

Palm Sunday, April 13 9:00 & 11:10 a.m.

Children of all ages are invited to participate in the Parade of Palms on Palm Sunday, April 13 during both services. Meet Heather in the Narthex 10 minutes before worship starts to receive your palm and instructions. Parents, if your children are too shy to walk by themselves, you are invited to join the parade. The more the merrier!



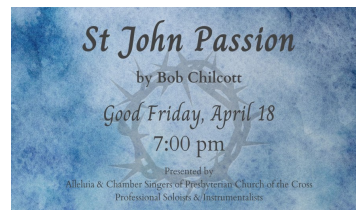
Maundy Thursday April 17 at 7:30 p.m.

Maundy Thursday is a service to remember the new commandment that Christ gave us to love one another. We celebrate the Lord's Supper, remembering the meal Christ shared with his disciples before his death. During this Tenebrae service, the lights in the Sanctuary are gradually extinguished as we remember the events that led Jesus to the cross to cancel our sins.



Good Friday Service April 18 at 7:00 p.m.

This year, the Alleluia and Chamber Singers, along with guest soloists Gretchen Crane, Jesse Wohlman, Sebastian Sorensen, and Joe Mendick, and professional instrumentalists, will present "St. John Passion" by British composer Bob Chilcott. Learn more on page 5.



Easter Sunday, April 20 9:00 & 11:10 a.m.

Attend one of our joyous celebrations on Easter morning! The tomb is empty and Christ Is Risen, Indeed! Join your voice with the happy chorus of choir and brass in praising God through traditional hymns and anthems in the midst of Easter lilies and flowers. (No Sunday School-youth activities today.)



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“Burying the Alleluias”

As we travel through Lent on our journey to Jerusalem and Easter, one custom that our church follows in worship is the practice of taking out (or “burying”) the Alleluias we normally sing. Here’s an article I saw recently about this. It’s from Erik Hoeke, the Director of Continuing Education at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, who I met at the seminary last week when I was there on study leave.

“In some traditions, Lent is a season where "alleluia" is buried in worship, a practice dating back to the Middle Ages. Originally, it meant removing the Alleluia sung before the Gospel reading, but it grew into refraining from the word entirely in Lenten hymns. This absence heightens Easter’s joy when alleluias return in full force.

Another Lent with buried alleluias is the last thing we need right now. The word alleluia means "praise God," which can be hard to do in the messiness of our world today. What we need is Easter. We need resurrection and alleluias, a day to "pull out all the stops" of the organ and celebrate the Resurrection of Christ, in a full sanctuary, with unrestrained joy.

But what if the practice of burying the alleluia can help us be resilient and hopeful? This ritual practice is not an act of finality. This burial—like the burial of a Christian who has died—occurs with belief in a resurrection and new life to follow. We bury the alleluia with sure and certain hope that we will sing "Alleluia!" on Easter with

maximum frequency, volume, and energy.

This Easter may be another muted celebration in the face of various trials. But perhaps that's what Christian hope often is—the promise of resurrection while we're buried in chaos. Maybe it's trusting in the hope of Christ when we don't feel hopeful. And one day, we may look back at these seasons of buried "alleluias"—when we could not sing praises—and be grateful that we reached the day when we again sing “Alleluia!” May we all find the strength to persist until that day comes. Alleluia. Amen.”

Here’s hoping that when Easter arrives on April 20 our alleluias will be strong, vibrant, and heartfelt!

Your pastor and friend,

Marshall Ziemann



Pastor/Head of Staff
Marshall Ziemann
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Tuesday Bible Studies

The Tuesday Bible Studies are now studying the gospel of Mark. Newcomers are always welcome; just bring your favorite Bible and join us in the classroom in the Welcome Center at either 7:00 (men) or 1:00 (everyone).

