

Cross Currents

Newsletter for April 2024



Embracing Community Connections

Learning - Learning about grace and our shared humanity.

Growing - Growing in understanding and hope.

Building - Building a better future, together.

And what better way to learn, grow and build than to invite civic leaders of positive change to speak with us, and share the good work which helps heal and advance our beloved community. Our Embracing Community Connections series begins with three speakers this April, focusing on initiatives which improve black and white racial equity and understanding in Omaha.

April 7 - Connecting with No More Empty Pots Leah Keinama - Director of Programs and Partnerships of "No More Empty Pots"

Leah's work at No More Empty Pots in North Omaha is groundbreaking, advancing their mission to connect individuals and groups to improve self-sufficiency, regional food security and economic resilience of urban and rural communities through advocacy and action. Come learn about the exciting outreach and opportunities.

April 14 - Connecting with the Tri-Faith Initiative Jeremy Fricke - Vice President of Mission Advancement

Jeremy Fricke's presentation is entitled "Religious and Racial Justice - Where we Were, Where we are Going." Tri-Faith counters the rise in hate crimes and religious hostility by cultivating empathy and understanding. Let's grow together by expanding our concepts of God's people.

April 21 - Connecting with the Empowerment Network Willie Barney - Founder and President of the North Omaha Empowerment Network

The network has launched major initiatives including increased high school and college graduation rates, reduced unemployment, decreased gun violence, and the rebirth of an African-American centered arts, culture, entertainment, and business district. We can help build a brighter future by being informed and engaged.

Join us for these three Sundays during April in the Welcome Center during Fellowship Hour in the Courtyard Room. Please register for these presentations on our church website or at the Information Desk. Each presentation will be unique and inspirational! Bring your curiosity and imagination.

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A Year with Tyler and Alyson

It's hard to believe that 20 weeks have now gone by since this year's Confirmation Class began to meet. It's a unique class for us this year – consisting of two talented eighth graders – Alyson Grady and Tyler Falcone. I'm sure you are used to seeing them in worship – because they have faithfully served as acolytes EVERY SUNDAY since last September!

In addition to not burning down the church (the first job of acolyting!) Alyson, Tyler, and I have talked each Wednesday in Cornerstone about what it means to be a member of Church of the Cross. As they have discovered, there's a lot to know about the Bible, our church, being a Presbyterian, and serving God. They are each very busy eighth graders, and you will enjoy getting to meet them more in next month's Cross Currents.

What I am reminded of each time I teach Confirmation is that our faith is meant to be handed off to others – to the next generation, to new believers, to those around us. Our own personal faith is supposed to rub off on others. It could be in a formal setting, like teaching a class, but the majority of the time we hand off our faith just by living our lives in community and letting Jesus flow out of us as we go through life. At least that's how it's supposed to work.

I believe the best way to share your faith is first to be a healthy Christian yourself. This is more important than we often realize. Most people who aren't actively pursuing lives of faith are not doing so because they've got a problem with Jesus. They've either come to believe that church isn't relevant or that the Christians they've met aren't displaying anything they'd want to have in their own lives.

"Hostile to the church, friendly to Jesus Christ" is how author John R.W. Stott began his famous little book, Basic Christianity, the book that God used to re-awaken me to Jesus and the church back in college. "It is precisely because they see a contradiction between the founder of Christianity and the current state of the church he founded that they are so critical and aloof."

That's the goal for us – that our lives wouldn't contradict Jesus! May the next generation, starting

with Alyson and Tyler see that Christ is alive both in our church and in our lives as they soon are formally welcomed into Church of the Cross on Confirmation Sunday, April 7



Your pastor and friend,

Marshall Zieman



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

Join a Tuesday Bible Study

The Tuesday Bible Studies led by Dr. Zieman have resumed as we study the New Testament book of Hebrews. Newcomers are always welcome; just bring your favorite Bible and join us in the classroom in the Welcome Center at either 7:00 (men only) or 1:00 (everyone). Note, if you are looking for a women's only Bible study, find the details about the Presbyterian Women's Morning Circle on page 7.



Cross Care Connections provides a personally tailored relationship with a fellow church member to walk with you at life's most challenging times. These trained compassionate individuals can provide confidential support to help you navigate major life events.

