

News from the Vine

October 2026

Vine Congregational United Church of Christ

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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

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will direct your paths. Proverbs 3:5-6

October is upon us - a month filled with a festival of color! It is the time of year when the trees are most colorful as the green leaves are giving way to their true colors. This festival of color is a reminder of the changing seasons we have here in the Midwest. It is also a reminder of the changing seasons within our lives. These changes in our lives come in many forms and, thankfully, at differing times within our lives.

Changes in our lives are reflected in our aging, in the geographical locations we may be living in, in the type and size of the dwellings we inhabit, in the increasing care by others for our well-being, of our mental capabilities, of how we earn our livelihood. There is a complexity about life. We are not simple beings. Nature is not a simple system. Even in the great expanse of the universe, there are complexities yet to be recognized and understood.

But in all aspects of life and existence there are rhythms. There are signs of rhythm all around us. The waning and waxing of the moon, the ebb and flow of the tides, the snowpack in winter and the melt in spring, growth in summer and harvest in the fall. The reminders and examples are all around *us*.

As humans, how do we handle the ebb and flow within our own lives? It is a natural process to want to resist change - at least dramatic changes - when confronted with them. Death is one of the most dramatic changes. Dramatic for the survivors, as there is a sense of empty space that once was occupied. That emptiness is the recognition that a soul which once occupied a physical expression is no longer present. Or is it?

As people of faith in a resurrected Christ, we often speak about transformative living. We, however, tend to limit this understanding to the physical world. What if the changing colors of fall are a reminder of transformation in a broader sense of the life cycle? In the children's book, "Freddy the Leaf", Freddy, an observant and deeply feeling leaf, saw the wonder of life as leaves began as buds, grew into broad green leaves which nourished the tree that bore them, then changed into beautiful colors as they aged, and after falling to the ground, provided nourishment still to the roots of the tree so the life cycle would happen another year.

My point being, no matter what cycle of life we find ourselves in, transformative living is occurring and what we are doing today will provide a future for others. Life is change.

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Mark Your Calendar

➢ Month at a Glance

Oct 4	SCRIP 30th Anniversary Reception
Oct 4	Neighbors in Need Special Offering
Oct 7	Youth Group – Wacky Wednesday
Oct 10	Heartland Association Fall Meeting
Oct 11	Blessing of the Pets
Oct 11	Crop Walk
Oct 12	Pizza Ranch Dine Out – Youth Fundraiser
Oct 12	Council Meeting
Oct 17	New Membership Class
Oct 18	Lunch after Church & Brat Tasting
Oct 20	Men's Breakfast
Oct 21	Youth Group – Wacky Wednesday
Oct 24	Fall Photo Shoot Fundraiser
Oct 25	Treats & Topics
Oct 25	Children's Halloween Party
Oct 25	Youth Group – Lunch & Setup Halloween Party

➢ A Brief Look Ahead

Nov 1	Pledge Sunday
Nov 1	All Saints Day Service
Nov 7	Health Fair
Nov 15	Annual Election and Provisional Budget Meeting
Nov 20	Transgender Day of Remembrance Prayer Vigil
Nov 22	Thanksgiving Potluck



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** meets every Wednesday evening at 6:30 pm in the fellowship hall for practice.
- **The Chancel Choir** will meet every Sunday at 9:15 am in the sanctuary for practice (once we have a choir director).

Give Online

Scan to learn more about us!

Connect with us:



OCTOBER 11 | 10:30 AM

We invite you to bring your family pet(s) for a special blessing. All of God's creatures are welcome, so bring your furry, fuzzy, feathered, scaled, or any pet that you include as a member of the family. Pictures of pets and stuffed animals are also welcome. All animals are to be leashed or crated. Invite your friends and neighbors to be a part of this special blessing.

A Word from the Pastor

Continued from page1

It is a natural ebb and flow of existence, an ongoing existence whether in a physical realm or a spiritual realm. Change involves grieving as grieving is the work of transformation, of leaving one life behind as we become a new life. I like to think of the changes in my life as chapters. Some of them I welcomed with open arms, some I have not been so graceful to embrace. Yet through all of these changes, I recognize a rhythm of life, and that rhythm has been set forth by what I call "God". I also understand that the One who has set the rhythm is present in each moment of my life, past, present, and future. I see October as a reminder for me to meditate on where I am in the ebb and flow of all that is. It can be a time to reflect, allow more spiritual growth, renew relationship with the One who has created all and sustains all. We are never very far from the tree of life and I believe we always return to the tree of life. Amen

Pastor Steven



OCT 25 | 1:00 – 2:00pm
Children thru Grade 5

Calling all little ghosts, goblins, monsters, mummies, and more - Halloween fun is knocking at your door! Join us at the church for a spooktacular Halloween party of games, activities, spooky sweet treats, and a wickedly good time! Costumes are encouraged but not required. Bring a friend and come for a frightfully fun time!

