

# Cross Currents

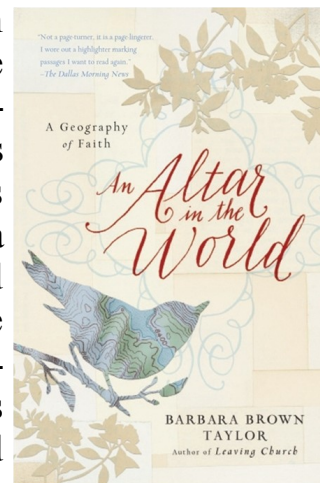


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## Lenten Disciplines

This year the season of Lent gets one of its latest starts – Ash Wednesday is March 9<sup>th</sup>. According to my sources it can only begin one day later. This year we will once again begin the season with our Ash Wednesday service. This is a simple service of repentance and involves the imposition of ashes. While this is not a common Presbyterian practice, our congregation has found it a most meaningful way to begin the season. There is Cornerstone Club through dinner (6:00 to 6:30) on the 9<sup>th</sup>, and we will begin the service at 6:40.

A second practice of our Lenten season has been the interruption of our regular Sunday morning classes, and the invitation to everyone to join together in a small group study. The study begins with a ‘Kick-off Sunday’ on March 6<sup>th</sup> where everyone meets their small groups leader and participants and gets a book and study guide. The book is very readable: *An Altar in the World: A Geography of Faith* by Barbara Brown Taylor. Groups meet on Sundays and weekdays, at church and in homes. I strongly, strongly urge you to consider being a part of the study if you are able. These limited-time small groups have contributed mightily to congregation members getting to know new friends within the church. These connections have been vital to our continued deepening as a caring family of faith.



Lastly, I would urge you to adopt two disciplines during Lent. The first would be to make worship a priority. Make this a time when you fulfill that promise you made to yourself about getting to worship more regularly. It can be a time of growth, and fellowship, and an opportunity simply to praise and thank the God who loves you. The second would be to think long and hard about some friend, neighbor, co-worker, relative who is not too regular with a church – and then invite them to come with you. At Church of the Cross we have a warm and welcoming place – but until someone gets inside they don't know it...! You may be the one God would like to use to reach out to someone special.

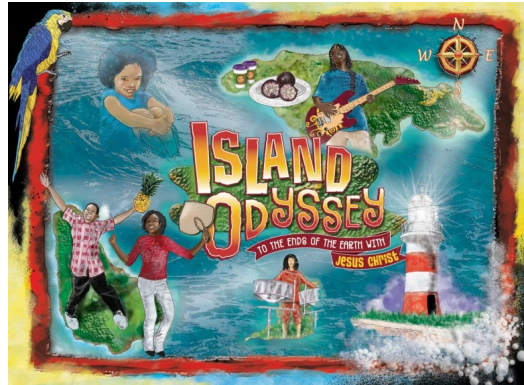
Lent is a season worth recognizing, and responding to.

See you in church...

*Kirk*

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# Christian Education



Get ready for an exciting island adventure at this summer's VBS! **June 13-17** from **9am-Noon** we'll be journeying with Paul through the islands of Cyprus, Crete, and Malta to learn about hearing God's voice, following His way, and being true to God's plan for us. From there we'll meet up with John at the Isle of Patmos before we voyage even further to the Isles of Fiji to celebrate the joy of spreading the good news wherever we go! We hope you can join us on this grand adventure filled with fun, friendship, crafts, and music. **Registration will begin at the beginning of April** for those 3 years old by May 31st to those entering 5th grade in the fall. The cost is just \$10 with a cap of \$25 per family. This year we'd like to encourage everyone to bring a friend to VBS—they don't need to be a member of our church to register! If you register with a friend who hasn't attended our VBS before you and your friend get to visit the Treasure Chest on the first day to pick out a prize. This year our mission theme will be a fundraiser for the Narnia Center in Russia so that our kids can join in our church's commitment to Christian mission in Russia. We hope to see you all there!

## More New Books in our Library!

These new books were recently added to the children's section of our library. They were used in the Bible Explorers rotation "Boy Jesus in the Temple" and then donated to the library for everyone to enjoy reading!