Images of Eden, and Easter, and Us.

i thank You God for most this amazing day,
E.E. Cummings

i thank You God for most this amazing
day: for the leaping greenly spirits of trees
and a blue true dream of sky; and for everything
which is natural which is infinite which is yes

(i who have died am alive again today
and this is the sun's birthday; this is the birth
day of life and of love and wings; and of the gay
great happening illimitably earth)

how should tasting touching hearing seeing
breathing any—lifted from the no
of all nothing—human merely being
doubt unimaginable You?

(now the ears of my ears awake and
now the eyes of my eyes are opened)

For April, I offer the preceding poem and the following as meditation for all things reborn.

Perhaps Cummings is provocatively playing with the Words of first death: Eve, to whom God told would die upon eating the fruit; yet upon eating the fruit, had the

eyes of her eyes opened (Genesis 3.7).

Perhaps Cummings is conjuring the poetic imagery of experience as Jesus encounters all that is a fully human merely being brought back from the depths of hell to walk the earth once more.

Perhaps Cummings is weaving such things together to show us the kind of new life that waits for us when we follow God knowing that we are dead to sin and alive in Christ (Romans 6.7-11).

It is that time of year when we make our way out of the wilderness of Lent, toward the Cross and the Empty Tomb, toward the Resurrection and the Life Eternal. We have been promised new life in Christ, and those who come to him with an open heart receive such. As we journey onward, be sure to stop and consider the beauty in all of these things like Cummings once did, but also pause to ask yourself: what are we going to do with the second chances God gives us?



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The View from My Office
APRIL BEGINS
THE SECOND QUARTER
OF THE YEAR OF THE BIBLE

Already we are in the fourth month of the year. If like me, you started on January 1, then together, we have read about a quarter of the Bible. Hopefully, we might find this month’s Old Testament readings more appealing than they have been for the last month or two. The reason is that we have finished reading the material on the Law (or instruction) and are now returning to a storyline.

Many of the stories of the Old Testament are exciting. They cover a time from the conquest of Canaan, through the period of the judges of Israel, into the time of the first king, Saul. Joshua is the first book we will read. Moses’ right-hand man and successor leads the people across the Jordan and finally gain possession of the Promised Land. The unusual events at the fall of Jericho point to the fundamental emphasis of the entire story: God establishes Israel in the land; it is not the people themselves who are conquering Canaan.

The conquest is predicated on the assumption that Canaanite culture had reached such a low state, both morally and spiritually, that there was nothing for God to do but to root it out altogether in order to establish a people living according to God’s law and will.

And that’s just the beginning, then we will also read Judges, Ruth and start 1 Samuel. Women will even have a part to play. Deborah, Ruth, and Naomi all play vital roles in these stories.

In the New Testament, we will finish the book of Romans this month. I find Paul sometime difficult to understand as a theologian. No matter how many times I read and study his letters, I feel like I’m not grasping his meaning, that there is more to what he is articulating. But I truly feel I am not alone as scholars don’t always agree with his writings as well.

April also finds us reading the Gospel of Mark, which I find fascinating since that is what the Tuesday Bible Studies are focusing on too. Mark is an action-packed Gospel, telling us about the amazing and miraculous deeds that Jesus accomplished. Try to breathe in the air of excitement and marvel that Mark felt. You may

find the Gospel revitalizing your own sense of awe and wonder as you meet the One to who the voice from heaven said, “You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased” (1:11).

Join us in reading, it is never too late to begin!

