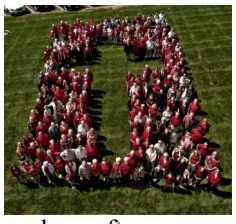
Cross Currents

PRESBYTERIAN
Church of the Cross

Newsletter for October 2026

Stewardship Campaign 2026 - Legacy Forward

Supporting Today's Ministry and Tomorrow's Mission!



As Presbyterian Church of the Cross begins our 2026 Stewardship Campaign, we invite you to look both backward and forward.

Our theme, **Legacy Forward**, recognizes that we are part of a story that began long before us and will continue long after us. We have received a remarkable legacy of faith from those who worshiped, prayed, served, taught, sang, gave, and cared for others. Their faithfulness helped create the PCOC we know today.

The writer of Hebrews reminds us that we are **"surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses"** (Hebrews 12:1). We see those witnesses in the generations whose generosity and commitment have strengthened our congregation.

Celebrating Our Heritage

Much of what we value about PCOC today is possible because someone before us chose to invest in its future. We see that legacy in worship and music, Christian education, missions and outreach, and the ways we care for one another and our community.

Strengthening Our Ministry

Stewardship is also about what is happening right now. Our annual gifts make it possible for PCOC to worship together, nurture faith, support music and education, serve our neighbors, and care for our congregation and community.

Every gift becomes part of that ministry, helping a child learn about God's love, enriching worship through music, supporting a mission partner, or providing care and encouragement. Our stewardship is more than meeting a budget. It is one way we participate in God's work through PCOC.

Shaping the Future

Legacy Forward also asks us to look ahead. Psalm 145:4 says, **"One generation shall laud your works to another."**

What kind of church do we want to leave for those who follow us? How can we ensure that future generations have opportunities to worship, learn, serve, make music, grow in faith, and experience the caring community that has meant so much to us?

This fall, consider what Legacy Forward means personally:

What have I received?
How am I making a difference today?
What do I want to make possible for those who follow?

Together, with gratitude for our heritage, generosity today, and faith for the future, **we can carry the legacy of PCOC forward for generations to come.**

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Presbyterian Church of the Cross

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Sweatshirt Weather Again

Who doesn't like October? Fall is in the air. Football and volleyball are back in swing. Baseball winds down and gets exciting. Pumpkin spice returns. We hope it stays nice enough for an outdoor Vesper Concert then all the way to trick or treating.

October also brings with it our annual Stewardship Season as the Session begins to plan financially for next year. Simply put, the amount of our returned stewardship cards sets the limits of what we hope to do financially as a church. Based on all our commitments, the Session will set our new budget for 2027. At PCOC, every person's giving truly counts. We need every family's involvement in order to continue our level of support.

Your contributions to PCOC are more important than you may realize! In our worship services, we will be hearing from various folks challenging us to not only dream big, but to make our discipleship a priority.

With your continued (and increased) support we hope to do even more. We want to reach out more to our visitors and new members. We want to send more youth on summer mission trips. We want to continue to improve our campus, modernize our classrooms and sanctuary, and give raises to our staff.

As you think about your plans for 2027, pray about what you would like your giving to be next year. It's a faith commitment between you and God. Please return your stewardship card to Mimi during the month of October. We will formally dedicate all the cards on Sunday, October 25.

This year's Stewardship Theme is "Legacy Forward." When I think of the atmosphere that characterizes Church of the Cross, this is a great phrase for us – depicting all that we've inherited, all we steward, and all we will leave for others!

Your pastor and friend,

Marshall Zieman

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.

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 no sign up online for individual Sundays.

Questions? Contact Mary Ott or Mary Lynn Bennett



Tuesday Bible Studies

The Tuesday Bible studies continue to study 2 Corinthians. Feel free to join in, either at 7:00 a.m. (men) or at 1:00 p.m. (everyone). Just bring your favorite Bible and come to the Welcome Center,



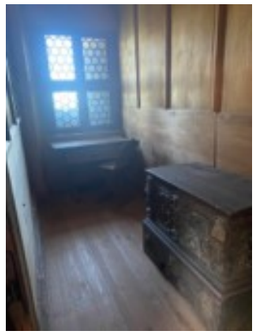
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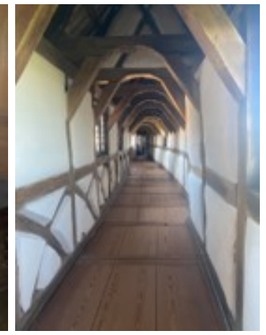
Hier Stehe Ich, Ich Kann Nicht Anders

I don't know about you, but I love October. People get excited for all things pumpkin spice and pumpkin patches and pumpkin carving; people get excited for the cooler weather and the changing leaves, the football games and the flannels, for volleyball matches and playoff baseball. And to be sure, for the most part, I get excited for all of those things too (though, admittedly, not so much the pumpkin spice lattes – I like my coffee black). But, call me an old soul, even in the midst of all these great autumnal things, one of my most favorite things about October, other than my daughter's birthday, is that it's the month in which we celebrate Reformation Sunday.