Contact Marshall or Rock in the church office for more information about this program or to request a Cross Care provider.

The View from My Office MONUMENT SIGN ERECTED



The final cap stone has been added to the new monument sign completing the project. The sign marks the south entrance to our Sanctuary and Welcome Center.

FINANCE COMMITTEE SENSES GENEROSITY

During January each year, members are asked to help cover the cost of our Per Capita apportionment. Thru mid-March you have given \$12,905 to help cover our cost of \$30,559.20. THANK YOU!

During February each year, members are asked to support the Deacon Envelope Fund. Thus far members have given \$7632.00. Again, THANK YOU!

KITCHEN CREW VOLUNTEERS

Help needed for our Monday morning kitchen crews again. I could use a couple of teams once per month to wash up a few glasses, cups, pitchers and utensils from Sunday with the dishwasher. Then restock the supplies and clear out any old items from the refrigerator.

If you and a friend have an hour to spend visiting and helping keep our kitchen clean and restocked, please contact Rock for more details in the church office.

VOLUNTEERS FOR SPRING CLEANUP

It could be YOU! It could be a family outing helping to prepare our church grounds for the growing season. Work gloves come in all sizes and colors. There are plenty of jobs to keep everyone occupied and working together joyfully. Everyone is welcome to join us.

In the spring we trim back plants, clean off winter debris, and rake up leaves. Bring tools, wheelbarrows, and good cheer.

We always share treats, juice, and coffee with our fellowship time. B&G would encourage all members to join us for this workday. Taking care of God's creation is our first calling from the Bible!

April 6, 9 am to NOON! Meet in Fellowship Hall.





Rock Sumner Business Administrator (402)333-7466 Ext. 6 rock@pcoc.us

Finance Committee Moderator: Belinda Greiner

Building and Grounds Committee Moderator: Roger Utman



SHF Chopped! Competition

One of SHF favorite events is their Chopped! Competition. What is Chopped!, you may ask? SHF Chopped! is a cooking competition that is fashioned

after the tv show of the same name. Our youth are split into teams that work together to create a menu that includes an appetizer, entrée and dessert. Guest judges

award the teams in sev-



eral categories, like, most flavorful, most interesting, tastiest entrée, etc. Chef Nickie is instrumental



in this event, as she spends time the week before the competition teaching the youth basics about cooking. She also works with them to create their menus. The twist...on the day of the competition, Chef Nickie throws in a random ingredient that both teams must incorporate into their menus. While the teams are working, Chef Nickie also prepares a meal

for everyone to enjoy. It is a fun event, and everyone is stuffed afterwards! Many thanks to Chef Nickie and our guest judges Keith and Paula Allen, Dennis and Amy Boesen, and Gary and Marsha Marron.

Confirmation Sunday April 7

Our Confirmation Class has been working hard all year long learning about our faith, and now is the time for them to officially join the church. Come support them in worship on Sunday, April 7 as they take their vows of membership. A reception in their honor is planned for 10:00 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. All are invited to celebrate!

Celebrating Women Baskets Silent Auction

Do you have a special woman in your life that deserves to be pampered? Not sure what to get her?

Well, look no further because SHF is assembling baskets just in time for Mother's Day. The silent auction begins April 14 and ends



Important Dates to Remember

April 7	Confirmation Sunday, 9:00 & 11:10 a.m.
May 5	Youth Sunday, 9:00 & 11:10 a.m.
July 9-11	Vacation Bible School, 9:00 a.m. to
	noon
July 14	Garage Sale Donation Drop Day, 9:00 a.m. to noon
July 27	Garage Sale, 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

on May 5. Come by the Lobby and find the perfect gift for the woman in your life. You'll be notified right after late church on May 5 if you win. As always, SHF thanks you for your support!

Garage Sale News



Churchwide drop off day is Sunday, July 14 from 9 a.m. until noon. We are unable to accept donations before this date. Please keep your treasures at home until then. We are happy to accept donations that are

gently used, clean, and in working condition.

We cannot accept the following:

Mattresses, tires, tube tv's, VHS videos/players, cassette tapes/players, or liquids of any kind. We must pay to dispose of these items, so please do not bring them to church.

