

News from the Vine

June 2026



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Lincoln, NE 68506

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SUNDAY

10:30 am Worship
11:30 am Fellowship Hour

SUNDAY SCHOOL

9:30 am (adult)
10:40 am (children)
(September – May)

OFFICE HOURS

Monday – Friday
10:00 am – 2:00 pm

MISSION STATEMENT

To Love and Serve Each Other
and All Creation

NEWS FROM THE VINE

A monthly publication of Vine Congregational UCC. Article deadline is the third Friday of each month. Please send news items to the church office.

A Word from the Pastor

“It is when he respects and nurtures the wilderness of his soil and his plants that his garden seems to flourish most. Wildness, he has found, resides not only out there, but right here: in his soil, in his plants, even in himself...” Michael Pollan, “Second Nature: A Gardener’s Education.”

On one of those very sunny and warm weekends this past May, I found myself visiting the garden centers. It was one of those days that made you want to start planting your vegetable and flower gardens even though you know the chance for a late frost was possible. After I had my fill of admiring the wide variety of flora, I began to observe other shoppers; watching them as they were discerning which plants they wished to use to beautify the outside of their homes.

What I saw in these shoppers was intentionality to create masterpieces in their gardens - the color designs to provide optimal beauty. For the gardener, this effort goes beyond making one’s surroundings beautiful, it also is an expression of self! It is in our gardens that we display our inner self, our wilderness, that which is found in our imagination, our confidence, our conformity, our defiant nature, our timidity, and our boldness. As Michael Pollan observes: *Wildness resides not only out there, but in our soil, in ourselves.*

There is something about tilling the soil that renews our soul. When we connect with the soil, we become rejuvenated, more centered, and maybe, most importantly, have a sense of oneness with life itself. Nurturing our spirit is as important as any physical activity we do to keep our body healthy.

Michael Pollan goes on to say, *“But wildness is more a quality than a place, and though humans can’t manufacture it, they can nourish and husband it... The gardener cultivates wildness, but he does so carefully and respectfully, in full recognition of its mystery.”* How we cultivate our soul is as varied as the type of plants we place in our gardens.

God sees us as wildness, and whether or not we are fully aware of it, cultivates us carefully and respectfully. As the summer progresses, may you continue to flourish in the way God has in mind for you! Amen

Pastor Steven

Mark Your Calendar

➤ Month at a Glance

Jun 1	Shred Vault Fundraiser Starts
Jun 7	Sunday Special Music Starts
Jun 8	Council Meeting
Jun 12-13	Star City Pride Festival
Jun 16	Men's Breakfast
Jun 28 – 30	Youth Mission Trip

➤ A Brief Look Ahead

Jul 12	Ice Cream Social
Jul 25	Vacation Bible School
Jul 26	Hymn Sing Sunday



Ongoing Events

- **Men's Breakfast** meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 8:00 am at Village Inn (48th & Van Dorn).
- **Ladies Coffee Talk** meets every Thursday morning at 9:30 am. Join us for coffee and conversation.
- **Lunch After Church** is the third Sunday of each month in the fellowship hall (September – May).
- **Treat & Topics** is the last Sunday of each month in the fellowship hall (September – May).
- **The Church Council** meets on the second Monday of every month at 7:00 pm at the church and via Zoom.

Music Ministry

- **The Joyful Noise Bell Choir** is on summer break. The regular schedule will resume in September.
- **The Chancel Choir** is on summer break. The regular schedule will resume in September.

Give Online



Scan to learn more about us!



BE A BLESSING PRACTICE PEACE.
LEAD WITH LOVE.
BE JOYFUL. PRAY OFTEN. BE KIND. GIVE THANKS.
DO GOOD. HAVE COURAGE. WORK FOR JUSTICE.
BE THE LIGHT. ENCOURAGE OTHERS.





A Fundraiser with a Difference

From June 1 through July 19, Vine will be conducting a fundraiser with a twist – it won't cost you anything!

Shred Vault (www.shredvault.com), a regional document destruction company, is offering fundraisers to non-profits to help promote their services. Participants receive sealable bags which hold up to 10 lbs. of paper to be securely shredded. There are six Shred Vault kiosks in Lincoln in which to deposit the bags, and the church will be paid \$5 per bag. There is no cost to the church or to the participants.

Starting May 31, detailed information and bags will be available. You are encouraged to share with friends and family as well. If you have sensitive documents that you would like to dispose of safely and securely, you won't want to miss this event!



