

News from the Vine

April 2026



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SUNDAY

10:30 am Worship

11:30 am Fellowship Hour

SUNDAY SCHOOL

9:30 am (all ages)

(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

“After this, I will pour out my Spirit on all kinds of people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, and your young men will see visions.” Joel 2:28 (NCV)

Easter Sunday is the celebration of the resurrection of Jesus and the beginning of the season of Easter, which lasts for seven weeks! With Easter, we begin to think of new beginnings. The spring equinox occurred on March 20, bringing with it signs of new life. We see trees budding out, bulbs bringing forth their blooms. All are visual messages of new life, very much like the message of resurrection. The promise of new life!

As I ponder current events, both in our country and worldwide, I cannot help but believe that we are in serious need of an act of repentance, so that we may experience the new beginning that resurrection promises. The prophet Joel addresses the need for repentance to the people of Judah.

Quoting from the introduction to the book of Joel: *Joel encourages people to change their hearts, which will be visible in their outward actions. God calls them to return to Him, for even in times of great distress, He is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, and overflowing with lovingkindness. Joel urges them to call on God, to repent, to “turn around.” Repentance means to change direction, to set new goals and to establish new standards. Joel wanted the*

people to seek God’s plan for their lives and to commit themselves to it, for whoever turns to God will not be disappointed! (The New Possibility Thinkers Bible, Robert Schuller, pg. 1030,1996 publication)

Hear once again the promise of God that comes with repentance: *I will pour out my Spirit on all kinds of people.* In the life of Vine Church, this Easter season begins with nine youth becoming confirmed and joining as active members in our faith community! We are seeing visitors who are bringing with them new possibilities. I see in this the scriptural promise that with *“all kinds of people “* God is pouring out His spirit, providing prophecy and new vision, wherein lies our hope of resurrection.

It is through resurrection that the promise of new life appears. But resurrection means ‘new’ not ‘old’. Jesus was seen in a new form once he left the tomb. We have to be willing to embrace the challenges that come with resurrection, as a community of faith and personally. The season of Lent helped us see what needed to be put to death and buried. The season of Easter is about new life and the changes that this new life brings! In the words, “He is Risen, He is Risen, indeed!” we are saying, “What once was, has now changed. What death once claimed, new life has overcome.” This new life sees new visions and speaks of new hopes. Let us live into this promise of God! Amen

Mark Your Calendar

➤ Month at a Glance

Apr 2	Passover Service (Seder Meal)
Apr 3	Fill the Easter Treat Bags & Setup
Apr 4	Easter Egg Hunt & Duck Derby
Apr 5	Easter Sunday and Breakfast
Apr 5	No Children's or Adult Sunday School
Apr 18	Spring Heartland Association Meeting
Apr 18	All-Church Spring Yard Cleanup
Apr 19	Lunch after Church
Apr 19	Kamp Kaleo Payments Due
Apr 25	Spring High Tea
Apr 30	Kamp Kaleo Payments Due
Apr 30	JIA Nehemiah Assembly

➤ A Brief Look Ahead

May 2	Plant Sale Setup
May 3	Plant & Bake Sale
May 10	Graduation Sunday
May 17	Celebration 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.
- **Treat & Topics** is the last Sunday of each month in the fellowship hall.
- **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** practices every Wednesday evening at 6:30 pm in the fellowship hall.
- **The Chancel Choir** practices every Sunday morning at 9:15 am in the sanctuary.

Give Online



Scan to learn more about us!



A LOT CAN HAPPEN IN 3 DAYS



HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

A Journey of Faith and Renewal

PALM SUNDAY

March 29 | 10:30 am

Join us on Palm Sunday as we begin Holy Week and celebrate Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

PASSOVER SERVICE

April 2 | 6:00 pm

Passover Haggadah Celebration! Join us for a special joint Seder Meal service with Northeast UCC at Vine.

EASTER SUNDAY

April 5 | 10:30 am

Alleluia! He is Risen, indeed! Join us for a joyous celebration of the resurrection of Jesus and the promise of eternal life! The sacrament of Holy Communion will be celebrated.

Easter Sunday Breakfast
8:30 – 9:45 am.

WISHING YOU
Easter Joy

PASSOVER SEDER MEAL

A Seder Meal – Passover Service will be held on Maundy Thursday, April 2 at 6:00 pm at Vine Church.

