized as one of today's most exciting young violinists, praised for his virtuosity, technique, and bright artistry. He has won prizes at more than 25 national and international violin competitions around the world.

Bledsoe performs and records classical music, jazz and folkloric music from around the world as he seeks to integrate different musical cultures with diverse audiences. He is the founder of Ensemble

Iberica which explores the music of Spain, Portugal and other areas of the world connected to the Iberian diaspora.



Outdoor Concert on October 8

The Back Alley Brass is bringing the party to our back lawn with their New Orleans-style jazz. Bring your lawn chairs and your appetites—The Corn Dog Co. food truck will be here! This is an event for the entire family.

We're Looking for a Few Extra Hands

Now that the Welcome Center is open, Vesper Concerts will need a few extra volunteers to help with greeting audience members and ushering at each concert. Email Kristi if you can help.

Advertise with Vesper Concerts

Do you work for a business that might want to advertise to the Vesper Concerts audience? Ask about our season sponsorship levels. Prices begin at \$300 for the entire season—quite a bargain compared to other organizations. For information, contact Kristi at kristi@pcoc.us.



Kristi Treu

Director of Music & Executive
Director of Vesper Concerts
(402)333-7466 Ext. 5
kristi@pcoc.us

Worship & Music Committee Moderator:
Jayne Frederickson



Cornerstone is Back!

We've missed you! And we'd love to see your family on Wednesday nights this fall at Cornerstone. This is our 32nd year of Cornerstone – isn't that amazing?

For our newcomers, Cornerstone is our midweek program for all ages. Come to choir, Bible Study, and enjoy a delicious meal prepared by Chef Nickie. Childcare is provided from 5:30 – 8:15 p.m. Cornerstone begins September 13 and ends November 15. Registration is required, so go online and register now!

- Bible Study for children in Preschool – 7th Grade and two classes for adults (details below)
- Confirmation Class for 8th Graders.
- Choir for children in 1st Grade – 7th Grade and Adults
- Dinner for all

Register online by September 1, so we can plan for dinner and supplies.

God Saves a People

Led by Kirk Ryckman

Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.

September 13 – November 15

The theme we will tackle this fall is “God Saves a People.” There is no more central theme to our faith and our understanding of God’s caring for us than this. And this theme of salvation moves from the Old Testament to the New and then the life of the early church. It will trace the saving grace of God from the Exodus, the wanderings, and the Kingdom’s rise and fall, on to God’s new act of salvation through Jesus, into the early church. Follow the sweep of the story and marvel at the mighty acts of God yet today! This is the heart of understanding our relationship to God. It is well worth the time to study. Please join us. Suggested book donation is \$20.

Dementia

Led by Carl Greiner and Steven Wengel

Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.

September 13, 20, 27

Dementia is an illness that can compromise memory, personality, and physical agility. The demographics of dementia are impressive: one in three seniors dies with Alzheimer’s. Currently, there are six million American’s living with Alzheimer’s. It is anticipated that there will be 13 million by 2050. You have the opportunity to learn about this important disease. This course is designed for a general audience and will emphasize questions and answers.

It is not necessary to attend all the classes; each class has its own features. Attending the first class is particularly recommended.

- September 13: Alzheimer’s and other problems of memory
- September 20: Preventive measures that you can take to reduce risk
- September 27: Challenges for caregivers

Please note: Some members have expressed interest in attending both classes, and we are sorry for the conflicting time schedules. As a result, we will record the Dementia class and make it available for online viewing, so all members have access to the class content.



Classes for All Ages

Sunday School Begins September 17

Now that school has begun, it’s time for Sunday School to resume. Classes for preschoolers to high schoolers to adults begin on September 17 at 10:00 a.m. We’d love to see you ALL on Sunday mornings!

