

Creekside Church of the Brethren Connection

August 2022

FRUIT

If you walk around a county fair, you can see all kinds of animals, produce, and home and family crafts projects prepared and displayed by kids and adults from all around the county. Produce that they have planted, cultivated, fertilized, watered, harvested, preserved. Animals that they've fed, cared for and trained from birth. Crafts and home and family arts projects into which they have poured hours upon hours of practice and preparation. They bring their best to be judged next to every other competitor's best. They hope for the best. And at their best, they are humble and gracious when they win and graceful when they don't.

And if you go to the state fair, you'll see animals, produce and crafts and projects – the best of the best – champions from every county fair in the state. Contestants bring their best to be judged next to all the other bests from all over the state.

It isn't a perfect system. Judges can make mistakes. Money can give some contestants an advantage. But as is true elsewhere in life, there are more positives than negatives, more gifts and graces and life lessons to be learned. And, more often than not, those who put the most time and effort into their projects get the most out of them. Better work produces better fruit.

In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus warns his followers against hypocrites who act religious, but who care more about appearances than pleasing God. In Matthew 7 he warns, "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. **YOU WILL KNOW THEM BY THEIR FRUITS.** Are grapes gathered from thorns, or figs from thistles? In the same way, every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit... Thus you will know them by their fruits."

What are the fruits of *our* faith and practice? By what fruits will Creekside Church be known? We often mention our Seed to Feed gardens (can you help?), and our bees. And the prayer garden to which we invite seekers who need a place to rest their hearts and souls.

But there are also the fruits of the time we spend together, when we work or worship together, the fruits of the way we speak with and treat each other. How we talk about our family of faith with people we know who could be so blessed to find a place to belong like Creekside. How we wonder together if there are other ways we can live out the Kingdom of God here and now.

God, help us to produce fruit that pleases and glorifies You.

Interim Pastor Tim



PASTOR'S REPORT

During July 2022 I have prepared messages for all Sundays but Annual Conference Sunday and shared information about those messages with the Media Team. With the help of Marita, musicians, technicians, drama director, and our copyright expert, I've prepared orders of worship, bulletins, and newsletter contributions. I've held office hours on Wednesdays and Fridays; welcomed visitors; responded (by telephone and/or text) to health concerns and deaths; sent various One Call Now notifications; and responded to a Creekside Needs Fund request. I met with the Church Board and assigned committees, and attended COB Annual Conference in Omaha, NE on your behalf.

A healthy church uses the gifts and abilities of its members to continue the work of Jesus, Peacefully, Simply and Together. I love how Creekside reaches out in Jesus' name through our online presence and livestreamed worship celebrations, through our Bee Team, our prayer garden, the Kid's Garden Club, our Seed to Feed garden, and supplies for community partners in ministry.

Thanks to all of you who help Creekside to reach out beyond our walls with the love of GOD!
(Interim) Pastor Tim

FROM THE CHURCH BOARD:

As members of the Church of the Brethren, we may be proud of the tradition we have of helping people around the world, including in our own country, who have been victims of disaster or otherwise have needs which may be answered through our financial pledges.

At our July meeting, the Creekside Church Board discussed and approved a recommendation from the Finance Committee that we give our own employees a one-time cost-of-living adjustment. This is to compensate them for the extra costs they are experiencing, along with the rest of us, of inflation... mainly food and gasoline. Some corporations have done this, though not many. The Board felt, and I hope you will agree, that we want to take care of our employees. The total cost of this cost adjustment over the remainder of the year will be \$14,300; all of our employees will benefit. The adjustments will not affect pay scales for those employees next year. Those will be set by the Board during budget planning in September.

While talking about how the COB helps others I want to mention other ways in which the church is working. Brethren Disaster Ministries has more than \$200,000 in Emergency Disaster Fund grants to support the feeding and housing of Ukrainian refugees in the countries of Moldova, Poland and Romania. Thanks to donations you made, Creekside was able to contribute a portion of that amount. COB Children's Disaster Services sent a team of six childcare volunteers to Uvalde, Texas following the school shooting there. Disaster Ministries opened a new rebuilding site following flooding in Humphreys County, Tennessee and will have a team in western Kentucky in October to help rebuild houses destroyed by tornadoes. We also continue work in Haiti, Nigeria and Honduras. We are fortunate to be able to do these things for others. Thank you, as always, for your contributions and support of Creekside and the Church of the Brethren.

Larry Ford, Church Board Chair



CONGRATULATIONS TO JUDY DE PUE on being the silver winner in the Specialty Garden Contest with her design of Creekside's Prayer Garden! She received the award last weekend from the international Association of Professional Garden Designers. You can find more pictures and information about her entry on the bulletin board at Creekside.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2022 REPORT

It was such a joy to finally return to a “normal” annual conference. The biggest difference was the wearing of masks while indoors. This was a decision made by the conference leaders. The conference the week before us had 40 cases of Covid. We only had 15.