Since the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in 70 AD, Jewish congregations have had to develop a way in which they can come together and recall their past, explain their present, and envision their future. Out of this has come many forms of liturgy which today is collected in books called Haggadah.

As Christians our faith roots come from the Hebrew scriptures, religious understanding and practices. Yet many of us do not have a clear understanding of our religious heritage and the importance of Passover. My first experience of a true Jewish Seder celebration came through an invitation of a Jewess hosting a Seder meal in her home with friends and family. Through this experience I was able to learn so much about Passover that was not taught in Christian circles. This form of coming together in meal and thanksgiving has become a very meaningful part of my practice of Lent.

When we compare the principles of the Passover to the details surrounding the death and resurrection of Jesus, it's exciting to see how the two are related. God's directives to ancient Israel foreshadowed His plan to deliver us from sin through Jesus' death and resurrection hundreds of years later.

Pastor Steven will co-officiate with Rev. Dr. Lisa Sherman, pastor at Northeast UCC. For the dinner, baked chicken and matzo ball soup will be provided. Attendees are asked to bring a vegetable, salad, or dessert to complete the meal.

Pastor Steven

No Easter Sunday School

There will be no children's or adult Sunday school on Easter, April 5. We invite the children and youth to join their families in worship and to enjoy breakfast together in the fellowship hall. Sunday school for all will resume on Sunday, April 12.

Easter Egg Hunt & Duck Derby The Ducks are Coming!

The annual Easter Egg Hunt & Duck Derby is on Saturday, April 4 from 10:00 – 11:30 am. Join in the fun and come anytime during these hours!



Children will collect five plastic eggs to trade for a treat bag and a rubber duck for the ducks games. There will also be a petting zoo, and the Easter Bunny will be available for pictures. This is a free, family event for toddlers through grade 5.

We will fill treat bags on Friday, April 3 starting at 9:00 am for anyone wanting to help. Some Troop 8 Scouts are volunteering again to help with games on Saturday. Due to the generosity of those last year, we will not need any donations for the treats.

We appreciate and thank the Foreman family for providing these fun duck games that so many have enjoyed over the years.

Easter Sunday Breakfast

You are invited to an Easter Sunday Breakfast on Sunday, April 5 from 8:30 – 9:45 am. Bring the whole family and join us in the fellowship hall for breakfast casserole, pastries, and fresh fruit. The Easter breakfast is being hosted by the Vine Youth as a fundraiser for their summer mission trip.





Spring High Tea

Cultivating Joy: How living with intention enhances our daily lives!

Guest Speaker
LINDA STEPHEN
 WRITER | ARTIST | PUBLIC SPEAKER

Learn more at lindastephen.com

Time for tea! Please join us for a delightful afternoon tea party. Enjoy delicious tea sandwiches, desserts, and a variety of premium teas. You will not want to miss this event!

\$15 per person. Purchase tickets by Sunday, April 12. Tickets are available in the church office or in the narthex on Sunday mornings. This is an all-church event ~ Invite friends and family.

Spring Meeting OF THE HEARTLAND ASSOCIATION

The Spring Heartland Association Meeting is on Saturday, April 18 at the Hallam Congregational UCC in Hallem (205 Harrison St.)

- 9:30 am registration with refreshments
- 10:00 am worship followed by:
 - Brief business meeting
 - General Synod Program

The noon meal cost is \$10 payable at the door. Checks payable to Hallam UCC. An offering will be received during morning worship.

If interested, please 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.

LUNCH *after* CHURCH

Everyone is invited to join us for Lunch after Church on Sunday, April 19 following worship in the fellowship hall. This month we are having deli-sub sandwiches, potato salad, chips, and dessert. Please join us!! This will be the last Lunch after Church until the fall.



Quarterly Giving Statements

The first quarter giving statements will be emailed the first part of April. Please review and contact the church office if you notice any discrepancies. If you don't receive an email with your statement, please contact the church office. Thank you for your generosity!

GRADUATION SUNDAY



Vine would like to recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of our 2026 graduates! If you or someone in your family is graduating from high school, college, military, or vocational school, please send a recent photo and a short bio (200 words or less) about plans for fall, activities during school, etc. The graduates will be featured in the May newsletter. Please send this information to the church office by Friday, April 17.

Graduation Sunday will be Sunday, May 10. During worship service, we will have a special time of recognition of our graduates. Please let the church office know by April 30 if your graduate will be attending this service so we may plan accordingly.