The garage sale will be on Saturday, July 27 from 8 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. We hope to see you there!

Scan to Register:





Heather Berry Director of Christian Education (402)333-7466 Ext. 2 heather@pcoc.us

CE Committee Moderator: Kathryn Vint

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

SHF Leaders: Dawn & Brad Gibson, Ethan Bennett,

Susan Price



The Queen's Six Makes Their Omaha Debut on Tuesday, April 9

The Queen's Six is making its debut in Omaha, and with only four stops scheduled on its US tour, this is an event you don't want to miss. Vesper Concerts presents them in a free concert on Tuesday, April 9, at 7:00 p.m.

The Queen's Six was established in 2008, the 450th anniversary of the accession of Queen Elizabeth I, from whom they take their name. Based at Windsor Castle, members of The Queen's Six make up part of the Lay Clerks of St George's Chapel, whose homes lie within the Castle walls. The Chapel Choir, which consists of girl and boy choristers and twelve professional adult singers, performs some eight services a week and at private and state occasions, often before the Royal Family.

In 2018, group members' duties with the Chapel Choir included singing for Prince Harry and Ms. Meghan Markle's wedding; in 2021, three members of the group sang at the funeral of HRH Prince Philip, The Duke of Edinburgh; and in 2022, members of the group sang at the Committal part of Queen Elizabeth II's official funeral services.

Now, Lissie, Tom, Nick, Dom, Andrew, and Simon have come together to bring their unique style of entertainment to a much wider audience. Their repertoire extends far beyond the reach of the choir stalls: from austere early chant, florid Renaissance polyphony, madrigals, and haunting folk songs to upbeat jazz and pop arrangements. The Queen's Six has sung at several prestigious festivals and venues, including the MET Cloisters in New York City, the Salzburg Bachgesellschaft, the Bermuda Festival, Bayreuth's Margravial Opera House, and St Louis Cathedral Basilica. Upcoming tours include return trips to the USA, Germany, the Baltic States and Poland, and first visits to China and Bulgaria.



Make sure you are on our email list to get up-to-date information about all our events by signing up on our website, www.vesperconcerts.org.

Vacation Bible School

July 9 – 11 9 a.m. to noon 4-year-olds – 5th grade (completed) Cost is \$10/student, \$20 max/family. Register online now.



Join us for a summer camp adventure with God! Lou (the lightning bug) will teach us ways we can put our trust in God when we are afraid, challenged, or called to do God's work. We still have volunteer roles to fill. Parents, grandparents, and youth, we cannot do this without you. Please consider serving. Contact Heather for more information.



Sign Up for Summer Art & Music Camp June 11-14

Does your 1st through 5th grader love art and music? Sign them up for this four-day summer camp at PCOC. Choose the Art option in the morning from 9:00 to 12:00, the Music option in the afternoon from 12:30 to 3:00, or BOTH! The registration form can be found on the church website. Questions? Contact Sue Thomas or Kristi Treu.



Kristi Treu Director of Music & Executive

Director of Vesper Concerts (402)333-7466 Ext. 5

Worship & Music Committee Moderator: Linda Matson







Don Sievers - 3/11/2024 A service was held on March 22 Nancy Drews - 3/13/2024 A service was held on March 22

- 4/2 Betsy Conway, Will Morris, Scott Stalnaker, Ardith Clary
- 4/3 Max Darling, Janelle Davis
- 4/4 Jeff Friesen, Tim Goodman
- 4/6 Ron Bowers
- 4/7 Sue Allen, Jim Chapin, Matt Darling, Jeff Schiessler, Nancy Utman
- 4/8 Sophia Buda, Charles Knight
- 4/9 Evalyn Mathia, Frank McMullen
- 4/10 Marilyn Fitch, Penny Morgan, Rita Seiler
- 4/11 Joan Carnaby, Jim Miller, Craig Moore
- 4/12 Sunny Karges
- 4/14 Everly Lorentzen, Lucien Kebeh
- 4/15 Logan Voss
- 4/16 Erika Cornett, Jacquie Kluck
- 4/17 Diane Hammang, Jackson Morris
- 4/18 Jamie Bougger, Sue Kiel
- 4/19 Adalyn Spielman
- 4/20 Kerri Davelaar, Zachary Metzger, Ethan Vannerman
- 4/21 Matt Karges
- 4/22 Lily Haas, David Paul
- 4/23 Michael Kussman, Marsha Marron, Darrell Stuedemann, Judy Sundberg
- 4/24 Brynn Stalnaker
- 4/25 Evan Graumann, Sue Meusey
- 4/26 Moira Hopp, Meghan McClain
- 4/27 Paul Holubeck, Laura Linder, A J Sundberg, Mike Hall
- 4/28 Pauline Lundgren
- 4/29 Paul Thomas
- 4/30 Timothy Harrison, Daniel Hinz, Garrett Moore, Emily Murray

