This Lent we are focusing on the idea of Covenant – what is it? What does it ask of us? What gifts do we have because of them? We are here simply because God choose to make a covenant with us – without our permission or acquiescence! God covenanted to love us, to stand with us, to guide us, and to never give up on us. Covenant doesn’t demand anything of us – it demands something of God, but it does invite things of us. Over the five Sundays of Lent (February 18 – March 18), Kris and I will be preaching on this theme, and inviting us to consider what God’s covenant means for us as we live our lives and practice our faith.

We’ll explore:

- God’s Covenant with all of creation after the flood
- God’s covenant with Abraham and Sarah to make of them a great nation
- The difference between a contract and a covenant
- The unbreakableness of God’s covenants and what that means for us
- Marriage vows and our commitments to each other (and it’s not just for married people!)

I look forward to exploring the covenants of God with you as we look forward to Easter, and the greatest example of God’s love in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Pastor Sue

~ Rooted in God ~ Open to Grace ~ Filled with Joy ~
Kris’ Thoughts

Matthew, Mark, Luke, John…. Thomas? Did you know that there are more than the four gospels we know as the first four books of the New Testament? There quite a lot actually, but only Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are recognized as canon or official biblical scripture. The others, well they are fun to read and study and they can shed some insight on the times in which they were written. And that’s what we will be doing here at FPC as we host the Jesus Seminar on the Road” March 16-17th, 2018.

At this two day lecture series presented by the Westar Institute, we welcome Dr. Nicola Denzey Lewis of Princeton University and Dr. Stephen Patterson of Claremont Graduate School as they lead us in series of presentations and workshops on The Gospel of Thomas: Recovering the Lost Wisdom of Jesus. The program begins on Friday night the 16th and concludes with workshops on Saturday morning and afternoon. You can find flyer and registration information throughout the church and on our website. You can also speak to Kris Brammer about the event. The cost is $60 (pre-registration) for the whole weekend or you can register for individual session s at $25-30 per session. The CE Committee hopes you will considering joining us for this informative and eye opening educational event.

Pray and Play,
Kris “Bubba” Brammer

EVERYBODY IS WELCOME TO ATTEND!

Jock Tut Peleak,
Parish Associate for Sudanese Ministry at First Presbyterian Church

YOU ARE INVITED!

Sudanese Bible Study
Saturdays @ noon

Every Saturday at 12:00 pm, our Sudanese congregation will have a bible study in Room 107 of FPC. Please join us for wonderful fellowship, prayer and reflection. Through this study, we hope to better understand God’s word. It’s not just a matter of you and your Bible, but rather that of you, your Bible and the Holy Spirit.

For more information, please contact (402) 617 - 2343.
FPChristian Education

What’s Happening in February!

**Children’s Ministry:**
- Feb. 4th – FORUM and Worship education Sunday
- Feb. 11th – Kind-4th grades (Jesus and the Children); 5th-7th Grades (Parables of Jesus)
- Feb. 18th – Kind-4th Grades (The Widow’s Mite); 5th-7th grades (Healings of Jesus)
- Feb. 25th – Kind-4th grades (Man Through a Roof); 5th-7th Grades (Teachings of Jesus)

**Youth Ministry:**
- Feb. 4th @ 5:00 pm – Super Bowl Party at Kris Brammer’s home
- Feb. 11th @ 8:30 and 11:00 am – Youth Sunday
- Feb. 18th @ 5:30 pm – Meals on Wheels part 1
- Feb. 25th @ 5:30 pm – Meals on Wheels part 2

**Forum Series:**
- Feb. 4th – Our February FORUM series speaker will be our own Dr. David Peabody who will lead us in looking at the four gospels of the New Testament (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) and how they came to be the four gospels (from among the many non-canonical stories about Jesus) included in the Bible. We hope you will join us for this informative and enlightening presentation.