I love Reformation Sunday for the simple reason that I feel like it's good to remember how we got here, to remember the incredible circumstances that forged the protestant faith tradition and the heroes who made it possible. It replenishes me with the hope that surely just as there were titans of our faith who walked before us there must be titans yet who walk amongst us still in our times (we just may be unaware of them). I also think it's worth remembering that "we," until the Protestant Reformation, were Catholic, Orthodox, or something of the like (or not at all) for 1500 years before that (and Jewish faith before that). We have such a deep and rich history, and October is a great time to look back at it all with great appreciation and a desire to learn more about all that our faith has endured and overcome over the millennia.

As I consider such things and look back to the past, amongst the countless moments and memories that church history provides us with, for whatever reason, I cannot help but think of Martin Luther this time around instead of Calvin or Zwingli or Ursinus – in particular Luther's infamous words he humbly muttered while on trial as he refused to recant his statements of faith, "here I stand, I can do no other." In our times of political, diplomatic, and international turmoil, I am struck by his moral conviction. Martin Luther knew that he ran the risk of being tortured and executed the longer he defied the church in Rome by refusing to abandon his calls to reform the Catholic faith (it is an urban legend perpetuated by both protestants and non-protestants alike that Luther was bent on creating a new church – that was simply not the case, he just wanted change).





Just for fun, mostly to be able to visualize his secret life, here are some pictures I took while at Wartburg Castle, where Martin Luther hid and lived and translated the Latin Bible into German (he did this at a time when over 90% was illiterate – he risked his life to write a book hardly anyone could read at the time). As you look at these pictures and consider the month ahead, I hope two things for you: first, that you would be inspired; second, that you would ponder how far it is that you would be willing to go for what you believed to be right, for your faith. I hope none of us ever have to literally stand on trial for our faith, but I do hope we can grow to truly understand what it means to say, "here I stand, I can do no other."



Associate Pastor
Josh Garry
(402)333-7466 x 2
josh@pcoc.us

Trunk or Treat October 25

Join us in Fellowship Hall and on the east lawn on Sunday, October 25 at 3:00 p.m. for food, games, and trunk or treating.

Be sure to wear your costume and bring a bucket for your treats.

We encourage everyone in the congregation to participate by hosting a trunk. All you have to do is decide on a theme, decorate your vehicle, dress up (come on, it's fun!), and provide treats or toys to hand out to the children. It's that easy and so much fun! Help us make this the best Trunk or Treat ever for our church family.

If you plan to host a trunk, please let Heather know. We are accepting candy donations. Please donate individually wrapped candy or treats. You may drop them off in the bin in the lobby. Thanks!

Join us for an Advent Study

Advent in Plain Sight
Sundays at 10 a.m.
Tuesdays at 7 p.m. on Zoom
November 22 – December 13

In this daily devotional for Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany, Jill Duffield draws readers' attention to ten ordinary objects that appear in the biblical narratives of messianic prophesy and incarnation – objects we encounter in our own lives. Readers will find new meaning in the biblical account of Jesus' coming. By connecting everyday objects with biblical texts, readers see the near kingdom of heaven on earth and ponder what that divine proximity enables and asks them to do and be. Each daily devotional features Scripture reading, prayer, and reflection, reminding Christians that God still dwells among us, even in the most ordinary places. Register online by November 1.

Children's Christmas Pageant

The Children's Christmas Pageant will be on Sunday, December 6 at 5:00 p.m.
All children (preschool – 5th grade) will be wearing costumes and singing!

There are mandatory rehearsals:
Wednesday, December 2 from 5 – 8 p.m.
Saturday, December 5 from 9 a.m. - Noon
Sunday, December 6 from 10 – 11 a.m.