Youth Group

Lunch and Halloween Party Setup

October 25 | 11:30 am | Fellowship Hall

All students in grade 6 – 12 are invited join us for lunch as we finish setting up for the children's Halloween party. Please bring a costume to wear during the party. During the party, we will work the games and activities. After the party, we will clean up and be headed home by 3:00 pm.



Vine Christmas Market

December 4 - 5, 2026
Friday 4 pm – 8 pm & Saturday 9 am - 4 pm

Suddenly it is fall, and the Vine Christmas Market will be here soon. We need your help to make it another successful one! Please consider volunteering and mark your calendars accordingly; sign-up sheets will be on the bulletin board in fellowship hall soon.

- **Marketplace Setup:** string the lights and decorate the market: Sunday, November 29 after church service.
- **Cutting Greens**: Monday, November 30. Cut fresh greens at Ken and Etta's home, at the church, and other possible home locations.
- **Greens Arrangements**: Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, December 1, 2 and 3, times TBD by volunteers. Starting with containers full of fresh greens, volunteers will add assorted décor items to create appealing tabletop arrangements. Prepare bags of greenery to sell.
- **Bake** for the Vine Sweets and Bakery Booths: at home on your own schedule.
- **Package Sweets and Baked Goods**: Wednesday, December 2 and Thursday, December 3, 11am-2pm and 2-5pm. Package the sweets and baked goods into uniform bags, with a decorative tie and a label. Wednesday: candy and cookies; Thursday: sweet breads and bars.
- **Staff a Vine Booth**: Friday, December 4: 4 to 8pm, Saturday, December 5: 9am-12:30pm and 12:30-4pm. Greet shoppers and sell products in one of the Vine Church booths.
- **Marketplace Teardown**: Sunday, December 6 after church service.

STEWARDSHIP
THERE OUR ♥ HEARTS WILL BE

Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
– Matthew 6:21

October is Stewardship month! Our stewardship theme, *There Our Hearts Will Be,* reminds us that faithful stewardship is not primarily about money—it is about placing our hearts in God's hands, trusting that where our hearts go, our lives, choices, and resources will follow.

Together, as a community shaped by grace, we will ask: Where is our treasure? How can our hearts more fully align with God's?

During October, Vine members will share stories about how we as a congregation are responding to God's invitation to bring our gifts – spiritual and financial. You will be asked to make a pledge of financial support to the work of Vine and the wider United Church of Christ.

Please plan to join us for Pledge Sunday on November 1 with your 2027 stewardship pledge form. Returning your pledge card connects you to the mission and ministry of our congregation to our neighbors, near and far.

Your giving will do so much more than balance our budget for the coming year. It helps make us financially secure so we can strengthen who we are and what we can do together.

Let's Dine Out!

Pizza Ranch Fundraiser
Monday, October 12 | 4:00 – 9:00 pm

Gather your friends and let Pizza Ranch make dinner while you support the youth mission trip (more information on the trip TBA). Various representatives will be working as bussers during the evening to help with the fundraising.

Pizza Ranch

Neighbors in Need

WALK IN LOVE

Special Mission Offering

Walk in love, as Christ loved us - Ephesians 5:2

The Neighbors in Need offering supports ministries of justice and compassion, with one-third of the offering given to the Council for American Indian Ministries and the remaining two-thirds supporting UCC justice ministries.

The Neighbors in Need offering will be collected on Sunday, October 4. The NIN special offering envelopes are located in the narthex. Please make checks payable to Vine with "NIN" in the memo line. You may also give online at vinechurch.org/giving or scan the QR code in the weekly bulletin or on the bulletin boards. Donations can be made any time during October.

Thank you for supporting Neighbors in Need!



Are you thinking about becoming a member of Vine? Are you a current member and would like to refresh your understanding or reaffirm your membership? Our membership class is designed to help you become better acquainted with Vine, our values and beliefs, and our relationship to the United Church of Christ. This is an informal class led by Pastor Steven.

The next new membership class is on Saturday, October 17, from 9:30 am - 12:00 pm. If interested, please contact Pastor Steven or the church office to register your interest.

Scripture Reader Needed

A Scripture reader is needed for October 11 & October 25. Please consider sharing the word of God with the congregation. The signup sheet is in the fellowship hall on the volunteer opportunities board.

