



## From the Pastor's Pen...

"What is a personal table story you will always remember?" As our Thursday morning Zoom study is in the habit of doing, we began our first Lenten session with this question. It's a fair question, as a 2023 study revealed "People 15 and older in the United States spent an average of 85 minutes per day eating and drinking in 2022." A different study suggests that when we add in other tasks like paying the bills, doing homework, sorting the mail, and using a laptop we can add more than 300 hours of sitting at a table every decade. Finally, if we include time spent socializing (in conversations, playing games, or doing puzzles), we can include 5 years and 7 months of our lives at tables. In total, we spend about 2.5 hours a day around a table.

Tables are an important part of our lives.

It was no different for Jesus and the disciples. It's why there are so many stories of Jesus sitting around a table. Of course there were meals at the table. There were also conversations, stories, and interruptions at the table. Jesus was the host. Jesus was the guest. Jesus ate with sinners and tax collectors and women and disciples and friends and family and friends' family and critics and lawyers and religious leaders and crowds and small groups. In Luke's Gospel, the table is the most common setting for the story of Jesus. The most told story in the Gospels is the story of feeding a multitude - told once in Luke and John; twice in Matthew and Mark.

Then, as now, many of us carry fun, happy, loving memories of time at a table. Then, as now, many of us carry painful, hurting stories of exclusion at a table. In this way tables provide an important setting for us as we journey to Easter.

This Lent we will follow the outline of the book, *Meeting Jesus at the Table* by Cynthia M. Campbell and Chris-

tine Coy Fohr. We will explore themes of scarcity, provision, and trust; welcome; grace; expanding the table; invitation; discipleship; memories; and hope. Every week, Jesus will meet us in our discussions, hymns, sermons, and explorations. We will come to the table for worship, fellowship, discipleship, and service. We will gather at tables in our homes, in our sanctuary, in the coffee shop, in the Welcome Center, on Zoom, online, and in our community.

If you would like a copy of the book, *Meeting Jesus at the Table*, they can be found at the Welcome Center desk. Studies have started, but it's not too late to join one. Daily prompts for prayer, reflection, and service can be found on Facebook and Instagram. All are invited to meet Jesus at the table.

~ Pastor Melodie



<https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/charts-of-note/chart-detail?chartId=107793#:~:text=Breadcrumb%20%20Home.%20%20People%2015%20and,per%20day%20eating%20and%20drinking%20in%202022.>

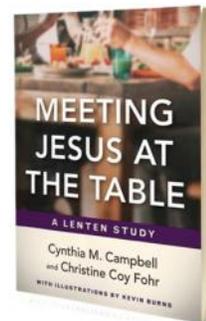
### Meeting Jesus at

**the Table:** Join one of three offerings of this book study during Lent:

Thursday mornings at 10:00 am via Zoom (signup below); Wednesday mornings at 10:30 am (beginning March 4); Monday evenings at 6:30 pm.

**Sign up here for the Thursday Zoom option:**

<https://bit.ly/meetingjesusepc>





## Ash Wednesday Around the Table

It's always a little nerve-racking to do something different - something new. We were hoping that in sharing ashes all day around a table in the Welcome Center we would 1) allow folks of all ages to be able to receive ashes; 2) provide a meaningful space and connection; 3) share community; 4) reach out to the many people who enter our building throughout a Wednesday (which is our biggest day of the week.)

Thank you  
-to those who dispensed the ashes. Who took it seriously, prepared, prayed, and showed up with humble hearts;  
-to musicians who provided amazing music;  
-and people familiar and new, young (our youngest was 6 months), "aged" (our oldest was 90+), yoga folks, food pantry folks, homebound folks with

caregivers, teenagers, 3 generations of family, parents with their children, Bible Studies, and friends. Over the course of the day, our faith community dispensed ashes to 73 people, including 15 people at a senior living community, because of the kindness and caring of you.

Friends, if ever we had a vision of the strength, mission, and vision of the church universal, and of what it means to gather at the table - this. is. it.