- Preschoolers (3’s, 4’s, and 5’s that haven’t been to kindergarten) meet upstairs in Room 7
- Kindergarten – 5th graders meet downstairs in the Gathering Space
- 6th – 12th graders meet downstairs in Room 11
- Adult education classes meet in Room 16— see class descriptions on next page



Important Dates to Remember

September 13	Cornerstone Begins
September 17	Sunday School Begins, Youth groups begin
October 8	2nd Grade Bible Presentation
October 29	Trunk or Treat
November 19	Advent Workshop
December 3	Children's Christmas Pageant

We Are Americans

Led by Charlene Meyer & Earlene Uhrig

Sundays 9-10:30 a.m.

September 24 – November 5

PCOC members come from diverse personal backgrounds in both locations growing up and career strengths. We'll explore how our ancestral diversity, faith diversity, and geographic diversity influenced our individual choices to become members of our caring PCOC community.

Can we meet the challenge offered by a Matt Skinner commentary and shared in Marshall's May 28th sermon? Can we continue to grow as a beloved community that is united in purpose and identity? This seven-week adult course will have a unique timeframe, meeting from 9:00 to 10:30 a.m. to allow necessary dialogue of the topics and still offer

time for fellowship before attending the 11:10 a.m. service. Weekly video/reading homework required.

Albert Schweitzer – A Modern Saint

Led by Carl Greiner

Sundays at 10:00 a.m.

October 22, 29 and November 5, 12

Albert Schweitzer (1875-1965) was an accomplished organist, writer, musician, physician, and missionary. This class will review his autobiography *Out of My Life and Thought* and address two basic questions: How did he put his faith into practice? How did he put his faith into reflection? Suggested book donation is \$15/book.



Heather Berry
Director of Christian Education

(402)333-7466 Ext. 2

heather@pcoc.us

CE Committee Moderator: Jeremy Cunningham

JHF Leaders: Jeremy Cunningham, Julie Evers, Ashley Sherlock, and John Stalnaker

SHF Leaders: Dawn & Brad Gibson, Ethan Bennett, and Susan Price



DEACON'S UPDATE

Submitted by Matt Kargas

The work "Deacon" comes from the Latin word "diaconus" meaning "servant." The PCOC Deacons are hard at work serving the church and their neighborhoods. If you haven't met your neighborhood Deacon yet, ask the church office to direct you to your neighborhood Deacon! They would love to hear from you!

The Deacon Fall blood drive is September 24. You can sign up today at redcrossblood.org/.

- 1) In the **Find a Blood Drive** box at the top of the page, enter PCOC and click the blue arrow.
- 2) In the list, locate our church's September 24 drive. Click **See Times** and sign up for a time slot.

You can help us reach our goal of registering 25 donors! If you give blood this month, the Red Cross has partnered with Sports Clips in order to provide a chance to win a free haircut coupon! Find details on rcblood.org/ or racetogive.



Drives Near PCOC

Refine Search

Hide Full Drives ☐ What does this mean?

BY DATE

BY DISTANCE

Sunday, September 24, 2023

Presbyterian Church of the Cross

1517 S 114th Street

Omaha, NE 68144

mi | 09:00 AM - 02:00 PM

SEE TIMES

+ More Details



Deacons Moderator:

Neal Hubbard



- 9/1 Nancy Drews, Alyson Grady
- 9/2 Kristen Curtis, Spencer Friesen, Kyndall Goodwin, Noah Luke, Hudson Schiessler
- 9/3 Tim Graumann, Bill Graves
- 9/4 Avery Boesen, Oliver Boesen, Carol Bolton, Sean Johnson
- 9/5 Sue Freyer, Silas Pflueger, Donna Turner, Josh Versaw
- 9/6 Russ Beernink, Marshall Zieman
- 9/7 Jeanette Garner, Gayle Kerr-McFadden, Nellie McDaniel
- 9/8 Sophia Miller, Arnie Nelson
- 9/10 Cecelia Ballou, Michael Weyant
- 9/11 Gary Fitch, Larry Frederickson, Tom Kort, Joshua Paul, Barb Scanlan
- 9/13 Jean Waters
- 9/14 Ryan Koch, Barbara McNeal, John Sparks
- 9/15 Madelyn Grady, Katherine Innes, Charles Madison, Mike McGillick, Rick Sessions
- 9/16 Verta Pugh, Kirk Ryckman, Cara Schiessler
- 9/17 Chad Bumsted, Harrison Versaw
- 9/19 Abby Sekle, Nuna Tchona
- 9/20 Shanna Mathia, Sara Pickens
- 9/21 Ava Davey, Molly McGuire, Sue Thomas, Tim Williams
- 9/22 Brayden Downes, Olivia Downes, Lauren Harrison, Leah Whaley
- 9/24 Pam Otto
- 9/25 Jerry Klein, Roger Pauba, Emily Sumner
- 9/26 Mary Carlson, Sierra Cunningham, Skip Decker, Dick Hart, Martha Henry
- 9/27 Alena Bennett, David Goodwin, Gary Petersen, Cassie Rathman, Kara Versaw
- 9/28 Adelyn Paul
- 9/30 Chuck Baddley
- 9/30 Carol Futhey, Marjorie Huff