APRIL	Scripture Reading
1	Joshua 1, 2, 3 / Psalms 37
2	Joshua 4, 5 / Romans 10
3	Joshua 6, 7 / Romans 11
4	Joshua 8, 9 / Romans 12
5	Joshua 10, 11 / Psalm 38
6	Joshua 12, 13, 14, 15 / Romans 13
7	Joshua 16, 17, 18, 19 / Romans 14
8	Joshua 20, 21, 22 / Psalm 39
9	Joshua 23, 24 / Romans 15
10	Judges 1, 2 / Romans 16
11	Judges 3, 4 / Mark 1
12	Judges 5, 6 / Psalms 40, 41
13	Judges 7, 8 / Mark 2
14	Judges 9, 10 / Mark 3
15	Judges 11, 12 / Psalm 42, 43
16	Judges 13, 14 / Mark 4
17	Judges 15, 16 / Mark 5
18	Judges 17, 18 / Mark 6
19	Judges 19, 20 / Psalm 44
20	Judges 21 / Mark 7
21	Ruth 1, 2 / Mark 8
22	Ruth 3, 4 / Psalm 45
23	1 Samuel 1, 2, 3 / Mark 9
24	1 Samuel 4, 5, 6 / Mark 10
25	1 Samuel 7, 8, 9 / Mark 11
26	1 Samuel 10, 11 / Psalms 46, 47
27	1 Samuel 12, 13 / Mark 12
28	1 Samuel 14, 15 / Mark 13
29	1 Samuel 16, 17 / Psalm 48
30	1 Samuel 18, 19 / Mark 14



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Finance Committee Moderator:
 Belinda Greiner

Building and Grounds Committee Moderator:
 Josh Murray



Deacons April Update

The Deacons would like to thank everyone who donated blood during our March 2nd blood drive. We had 29 donors, the highest turnout we've seen in a while. If you're interested in donating, our next blood drive will be in September 2025.

This Easter, our Deacons will be delivering baskets to 54 couples and individuals who are unable to attend

church services, bringing a little joy and connection to them during the holiday.

We are also preparing for the Senior High Recognition Brunch, celebrating our graduating high school seniors and their families. More details will be shared with students and parents in the coming weeks.

Thank you for your continued support of the Deacons and our ministry!



MUSIC NOTES

Don't Miss Ryan & Ryan on Thursday, April 3

Join us on Thursday, April 3, at 7:00 p.m. for Ryan & Ryan on duo pianos.

Ryan & Ryan is a dynamic father-son piano duo that combines classical and contemporary music to create enthralling concert experiences. From Rachmaninoff to Gershwin to Billy Joel, Donald and Barron Ryan combine their talents to create a dazzling blend of old and new schools.



performing team, Donald and Barron amaze audiences with their skill, expressiveness, and love of making music. Their experience in classical, jazz, ragtime, and funk allows them to create exciting new music and give fresh interpretations of old. Audiences everywhere have been thrilled by their renditions of selections from Grusin's *The Firm* soundtrack and Rachmaninoff's *Second Suite for Two Pianos*. Their performance of George Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* has consistently earned a standing ovation.

Barron Ryan graced our stage two years ago in 2023 ("Classic Meets Cool"). This year, Barron and Donald will present a program titled "Kickin' the Clouds Away," where you will delight in a mix of classical crossover, jazz, ragtime, gospel, and blues.

As always, this Vesper Concert is free for all to attend. Please visit vesperconcerts.org for more information and follow us on Facebook and Instagram.

Good Friday Service on April 18 at 7:00

This year, the Alleluia and Chamber Singers, along with guest soloists Gretchen Crane, Jesse Wohlman, Sebastian Sorensen, and Joe Mendick, and professional instrumentalists, will present "St. John Passion" by British composer Bob Chilcott.

This hour-long work uses the text from St. John's gospel to tell the story of Christ's trial and crucifixion. The soloists and choir bring the drama to life. A brass quintet, solo viola, cello, timpani, and organ provide the instrumentation. The piece also includes five Passiontide hymn texts, which will be sung by the choir and congregation together.

We hope you will find this service immensely moving and meaningful.

As a



Kristi Treu

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

Worship & Music Committee Moderator:
Don Metzger



Register Now!

**Road Trip – On the Go with God
Vacation Bible School
Tuesday – Thursday, July 15 – 17
9 a.m. to Noon
4 yrs – 5th Grade (completed)**

Join us in a fun-filled adventure on the open road, taking all the kids (Travelers) on thrilling journeys to exciting destinations. Led by the Navigator and an adventurous pup Scout, kids will learn that God is always with them. Through engaging stories from the Navigators' Guide (the Bible), Travelers will delve into timeless tales of faith from the Old and New Testaments. Get ready for twists, turns, and excitement as they face new challenges and find strength in God's presence on this unforgettable trip! Register online by May 1. Adults and teens, we need YOU! We are forming our leadership team now. Contact Heather to serve our children.