Host a Sunday Fellowship!

Help us keep our church family connected this summer! We are looking for individuals or families to host our Sunday morning fellowship hour. Hosts provide a light snack (finger foods that can be easily eaten off a plate or napkin while standing). It's a fun and simple way to serve. The signup sheet is in the fellowship hall on the volunteer opportunities board



Let's Make Music this Summer!

Summer Music Performers Needed! We are seeking music-loving volunteers to provide special music such as solos, duets, groups on vocals, and/or instruments. All ages are welcome to share their gifts of music during our summer worship (June through August). The signup sheet is in the fellowship hall on the Volunteer Opportunities bulletin board. Let's share our love for music at Vine this summer.

Do you know someone or a group that would be willing to share their musical talents for our summer special music? If so, please provide Anica Brown with a contact name and phone number. We have special music every Sunday from June 7 through September 6.



The Plant and Bake Sale was a Success! Thank you to all who brought plants, food treats, and yard items to our annual sale on May 3rd! We raised \$696. This is a great fundraiser, because the focus is on sharing – we share plants that we love and our favorite food items with our church friends.

Joan Humphrey, for the Fundraising Team



We invite you to send Wade Remmenga a birthday card as he is turning 75 years young on June 5. His children have organized a card shower to celebrate this special day. His address is in the church directory. Let's shower him with lots of Happy Birthday love!

Get Ready for Star City Pride 2026

Star City Pride is celebrating 20 years of pride with the theme of "Rainbow Rewind: Play it Loud, Live It Proud!" - an ode to queer history and culture.



Vine will participate in the Faith Alliance Coalition of Churches booth, the parade, and we will host our own booth on Saturday where attendees can learn about our Open and Affirming congregation. Want to volunteer? Please sign up today! The signup sheet is in the fellowship hall on the volunteer opportunities bulletin board. If you have any questions, please reach out to Gertrud Finkbeiner or Pastor Steven.

- **Pride in the Park Friday, June 12 | 4:00 - 8:00 pm**

Vine Church will help set up and host the Faith Alliance Coalition of Churches booth at Woods Park (33rd & O Street). This is a family event, with games for kids and families and information about Lincoln's Open and Affirming Congregations.

- **Pride Parade Saturday, June 13 | 10:00 am - 12:00 pm**

The Parade is two trips around the Capitol (14th & K Street). There will be a bus available if you prefer to ride in the parade (limited space, so sign up early). If you are riding, please arrive at Christ UMC (4530 A Street) by 8:30/8:45 am to meet the bus. The bus will leave Christ UMC by 9:00/9:15 am to get to the parade route.

- **Pride Festival Saturday, June 13 | 1:00 - 8:00 pm**

Vine will have a booth with information about our faith community and mission. We will have free tattoos, a prize drawing and gifts for those who visit our booth. The booth is downtown on 17th Street (between O & P Streets).

BROCK'S BOUTIQUE

Brock's Boutique started seven years ago as a way to give back to the community and honor the founders' late son Brock. Every first Saturday of the month, the Havelock Christian Church in Lincoln hosts a free clothing and meals event.

If you have clothing or bedding to donate, please consider Brock's Closet Free Clothes Program. They accept donations at 6520 Colfax Avenue or call for a pickup.

STAR CITY CHORUS

Star City Chorus is Lincoln's only LGBTQA+ mixed choir. They perform throughout the year with fall, winter, and spring concerts as well as special appearances when asked. You have had the opportunity over the past years to hear this chorus perform their Christmas concert hosted at Vine Church and this last year at the Christmas Market.

Star City Chorus also performs annually at the Star City Pride celebration. There are several times you can see them performing during the Pride Festival. There is a performance on Thursday, June 11 at Southpointe Christian Church (7010 Helen Witt Dr) at 7 pm or on Saturday, June 13 at the Pride Festival at 17th & O Street at 3 pm.

The choir will also be singing on June 30 in New York City at Carnegie Hall. Pastor Steven is a member of this choir and will be joining them in New York for that performance.

STEWARDSHIP & Summer Giving

Convenient, Automated Tithing for Your Busy Summer

It's almost summertime and the summer months bring vacations and other activities. We encourage you to continue your consistent support to our church and mission, especially during the summer months. If you think you'll miss church services this summer, consider setting up recurring giving before you pack your bags and hit the road.

It takes just a few moments to get started, and your regular donations will help sustain us throughout the year. Visit vineucc.org/giving to set up a secure, recurring contribution from your bank account, credit card or debit card.