## Join us at Eastridge during Holy Week!

- Sunday, March 29, 9:30 am - Palm Sunday worship (sanctuary)
- Thursday, April 2, 6 pm - Maundy Thursday heritage dinner & worship stations (welcome center and sanctuary)- bring a dish from your heritage to share (and maybe that's a grocery store specialty!)
- Friday, April 3, 8am-8pm - Good Friday worship stations (sanctuary)
- Easter Sunday, April 5, 6:30 am - walk the Sunrise Road with communion (meet in welcome center no matter the weather)
- Easter Sunday, April 5, 9:30 am - worship with communion, bells, brass, and choirs (sanctuary)



## Maundy Thursday Heritage Dinner and Worship Stations!

Join us at the table this Maundy Thursday at 6 pm for a heritage potluck meal! Bring a favorite dish from your family, your family of origin, a cuisine you love, or whatever you love to grab in a hurry at the grocery store! We'd love dishes that have a story to share - mom's special lasagna, a traditional Irish meat pie, or chocolate cake. Following dinner, our worship will continue in the sanctuary with stations that reflect on table scenes from the holy days.

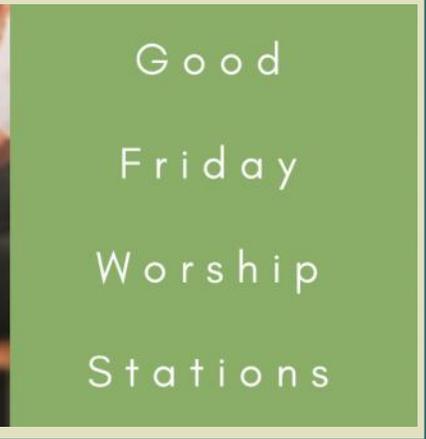
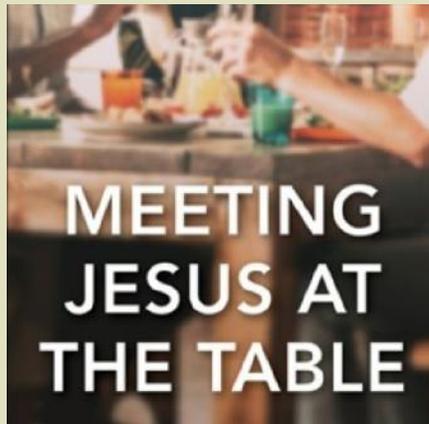


Maundy Thursday  
Heritage Dinner  
and  
Worship Stations



## Good Friday Worship Stations

Worship stations for self-guided worship and reflection are available from 8 am - 8 pm in the sanctuary. These stations feature table scenes from the holy days, and provide opportunities for prayer, praise, reflection, and contemplation as we observe Good Friday.



### SAVE THE DATE...

Justice in Action's  
4th Annual  
Nehemiah Assembly

### Current Issues:

- Food Insecurity
- Diversion Programs

### Issues Being Monitored:

- Mental Health Navigation
- Eviction Mediation

April 30 (Thursday) @ 6:30pm

St. Mark's United Methodist Church

Join with 26 other faith communities as we work to bring systemic changes to Lincoln and Lancaster County.

**Solutions Briefing Rally:** March 26  
6:30—8:00 pm  
Southwood Lutheran, 4301 Wilderness Hills

**Spring Flower Order Form:** If you wish to provide a spring flower for the church sanctuary for Easter Sunday, please complete this form and mail or bring to the church office by March 27. Flowers will be a variety: lilies, tulips, hyacinths, daffodils. Please let the church decide what to order. Make all checks payable to Eastridge Presbyterian Church noting on the check that it is for a flower. Please state exactly how you want your contribution printed in the bulletin. Return money with this form.

Donated by \_\_\_\_\_

In memory of \_\_\_\_\_

In honor of \_\_\_\_\_

No. of flowers \_\_\_\_\_ (Cost \$14.00 per flower in pot) Total \_\_\_\_\_

I will pick up my flower after the last Easter Service. \_\_\_\_\_

I wish my flower to be taken to a church member. \_\_\_\_\_



## HIGHLIGHTS



### Session Highlights February

Approve Session Meeting Minutes for January 11, 2026.

Approve Special Session Meeting Minutes for 2026 budget via Zoom on January 22, 2026.

Acknowledge that communion was served on Sunday, February 1 at 9:30 a.m.

Acknowledge Ordination and Installation of Ruling Elders Celeste Ilian, Cathy Schapmann, and Cheryl LaRue on February 1.

Acknowledge Installation of Ruling Elders Carolyn Brandle and Carol Ripley on February 1.

Approve the 2025 PCUSA Statistical Report for Eastridge (534 total active members).