**Adult Ministry:** (Sunday Morning Education Classes unless otherwise noted)
- Adult Education – Bible Study (Room 105) Join this class as the examine the theme of “Self-controlled, Upright, and Godly Faith” as seen in James 2:14-26, James 3:1-12, Acts 9:36-43, and I Timothy 6:11-21. This class is lead by Gary Hughes.

- Adult Education – Topical Studies (Room 107) Throughout February, this class will be using the curriculum, “Painting the Stars: Science, Religion, and an Evolving Faith” from the Living the Questions series.
Jesus Seminar on the Road
First Presbyterian Church, Lincoln
March 16 & 17, 2018
Presented by the Westar Institute

The Fifth Gospel: Recovering the Lost Wisdom of Jesus

In 1945 a new gospel was discovered that would alter the way scholars look at the gospels, the origins of Christianity, and even Jesus himself. The new gospel was identified as the previously known but never found Gospel of Thomas. This Seminar introduces the Gospel of Thomas, examines its vision of Jesus, and asks how Thomas challenges our understanding of the historical Jesus and the story of Christian beginnings.

Program Schedule

The Fifth Gospel - Friday, March 16 7:00-8:30 pm with Stephen Patterson and Nicola Denzey Lewis
What do we learn from the fifth gospel that we do not learn from Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John? In this opening session, Stephen Patterson and Nicola Denzey Lewis will tell the story of the Gospel of Thomas, look at some major differences between Thomas and the canonical gospels, and bring us up to speed on what scholars know (and don’t know) about Thomas and earliest Christianity.

Unlocking the Fifth Gospel - Saturday, March 17 9:30-10:30 am with Dr. Nicola Denzey Lewis
The surprise discovery of the Gospel of Thomas in 1945 is an event unrivaled in the study of Christian origins. Who wrote it? Where? And why does it sound so different from the canonical gospels? Nicola Denzey Lewis will unlock the secrets of this gospel (some of them!) and what this new gospel really tells us about early Christianity.

Speakers
Dr. Stephen J. Patterson (Ph.D., Claremont Graduate School) is Geo Atkinson Professor of religious and Ethical Studies at Willamette University. He is the author of many books, most recently The Lost Way: How Two Forgotten Gospels are Rewriting the Story of Christian Origins.

Dr. Nicola Denzey Lewis (Ph.D. Princeton University) is the Margo L. Goldsmith Chair in Women’s Studies in Religion at Claremont Graduate University. Her research centers on the city of Rome during the Roman Empire and she holds particular expertise on ancient Christian practices.
Program Schedule Continued

**Thomas: Plato’s Gospel** - *Saturday, March 17 11:00 am - Noon with Stephen Patterson*

The Gospel of Thomas holds themes common to Plato's philosophy such as the mortal body and immortal soul. Knowledge of the true self, not to be confused with the physical self, is part of Thomas's concern. But Thomas combines platonic themes with Jesus' sayings and insists that the Empire of God is here and now. Thomas is a good example of how early Christ communities worked creatively with the "science" of their day.

**The Wisdom of Jesus in the Modern World** - *Sat., March 17 1:30 - 2:30 pm with Stephen Patterson* What difference has the Gospel of Thomas made to the way scholars understand Jesus? To the way they understand Christian origins? Or Christianity in its first four centuries? Can this collection of sayings make any difference today?

**Question and Answer Period** - *Sat., March 17 3:00-4:00 pm with Nicola Denzey Lewis and Stephen Patterson*

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**Sponsor**

First Presbyterian Church  
840 South 17th Street  
Lincoln, NE 68508  
www.fpclincoln.org  
402-477-6037

**Local Contact Information**

Rev. Sue Coller (scoller@fpclincoln.org)  
Kris Brammer (dce@fpclincoln.org)

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**Fees**

**All Sessions:**

- Individual Rate - $75
- Pre-registration Rate (by March 2) $60
- Additional Family Members $50

**Single Session:**

- Friday Evening Lecture - $20
- Saturday Morning Workshop - $30
- Saturday Afternoon - Workshop - $30

Refunds are available until two weeks before the event if requested in writing, minus a $10 administrative fee. No refunds will be given after that date.