We sincerely thank you for your generosity to our community and various ministries!

Welcome New Members!

We would like to extend a warm welcome to our newest member, Sue Shear. Be sure to introduce yourself and make her feel at home. Sue Shear is on the Board of Directors for the Tri-Conference (TCM), is a chairperson of the Heartland Association, is the chair of the Nebraska Board of Directors for the Nebraska Conference, and she serves on the General Synod Nominating Committee of the UCC.

It is such a joy to see new members join the Vine family. Welcome to Vine!



Finding the perfect gift just got easier!



Shop with SCRIP for Father's Day – Graduations – Weddings – Birthdays - the possibilities are endless!!! Stop by the SCRIP sales table any Sunday morning to continue your support for this program.

 ShopWithScrip®

BRANCHING OUT

Branching Out collections for June will go to the HUB (Central Access Point for Young Adults). Their current needs list includes diapers in sizes 5,6,7, pull-ups and unscented diaper wipes. Also needed are gently used kitchen utensils, garbage cans, towels, and full/queen bedding.

Thank you for donating shoes to the One Day Without Shoes drive in April and lunch items in May to help stock the shelves of We Can Do This. These items are used to fill four community pantries to feed children on weekends and in the summer.

Scripture Reader **NEEDED**

A Scripture reader is needed for June 14. Make a difference and volunteer to read the scripture during our worship service. The signup sheet is in the fellowship hall on the volunteer opportunities board.

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED

The church office will be closed on June 15 – 17. Sheri will be back in the office on Thursday, June 18.

Pastor's Vacation

Pastor Steven will be out of the office from June 28 – July 3. He will be back in the pulpit on Sunday, July 5. If you need a pastoral visit during this time, please let the church office know.

Deceased Members

In our community, it is a privilege to support one another through every season of life. If you learn that a Vine member has passed away, please notify the church office as it is essential for providing pastoral care, supporting the family, and updating the church records.

Please let us know the name of the deceased, the date of their passing, and any initial plans for their memorial service or funeral.

HAVE YOU TALKED TO GOD TODAY?

From the **MODERATOR**

In last month's newsletter we shared the news of Vine providing storage space for non-perishable food items for We Can Do This. The organization's volunteers have brought in the shelves and supplies, and the space is set up and ready for them to use. As they establish their routines and refine their organization of the space, we'll continue to provide information to you on opportunities to mutually support and coordinate with them.

A tree limb recently fell on the west side of the building – fortunately, there was no damage or injuries. Council will be following up on any tree trimming needed.

The choir and the worship attendees are so grateful that Russ Workman came out of retirement to help the choir the last two months of the program year. It was such a pleasure to have him directing again. The Council will be seeking a choir director for the fall.

I hope you will be able to attend the listening post on May 31 as we continue our conversation on church finances.

If you have a question or concerns, please contact me or a Council member.

Joan Humphrey

Council members: Phyllis Schuessler, Jim King, Gertrud Finkbeiner, Diane Robie, Rick Heiliger, Alex Gross, Karen Hemmerling and Bruce Baker. Cathy Anderson, Church Clerk



Vacation Bible School is on Saturday, July 25, from 9:00 am – 12:00 pm. VBS is a convenient, fun, one-day activity-packed day. Plan to include Vine VBS as a part of your summer activities. More information will be coming in our July newsletter.



On Sunday, May 10, Vine recognized 4 graduating high seniors and 1 college graduate. Those present were Khoe Cuttlers, Zion Pearson, and Annette Foreman.

Pastor Steven and Joan Humphrey (Moderator) presented the high school seniors with a book titled, *What Ever You Are Be a Good One* by Lisa Gongdon, and to our college graduate a book titled, *You Can Be Brave* by Max Lucado. A blessing was spoken by the congregation to wish them the best and God's love as they follow their future plans.



Thank You Note

Dear Vine Family,

Thank you so much to all who made Zion's graduation celebration so special. Your cards, gifts, kind words, and your presence meant so much. It made him really feel valued as a part of our Vine family. Thank you!

Zion, Erin, and Phyllis

Justice In Action Assembly held on April 30

Justice In Action had a fantastic Nehemiah Assembly on Thursday, April 30 at St. Mark's United Methodist Church. There are 27 faith congregations involved in JIA, and Friends of JIA for those who are not affiliated with a church. There were 1,349 people in attendance, breaking last year's attendance numbers. Vine had 38 people in attendance. The pop-up choir had 91 singers from nineteen faith communities!