A motion was carried to approve "Simple Stories for Complex Times, ABC's of the Bible" for summer months.

The Annual Session Retreat was held February 8. Discussion was held on both the Faith Shift Study presented by Kris Adler-Brammer and information on belonging, membership, and the church we are becoming presented by Rev. Dummermuth. A motion was carried to form a small group to work on belonging and membership at Eastridge.

A celebration of the Annual Congregation and Corporation meeting was held February 22, 2026. Small group discussions celebrated our shared ministries and good work of 2025. Time was also spent dreaming and visioning for our today and our tomorrow.

## Eastridge Celebrates! The Annual Meeting

Around fifty-five members of our community gathered in the Huxtable Lounge on Sunday, February 22 for our Annual Meeting. This year, we focused on celebrating the ministries of 2025 as well as looked forward to the future of Eastridge Presbyterian Church. After eating delicious cupcakes, we broke into four groups to hear reports from the Session, Finance Team, and Trustees. We also asked questions that prompted us to vision for what our future might look like.

Session, Finance, and the Trustees will be getting the reports of those conversations and will discuss them at their next meetings. Overall, the meeting was well received in its new format, although it was hard to hear the group discussions. We are thankful and excited that

so many people came to the meeting, and that the discussions were meaningful. We are already discussing what changes need to be made for next year's celebration.

Thank you to those who led and participated in the discussions!

*Rev. Dr. Melodie Jones Pointon, Moderator*





### **SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY:**

THANK YOU everyone who voted for your favorite team in the Souper Bowl of Caring. I think the Seattle Seahawks were the clear winner here at Eastridge. Regardless of who you voted for, we were able to provide many items to the Eastridge Food Pantry and it was much appreciated. The youth of EPC appreciate your support of this yearly event.

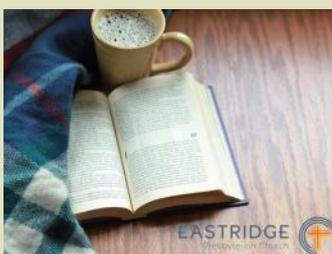


**COLLEGE CARE PACKAGES:** It is time to send care packages to our EPC college students, and we need some goodies to fill the boxes. Below you can find a list of some of the favorites. Once you have shopped, the items can be dropped off in the church office. If you don't want to go out and shop, you can also purchase online and just have it shipped to the church. If you are looking for ideas, you can use the following link to access our Amazon Wishlist. (<https://a.co/e4dn6le>) Please send it ATTN: Kris Adler-Brammer.

And if you aren't up for shopping, cash donations are also helpful to purchase those last additional items or help cover the cost of postage (\$17.10 per box shipped).

- Individual servings of cookies, oatmeal, crackers, goldfish, animal crackers, cheez-its, etc.
- Mac-n-Cheese (in the packets), ramen noodles
- Gummy candy, granola bars/protein bars, gum, crystal light/drink powder packages
- Laundry pods (non-scented), dryer sheets (non-scented)
- Fun pens/stationery/office supplies
- Band-aids, cough drops

We will be filling about 20 care packages so items in multiples are appreciated. If you have any questions about donating, please feel free to contact Kris Adler-Brammer at [kadlerbrammer@eastridge.org](mailto:kadlerbrammer@eastridge.org). Please have all items to the church office by Thursday, April 2 so we will have everything to pack them up on Sunday, April 12. We will be packing baskets/boxes on the 12th following worship and we would invite you to join us!



### **Devotion Ministry:**

We are always looking for new writers for our online devotion ministry. If you are interested in writing, even just occasionally, please contact the office for more information.



## Bridges to Hope: Second Chances and the Work of Belonging

Join the Faith Coalition of Lancaster County for our March Gathering on Wednesday, March 11 | 12:00–1:00 PM.

Join us for a conversation with Rhonda Mattingly, Executive Director of Bridges to Hope, an organization dedicated to supporting individuals reentering the community after incarceration.