*P is for Passover*  
*A Holiday Alphabet Book* by  
 Tanya L. Stone  
*Sammy Spider's First Passover* by  
 Sylvia A. Rouss  
*Passover-Celebrating Now Remembering Then* by Harriett Ziefert

## Discovery Preschool Fundraiser!

Please mark your calendars for Sunday, March 13th and plan to stop by Don and Millie's on 108th and W. Center Rd. after church! Our Discovery Preschool will earn 20% of your total order but you need to mention Presbyterian Church of the Cross when you place your order. The total amount earned will go directly to our Discovery Preschool program. The Caring and Sharing program with Don and Millie's is held on the 2nd Sunday of every month. Your support in this effort will be greatly appreciated.

## 49ER'S

The 49er's will meet for lunch, Tues, March 1<sup>st</sup>, 11:30 at Justin Thyme Café, 8544 Park Drive. A limited menu of soup, salads, and sandwiches will be available. Following lunch, Tom Lucas, folk and humorous song singer will entertain us.

Please sign up at the information desk, or call Donna Turner, 402-397-3643 or Gwen Elsasser, 402-333-6732 for reservations.

Let's have a good turnout since the café is normally closed Tues and they are not charging us for the room.

## The Discipline of Confession

The practice of confession is important in the life of any believer. When we confess, we acknowledge our sins to God and seek forgiveness. Within our Reformed faith tradition, we recognize the need for confession as a means of reuniting us with God when sin leads us away. The good news for us when it comes to confession is that we believe that God always forgives us. When Jesus died on the cross and rose from the grave three days later, we believe that he conquered sin and death, and allowing us to be reconciled to God (the theological term for this is justification). While Jesus' death secured forgiveness from sin for us, the harsh reality is that we continue to sin. The discipline of confession is the regular process of examining our lives and hearts, weeding out the sins that continue to plague us, and handing them over to God.

Richard Foster sees three components involved in confession. The first component is self-examination. In order to confess our sins we need to be aware of the sins we have committed. We all know that life moves awfully quickly and it can be easy to get swept up in the daily grind. We can easily avoid recognizing sin in our lives. It takes introspection through prayer and reflection.

The second component involved in confession is sorrow. We have all suffered the consequences of sin: we have hurt loved ones, broken trust, and hurt ourselves. The natural human response to those kinds of hurts is to feel regret, to feel sorry, to feel sorrow. Foster argues that once we recognize our sin, we really ought to feel bad about it. It's that sorrow that leads us to want to seek forgiveness from God and from others. It's sorrow that makes us want to change.

Which leads to the third component of confession: the determination to avoid sin. The theological word we would use for this is repentance. Repentance literally means "to turn away." After we recognize our sin and desire forgiveness, the hope is that we want to become "new creations." Confession is not merely a recitation of wrongs committed, it includes a promise to make an effort to live differently with God's help.

For most of us, confession is a very private matter. Our sins are between us and God. But there are denominations and religious traditions that see great value in going to trusted and supportive individuals to make a confession. Perhaps you have had to do the difficult work of telling a loved one you have wronged them. There is healing in the act of actively seeking forgiveness from those we hurt. But there is also power in verbalizing our sin to another person and hearing God's promise of forgiveness from another human being. This is the very reason why there is an assurance of pardon each week after we sing the Kyrie. We need to hear that we are forgiven. If you do choose to go to someone else to confess your sin, be careful. Go to someone you know will hear you and not openly judge you, someone you know you can trust to be discrete. If you'd rather keep things more quiet, consider writing your confession on occasion. Sometimes it is good practice to get our heaviest thoughts outside of ourselves, whether that means telling them to someone else or writing them down.

The good news of the discipline of confession is that when we do go to God to confess our sins, God hears us. He hears us and he forgives us. Even if you think you have done the worst thing imaginable, there is nothing in heaven or on earth that can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Friends, believe the good news of the Gospel: in Jesus Christ we are forgiven. Amen!

For next time: worship.