LUNCH after CHURCH

Lunch plans made easy! You're invited to join us for Lunch after Church on Sunday, October 18 after worship in the fellowship hall. Lunch will be a loaded Baked Potato Bar or salad with the toppings of your choice including butter, sour cream, shredded cheese, chives, bacon, broccoli, and chili. Lunch is provided with a freewill offering.

TASTE TESTING CHRISTMAS MARKET

The countdown to the Christmas Market is on, and since we're adding to this year's culinary offerings, we have a very important mission: finding the perfect bratwurst!



Join us on Sunday, October 18 in the fellowship hall for a Bratwurst Tasting during our lunch to help us choose the top brand.

Fall Photo Shoot Fundraiser



Saturday, October 24 1-4 pm

Sign up for a 10-minute fall photo session for one family, couple, or individual. Make a freewill donation to support the youth mission trip and receive at least five edited photos with full rights to print, post, and share.

Photo sessions will take place at UNL East Campus and participants will receive an email with more details. A signup sheet will be posted soon.

TREATS & TOPICS

Join us for Treats and Topics on Sunday, October 25 after worship in the Sanctuary. Kelli Woods, Community Outreach Specialist with Teammates, will share information about their program. Come for the information, stay for the conversation - and, of course, the treats!



This year, we are thrilled to celebrate a major milestone: 30 years of Scrip fundraising**!** For three decades, Vine has turned everyday shopping - like buying groceries, filling up the gas tank, and grabbing morning coffee - into meaningful funding for our church.

Please join us for a reception celebrating 30 years of impact on Sunday, October 4 in the fellowship hall after worship. Thank you for making a difference with every single purchase. Here's to the next 30 years!

BRANCHING OUT

Friendship Home needs simple specific cleaning, personal care items, grocery items, and gas gift cards to help families fleeing domestic violence. Branching Out will collect these items during October through November 3. This will allow time to get the donations delivered before Thanksgiving.

Please pick up a shopping list from the collection basket so you will be able to purchase the items needed. If you wish to purchase a gift card, you may shop at the SCRIP table. You may either buy a gift card or donate money to help purchase a group card. Please make checks payable to Vine SCRIP. All gift cards may be left at the SCRIP table rather than putting them in the collection basket.

Thank you for your generous donations in August and September to the Zambia school supply basket and the collection to help ship the items.

QUARTERLY GIVING STATEMENTS

The third quarter giving statements will be emailed the first week in October. Please review and contact the church office if you notice any discrepancies.



Our office manager, Sheri DeGalbo, has been working on a continuing project to improve our attendee databases, and she requests your help in developing a new information category: family relationships.

Knowing who is related to whom allows us to provide better support, targeted pastoral care, and helps us understand how attendees of Vine are connected. We currently have parents and adult children on our rolls who have different last names, and a pastor or office manager may not know them well enough to know the relationship.

If you have family members that attend Vine that do not reside in your immediate household, please let Sheri in the office know. In fact, you may want to share information on a contact who does not attend Vine, in case it is needed in the event of accident or illness. Thank you for helping us care for you and your loved ones.

Joan Humphrey, Moderator



The Fall Heartland Association meeting will be held on October 10 at 9:30 a.m. at First Plymouth Church, 2000 D Street. Lunch will be provided for $10, payable at the door. Registrations are due by October 6. See the bulletin boards for additional information. If you would like to attend, please let the church office know so we can get a count of those attending from Vine.

YOUTH GROUP

WACKY WEDNESDAYS

Join us for some fun activities with a lesson. We have two Wednesday gatherings in October from 6:00-7:15 pm at Bethany Christian Church (1645 N Cotner).

- **October 7 – Does it Float?** Youth are welcome to bring an item and test the group's guessing abilities on whether it will float or sink. Other items will be provided and then we will test our engineering skills.
- **October 21 – FEAR!** How brave are you? What creeps you out? Come talk about fear and test your bravery with this fun Halloween-themed night. We might have some treats also!!!

CROP HUNGER WALK

ENDING HUNGER ONE STEP AT A TIME

Sunday, October 11 | 1:00 pm

CROP Hunger Walk is a national program that raises funds to help fight hunger around the world and in local communities. Twenty-five percent of the funds raised stay in Lincoln.

Want to help raise money to battle hunger in local communities and around the world? Please sign up using the QR Code below, gather sponsors, and then join the 2.5 mile walk to raise awareness and mirror the walk many take in other nations to receive rations for meals.

Everyone is invited to participate by joining us on the walk or donating to support one of our walkers. See bulletin boards for additional information.

We will gather at Our Savior's Lutheran Church (1200 S. 40th Street) at 1:00 pm to check in and walk with other participants.