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

In need of prayer?

Submit a prayer request online. All requests are shared only with members of the prayer team.

Prayer Team Coordinators:

Julie Buehler and Judy Arms

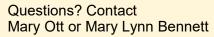
Mission Volunteer Opportunity Submitted by John Bennett

Please join me on **Saturday, April 13th** at the Heartland Hope Mission's West O location at 15555 Industrial Road from **10AM - 12 Noon.** You will be packing pre-made pantry boxes for clients, stocking pantry shelves, or collecting and sorting pantry donated items. Only children over the age of 12 will be allowed to volunteer. If you are a <u>first-time volunteer</u> with Heartland Hope Mission, please complete the form provided with this link. https://secure.lglforms.com/form_engine/s/e7MJ110dH76CmILb7YGREg

If you have volunteered for an HHM event in 2023 or 2024, you should have received an invitation to a Fiesta volunteer appreciation lunch at HHM's South Omaha headquarters at 2021 U Streeet, Omaha on Friday, April 12th at 11 am. Please consider attending this appreciation luncheon and thank you for your continuing support of Heartland Hope Mission! Heartland Hope Mission's demand for services has increased over 60% in 2023 over the previous year!

Choose a Sunday to Help!

If you are looking for a way to serve the church, please consider filling one of our open usher spots. You can now sign up online for individual Sundays.





Membership Committee Co-Moderators:

Amy Boesen & Brenda Graumann



Active Minds in April

Active Minds will be playing Spades for the month of April. Please join us in the Lower Level Great Room on Tuesdays from 2-4 p.m. This is an easy game to learn, and we have patient teachers available to help.

Coordinator: Earlene Uhrig

Presbyterian Women on April 4

Our ladies are continuing studying "Sacred Encounters" on April 4 at 9:30 am in Room 15. In Lesson 8, Sharon Walsh will share the story of Lydia Encountering Jesus in Worship. Acts 16:11-15.

Our Gifting Gals Project continues as we collect Sunglasses and Sunscreen in April. Our bin is next to the Missions food bin in the circle drive. We appreciate your donations for our project as do the lady clients at Heartland Hope Mission. If you have questions, please contact Cindy Nisley.

Coordinator: Cindy Nisley

49ers on April 2

Our speaker will be Ken Gruber, President of Omaha Rapid Response. He will speak about Rapid Response' ongoing efforts to help the tornado victims in Kentucky and Mississippi. He will update everyone on Rapid Responses' 2024 trips to Ukraine (war), Fort Meyers (hurricane), and the continued rebuilding of houses in King Lake, NE.

If we have a few extra minutes, he might give an update on the show The Chosen, as he will have just returned from filming Season 5 the weekend before our time at Wheatfields. We meet for lunch at 11:30 a.m. at WHEATFIELDS, 1224 South 103rd Street (One Pacific Place). We order from a special menu provided for our group. Everyone is welcome - whether you are 49, younger, or older - come join us! For reservations and/or questions, please contact Mary Ott or Judy Sundberg. Or, sign up in the white binder at the Information Desk.

Coordinators: Judy Sundberg and Mary Ott

Friday Night Gourmets on April 12

Betty Goodwin, Kim Banat, Inga Wagner & Alta Empkey will be your hosts at GORAT'S, 4917 Center St. Omaha, NE. We will have a social time from 6:00—6:30 p.m. and Dinner orders will be taken at 6:30 p.m. We will order from a special

menu and pay for individual tickets. Thank you. Sign up at the information desk. Questions? Contact the hosts. Betty Goodwin & Kim Banat, Inga Wagner, Alta Empkey.