*Blessings, Nadia*



Hello to all moms at Presbyterian Church of the Cross. As you have heard, it is not too late to join the newly started MOPS group. MOPS is a group of moms who have children from birth to age 5. It is a wonderful to spend some much needed

“mommy time”, pursue strategies to be the best mom in a Christian way, and it is a remarkable way to get to know the other moms in the church and Omaha community. So far this year, we have had some incredible meetings. We have had some great informational speakers, including a pediatric dentist and a professional photographer. Both were able to answer some very common questions, ones that I’m sure all moms ask. Mary Lynn Bennett also was able to give us some great information about the Madonna school for students with special needs. We plan on providing this school with some much needed supplies. It is an awesome service project that we would love to have you help with. We have also participated in Operation Christmas Child in which we were able to fill shoe boxes with toys and necessities for children around the world in need. We plan on having more great meetings in the future. We have invited Mary Kern to teach us about the ministry of prayer shawls and how to make them. Pastor Nadia will also be at meeting to provide tips on how to include the whole family in prayers. Lastly, we plan on becoming certified in infant and child CPR, thanks to Sondra Willis. It is going to be an incredible 3 months. We hope you can join us. Feel free to bring your friends too! All are welcome!

*The MOPS of Presbyterian Church of the Cross Steering Committee*

## New Members



### Denise and Randy Ewing

Denise and Randy are natives of Iowa and moved to Omaha from Lincoln Nebraska in June of 2010.

Randy is an attorney and was an elder and an active member of Westminster Presbyterian Church in Lincoln. He was also involved in Lincoln Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, and many civic organizations. Hobbies include photography, hiking and being grandpa to their 2 granddaughters.

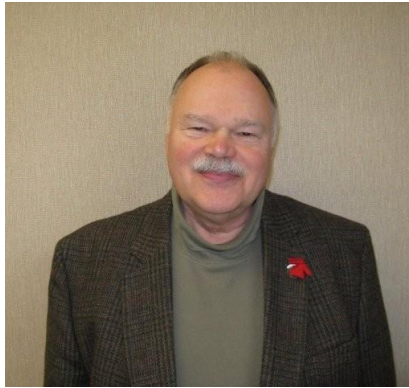
Denise is a retired Executive Assistant and was an active volunteer and program coordinator for Madonna Rehab Hospital’s Angel Dog program (pet therapy). Her hobbies include hiking, spending time with their 2 golden retrievers, and being “Grammy” to Allison and Katelyn.

Denise and Randy were attracted to Church of the Cross by the traditional worship and friendly congregation. As a visitor, they always felt welcomed at worship.

## DEACONS’ ENVELOPE FUND

One of the special offerings the congregation supports for the work of the Deacons is the DEACONS’ ENVELOPE. Monies from this fund are used throughout the year for the caring ministries at Church of the Cross. We send Valentine boxes to the college-age youth of our church in February. Each year we recognize our graduating high school seniors with a brunch and a gift of a study Bible. Deacons purchase cards and other expressions of care for individuals in our congregation. All of these are paid for from this fund. Perhaps the most visible use of these monies is to provide the lunch and gathering place for family and friends after the funeral of a loved one. This is an important way we show our care and concern in a difficult time of grief and loss.

Since not every family has requested an envelope box for their contributions, we are highlighting this fund during the months of February and March with extra envelopes in the pews and enclosing one in Cross Currents. Of course, you can simply note ‘Deacons Envelope’ in the memo portion of your check.

**(New Members continued)****Richard Hulsey**

Welcome Richard! Linda, who proceeded Richard to Omaha, is an active member in our church; she is currently employed with the Omaha Public Schools. Rich recently retired following 40+ years in construction engineering. Rich was very active in his home church in Canonsburg, PA, where he served as a Deacon, an Elder, on the Stewardship committee, participated in work days at the church camp, and was a leader in men's ministry-he led study retreats and was trained in "The Man In The Mirror". His service extended to his local community also, as a volunteer at the food pantry. Rich's hobbies include railroad model clubs; he is looking forward to volunteer work on the Henry Doorly Zoo train.