The assembly began with a Justice In Action Choir, created with all those who wanted to join, who sang two songs. A prayer opened the event, and then Pastor Steven began the Action Assembly with introductions and a description of what would be expected for the evening. Different JIA speakers took turns discussing updates on our four areas of concern.

- The Food Insecurity research team shared many details and a list of places, including Connection Point that Vine supports, that offer food during the week. They shared that about 14,500 kids in our county are food insecure. With the current need becoming harder with SNAP benefit rules changing, many more people will have difficulty feeding their family.
- Next was Pre-eviction Mediation which seeks flexible solutions between tenants and landlords. The research team encouraged all of us to share that the Mediation Center is available and would like landlords and tenants to know there is another way to work through their rent without fear of eviction.
- Lutheran Family Services has hired a mental health coordinator through a grant they acquired to organize the Mental Health Navigation system. The speaker at the Assembly shared that there is continued work to be done to create the online access portal and personal support and outreach from navigators so the system will be accessible, efficient, supportive for the greater community, and be future-oriented.
- The final issue shared was Pre-Trial Diversion for non-violent offenders. The Lancaster County Criminal Justice System completed an assessment and in their final report they included a recommendation: "A structured diversion program should route eligible people into treatment instead of prosecution or jail." Currently, jail population is at 635. A young man spoke in-person about how the diversion program helped him to get back on his feet and make good choices in his life, and he was thankful for this program. Both Pat Condon, current Lancaster County Attorney, and Randy Ritnour, candidate for Lancaster County Attorney, were asked the same question:
- Will you commit to expanding the substance use diversion problem solving program by 75-110 people? Pat Condon did not commit; Randy Ritnour said yes.

The power of people makes justice happen for those in our county.



Vine's Spring High Tea

It was a beautiful day to have a spring tea! The Vine's Spring High Tea was held on Saturday, April 25 and it was wonderful! We enjoyed lovely piano music provided by our organist, Jeremy Duck, and we had delicious tea sandwiches, desserts, and a variety of premium teas. Our guest speaker, Linda Stephen, shared information on "Cultivating Joy" by being present in the moment from the biggest things to the smallest.



UCC Devotional

Little Foxes, by Quinn G. Caldwell

Catch us the foxes, the little foxes that ruin the vineyards. - Song of Solomon 2:15 (NRSV)

Some little things aren't little. Some are. Sometimes you can't tell which is which on your own.

The offhand comment you can't stop thinking about.

The interruption when you were trying to say something important, or unimportant.

The funny look, the slight slight, the forgotten detail.

You tell yourself you're being silly. You tell yourself that you're overreacting, or that you aren't being fair, or that you imagined it. You don't want to make a big thing of it. But I've got news for you: the fact that you can't stop thinking about it? That means that whatever you tell yourself, this little thing is already big enough to be getting on with.

Why not tell the other person? If the relationship is trustworthy, why not trust it and say, "This seems so small, but I can't stop thinking about it"? Why not say, "This is dumb, but it's rattling around in my head and I want to get it out"? Why not assume you will be heard?

We've all hurt other people before. We've all overreacted before. If it's the former, why not give the other person the chance to make repair? If it's the latter, why not give the other person the chance to bear with you? Either way, you get heard and the relationship gets strengthened.

Either way, you catch the little fox before it can destroy the whole vineyard.

Prayer: Save us from the little things that devour. Amen.

In Sympathy

Vine extends heartfelt sympathy to the family of member Max Breed who passed away on April 28, 2026. We celebrate his life and ask God to surround his family and friends with comfort in their time of grief.

Bible Quiz

After his resurrection, Jesus asked one of his disciples the same question three times: "Do you love me?" The disciple felt hurt, wondering why Jesus kept asking. Who was this disciple?

- A. James
- B. John
- C. Philip
- D. (Simon) Peter

Answer: D (John 21:17)

ORDINATION

The Heartland Association of the UCC invites you to celebrate the Ordination into the Christian Ministry of Andrew Michael DeGloyer on Sunday, June 7 at 3:00 pm at St. John's United Church of Christ in Syracuse, NE (511 7th Street). A meal will follow the ceremony. Clergy members are encouraged to wear red vestments and proceed together.



We pray a special blessing this Father's Day for fathers and father-figures, and other good and faithful men in our lives. We affirm the importance of good fathers on earth as we worship our perfect Father in heaven as his beloved children.