PLANT & BAKE SALE

After several episodes of weather whiplash this year, we trust that spring will come and stay as it normally does! The vine plant and bake sale will be the first Sunday in May as it normally is! And we will be ready!

Seedlings have been started, perennials are popping up to be split, houseplants have been divided and repotted and are waiting to be rehomed, and garages have been cleaned out with excess tools, pots, and lawn items headed for the sale. There may be some surprises too!

If you'd rather have sugar and flour under your fingernails than dirt, you can support the other half of this FUNdraiser and bring something tasty wrapped and ready for sale – anything you like to make – anything you think someone would like to eat!

REMEMBER: We don't advertise this to the public because we never know what we'll have available to sell but as always, you are welcome to bring family, friends, neighbors, strangers off the street, etc. – we will be open until we're sold out.

AND, as always – IT'S MARATHON DAY, SO THERE WILL BE TRAFFIC ISSUES – MORE ON THAT LATER.

If you have questions, please contact Jean or Phyllis.

Thank You Notes

Thank you to everyone who helped make our 50th Anniversary Celebration on Sunday, March 1 so very special. We are truly grateful for all the time and effort given to make our anniversary party a once-in-a-lifetime experience. We are so blessed to be a part of this Vine family. Thank you again for all the loving memories!

Kate and Bruce Baker

Thank you for the cards, calls and concern at the time of Paul's knee surgery and the death of his brother.

Paul and Cheryl Svoboda

YOUTH GROUP

We are excited to invite our current 5th graders and all 6-12 graders to join the Vine Youth Group. We will meet three times this month.

Sunday, April 5 - Easter Breakfast

- We will be providing the casseroles, fruit and juice for the meal, in addition to helping serve Easter morning from 8:00-10:00 am. Please talk to Karen Bratton about how to be involved.

Saturday, April 18 - Paint and Plant Service Day

- We will meet at the church from 9:00 -11:00 am to help plant the remaining Easter bulbs and to paint walking sticks for Kamp Kaleo. Make sure to wear your old clothes and join us for these service projects.

Monday, April 20 - Pizza Ranch Dine Out

- Our April Mission Trip Dine-out is at Pizza Ranch (8420 Lexington Ave) from 4:00 -9:00 pm. Their pizza is good, but the chicken and cactus bread are amazing. We will have volunteers helping bus tables in the dining room, so come in and join us for food and fellowship.

Wednesday, April 29 - Can You Escape??

- Join us from 6:15 -7:30 pm as we attempt an escape room as a group.

JIA Nehemiah Assembly

The Justice in Action Nehemiah Action Assembly is Thursday, April 30 from 6:30-8:00 pm at St. Mark's United Methodist Church (84th and Pioneers). Please consider being part of this evening for justice! The event begins at 6:30 pm; doors open at 6:00 pm. There is no cost to attend.

You are invited to attend and invite others to stand with us for justice! If you want to attend, there will be a signup sheet in the narthex on Sunday mornings or on the volunteer opportunities bulletin board. Anica will provide the attendees with a ticket.

Let's wear our Vine Church T-shirts to show our presence. If you need a Vine T-shirt, please contact Sheri in the office.

Geriatric Gardeners Seek Volunteers

The Spring All-Church Workday is Saturday, April 18 at 9:00 am. Help us get ready for spring! The geriatric gardeners are seeking volunteers, especially younger, able-bodied individuals, to come lend a hand as we clean up the church grounds for the spring season.

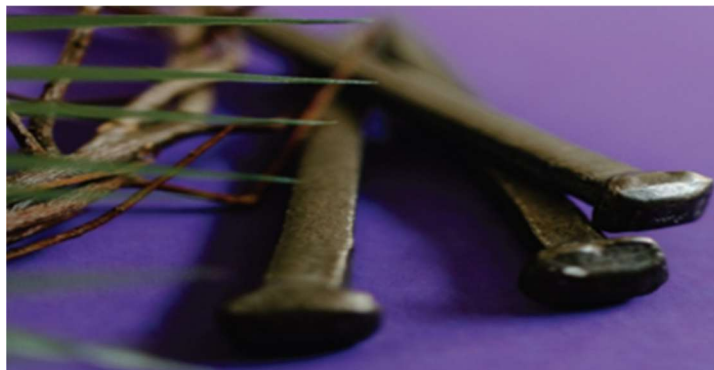
Bring gloves, tools, and a smile—many hands make light work.