May Baskets Silent Auction

Do you have a special woman in your life that deserves to be pampered? Of course you do! 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 13 and bidding ends on May 4. Come by the Lobby to find the perfect gift for the woman in your life. You'll be notified right after late church on May 4 if you win. As always, thanks for your support!



Children's Palm Parade

Children of all ages are invited to participate in the Parade of Palms on Palm Sunday, April 13 during both services. Meet Heather in the Narthex 10 minutes before worship starts to receive your palm and instructions. Par-



Important Dates to Remember

- | | |
|--------------|--------------------------|
| April 13 | Palm Parade for Children |
| April 19 | Easter Egg Hunt, 10 a.m. |
| April 27 | Confirmation Sunday |
| May 4 | Youth Sunday |
| July 15 – 17 | Vacation Bible School |
| August 5 - 8 | Art & Music Camp |

ents, if your children are too shy to walk by themselves, you are invited to join the parade. The more the merrier!

Easter Egg Hunt

Easter is just around the corner! Hop on over to church on Saturday, April 19 for our annual Easter Egg Hunt. We'll start our time with crafts in Fellowship Hall at 10:00 a.m., then we'll move outside to the East Lawn for the hunt at 10:30 a.m. Be sure to bring your own basket to collect eggs. Keep an eye out - maybe you'll spot Peter Cottontail!



We're accepting donations of individually wrapped candy to fill the eggs. Please place candy donations in the plastic bin by the Information Desk in the Welcome Center by April 13.

One Great Hour of Sharing

One Great Hour of Sharing is the single largest way Presbyterians come together every year to work for a better world.



This special offering enables us to share God's love with our neighbors in need around the world by providing relief from natural disasters, food for the hungry, and support for the poor and oppressed.



Heather Berry
Director of Christian Education
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heather@pcoc.us
Our Sunday School children were

- 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, Piper Smith, Jonathan Fritz



Confirmation Sunday

Our Confirmation Class has been working hard all year learning all about our faith, and now is the time for them to officially join the church. Come support them in worship on Sunday, April 27 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 attend!

- Discover water color techniques
- Tie Dye t-shirts
- Sculpt with clay
- Print making across mediums
- Understanding Origami folds
- Creating Monet like art
- Creating optical illusions
- Painting stepping stone

Sign up to participate or volunteer to help will be on the PCOC Web Site.

Garage Sale News

SHF will not be sponsoring a church garage sale this summer. Please save your treasures for the 2026 sale.

Music Camp
August 5 – 8 , following Art Camp
Lunch 12:00 – 12:30
Music Camp - 12:30 to 3:00

2025 Art Camp/Music Camp

Art Camp

August 5 – 8, from 9:00 to 12:00 noon
For Children who have finished Kindergarten through 5th grade

\$25 for materials Gathering Room in the lower level Presbyterian Church of the Cross Instructed by Sue Thomas