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To register for the event please visit the Westar Institute website at

February Library Notes

February is **Library Lovers month**! Celebrate by showing some love for the FPC library; stop in, browse the shelves, and take a good book or three home with you.

At the January Congregational meeting, we voted in the latest batch of church leaders. However, each of us has the opportunity to be a **servant leader** to the congregation. A selection of books will be on display in February, to help grow as leaders.

- All God’s People are Ministers, by Patricia N. Page
- Antagonists in the Church, by Kenneth C. Haugk
- Red Letters, by Tom Davis
- Selected to Serve, a Guide for Church Officers, by Earl S. Johnson Jr.
- The Presbyterian Deacon, by Earl S. Johnson Jr.
- The Wounded Healer, by Henri J.M. Nouwen
- Value Driven Leadership, by Aubrey Malphurs
- You the Leader, by Phil Pringle

February is also **Black History Month**, and we have a great selection of books that focus on the experience of people of color, the challenges they have faced, and their strength to overcome the obstacles put before them.

- A Different Mirror, by Ron Takaki
- Lanterns, Memoir of Mentors, by Maria Wright Edelman
- Same Kind of Different as Me, by Ron Hall and Denver Moore
- Stride Toward Freedom, by Martin Luther King, Jr.
- The Colors of Water, by James McBride
- The Cross Burns Brightly, by Mel Blount

**Lent begins February 14th**, and the Library has several small group studies and devotionals available for individuals or small groups to borrow. The Library also is a great space for your small group to meet, so please use it!

We also celebrate **Valentine’s Day** on February 14th, and we have a great selection of fiction guaranteed to tug at your heartstrings. Authors from Karen Kingsbury and Debbie Macomber to Nicholas Sparks and Stephanie Grace Whitson can be found on our shelves. Kleenex not included.

On March 16th and 17th, FPC will be hosting the **Jesus Seminar on the Road**, presented by the Westar Institute. The focus will be on the **Gospel of Thomas**. A selection of books to assist you in preparing for this event will be on display in the Library in February and March.
Presbyterian Women

In 2018, we will celebrate Presbyterian Women's organization 30th Anniversary as we know it today after becoming PCUSA. Plans will be made to celebrate this anniversary.

**Just a bit of History:** Women of the Church became deacons in 1906 and elders in 1930; attended the General Assembly in 1931 for the first time; and were ordained ministers in 1956. Sue Tidball was a member of First and she was installed as an elder in 1967.

We also celebrate and honor the individual women who contribute their gifts to church and community, and to lift up issues of women's rights. It also gives us the opportunity to recognize members of our congregation whose faithful service makes a difference in the church's life. We will be doing this in March. If you would like to recommend someone for this honor, please send the name of either a woman or man to our secretary: Carlene Miller, mamacarlene@gmail.com.

The Presbytery will be presenting reading awards to anyone who has read at least 4 books from our library or books on the reading list which can be found in the PW Yearbook. If you have read 4 or more books, please send your name to Julie Van Meter, njvannmeter@futuretk.com. Reading awards will be presented at the Spring Gathering on April 28. If you are not attending the gathering, we will present them at a church service after the gathering.

Financial contributions are made to the Presbytery, Synod and Churchwide to support mission. Annually we support the Churchwide Mission with a pledge of $700, the Synod and Presbytery with $350 each. We have only had one fund raiser to help fulfill these pledges so contributions are always welcome. In the fall we had our Thank Offering which provides financial aid to various groups who need support in assisting all people to a better quality of life. We gave $908 to this offering. Items were donated to the Presbytery for Hygiene kits and our church put together 24 school kits last year and this year we will donate items for the hygiene kits as well as at our Spring Gathering we will be asking for children's books to be donated to various shelters in this state.