PCOC Book Group on April 17

PCOC Book Group will meet Wednesday, April 17 in Room 13 from 5:15 to 6:30 p.m. to review *THE ALCHEMIST* by Paulo Coelho . All readers are welcome! Questions? Contact Charlotte Hubbard.

Stay Active on Mondays & Thursdays

Music & Movement meets at 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. in the Great Room.

Coordinator: Betty Baddley

Tai Chi meets at 10 a.m. for gentle stretching and movement! Drop in if you'd like to attend a class.

Coordinator: Paula Allen

PCOC GALS April 25

GALS will visit the Kiewit Luminarium on Thursday, April 25. The Luminarium hosts an adults only night on Thursdays starting at 7:00 pm, which will provide a fun setting for learning and fellowship. Look for more details in April.

Tables for 8

SPRING/SUMMER SESSION 2024

The deadline for new registrations or making a change for the spring/summer session (May, June, July, and August) is April 10. If you are currently in Tables for Eight as a "Regular", you will automatically be reassigned to a new group. However, if you choose not to participate or want to change to a "Substitute" contact Pam Otto. New "Regular" participants or "Substitutes" (couples or singles) are always welcome to join this fellowship opportunity. Questions and answers about "Tables for Eight" are on the registration form, and the form is available at the Information Desk or on the Website (www.churchofthecrossomaha.org.

Coordinator: Pam Otto

Congregational Life Committee Moderator:

Kathy Nickel & Stephanie Weaver



The Mission Committee Mailbox

The Mission Committee would like to share with you some of the mail we receive every month from the organizations which are the grateful recipients of your generosity. Below are the latest thank you notes we have received:

- -The staff and students of Sherman Elementary said, "Thank you, thank you, thank you for your kindness and generosity to our Sherman students and staff every year!! Your donation is used at Sherman throughout the school year to meet our student needs, whether that need is school supplies, clothing, a community experience or a classroom wish or need. Your generosity and kindness blesses many students and families as well as our staff in small little ways butr with such a big impact on lives!!"
- -Omaha Street School thanks you for your continuing generous support. You made it possible for them to continue helping their students academically, vocationally, and spiritually.
- -The Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Associate for Migration Accompaniment Ministries Susan Krehbiel thanks you for your gifts of \$560, \$5,242.29 and \$5,225 for disaster relief assistance in the aftermath of the Hawaiian wildfires and for International Refugee Programs, which assisted Ukrainians, Israelis and Palestinians.
- -Your gift of \$355 is very much appreciated by Pastor Chelsea Salifou of Heartland Hope Mission. Your donation will help working poor families with many of their needs.
- -The Rev.Edwin Gonzalez-Castillo, Director of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, thanks you for the \$1,657.40 which was used to help the Israelis and Palestinians.

Siena Francis House Servers Needed

Sunday, April 14 4:15 to 6:15 p.m.

PCOC has the dinner shift on the 2nd Sunday of every month at Siena Francis House. We need at least 6 volunteers. Please consider giving your time to this mission. Questions? Contact Keith Allen.

Scan our QR code to access the church online sign up page. We've made it easy to sign up to serve at Siena Francis House.





Mission Committee Moderator:

Anne Wattles

Agape for All Book Review

Submitted by Pattie Richie 24th and Glory: The Intersection of Civi Rights and Omaha's Greatest Generation of Athletes Written by Dirk Chatelain.

Recently our own Russ Beernink shared this video link, produced by Nebraska History Brown Bag Lectures. This hour long video features the author as he shares his reasons for writing the book.

The stories are personal, relatable and compelling.

Each of us has a part to play in creating a better future with agape for all, but the first step is always learning, and as the author shares his process of discovery he is guided by Ken Burns statement: "I know of nothing more urgent than the history you do not know."

Dirk Chatelain's research was born of his ignorance...he realized that as a white man from a small Nebraska town named Rising City, he may not have much in common with the famous, high achieving black athletes of North Omaha, but he was so amazed by the achievements of the great athletes and horrified by the civil rights issues of the 1950's, and 60's he chose to turn his journalism talents to writing this compelling book.