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

April volunteer opportunities brought to you by your PCOC Mission Committee

Date	Time	Activity	Mission Committee Contact
April 2	10:30a -12:30	Join a PCOC volunteer on their Meals on Wheels deliveries	Keith Allen
April 5	9:30a-noon	Join 5-10 PCOC members to distribute food and clothing at Heartland Hope Mission	John Bennett
April 6	10a	Join PCOC volunteers in planting <i>Pinwheels for Prevention</i> in support of Project Harmony	Gayle McFadden
April 8	6:30p-8:30	Join PCOC members and the Agape for All group at a movie and discussion about redlining in Omaha	Kathy Moore
April 10	11:30-1pm	Join 8 PCOC volunteers who serve lunch to the youth at Omaha Street School	Tina Morgan
April 13	4:30-6pm	Join 4-5 PCOC members to serve dinner to homeless individuals at Siena Francis House	Keith Allen
April 15	6p-8:30	Celebrate with 3 tables of PCOC supporters at the annual Omaha Street School Gala	Keith Allen
April 20	9-noon	Join many PCOC members in bringing pantry and hygiene supplies to church for Heartland Hope Mission Pantry Sunday	John Bennett
April 22	Noon - 1	Join Mission Committee members at OPS - Walnut Hill School Support to help with annual teacher appreciation lunch	Rob Baily
April 23	10:30a-12:30	Join a PCOC volunteer on their Meals on Wheels deliveries	Keith Allen
April 27	10a-11a	Join the Agape for All Speaker Series at PCOC - Embracing Community Connections	Kathy Moore



- 4/2 Betsy Conway, Will Morris,
Scott Stalnaker, Ardith Clary
- 4/3 Max Darling, Charlotte Kerr
- 4/4 Jeff Friesen, Tim Goodman
- 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
- 4/21 Matt Karges
- 4/22 Lily Haas
- 4/23 Michael Kussman, Marsha Marron,
Darrell Stuedemann, Judy Sundberg
- 4/24 Brynn Stalnaker
- 4/25 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

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 prayerteam@pcoc.us or
and Judy Arms

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

PCOC Authors, Part 2

A few months ago, PCOC member authors of children's and young adult books were featured: Gayle Kerr McFadden, Bidong Tot, and Patty Ritchie. In this

article, authors of adult books are introduced. So come check out some of these!

MARY CRAMER is a retired nurse and Professor Emeritus at the University of Nebraska Medical Center. She has published numerous medical related articles, but her book *PERSISTENT SPIRIT; AWAKENING MY HEART TO HIS VOICE* is of a different nature. Mary still remembers her father's voice, "Mary, you sure are a persistent little gal. That will get you far in life." For many events in her life that persistence paid off, but as the title of this book suggests, the Holy Spirit was even more persistent in showing her the need for His guidance through various personal life experiences. An inspiring read! This book can be found in the adult nonfiction section (920 Cr-Pe). Another of Mary's books (not in our library) is titled *MY FAITH REVEALS GOD'S LOVE: PRAYERS AND MEMORIES OF HOPE AND STRENGTH*.

KAREN MOREY, also retired, has had 25+ years in sales management and as a training director and program leader. Those organizational skills led her to write *CELEBRATING OUR CONNECTIONS: A GUIDE TO FAMILY REUNIONS*. With experience through four generations of reunions in her family, this guide gives help in how to plan reunions for one day, a weekend, or a longer "blow-out" event. This book is also nonfiction (929 Mo-Ce) in the library.

Though not a member, since pastors are members of Presbytery rather than any specific congregation, REV. RICHARD (DICK) MEYER is well known at PCOC. He has retired after serving as both Associate and Senior Pastor at West Hills Church in Omaha and serving a church in Oregon. There are three volumes in his *ONE ANOTHERING* series of books with sessions for small group discussions based on Biblical themes like "love one another," "bear one another's burdens," "encourage one another," "accept one another," "teach one another" and "honor one another." The first two volumes of *ONE ANOTHERING* can be found in the nonfiction section (268.434 Me-On).

Charlotte Hubbard is our "chameleon" author who started out in education (high school English and French teacher, then school librarian) before she decided to write full time. She had written magazine stories and then began her book writing career with historical romance novels, faith and family stories, finally settling into writing Amish novels.

Many of her Amish books are in series, but one in our library is a stand-alone novel titled *A MOTHER'S LOVE*. Two of the four books in her *SEASONS OF THE HEART* series are *SUMMER OF SECRETS* and *AUTUMN WINDS*. All of these books follow characters who experience the enduring love of God while also grappling with real life situations. (All found in Fiction Hub)



Active Minds in April

Canasta will be the game for April at the Active Minds Fellowship Group. Join us when your schedule allows: Tuesdays, 1:30-4:00pm. Lower level Great Room.