**Nancy and Darold Lundgren**

Nancy and Darold have recently transferred their memberships to PCOC from Westminster Presbyterian Church – Omaha. They are both natives of Southwest Iowa but have lived in Omaha for over 50 years. They have two daughters; one lives in Kansas City with her husband and two children and their other daughter is Lynette Olsen who also attends Church of the Cross with her husband Matt and daughters Ingrid and Evy. Darold and Nancy are both retired and they enjoy playing golf together and spending time with family (especially their grandkids).

**Welcome New Members**

**Do we have your  
updated email  
address.**

**Cross Currents**

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

**March Birthdays**

- 2 Nikki Burson
- 3 Mary Cramer, Earl Leinart
- 4 Drew Ritchie
- 5 Chad Bruck, Stan Garner
- 6 Aubrey Bruck, Austin Curtis, Dottie Esbenshade, Sandra Johnson, Luann Knutzen
- 7 Josh Gazzetta, Michael Juarez, Laurel Metzger
- 8 David Gazzetta, Norma Mitchell, Marsha Smith
- 9 Elizabeth Swedlund
- 10 Lloyd Meyer, Kathy Nickel, Anna Sumner
- 11 Euloge Sekle
- 12 Nichole Ford, Diane Wetuski
- 13 Dona Golden, Pam Lindsey, Mitch Pirnie, Anna Whaley
- 14 Bob Dickmeyer, Chuck Krumme, Grace Leinart, Camilla Luma
- 15 Paul Cornett, Alyssa Lampe, Brenda Soukup, Henry Spann
- 16 Glenn Haycraft
- 17 Ryan Clancy, Mary Haddock, Kathy Martin, Aaron Stoddard
- 18 Scott Coburn, Harriet Hanson, Heather Hawthorne, Sara Lown
- 19 Jennifer Bennett, Amy Grossardt, Kathryn Harrison, Stan Hille, Dale Kuster
- 21 Jill Bobek, Carol Hale, David Moore, Cody Thorson
- 23 Nancy Long, Hannah Riley, Parker Spann
- 24 Bob Foehlinger, Carol Lofshult, Ed Ticknor
- 25 Cheryl Ebert, David Jahraus, Shirley Morthole, Gerry Reid
- 26 Darold Bauer
- 27 Karen Butler, Natalie Ford, Paul Kratz, Gladys Kuster, Lissa Treu
- 28 Dave Arnold, Noelle Jordheim, Scott Morris
- 29 John Swenson
- 31 Elise Arnold, Herbert Underwood

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

Worship 9:00 & 11:10 a.m.  
Church School 10:00 a.m.  
Phone: 402-333-7466 Fax: 402-697-9084

E-mail addresses:  
churchofthecross@pcoc.us  
Kirk- karyckman@pcoc.us  
Nadia-nadia@pcoc.us  
Dana - dana.sloan@pcoc.us  
Sheri—sessions@pcoc.us  
June—junef@pcoc.us  
Web site: www.churchofthecrossomaha.org  
Www.organvesper.com

Staff

Dr. Kirk A. Ryckman	Pastor
Rev. Nadia Mullin	Associate Pastor
Dana Sloan M.M.	Minister of Music
June Fettig	Business Administrator
Sheri Sessions	Christian Education Director
Barbara Elliott	Director, Discovery Preschool
Robin R. High	Associate Organist
Julie Hansen	Secretary/Receptionist
Linda Hulsey	Director, Youth Choir
Jayne Frederickson, Kristi Treu,	Directors, Childrens' Choirs

## ORGAN VESPER SERIES FEATURES DUO-PIANISTS FEBRUARY 27

Thrill to the sounds of duo-pianists, JAMES JOHNSON and MEGAN FANGMAN KNOPP on Sunday, February 27 at 3:00 p.m. Our wonderful Mason & Hamlin piano will resound to the sounds created by not two but four hands in a literature that is seldom explored.

Dr. Johnson is head of the keyboard area at the UNO Department of Music and Megan Fangman Knopp, an Omaha native, is a graduate of the Royal School of Music in London.

Don't miss this rare musical opportunity, and invite your friends!  
Admission free.



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Next Cross Currents Deadline is:  
March 6, 2011  
Mailing Date is: March 9, 2011