Each year our Presbytery has events in the spring and fall to nurture, educate and acquaint ourselves of things happening in our Presbytery and denomination. Our Spring Gathering will be held at the Presbyterian Church in Hickman on April 28. Registration forms will soon be available. We encourage all women to attend. In 2018 the Churchwide Gathering will be held in Louisville, KY on August 2-5. Plans are being made to attend and if you are interested call Terri Sherman 402-525-6008 or Joan Berglund 402-440-5478.
Hymn Festival with John Ferguson
Sunday, March 4, 2018, 3:00 PM
In collaboration with
The Lincoln Organ Showcase
featuring
The First Presbyterian Choir
with special guest choir
The Presbyterian Church
of the Cross Chamber Singers

John Ferguson
Long-time professor
of organ & church
music at
St. Olaf College

The Crossroads Project
Friday, April 27, 2018, 7:30 PM
A powerful look at global sustainability and
climate change with narration, music and
visual art
With physicist Robert Davies, the Fry Street
Quartet, music by Laura Kaminsky & visuals
by Rebecca Allan & Garth Lenz

Tickets: 402.477.6037  www.fpclincoln.org
Find us on Facebook

Seats are still available for both of these wonderful events! To purchase
tickets you can call and order them through the church office (402) 477 - 6037
or online at www.fpclincoln.org
As of January 16th we had received 96 pledges, totaling $374,400. Of those 96 pledges, 47 were able to increase their pledges, 26 were able to maintain their pledges; 20 were in need of decreasing their pledges and 3 new pledges were received. We have 91 members who have not returned their stewardship cards. The distribution of our membership and friends financial pledges is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>$20,000 and over</td>
<td>4</td>
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</table>

We sincerely thank those all who have returned their financial stewardship cards. It is through our combined commitment and hard work that we can and will reach our goal to grow where we have been planted.

- **Stewardship & Finance Committee**

Annette Brown, Sherry Knapp, Carlene Waldron, Dianne Frydendall Smith, Jim Wagner, Steve Hill, and Marlene Wagner
Reverend Tom Schmid, former pastor of First Presbyterian Church, died on December 25, 2017. Our prayers go out to his family.

To read Rev. Schmid’s obituary visit:

If you would like to send condolences to his family, contact:

Elizabeth Schmid
418 West de la Guerra
Condo C
Santa Barbara, CA 93101-6917

--- Prayer List ---
Prayers: Carlene Miller, Janis Ott - the mother of Carol Ott Schacht, the family of Thomas Schmid

If you have a joy or concern to add to this list, please call or email the church office.
402-477-6037, officeassist@fpclincoln.org

--- Birth Announcement ---
We're so happy to welcome Jrue Allen Jefferson to our world, who was born on January 13th, 2018 to Michelle Philippi and Marcus Jefferson. His older siblings are Dezmen and MarShawn Jefferson and his grandparents are Jerry and Connie Philippi!


Session Report

**Christian Education**

Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts will be selling their products (popcorn and cookies) at the church. Planning is on-going for the Westar Institutes, Jesus Seminar on the Road, which FPC will host on March 16th and 17th. Kris Brammer will be starting a new class, to meet on the third Sunday of each month, in HeBrews.

**Music & Fine Arts**

There are continued talks about potential artists and events for the 2018/2019 Arts for the Soul series.

**Property**

They will be painting the south balcony stairwell. Many other projects planned for 2018.

**Stewardship & Finance**

94 pledges for a total of $372,700: --46 increases; 26 no change; 20 decreases; 2 new member pledges. New budget was received and approved by the session.

**Member Nurture**

Poinsettia plants were delivered to our at home members.

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**“Working for Justice”**

Ecumenical Legislative Briefing Day
Saturday, February 10, 2018
Christ United Methodist Church

This is a wonderful event with many interesting and informing workshops & presenters. Some of the topics include “Aging and Health Care,” “Climate Change,” “Water Issues” and many other great workshops! To register and for more information visit - [http://www.nelegisbrief.org/workshops.html](http://www.nelegisbrief.org/workshops.html)

The deadline to sign up is **February 2**, so be sure to register soon!
Ways to Give!