New players and friends welcome. We have very patient teachers. Feel free to stop by after Tuesday Bible Study. Questions? Contact Earlene Uhrig

Presbyterian Women April 3



Happy Spring!, from the Presbyterian Women's Circle. We meet next on Thursday, April 3 at 9:30 am in the Courtyard room. Our Bible study continues from Growing Older & Wiser by Dale & Sandy Larsen. Lesson 7 will be lead by Carolyn Will, it's titled "A Reason to Be Here" based on Philippians 1: 18-26.

All church women are invited to join us. Please contact Cindy Nisley, if you have any questions.

PCOC Book Group on April 16

PCOC Book Group will meet April 16 in The Courtyard Room from 5:15 to 6:30 p.m. to review *The First Ladies* by Marie Benedict and V.C. Murray. All readers are welcome! Questions? Contact Charlotte Hubbard.



49ERS on Tuesday, April 1

Our program for Tuesday, will be Josh Planos, Vice President of Marketing and Public Relations at Better Business Bureau of the Midwest Plains. He will speak about "Scam Prevention," covering key strategies to protect yourself



from scams, what to be on the lookout for, in today's increasingly digital world, and how to safeguard your finances and personal information. The lunch location is Wheatfields, One Pacific

Place, at 11:30 a.m. Everyone is welcome, whether or not you are 49, younger or older, come join us! We will order from a special menu. For reservations or questions, please contact Mary Ott, or Judy Sundberg. We also have a sign-up sheet at the Information Center.

Tables for Eight – Spring/Summer Session 2025

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" or a "Sub", you will automatically be reassigned to a new group or stay a "Sub. However, if you choose not to participate or want to change your current status," contact Pam Otto. New "Regular" participants or "Substitutes" (couples or singles) are always welcome to join this fellowship opportunity. "Tables for Eight Registration Form" is on the Website (www.churchofthecrossomaha.org).



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

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.



Ushers Needed

Questions? Contact Mary Ott or Mary Lynn Bennett



Embracing Community Connections Speaker Series Continues!

This spring we have two more speakers coming to church to share information about our Omaha Community, and the important work which needs to be accomplished for immigration and refugee resettlement. We believe these are timely, rich opportunities for us all, so bring your questions and imaginations and let's open our hearts and minds together!

Embracing Community Connections

Sunday mornings, in the Welcome Center
April 27th and May 4th, 10:10 -11:00AM.
In the Courtyard Classroom
Please arrive before 10:10

April 27 – Connecting with Omaha Welcomes the Stranger (OWS)

Tom & Margaret Hoarty, founders

Omaha Welcomes the Stranger, formed in 2022, strives to serve migrants fleeing violence and persecution in their home countries by providing safety, hospitality, hope and assistance with establishing new lives in the United States.

Increasing numbers of families have been arriving in Omaha who have no friends or relatives in the U.S. OWS provides shelter, food, and healthcare, and facilitates referrals to legal assistance for these asylum seekers. Because these families have no sponsors in other cities, OWS assists with resettling them in permanent housing in Omaha, and supports them monetarily while they await work permits. They initially house them in a shelter that is located on the same campus as the Omaha Street School. They are currently supporting 21 families, 12 in the shelter and 9 in rental housing, totaling 78 people.

OWS collaborates with local churches and service providers, as well as many volunteers, in order to fulfill its mission of providing compassionate care to immigrants. Tom and Margaret Hoarty started this organization after volunteering in El Paso, Texas at Annunciation House for a couple of years. This experience compelled them to address a need in our Omaha community and to create this new non-profit organization. We have much to learn from them and may find new opportunities for service.

May 4 - Connecting with the Center for Immigrant and Refugee Advancement (CIRA), formerly known as the Immigrant Legal Center

Erik Omar, Executive Director of CIRA

CIRA's history reflects a dedicated effort to merge organizations which strive to provide legal, resettlement and social services in a growing number of locations, from Council Bluffs to Scottsbluff.