The book awaits your reading! Our PCOC library is calling your name!

Got an hour? Watch the "behind the scenes" video which shares the motivation and process of a great book we have in our church library, which Ann Pearson recently reviewed for us.

https://www.youtube.com/watch? v=WrC5uAJRmAw



Meals on Wheels Mission Opportunity

Meals on Wheels (MoW) is a program run by the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging which has for over 40 years filled the nutritional needs of homebound individuals by providing hot, noon meals, personally delivered by a team of volunteers every Monday through Friday.

PCOC partners with MoW to deliver meals every Tuesday and Wednesday to about 10-12 individuals who live near PCOC in surrounding neighborhoods. The meals are already prepared and packaged and stored in coolers which are picked up next to St. Timothy's church on 93rd and Dodge. Delivering those 10-12 meals takes a car and about 1.5-2 hours

We currently have a need for volunteers to take open delivery spots in May and June, particularly Tuesdays. Volunteers can sign up for a single day or for multiple days in May and June. If you are not sure and would like to just "stick your toe in the water," please consider riding along with one of our current PCOC volunteers to see how it works before you commit to trying it on your own.

If interested, contact John or Patti Sparks.



New Travel/Study Opportunity in Lithuania

Submitted by Karen Morey

Our friend and Mission Worker Ellen Smith is collaborating with Carl Horton of the PC(USA) Peacemaking Project to host a Travel/Study Tour titled "Lithuania: Healing the Legacies of War and Oppression," in October, 2024. The tour will be a more in-depth study of the history we were introduced to when Jean Waters, Karen Morey, and Jon and Irene Boomgaarden traveled with Ellen to Lithuania in winter of 2023. Of that trip, Jean Waters said, "When visiting Lithuania, you experience a charming old European country, cathedrals and castles, alongside Soviet-style housing. It is important to see that the people of this country suffered, and they acknowledge their history so that they, and none of us, will repeat it."

PC(USA) is now recruiting participants for this Travel Study Tour, who will begin their journey in Lithuania's capitol, Vilnius, then move to Klaipeda, learning about various phases of Lithuania's history, from the Nazi and Soviet occupations to today's Ukrainian refugee crisis. Applications are being accepted now, online at https://www.presbyterianmission.org/story/what-does-lithuania-have-to-teach-us-about-war/.

The deadline for applications is June 14, but the size of the group will be limited, so the sooner you consider this opportunity, the better! For additional information, check the website above or contact Karen Morey or Jean Waters.



DEACONS' UPDATE

Deacons April Update Submitted by Jerry Cornett

The Deacons would like to thank all of those who donated blood March 3rd during our Semi-annual blood drive. 18 pints of blood were collected for this vital community resource. If you're interested in donating, our next blood drive will be in Fall 2024 and you can contact any Deacon with questions.

Looking forward, the Deacons are preparing Easter baskets for delivery this month to those not able to attend church services.

We're also planning the Senior High recognition Brunch for graduating High School Seniors. Each year the Deacons host a Breakfast for graduating Seniors and their families and provide them with a gift from the Deacons as they start their journey into the world.

Deacons Moderator:Neal Hubbard

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Next Cross Currents Deadline is: Third Friday of the month

April 19, 2024

Volunteer Opportunity Ahead

If you have a few hours you might like to contact Kathy Moore about volunteering to assist with a **Family Wholeness Fair** on Saturday, April 27th from 1:00 – 4:00 at Skinner Magnet Elementary. Kathy serves on the Courageous Conversations planning committee that will be sponsoring the event which is focused on building connections between "those who need support and those who offer it". (see the flyer)

The Family Fair will include games and activities for children and youth of all ages, food trucks and numerous learning opportunities for parents including service providers ready to sign them up for needed programs. The school is located at 4304 North 33rd and T-shirts will be provided for all volunteers so children and families can easily identify

them. Please call, text or email me if you would like to learn more about the event and consider volunteering. Kathy Moore



Cross Currents

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Communications: Christian Fritz

communications@pcoc.us

For *Cross Currents* and Bulletin announcements, church website updates, Zoom meeting invites, or other communications needs, please contact Christian.