Congregational Life Committee Co-Moderators:
Kathy Nickel & Stephanie Weaver

Membership Committee Co-Moderators:
Amy Boesen & Brenda Graumann, co-moderators

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



Invite a Neighbor to Church

PCOC . . . It's Where You Belong! **New Member Discussion on October 1**

Do you know someone who is looking for a church home? Invite them to visit PCOC this fall and show them all that PCOC has to offer. Our Welcome Center dedication on Sunday, September 10 will be an especially great day to visit.

Our next new member discussion will be held on Sunday, October 1 after the late worship service. The discussion will last about an hour, and a light lunch will be provided. Scan the QR code below to access the online sign-up page of the church website. Scroll to locate the new member discussion, and then sign up! Or, call the church office to attend the next new member discussion.





Tai Chi

Tai Chi meets at 10 a.m. on Mondays and Thursdays. Drop in anytime if you'd like to attend a class. No class on Labor Day, September 4.
Coordinator: Paula Allen

Music and Movement

We meet every Monday and Thursday at 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. to encourage and support each other as we stay active and healthy. We love having new people join our Music and Movement! No class on Labor Day, September 4.
Coordinator: Betty Baddley

49ers on September 5

Join us to hear Nick Salick, Development Officer/Nebraska Field Officer, inform us about the Nature Conservancy and their mission to protect the lands and waters on which all life depends. In Nebraska they steward prairies, work with farmers to implement conservation practices, and protect the Platte River – the world's foremost stopover for sandhill cranes. Join us to hear about the exciting work they are doing in our state. We meet for lunch at 11:30 a.m. at WHEATFIELDS, 1224 South 103rd Street (One Pacific Place). Everyone is welcome – whether you are 49, younger or older -come join us!
Coordinators: Mary Ott and Judy Sundberg

Active Minds on Tuesdays

Active Minds participants will be learning or re-learning North Dakota Whist during September. New members are always welcome, and we will teach you to play this card game. This group is a drop-in option for fellowship, fun, and laughter on Tuesday afternoons from 2-4 p.m. We meet in the lower level and hope you will join us.
Coordinator Earlene Uhrig

Presbyterian Women on September 7

How exciting to begin our Morning Circle with a new study *Sacred Encounters: The Power and Presence of Jesus Christ in Luke-Acts*. Luke provides a perspective on the person and works of Jesus Christ with the scope of His message and inclusivity of God's love and salvation. In Acts, the Apostles with the Holy Spirit continue this mission of mercy and compassion. Lessons invite today's church to take

caring beyond our congregation to inclusion in our communities of faith. We meet on the first Thursday of the month at 9:30 a.m. (new time) in Room 15. On September 7, Ardys Hansum will lead the first lesson Elizabeth's Sacred Encounter. Questions? Contact Cindy Nisley.