The deadline to register is November 1. Sign up here:

'Tis the Season Workshop and Fundraiser Lunch

All ages – the young *and* the young at heart - are invited to join us for this SHF fundraiser on Sunday, November 15 at Noon. This continues to be one of SHF's biggest fundraising events of the year, supporting their summer mission trip. Next year they're going to Rimrock Camp in Rapid, South Dakota. Come for lunch and stay for crafts! We're introducing activities that encourage full family participation. There will be one shut in craft, one family craft, and three other crafts. Each one has been thoughtfully chosen so everyone can enjoy creating together.

We hope to see all generations join us for this special fundraiser. Please be sure to register online by November 1 to reserve your crafts and lunch. If you have any questions, please contact Heather.

Note: SHF will be meeting on Friday, November 13 at 6 p.m. to set up and prep food.
On Sunday, November 15, SHF youth should arrive at 10 a.m. and need to stay to clean up and reset Fellowship Hall. Parents plan to pick up your youth at 2:30 p.m.

'Tis the Season Crafts:





2nd Grade Bible Presentation

Students in the second grade will receive their very own Bibles during late church on October 11. Everyone is invited to help us celebrate this happy milestone. If you are unable to attend, please contact Heather to make other arrangements to deliver your child's Bible.

Fabric Donations Needed

We are collecting cotton fabric in Red, Green, White, and Cream solids or prints. They will be cut into 3-inch squares, so scraps will work, too. Drop off donations in the bin in the lobby.

Important Dates to Remember

October 11	2nd Grade Bible Presentation, 11:10 a.m.
October 25	Trunk or Treat, 3 p.m.
November 1	Deadline to register for the Children's Christmas Pageant
November 15	'Tis the Season Workshop & Lunch, Noon
November 22	Advent Study Begins
December 6	Children's Christmas Pageant, 5p.m.



Heather Berry
Director of Christian Education
(402)333-7466 x 4
heather@pcoc.us

CE Committee Moderator: Laurie Kerr

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

SHF Leaders: Ethan Bennett, Jonathan Fritz, Lisa Luke, & Piper Smith

Music Notes

PROJECT Trio Performs at the Annual Outdoor Concert

Join us for this much-anticipated annual event! Vesper Concerts presents PROJECT Trio on Sunday, October 4, at 4:30 p.m. on the East Lawn. Bring your lawn chairs and an appetite, because the Corndog Co. food truck is back!

PROJECT Trio is a dynamic and innovative music group known for their genre-blending performances and captivating stage presence. With virtuosic musicianship and contagious energy, PROJECT Trio has gained worldwide acclaim for their electrifying performances that defy categorization and captivate audiences of all ages. You can find out more information about the group at vesperconcerts.org.



Worship & Music Committee Moderator:
Charlotte Hubbard - Worship&Music@pcoc.us



Kristi Treu
Director of Music & Executive Director of Vesper Concerts
(402)333-7466 x 4
kristi@pcoc.us

PCOC Book Group on October 21



PCOC Book Group will meet October 21 in The Courtyard Room from 5:15 to 6:30 p.m. to review *Rebecca* by Daphne DuMaurier. All readers are welcome! Questions? Contact Charlotte Hubbard.

Active Minds in October



Active Minds is looking forward to having guest teachers Brenda Graumann and Darold Bauer help us learn/review the card game--North Dakota Whist. All are welcome! Every Tuesday in the lower level Great Room, 1:30-4:00 pm. Bring a sweater. Feel free to join us after Bible Study.

Friday Night Gourmet on October 2

Friday Night Gourmet will meet on October 2, at Pasta Amore in Rockbrook Village. We will order off the menu. Gathering at 6:30 with ordering at 7:00. Space is limited to 30. Questions: Call Charlene Meyer 402-968-4606. Hosts are Lloyd and Charlene and Mary and Butch.



Presbyterian Men October 17

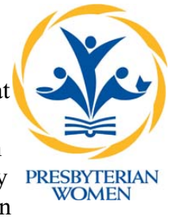


On Saturday, October 17th at 9:00 am, PCOC men are invited to attend a continental breakfast and program in the Welcome Center featuring Jay Miralles, a co-founder of the 50 Mile March Foundation, Inc. He will speak about how this nonprofit directly assists veterans facing mental health challenges and homelessness through the annual fund-raising 50-mile walk from Lincoln to Omaha since 2020. Please sign-up to attend this uplifting mission at the Information Desk by Sunday, October 11th. Invite someone to attend with you. Husker football is at Oregon & volleyball at home vs. Purdue. Contact Jon Boomgaarden at 402-981-7164 with questions.