Thank you,
Etta, Jean, Jennie, and Phyllis



Green Thumb Volunteer Needed

We are seeking a volunteer to water and care for the Easter spring flowers during the week leading up to Easter Sunday and a week or so after Easter. If you want to volunteer, please let Sheri in the office know.



BRANCHING OUT

It's time for **One Day Without Shoes at the People's City Mission**. **Branching Out** will sponsor a barrel for shoe collection inside the south entrance. It will arrive the week of March 30 and remain at Vine until the week of April 20. We have just three Sundays, April 5, 12, 19 to fill it with gently worn or new shoes for men, women, or children. We did it last year so let's do it again!

Pack the Sack became Pack the SUV! Thank you for so many donations!



One Great HOUR OF SHARING

During March, we collected \$1,208 for the One Great Hour of Sharing special mission offering! Thank you for your "Love Offering!" Your gifts continue to bring new possibilities and hope to communities in the United States and worldwide. Your donation will appear on your giving statement.

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED

The church office will be closed on Monday, April 6.

Duct tape may patch a lot of things, but 3 nails fixed everything!

Scout Sunday

We celebrated Scout Sunday on Sunday, March 15! A huge thank you to the Scouts for taking on active roles in the worship service. Thank you to all the Scouts, leaders, and families for making Scout Sunday a memorable celebration of faith, duty, and community.



Youth Service Blitz

In February, confirmation youth participated in a service blitz serving the Lincoln community. They participated in service projects all over Lincoln.



UCC Daily Devotional

Tell God Everything, Vince Amlin

Don't worry about anything. Instead, tell God about everything. Ask and pray. Give thanks to God. - Philippians 4:6 (NIRV, adapted)

My co-pastor is fond of saying my family's pet is "the most prayed-for cat in America." Because, at least once a month, my kiddo offers gratitude for Bailey in worship: On the arbitrary date we've chosen as her birthday. When she got sick from chomping a bouquet of daylilies. Or simply after some particularly good morning cuddles.

The prayers often elicit laughter, but I love them. Not only because it's my child offering them. But also for the example they set for the rest of us. Adults regularly tell me after worship that they "almost" prayed for something. But they worried it wasn't important enough. They assume the most meaningful prayers are about the biggest life events.

But I suspect it's just the opposite. That our deepest, most vulnerable prayers are often the smallest. The tender ones we worry will sound trivial to others but which get us through our days:

"Send me a parking spot so I don't lose this job." "Settle my anxious mind so I can finally sleep." "Thank you for this cat, who, when school is hard and my parents are grumpy, loves me unconditionally."

The small prayers are the ones that knit our lives together in community and with God. Like the way we invite all our friends to our weddings. but we only text a few about what we had for lunch. Or the dumb thing we said in the meeting. Or how the cat jumped into bed to wake us up.

How soft the spot behind her ear is. How loudly she was purring.

Prayer: God, you wouldn't believe the day I've had...



According to Matthew's account, something remarkable happened to the earth on the day Jesus was crucified and again on the morning when Mary Magdalene and the other Mary visited the tomb. What occurred on both days?

- A. There was a flood on both days.
- B. There was an earthquake on both days.
- C. There was a huge fire on each day.
- D. There was complete darkness on both days.

Kamp Kaleo

Summer Fun Ahead at Kamp Kaleo

This summer we will have 13 students attending Kamp Kaleo throughout the summer in various camps. Along with the students, we have 6 parents attending with our students. All of our students were able to register prior to the February deadline to receive Kamp Kaleo's scholarship.

We thank the generosity of Vine Foundation, Vine SCRIP, and Heartland Association for providing scholarships so that so many of our students can attend Kamp. Parents will be providing a portion of the registration fee as well. All of our students and parents will enjoy this Kamp opportunity and have a great time this summer.

Parents should have their portion of the Kamp tuition submitted to the church office by Sunday, April 19. If you don't remember your amount, please contact Sheri in the office.

K a m p K a l e o WORK WEEKENDS

Kamp Kaleo is hosting three spring work weekends to help prepare for the coming camping season. Volunteering to help is a great way of providing stewardship of one of our greatest resources for ministry. Come lend a hand, meet great people, and help get the Kamp ready!

Vine is designating the weekend of April 24-26 for our church to participate together as a whole. For additional information, see the bulletin boards. If you are interested, please let the church office know by April 5, so we can register all attendees at one time, together.

Want to carpool? Pastor Steven will attend on Friday and come back on Saturday late afternoon. Please let the office know if you want to carpool.