CIRA now has close to 100 employees in ten locations. Many or most of those employees were refugees themselves, easing the language and cultural challenges faced by new arriving families. They are just completing renovation on their building space at 42nd and Center and will have all Omaha employees under one roof. The building itself, which is wrapped in a beautiful, diverse mural, throws out a brilliant welcome mat before the newcomers even walk in the front door.

Our speaker, Erik Omar, is an attorney who has served the refugee community for the last ten years, first as a volunteer and ultimately as the leader who took the agencies through this important mergers in 2022. He has important information to share with us about the changes underway in our country and within their agency.



Cross Care
connections

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

Deacon Moderator

Patty Sparki

Membership :Co-Moderators

Brenda Graumann and Earlene Uhrig



Agape Book Review

Submitted by Ann Pearson

Hidden Figures: The American Dream and the Untold Story of the Black Women Mathematicians Who Helped Win the Space Race,
by Margot Lee Shetterly

The author has a very interesting background, including time spent at Merrill Lynch and JP Morgan. However, what prompted the author to write this book were her many happy memories of her father and their many African American friends who were major contributors to the significant math and science endeavors required to maintain safety and progress at NASA’s Langley Research Center after WWII and through the development of the Space Race.

The folks she knew told stories of the separate restrooms and eating facilities they were forced to use. These practices occurred despite the fact that their education, skills and knowledge were at least as good as their White peers. One of the impressive aspects of their service to the country was their devotion to their work, the high quality of their work, and their pride in being part of America’s efforts in the Space Race. One of the hopeful aspects of their work was the fact that as their fellow White scientists and mathematicians became aware of how highly skilled their Black partners were, some of the personal and legal barriers began to break down. They became true partners in their efforts.

As progress was made in the development of mathematics and science, electronic computers became more useful and gradually replaced the “human” computers. In fact, prior to the early 1960’s the human beings were referred to and carried the title of “Computer.” And the astronauts preferred the science and conclusions of the human computers. Before his first flight, John Glenn wouldn’t take off until “the girl” had approved the calculations. The “girl” just happened to be Katherine Johnson, one of the highly regarded and respected Black human computers on his team.*

**Both John Glenn and Katherine Johnson were long-time Presbyterians. Johnson was a 50-year member of Carver Memorial Presbyterian Church in Newport News, Virginia, serving as a ruling elder and a member of the church choir. -MZ*

Another remarkable aspect of these Black women was their extraordinary devotion to the effort of the space team and this country in spite of the discouraging barriers they faced. They spent many hours away from their families. One of them managed to take over a supervisory position after years of being more knowledgeable and having far better management skills than her own boss.

Although the movie was commissioned by the author, there is one major difference that’s worth mentioning and also prompts a recommendation to read/see both. The book spends a great deal of effort explaining the tremendous amount of complexity and time and effort required to develop the knowledge to send human beings into space

and return them safely. You’ll view this country’s space accomplishments in a whole new light after reading the book. In contrast, the movie does a much more thorough job of portraying the human and emotional costs paid by the teams of Black women who led the way in this industry.

As always, we have so much to learn!

DIVISIBLE: The Omaha Redlining Documentary

Date: Tues, April 8, 2025

Time: 6:30 – 8:30 pm.

Where: Omaha Conservatory of Music
7023 Cass St, Omaha, NE 68132

Church of the Cross and our Presbytery are joining with other congregations to sponsor a screening of this film. The auditorium at the Omaha Conservatory is a beautiful space. We would love to see dozens of Church of the Cross members attend! Bring your friends and neighbors! It’s free!

The documentary “Divisible” was made in Omaha, about Omaha. It explains the history, mechanics, and lasting ramifications of redlining in our city. Many of us have heard of redlining and know it began in the last century as a process of segregating neighborhoods by race. But, did we experience it? Do we think it has ended? Do we think there are lasting effects today?