From the MODERATOR

At our September meeting, Council members approved replacing the commercial garbage disposal in the kitchen. The majority of the $3,600 cost will be covered by the money raised through the Shred Vault fundraiser ($2,250) and this summer's Garden Market ($761). The SCRIP committee volunteered to cover the remainder (about $600).

The Council approved a change in the service provider for snow removal. The company hired at the beginning of 2026 to clear and salt the sidewalks will also handle plowing and de-icing in the parking lots this coming season.

The Council continued discussion of the ideas and topics raised in the listening posts at the end of May and August. Three of the suggestions are being explored by small teams of volunteers. Meanwhile, the pizza box workers are raking in the dough! (You knew I couldn't resist that.)

If you have a question or concern, 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

Thank You Note

Dear Vine Family,
Thank you for all the cards and good wishes for my birthday! I appreciate all the love, and I was very surprised at my party!

Love, Morgan Cuttlers

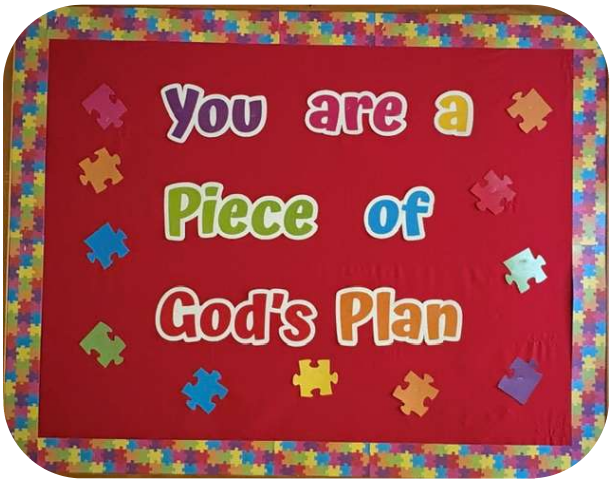
Even if He doesn't

Daniel 3:18

Children's Sunday School

Vine Sunday School Kick-Off on Sunday, September 13 was a busy, fun-filled time, with the kids playing ice breaker games and team building activities. For one activity they had to search for puzzle pieces and then work together to assemble the puzzle. We ran out of time to finish the puzzle but everyone had fun and it emphasized the new bulletin board across from the Sunday School room that points out that we are all pieces of God's Plan!





Pizza Boxing Fundraiser at UNL football games

Thank you to Barb and Todd Smisek, Steven Mitchell, Andy Cruz, Anica Brown, Sherry Huenemann, Cathy and Don Anderson, Phyllis Schuessler, Erin Schuessler, Zion Pearson and Karen Bratton who volunteered to box pizzas for the home football games. With our matching gifts we have raised $3,500 in September. We still have 4 games left in October and November, so if you want to volunteer and haven't signed up yet we would love to have you join us.





UCC Devotional

Remember Your Name in the Night,
by Talitha Arnold

I remember your name in the night, O Lord, and keep your law. - Psalm 119:55 (NRSV)

I remember a lot of things at night. Perhaps you do, too. I usually start with everything I didn't get done that day. The calls not made, the emails not answered, the deadlines missed. Then the remembrances expand to the things I wish I hadn't done. Time I wasted, frustration I should have kept to myself, cookies I shouldn't have eaten.

Maybe you have your own nightly spreadsheet, too.

The later the hour, the longer the list. Sometimes the remembrances include not only the harm we have done or the good we've left undone, but also the harm done to us, perhaps that day or in the distant past. If so, we're in good company. The composer of Psalm 119 recalls their own distress: "The arrogant utterly deride me. Hot indignation seizes me because of the wicked" (119:51, 53). Late-night insomnia has a long history.

To deal with despair and distress, the psalmist takes comfort in God's ordinances and commandments. "Your statutes have been my songs wherever I make my home" (119:54). And then the psalmist remembers something beyond the hurt, beyond the failings, even beyond God's law: "I remember your name."

When our nights grow long and our lists grow longer, may we remember God's name. The name of Forgiveness. The name of Courage. The name of Love.

Prayer: No matter what else we remember in the long nights of our souls, O Lord, help us to remember your name. Amen.

Bible Quiz

Although the apostle Paul is credited with writing the letter to the Romans, he dictated the message while another believer served as the scribe. Near the end of the letter, that writer briefly identifies himself. Who was it?

A. Tertius
B. Timothy
C. Lucius
D. Aquila

Answer: A (Romans 16:22)

BIBLE WHO AM I?

I betrayed Jesus for thirty pieces of silver. Who am I?

A. Joshua
B. Judas Iscariot
C. Barnabas
D. Peter

Answer: B (Judas Iscariot)