49ERS on October 6

Our program for Tuesday, October 6, 2026, will be a dymanic trio of Presbyterian Church of the Cross volunteers, Sandi Stuckey, Charlene Meyer and Frank McMullen. These three individuals volunteer at the Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium, as one of their activities. They will enlighten us as to some of the many volunteer opportunities available for anyone interested in getting involved in our community. I look forward to their fun and informative presentation. 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, 402-201-4103, or Judy Sundberg, 402-333-6981, We also have a sign-up sheet at the Information Center.

Presbyterian Women on October 7



Join us on Thursday, October 7 at 9:30 am in the Courtyard classroom. Presbyterian Women will continue our Horizon's study as Carolyn Will leads us in lesson 2, "Connected in Christ" from 1 Corinthians 3-4... seeing our church as a family sharing gifts and support united in Jesus. All PCOC women are invited to come to our Circle. Contact Cindy Nisley at 402 850-0889 with any questions.

GALS Crocktoberfest October 18

Crocks, Caring & Fall Fun!



Something delicious is simmering, and you're invited! Get ready for a cozy gathering of GALS filled with crockpot creations, friendship, a little fun, and a special way to share the love this fall. Bring your appetite and your giving spirit! More details are cooking… so be sure to check your email for all the delicious details! **You won't want to miss this one!**



10/1 Mary Johnson
10/2 Spencer Evers, Cadence Fritz, Sarah Koch, Karen Metzger, Piper Mooney, Roger Utman, Eileen Wright
10/3 Betsy DeStwolinski
10/4 Brem Bremers, Christian Fritz, Tom Searson
10/5 Bobbi Dyer, Larry Keating
10/6 Loren Penkava, Sam Rennick, John Stalnaker
10/7 Melissa Rock, Polly Wyatt, Laura Duncan
10/8 Brad Gibson
10/9 Susan Emmert
10/10 Adam Luke, Donna Wilhite
10/11 Donna Adams
10/12 Brody McGuire
10/13 Mike Morey, Amen Sekle, Bob Wyatt
10/14 Sonia Duncan
10/15 Lori Pirnie
10/16 Kenneth Penney, Barb Stuedemann, Nadia Garry, Charlotte Clerk
10/18 Jenn Luth, Jennifer Spann, Lindsey Woods
10/19 Sue Jenkins, Eliza Lewis
10/20 Philip Holubeck, Linda Rathman, Stanton Weyand
10/21 Nancy Buda, Becca Frampton
10/22 Linda Miller
10/23 Barrett Ballou, Hallie Ballou, Don Miller Tina Morgan, Karen Saunders, Lennox Mendick
10/24 Callen Moore, Barbara Wolpa, Dave Woods
10/25 Mason Downes
10/26 Beckett Friesen, Dianne Witmer
10/27 Pat Vint
10/28 Avery Fuller, Deb Schmadeke
10/29 Sally Hansen, Becky Zieman
10/30 Wendy Chapman, Doug Larson
10/31 Laura Falcone

Reminder: Please contact the church office when you or a family member is hospitalized at churchofthecross@pcoc.us or at 402-333-7466.

Thank you from our Members!

Thanks for all the prayers. It's been a long few months with highs & lows but really appreciate our church family. Thanks to Marshal & Josh for the visits & prayers. The flowers from church lit up the hospital room. Thanks deacons. Enjoyed every card .

Ken & Ardell Penney

Remembrance Service Sunday November 1 at 4:00 p.m.



Our church's Cross Care Connections program is reaching out to members and families to come and remember your loved one during our annual afternoon service in our Sanctuary. You are invited to stay after the service for continued fellowship at a reception in the Welcome Center.

Remember to Fall Back!

Daylight Savings Time ends at 2 a.m. on November 1. Be sure to set your clocks back one hour before going to bed on Saturday night, October 31, so you're on time for your church events on Sunday.

In need of a Prayer?

Submit a prayer request via email. All requests are shared only with members of the Prayer Team.

Prayer Team Coordinators: Julie Buehler & Judy Arms - prayerteam@pcoc.us

Membership Committee Co-Moderators: Trudy Meyer & Earlene Uhrig - Membership@pcoc.us

Congegational Life Committee Co-Moderators: Pam Swenson & Sue Meusey - CongregationalLife@pcoc.us

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:

-Heartland Hope thanks you for your contribution of $410 to provide working poor families with a week's supply of groceries.

Siena Francis House Servers Needed

Sunday, October 11
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.