Friday Night Gourmets on September 8

Friday Night Gourmets will be opening its 2023-2024 dining-out season on September 8 at Farmer Brown's, 2620 River Rd Dr., Waterloo NE (402-779-2353). We will order from their party menu which includes steak/prime rib, chicken, and seafood. Social Hour is at 6:30 p.m., and dinner is at 7:00 p.m. All are welcome to join us for this September "tradition" of great food, friends, and lively conversations. Check the Information Desk in the Welcome Center for the sign-up sheet, and please sign up by Sunday, September 3. Hosts are Gene/Verta Pugh and Curt Field/Launie Lambert. Contact the hosts with any questions.

Book Group on September 20

PCOC Book Group will meet Wednesday, September 20 from 5:15 to 6:30 p.m. to review *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo* by Taylor Jenkins Reid. All readers are welcome!
Coordinator: June Fettig

Presbyterian Men

Presbyterian Men have a couple of events planned this month. Find details about our mission workday at Calvin Crest on page 8. On September 13, the men will be cooking dinner on the first night of Cornerstone. Questions? Contact Coordinator Jon Boomgaarden.

Breast Cancer Support Group



For anyone currently diagnosed with Breast Cancer
Contact Karen Morey or Heather Berry



From the Mission Mailbox

**Your mission dollars and
volunteer hours at work!**



The Mission Committee would like to share with you some of the mail received from the organizations which are the grateful recipients of your generosity. For the last month we have received these thank you notes from the following mission partners:

- Heartland Hope Mission thanks you for the monthly donations of money, food, and hygiene items. The monetary donation will provide working poor families with fresh produce, meat, milk, and access to clothing and household items. Your contribution also allows families to meet with a Client Service Specialist to receive navigational services, SNAP (food stamp) application assistance, and access to HHM's Job Paths program.
- On behalf of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Office of Ministry Engagement and Support, Rene Myers says thank you for your gift of \$1,820 and for your gracious and faithful support.



An Outstanding School Supply Drive

Thank you to everyone who helped at our back-to-school supply drive packing day on Saturday, August 12, and thanks to everyone in the congregation who donated backpacks and school supplies during the month of July. We collected 135 backpacks, exceeding our goal of 125!



SPIRIT OF MISSION

Mission Committee Moderator:
Anne Wattles

Presbyterian Men's Calvin Crest Work Days

Submitted by Jon Boomgaarden

The Presbyterian Men of PCOC will have project workdays at Camp Calvin Crest on Friday, September 8 and/or Saturday, September 9 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Our projects include replacing deck boards on the GaGa Ball Court and finishing a couple cabin decks. We will carpool (more details later) and have a no-cost lunch. Please sign up at the Information Desk in the Welcome Center. Questions? Contact Coordinator Jon Boomgaarden.

Maui Fire, Donations, and PDA Submitted by Anne Wattles

Most of you know that on August 8 there was a devastating fire on the Hawaiian island of Maui. Most of you know that as of August 16, 106 people have died. And most of you know that Presbyterian Disaster Assistance is not a first responder to events such as this.

Marshall received a message from PDA to all Presbyterian churches reminding us of this and to let us know that when the rebuilding begins, they will be there as long as needed. PDA's message said to "stay tuned" for more information about their role in the coming months.

The Mission Committee would like to invite you to not only pray for the people of Maui and the work ahead for PDA but to also monetarily donate. Your gift will assist PDA with their work and will be greatly appreciated.

You may give online on the church's website at <https://churchofthecrossomaha.org/gifts-giving/>. Choose "Disaster Relief" as the Fund. Or, you may give by check. On the memo line, please write "Disaster Relief."

Something to Celebrate

Submitted by Betty Baddley

The Refugee Committee is happy to report that our "family" (shown below) is settling into their new home in Omaha! They are in an apartment, and the household items and furniture that generous folks at PCOC helped us collect fit beautifully in their new dwelling.

The children are starting school, and Ali (their father) is interviewing for potential jobs. There have been many obstacles to work through, and there is still much work to be done. The family is strong and determined, and we are extremely blessed with people who are willing to support the mission to help them become part of the Omaha community.

Thank you, dear friends, for your continued interest, support, and prayers. Indeed, this is what being a community of faith can do in its most important calling - showing God's love and reaching out to people everywhere with compassion, hope, and love. We promise to keep you posted as we journey this amazing road together.