Redlining was outlawed in 1968 by the Fair Housing Act, but the practice did not end at that time. Redlining not only told real estate agents where people could live, but allowed discriminatory mortgage lending and neighborhood business development. The film will help us understand the resulting disparities in generational wealth, education, health care, and access to good nutrition among different sectors of our city.

The April 8th evening also includes a brief panel discussion by Omaha experts and refreshments. It promises to be an informative and inspiring night! Inspiring because with truth comes a way forward.

Take note of the invitation in our bulletin, and remember to sign up online! You can follow the QR code or the link in the announcements. If you don’t do stuff online, feel free to sign up at the information desk and we will register for you. Carpooling will also be an option, so you can indicate your desire to carpool at the information desk as well.





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:

-Pastor Chelsea Salifou, CEO of Heartland Hope Mission, thanks you for your contributions of \$602 and \$141.

-Rene Myers, Ministry Engagement Advisor of the Presbyterian Church USA's Office of Ministry Engagement and Support thanks you for your \$6,000 donation for Mission Personnel Support in honor of Mission Co-Worker Ellen Smith, \$15,715 for disaster hurricane relief, \$25 for a family of chickens, \$40 for a piglet, \$720 for 3 opportunities for beekeepers and \$1,820 for Shared Mission Support.

-Calvin Crest thanks you for your gift of \$5,000 for their wish list items.

-Toba Cohen Dunning, Executive Director of Omaha Public Schools Foundation, thanks you for your generous gift of \$1,699.41 which benefits Bancroft, ILP, King, Sherman, Walnut Hill and Wakonda Elementary Schools, allowing them to continue their mission of enriching the learning experiences of the students.

-A staff member from ILP thanks you for your support. She appreciates the parent/teacher conference dinners and gift cards you provided.

-The Voices for Children staff thanks you for all of your support and your Mission Tree support of \$255.50.

Mission Committee Moderator:

Keith Allen — Mission@pcoc.us

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.

Heartland Hope Mission Saturday April 5

Consider volunteering on the first Saturday of each month to work at the HHM West pantry at 15555 Industrial Road from 9:30am - 12:30pm. Several members of our church will be there with you and it is a great way to meet the staff, other volunteers and help local clients for a short period of time on one Saturday each month. Please contact John Bennett if interested in volunteering at (402) 618-6991 or mljbennett85@gmail.com. Thank you for continuing to support Heartland Hope Mission.



Saturday, April 26
9am - Noon

Bring your work gloves, your rakes, or your trash can to help haul the debris.

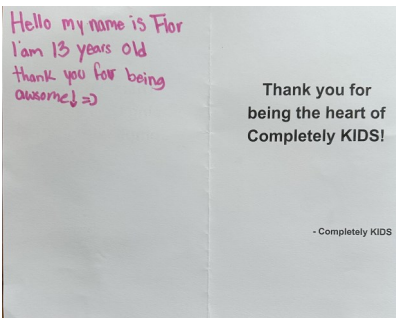
Bring your smile, your enthusiasm and your non-stop energy!

Help spruce up our church's lawn and landscaping by lending a hand.

Juice, coffee and snacks will be available.

 **PRESBYTERIAN**
Church of the Cross

All church event sponsored by your B&G Committee
Rain date set for Saturday, May 3



Siena Francis House Servers Needed

Sunday, April 13
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



Membership Committee Co-Moderators:

Brenda Graumann and Earlene Uhrig

Congregational Life Committee Moderator:

Linda Miller

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



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**Next Cross Currents Deadline is:
Third Friday of the month
April 18 2025**



You are invited to Omaha Street School's
2025 Fundraising Gala!

Tuesday, April 15, 2025 – 6:00pm social hour & 7:00pm dinner

RESERVE YOUR SPOT by APRIL 4

SIGN UP at the Information Desk or Church Website

CONTACT Anna Sumner if you need more information

Cross Currents

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Church Office: For general church information/requests/inquiries, contact the church office. Email: churchofthecross@pcoc.us or phone: (402)333-7466

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.