Amazon Smile -
Each time you shop on Amazon the church gets a percentage of your shipping dollars at no extra cost to you! To sign up visit this link - https://smile.amazon.com/ch/47-0391514 - and choose First Presbyterian Church as your charity. You must shop though smile.amazon.com for donations to apply.

Propelr -
Do you have a Union Bank account? If so, you can sign up with Propelr. To sign up visit this link - https://www.ubt.com/personal-banking/debit-cards/propelr - and choose First Presbyterian Church as your selected organization. Then when you make a purchase at a participating merchant with your UBT Debit Card, the merchant will donate a percentage of the purchase to FPC!

To donate online** -
Visit the following website - https://onrealm.org/fpclincoln/ - Choose one of the designated donation areas, enter your email address, enter your payment information and click GIVE. Contact Carrie to confirm that the email address used to make the donation is the same email address listed in Realm so that you get credit for your donation.

To donate via text -
Send a text to 73256 with the message MissionPossible. You will receive a text with a website. Tap on the link and follow the directions.

Please contact David (officeassist@fpclincoln.org) if you have any questions!

****To set up reoccurring gifts/donations contact Carrie (churchadmin@fpclincoln.org) or call the church office and she will help you set this up starting with a Realm invite. You can also give via credit card, however FPC has to pay a percentage fee for credit card transactions, so the church benefits most from donations directly from a bank account.
By 1883 the First Presbyterian Church had outgrown its first home. Plans were being made to build a new church and ground was broken in April of 1884 just 15 short years after the founding of the Church. The new building would occupy two lots on the southwest corner of 13th and M streets and the site would later become the location of the first Cornhusker Hotel. There is a plaque set in the sidewalk in front of the Convention Center marks the location of the second building.

It is interesting to note that in March of 1884 it was discovered that the records of Lancaster County showed no legal organization for First Presbyterian Church of Lincoln, Nebraska. It was necessary for the Secretary to procure a certified copy of the original organization papers and of the minutes of the congregational meeting at which the first Board of Trustees was elected, to file these with the Office of the County Clerk and to take any other steps necessary to make the organization a legal one. It was not until January of 1886, that a corporate seal was secured.

The second church building cost approximately $40,000 and seated 600 worshipers. In the Fellowship hall is a Communion table as well as two chairs from the second church building. The original loan was paid off and the church had a social and they thanked everyone who helped to pay off the loan, then they burned the loan papers.

A Mrs. Ladd is mentioned in the Church’s history book speaking of the church building and how things wear out as we have come to know they do over time and use. In one particularly interesting paragraph she talked about the carpet and how it was an ingrain wool carpet that had gotten so thin that they were afraid someone would catch a toe in the holes and have a fall. The women of the Church decided to buy and pay for the new carpet that was needed. It was found that they would not have enough money to cover such a large area unless the women would also be willing to sew the carpet themselves as well. In those days carpet came in strips and then was sewed together. So it was arranged to have Miller and Paine measure and cut the carpet, bring it to the Church a few strips at a time and the women would drop in as they could and sew the new carpet. It is noted that in a “short” time the work was completed.

Throughout the early years the Church not only served its own members but those of the community. In 1881 the Ladies Society existed which included committees for missionary work, socials, and relief work. By 1915 the Session approved support for home ministry and the first evidence of outreach was the establishment of a Mission Sabbath School in 1881 located near the corner of 19th and Q Streets.

Stay tuned each month as we explore our rich and diverse history leading up to 150th Anniversary!
First Presbyterian Church - “A place to belong!”

Our 11:00 AM Sunday church worship service is broadcast on Spectrum NET Channel 1302 Thursdays at 8:00 PM & Fridays at 1:00 PM. To learn more about us at First Church visit us at www.fpclincoln.org.