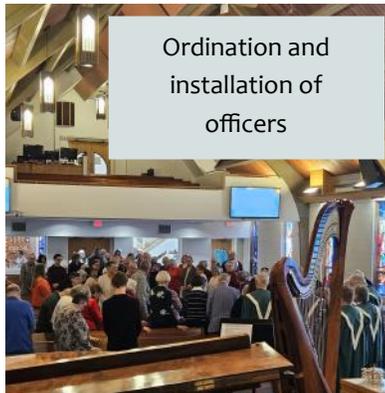
**SECOND CHANCES**  
Bridges to Hope

**RHONDA MATTINGLY**  
Executive Director,  
Bridges to Hope

**Mar 11**  
**12 PM | WED**

AT EASTRIDGE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
1135 Eastridge Drive

**fclc**  
FAITH COALITION OF LANCASTER COUNTY



Ordination and installation of officers

Some recent photos of Eastridge happenings!



Contemplative Prayer in February



Ash Wednesday in the Welcome Center



“Staying Sane in Strange Times”: A Mental Health Cafe



Annual meeting, “Eastridge Celebrates”





A+ Academy is celebrating 10 years here at Eastridge!

Join us to celebrate  
**A+ Academy's**  
**10TH BIRTHDAY**  
MARCH 14, 2026 | 5:30-7:30 PM  
LINCOLN CHILDREN'S MUSEUM  
1420 P ST | LINCOLN, NE  
Come celebrate a birthday with us!  
Food available for purchase at  
Kazoo's U-Stop  
RSVP TO CINDY  
Cindy@aplusacademyandchildcare.com  
Please include the number of Adults and  
Children attending

Lenten Playlist "Table Songs" by  
Porter's Gate:

<https://tinyurl.com/TableSpotify>



<https://tinyurl.com/TableApple>



<https://tinyurl.com/TableYT>



**created concert**  
march 27 | 6:00pm | 535 n 16th st

No tickets or RSVP necessary, come as you are, come as you are able!

March 27<sup>th</sup> @ The Lutheran Center

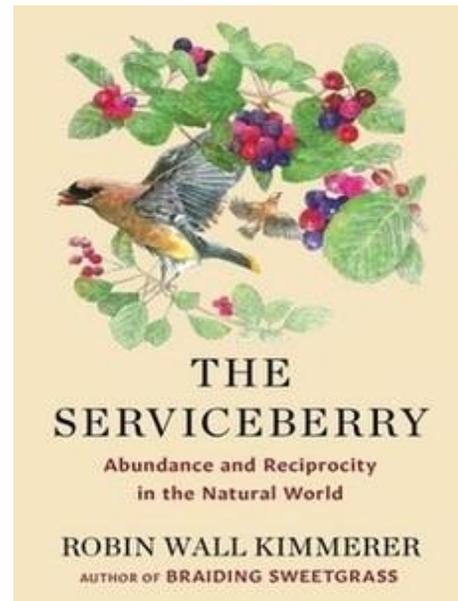
535 N. 16<sup>th</sup> @ 6:00pm

The Lutheran Center is hosting THE CREATED CONCERT, bringing together UNL's campus and the broader community. Through music and fellowship, this annual concert demonstrates open and affirming faith. The music and food are offered free of charge. All are welcome!

Guest Music Artist: SEMLER

Food Truck: Muchachos

Coming in April: A book discussion of "*The Serviceberry: Abundance and Reciprocity in the Natural World*" by Robin Wall Kimmerer. Watch for more information soon!





**YOUTH MEALS:** We LOVE having visitors at Youth Group on Wednesday evenings. It's a chance for us to get to know others in the congregation outside of the normal Sunday morning setting. One of the ways to get to know our youth, and be in fellowship with them, is to provide dinner on a Wednesday evening. It can be a group of people providing dinner, a couple of families getting together, or individuals. We feed around 10-12 people each week. If you provide dinner, it is most helpful for us if the volunteers can set up, serve dinner, and clean up, and most importantly JOIN US for dinner. It's a great time to hear about what the youth are doing in their life. Often times, you only



have to ask one question and they will take it and run! If you would be willing to volunteer for a Wednesday in April, you can sign up with the following link or QR code.

The link to sign up is:  
<https://bit.ly/youthdinner25-26>.



## Fourth Friday Women's Coffee Fellowship:



Join the ladies in Huxtable Lounge on March 27 at 8:30 am for our monthly coffee fellowship.