A Special Note of Thanks to the 2023 Confirmands:

This year's Confirmation Class recently sent a very thoughtful monetary gift to the Refugee Committee for delivery to the six youngsters who have moved here from Syria. The class asked that their gift would allow the family to shop for particular toys and games that they might enjoy as they get settled in their new environment.

Our committee has received many generous gifts and support from our church family in our efforts, and now, we see a wonderful gift of kindness and thoughtfulness as our young people step up to be

part of the program!

Thank you, Confirmands, for your acts of kindness and support for others.

You set a good example for all ages, and we are proud that you are thinking of other people and showing your love for all

God's children. You have learned your lessons well, and we will try to report to you how they use your gift! Thank you and well done!



AllPlay Update

Submitted by Sandi Stuckey

On Sunday, August 13, Bruce Froendt, Founder and Executive Director of AllPlay Miracle Baseball League spoke to our congregation regarding the need for volunteers. Every Saturday during the season, over 500 children ages 3 to adults are signed up to play on the 30 AllPlay teams. The fall season runs through September 16. More than 100 volunteers are needed each Saturday to ensure all "bases are covered," so the players and families have a great time.

Cindy Garner and I are there most Saturday mornings, and we would love to tell about our experiences. It is easy to volunteer. You can sign up as an individual or bring a group. There are many volunteer opportunities from greeting, concessions, announcer, umpire, and being a buddy. Each volunteer slot is 2 hours, and you can sign up on the church website. See you at Seymour Smith Field on Saturdays!

Heartland Hope Mission

Submitted by John Bennett

On Saturday, September 23 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., we need 5 to 10 volunteers to help distribute pantry items, direct pantry drive-thru traffic, restock shelves, sort donations, and complete other various tasks at HHM. Please contact John Bennett if you are interested in assisting with this event.

Pantry Sunday continues on the 3rd Sunday of the month to support the HHM pantry. On September 17, bring your food and hygiene items to Sunday worship with you, or drop them inside the circle drive doors at church anytime. You can find the most needed foot items listed on the mission page of the church website.



Siena Francis House

Dinner servers needed on Sunday, September 10 from 4:15 to 6:15 p.m. Sign up online. Questions? Contact Keith Allen.

Agape for All -

Where All are Welcome to Learn and Listen

Submitted by Patty Ritchie

Fort Omaha Intertribal Powwow Saturday, September 23, 1-7:30 p.m. 5730 N 30th St. at Fort Omaha

Celebrating Native American cultures, the powwow honors the traditional dance, music, artistry, oral history and foods of various tribes across Nebraska and the surrounding region including Omaha, Ponca, Santee Sioux and Winnebago.

Are you interested in attending and looking for a ride? Sign up online or at the Information Desk in the Welcome Center. Questions? Contact Earlene Uhrig. We will meet in the North parking lot at 1:30 that day to carpool.

"We are Americans: Where is our destiny?" September 24, a 7-week adult class

A full description of this class can be found with the Adult Education fall offerings on page 5. Please direct questions to:
Charlene Meyer or Earlene Uhrig

United We Walk September 10 from 3-6 p.m. on the Tri-Faith Commons (13136 Faith Plaza)

Following a successful inaugural, Tri-Faith Initiative is thrilled to host the second annual "United We Walk" fundraiser - a one mile loop around the Tri-Faith Commons near 132nd and Pacific streets . Caution - this event requires the ability to walk long distances.

Donations during the event directly benefit Tri-Faith's mission of cultivating inclusive environments in our community that advance interfaith relationships and understanding.

As a major late summer event in the Omaha metro, United We Walk brings together people, businesses, and nonprofit partners to build trust and understanding in an enriching way "Hatred and violence toward anyone in our community will never be tolerated; we are always stronger together."



Form a team and bring banners, signs, t-shirts, etc. — whatever helps you proudly express the beauty of your affiliations, identities, and communities! If you are interested in being part of a Presbyterian Church of the Cross team, please sign up in the Agape section of the website. Email Kathy Moore if you have questions.