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**Food Distribution**  
**Saturdays: Feb. 3rd & 17th**  
9:30 AM: Doors Open  
10:00 AM: Food Distribution  
*Thanks to all who help!  
Volunteers are always welcome!*  

**Stephen Ministry 1st Church**  
Stephen Ministers are members of our congregation who receive special training to provide one-on-one care to members of our congregation who are experiencing grief, loneliness, divorce, hospitalization, disability, job loss and other life difficulties. Our relationships with Care Receivers are highly confidential. If you are experiencing a hard time in your life, please call the church office (402) 477-6037, leave a message with your name and phone number, and a Stephen Ministry Leader will call you back.

**Moving in the Spirit:**  
**Exercise for the Body & Soul**  
*Moving in the Spirit* continues at FPC on Fridays at 10:00 a.m. in **FELLOWSHIP HALL**. Open to anyone and free of charge. For more information, please contact Dave Hammar at 402-421-3136 or dbhammar@windstream.net

**LOOKING FOR USHERS**  
Do you like coming to church on Sundays? Do you like greeting and helping people find a seat and get settled in on Sunday mornings? Do you like being part of our church?

If you answered “yes” to any of the questions above, you should consider becoming an usher on Sunday mornings. This is a great opportunity to get to know our members better while helping out on Sunday mornings. Email officeassist@fpclincoln.org if you’re interested in joining!

**Flyleaf Book Club**  
Friday, February 16th at 9:00 am  
**Library**

In February, the book club will be discussing the book *Born a Crime* written by Trevor Noah.

New members are always welcome to join!

**Next First Report Deadline:**  
**Thursday, March 15, 2018**

*This is a hard and strict deadline. We want to make sure that we get all church and member information out there so be sure to send us anything you’d like included in the newsletter by the deadline!  
Articles received after this time may not be included in the newsletter.  
Send articles/photos to David at officeassist@fpclincoln.org*

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Our 11:00 AM Sunday church worship service is broadcast on Spectrum NET Channel 1302 Thursdays at 8:00 PM & Fridays at 1:00 PM. To learn more about us at First Church visit us at www.fpclincoln.org.
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<thead>
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<td>Sunday</td>
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<td>Worship / Great Hall</td>
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<td>7:00 am</td>
<td>Men’s Breakfast / Fellowship Hall</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday 7</td>
<td>8:30 am</td>
<td>OLLI Book Club / Library</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday  18 - First Sunday of Lent</td>
<td>8:30 am</td>
<td>Worship / Great Hall</td>
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<td>Monday  19 - President’s Day</td>
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<td>SCC / 215, 216</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>8:30 am</td>
<td>Stephen Ministry/Fellowship Hall</td>
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<td>February 2018</td>
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</table>
First Presbyterian Church, a place to belong!
Where faith is nurtured, curiosity is encouraged, diversity is welcomed, and all are loved.

For after-hour calls to the church office, 402-477-6037, the staff voicemail extensions and e-mail addresses follow:
Church Fax Number: 402-477-6048
Church website: www.fpclincoln.org
Pastor/Head of Staff: Rev. Dr. Sue Coller
x 103  scoller@fpclincoln.org
Parish Associate for Sudanese Ministry:
Rev. Jock Tut Paleak
x 114  jutPaleak@gmail.com
Music Director: Dr. Brian Pfoltner
x 121  musicdir@fpclincoln.org
Organist: Dr. Charles W. Ore
  charles.w.ore@gmail.com
Director of Christian Education: Kris Brammer
  x 106  dce@fpclincoln.org
Church Administrator: Carrie Cross
  x 102  churchadmin@fpclincoln.org
Office Assistant: David Kamran
  x 101  Office Assist@fpclincoln.org
Custodian/Maintenance: Jeff Kephart
  maintenance@fpclincoln.org

February Birthdays
Birthdays are important events. If your birthday is missing from our list, or listed wrong, please call the church office so we can correct it: 402-477-6037.

If you had a birthday and we missed you I apologize! Please let us know so we can update our files.

Sunday Morning Drivers
If you need a ride to a Sunday worship service at the church, please contact a Sunday Morning Driver or the church office.

Pam Boyle  402-421-3270
Nancy Field  402-466-7848
Lynne Hughes  402-489-1435
Nancy Janike  402-489-6779