AGAPE FOR ALL October Update

Submitted by Kathy Moore

The Agape for All outing on Saturday, August 29th could not have gone better! **The Ernie Chambers Legacy Library** 4401 North 21st Street was our first stop. It just opened within the last month and we were their inaugural tour. It was created by Senator Chamber's daughter, Gayla Lee-Chambers, with the incredible artistic talent of his granddaughter, Lauren Chambers. Words, and even the photographs, cannot do justice to the true legacy embodied in this library of the longest serving legislator in Nebraska history. It is spread throughout several rooms, and presents photographs and artistic creations by Lauren, laying out Senator Chamber's life as well as the history and accomplishments of many other black leaders from Nebraska. A highlight of the day was the presence of Ernie Chambers himself. We enjoyed a lengthy discourse with him sharing memories of racist experiences that shaped his life and career. One room includes dozens of his more famous quotes. His highly intelligent and "ironic" sense of humor shines through in many, including one I enjoyed;
"If you took all the economists in the world and laid them end to end
they couldn't reach a conclusion. … But if they did, it would be wrong." – 2013







Mission Committee Moderator:
Beth Maxwell - Mission@pcoc.us



The Malcolm X Memorial Foundation was next at 3448 Evans Street. Not much has changed in the facility in the last five years since a group of us toured it previously but their future is bright and filled with possibilities. The Foundation holds such an important, rich history, which the Director, JoAnna Le-Flore Ejike, described for us with a wonderful depth and breadth of understanding. They do offer some specific classes, which could be worth visiting in the future. Much of the material in the Foundation's possession was found in a storage unit many years ago and JoAnna's talent as a Cultural Preservationist is reflected in the work they do every day. The Foundation has been given $20 million dollars, which needs to be matched, to build a new facility and actually create a beautiful campus. As the outdoor photo shows, they hold a significant amount of land and have contracted with an architect to create a design and plan that would compete easily with the state-of-the-art civil rights museums in the south.





What does Agape have next on our schedule?
We have no plans for October but want to direct our focus again in November to our Native American heritage. During November, the Omaha Public Library will be hosting author Joe Starita who will be speaking about his book "I Am A Man". This book chronicles the Ponca Chief Standing Bear's Journey for Justice. After the Ponca tribe was exiled from Nebraska to Oklahoma, the Chief lost his only son and traveled 600 miles to return his body to their traditional burial ground in Nebraska. We would like to take a group to the presentation scheduled for Sunday, November 22 from 2:00 – 3:00 pm at the Central Library at 72nd & Dodge. I will call the library on October 1, when registration opens, and try to reserve at least ten seats, but space may be limited. If you know you are interested, please sign in online at the PCOC website as soon as possible and we will finalize details closer to the event. If November 22 doesn't work for you, he will also be speaking at the Abrahams Library location, 90th & Fort, on Monday, Nov 9 from 6:00 – 7:00 pm. You could sign up for that one by either calling the Abrahams branch or registering online at the OPL website. We do have this book in our Agape Library if you want to borrow it.

To prepare for that event, you may want to enjoy a lovely fall visit to our own Standing Bear Lake at 6404 N 132nd Street. This plaque is a beautiful memorial to Chief Standing Bear's life and the lake is a lovely, peaceful place to visit.





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Next Cross Currents Deadline is:
Third Friday of the month
September 18, 2026

Deacons October Update

Submitted by Shanna Mathia

The Deacons at Church of the Cross serve the congregation by caring for the practical and spiritual needs of the congregation, encouraging fellowship at events like the All-Play Event in August, and helping extend the church's ministry of compassion beyond Sunday worship. One of their many duties include helping organize ministries that show Christ's love in tangible ways. Through the Home Meal ministry, the deacons help provide meals for those recovering from surgery, grieving a loss, or facing other seasons when practical support is especially meaningful. We have recently added families welcoming a newborn to the Home Meal outreach. These meals might be home cooked and delivered by one our many volunteers, or the deacons have now approved the option for a food delivery service gift card, if the family prefers. To join the list of meal donors or suggest someone who may benefit from this ministry, please contact Shanna Mathia. Deacons also encourage and remember college students through seasonal outreach, such as providing Halloween and Easter gift cards to students and young adults aged 18-22 as a simple reminder that they are loved, supported, and connected to their church family even while away from home.

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

Church Office: For general church infomation, requests, & inquiries, contact the church office at churchofthecross@pcoc.us or at 402-333-7466.

Communcations: For *Cross Currents* and bulletin announcements, church website updates, Zoom meeting invites, or other communicaitons needs, Christian Fritz can be reached at communications@pcoc.us.