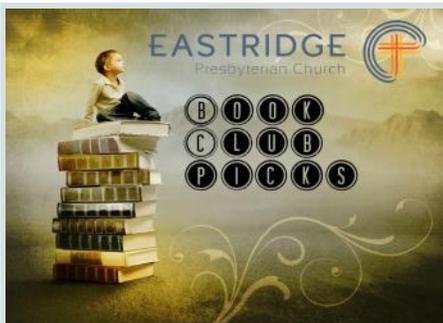
Let the office know if you would like to be included in an email reminder; reminders are sent the Monday prior to Friday coffee.



## TOILET PAPER SNOWMAN:

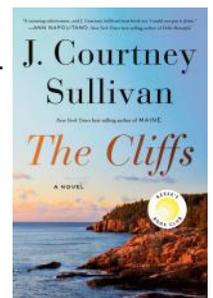
Thank you for helping us make a gigantic toilet paper "snowman" to benefit Fresh Start & our Eastridge Food Pantry.

Thank you also to our Outreach Committee, in particular Jo Bateman and Debbie Merritt (shown) for their coordination of the project and transportation (to Fresh Start) of toilet paper!



The Eastridge Presbyterian Book Club meets again March 9 at 7:00 pm. Our pick for the month is: **The Cliffs** by **J. Courtney Sullivan**. The EPC Book Club meets monthly from September—June in M12.

Join us for discussion and refreshments!  
Check out the entire year's list online, calendar page.





**THE GATHERING PLACE:**  
Eastridge Presbyterian Church arranges to provide 4-5 volunteers at The Gathering Place, a local soup kitchen, on the 4th Monday of each month. For more information on what this entails, contact the church office. Thank you to all Eastridge members who volunteer to serve at The Gathering Place. **Sign up here:**  
<https://bit.ly/epcgatheringplace26>



**EASTRIDGE**  
FOOD PANTRY

**Eastridge Food  
Pantry  
volunteer  
sign ups:**

Distribution: <https://bit.ly/FPDistFood>

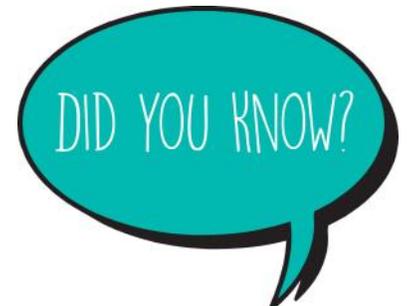
Filling boxes: <https://bit.ly/FPFillingBoxes>

Rev. Dr. Melodie Jones Pointon.....Senior Pastor  
Rev. Thomas Dummermuth.....Associate Pastor  
Kris Adler-Brammer..... Youth and Children’s Ministries  
Donna Gustafson.....Office Manager  
Andy Kalnins.....Night/Weekend Custodian  
Brent Shaw..... Organist & Adult Choir Director  
Will McGuire.....Worship Leader  
Vince Ruhl.....Director of Online Ministries  
Brett Meier.....Audio/Visual Technician  
Laura Siemsen.....Administrative Assistant  
Office number.....402-488-7844  
Melodie Jones Pointon: [mjonespointon@eastridge.org](mailto:mjonespointon@eastridge.org)  
Thomas Dummermuth: [tdummermuth@eastridge.org](mailto:tdummermuth@eastridge.org)

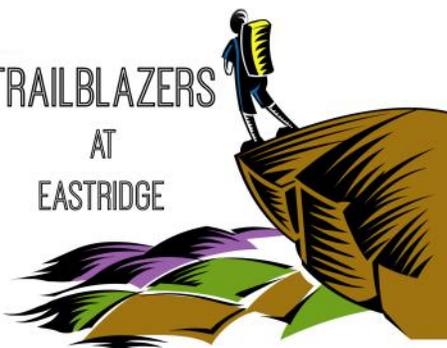
## MEET THE STAFF

### Did you know?

The bulletin board just outside the restrooms and M12 (east wall) has information on upcoming events and volunteer opportunities in the city of Lincoln. Check it out!



**TRAILBLAZERS**  
AT  
EASTRIDGE



Trailblazers is a group of older adults at Eastridge that provides an opportunity for men and women, singles as well as couples, to participate together in the life of the church—in service and fellowship. **Join us on March 20 for a speaker & refreshments at 7:00 p.m. – Huxtable Lounge**

**Jennifer Nickolite: A Conversation (Medical Community/ Medicine inspired)**

**EASTRIDGE**  
Presbyterian Church



1135 Eastridge Drive  
Lincoln NE 68510



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