Our Church Library Grows, with Additional Social Justice Books Submitted by Ann Pearson

During the month of August, we gratefully received a gift of 20 beautiful new books for 'children of all ages', including youth! Most of them were a gift from Mary Ott. The books cover almost every aspect of life about people of every color and religion. Many of the illustrations are gorgeous, and the stories are delightful and intriguing.

One of the books tells the story of a little Jewish boy's first trip to Israel. Several books are excellent books about Black History. In fact, as I read the youth history books, I find them to be very helpful learning tools for my own journey toward a greater understanding of what it means to be black in this country. Two other books tell the stories of children with two mommies and two daddies. Another one presents the touching story of a child who appears as a boy, but feels like a girl. I think we all probably knew kids like this in school.

And, finally, there is an outstanding story of a young Muslim girl who must survive the challenging conditions in post-Taliban Afghanistan. It is a novel based on the true story of a girl whose mother (Mor) dies. Her alcoholic father places her in an orphanage in order to marry another woman. It is tragic, heartbreaking and eventually triumphant. Although recommended for youth, it reads like an adult book. It is called *Wanting Mor* by Rukhsana Khan. It would be an excellent pairing with the exciting book reviewed this month (below).

A couple of reminders about the library: When you or your child return a book, please use the book return slot directly to your right as you walk in the door. Even if you have checked out the book just for Sunday morning, please use the return slot. Also note that the Agape children's collection is being placed on the lower shelves, to your left as you enter. This is so the books are more easily accessible to the children.

A special thank you to Mary Ott for her generous and meaningful donation of children's books and another special thank you to Judy Arms for being such a wonderful caretaker of this special library we have here at PCOC.

Sometimes a review has been written about a book that is not in the library. In that case an interested person should contact the writer of the review about obtaining a copy. Perhaps we can include it in our library.

Agape for All Book Review

***PROUD: Living My American Dream*
by Ibtihaaj Muhammad
Review Submitted by Earlene Uhrig**

After picking this book as a possible interest for our refugee family to enjoy, I was asked to share details with all of you. This book is the story of a young outsider trying to find her place. Ibtihaaj dedicated this book “to anyone who has ever been told they don’t belong. When you let your light shine, it illuminates everyone around you.”

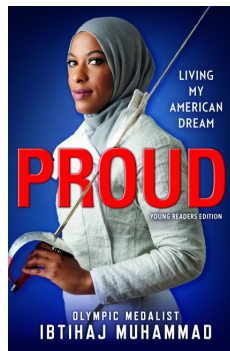


Photo credit © 2023
Hachette Book Group
Books

This memoir is of her journey from growing up as a Muslim American, rising above bigotry on many occasions, and pushing past the struggles of focus required to finally become a bronze medalist in the 2016 Olympics. The first American Olympian to compete wearing hijab, she was named one of Time magazine’s 100 Most Influential People in the World in 2016. Oh yes, the hijab Barbie is her likeness.

This is a Young Readers book, and Ibtihaaj closes with 15 specific thoughts, IBTIHAJ’S ADVICE. I have chosen four that I hope you ponder as you reach for this book and find an inspiring read.

- Hold on to your faith first and foremost.
- Always seek knowledge in whatever you do. Do your research, take notes, and be willing to learn.
- Be open to people who may be different from you. Tolerance and acceptance of differences make for improved, more inclusive, richer spaces.
- We all have a gift that we can use to make the world a better place. What’s yours?

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**Next Cross Currents Deadline is:
Third Friday of the month
September 15, 2023**



Please Note:

- The Church Office will be closed on Monday, September 4 for Labor Day.
- Our summer schedule continues through Sunday, September 10.
- Our two-service schedule and Sunday School will resume on Sunday, September 17.

Cross Currents

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

Have general questions about the church?

Contact the Church Office — email: churchofthecross@pcoc.us or
phone: (402)333-7466

Have content for the next issue of the *Cross Currents*?

Email articles to Communications@pcoc.us