Conference by the numbers: Total registered 1,315 = 425 delegates, 748 non-delegates, 142 virtual non-delegates. Over 100 pints of blood donated.

Conference offerings received in worship and online totaled over \$39,000 to support projects such as Girls Inc. of Omaha, Ministerial training for international Church of the Brethren leaders, and Annual Conference.

Election of personnel provided us with some results that should be of particular interest to Creekside. Pastor Rosanna was elected to the Mission and Ministry Board of the denomination. (Way to go, Pastor Rosanna!) Another result of local interest is the election of Madalyn Metzger, from the Goshen City Church, to the position of Moderator-elect. Next year will be the second year in a row that the moderator and moderator-elect were graduates of Manchester (College) University. A third result is the election of Kevin Boyer to the Brethren Benefit Trust Board; he is from the Plymouth CoB and is Financial Administrator of the Elkhart Clinic.

Items of business include the approval to form a study team to look at ways to increase access to denominational events and the approval and recommendation to update the polity regarding Annual Conference Agencies.

One item of unfinished business that was approved was a set of new documents to guide pastors' salaries and benefits. These documents should help congregations determine their pastor's salary and how to treat different portions of the pastor's agreement.

An announcement was made that Brethren Benefit Trust was changing its name to Eder Financial. The Eder River in Germany is where the founders of the CoB were baptized by Alexander Mack.

It has been sad this past year or so to hear of congregations leaving the Church of the Brethren. But at Annual Conference this year there were twelve new projects, fellowships, and congregations introduced to the delegates. The church is also active in 11 other countries such as Nigeria, Brazil, Spain, Haiti, China, Honduras, India, and the Dominican Republic.

Respectfully submitted by Ted Noffsinger, Creekside's Annual Conference delegate

BOWMAN ON “THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT”

I hope you are enjoying reading the “Sermon on the Mount” by Robert Bowman as part of your Sunday School class and as part of Pastor Rosanna's concentration during her sabbatical. If you were not able to attend Bob Bowman's discussion of his book on Sunday July 17th, it is available for you to view on YouTube by looking under “Creekside Church of the Brethren”. Bob said he suspects there have been more sermons based on the Sermon on the Mount (SOTM) than any other part of the Bible and is certain more commentaries have been written on it than any other part of the New Testament.

He raised an interesting question: If you had been living in the time of Jesus and had heard him teaching, would you have been one of his followers? He concedes there are many ways in which The Beatitudes can be understood and said, “It's supposed to be that way.” As most of our classes have already done, he asked for suggestions for a synonym for “blessed”. One of Bowman's current favorites is not another word, but a phrase: “God gives deep joy”, e.g. ‘to those that mourn’. Bob concedes it's very difficult to live up to The Beatitudes: “I would like to be able to put it into practice. I am not able. But once I stop aiming for it, I have failed something.”

His conclusion is that the SOTM is for all Christians; St. Augustine called it “the perfect pattern for Christian life.” When she returns, we will enjoy Pastor Rosanna's pictures and words on parchment of the chapters of Matthew which tell of the SOTM. In the meantime, I hope you will continue to enjoy discussing Bob Bowman's book in your Sunday School class or through personal study and continue to hear Pastor Tim's sermons about this important and challenging part of the New Testament.

Larry Ford

ATTENTION SEED TO FEED CCS GARDEN VOLUNTEERS:

I wish to THANK YOU, for all the work you have put in so far this year, for our Seed to Feed garden. Some of you have spent more than a few hours here working.

On the afternoon of Monday, July 11 we were invited to visit the Seed to Feed garden at Elkhart County Community Corrections; thank you to those who attended with me. On Tuesday evening, August 16 at 7:00 pm, we will be hosting workers and volunteers from all of the other gardens here at Creekside. We hope you plan to attend.

The weeds in our gardens are still growing and need our attention. If you can't work during our scheduled time, please feel free to come when you are able and pull or hoe them out. You will notice that at least two full rows are empty. They have been replanted for the second and third times. I believe the moles are eating the seeds.

Starting in mid-July we will need to work at least two days a week as crops are ripening. CCS really wants us to deliver either on Tuesdays or Fridays, between 10:00 and 4:00. This means if we pick on other days we will need to find room in our cooler/refrigerator to store the produce until we take it in. Beans, cucumbers, and squash especially will need special attention; probably tomatoes and peppers as well. Pumpkins and Winter Squash won't be harvested until fall. We need all the help we can find to meet those needs, as all of us cannot be expected to be there all of those times.

We need to start thinking about next year, too. CCS and Seed to Feed need us but we will need to have more help if our gardening is to continue!

If you're interested in helping but aren't sure where to start, please contact Cal Graber, Tim Lund, or Mike Kauffman. Thank you for your help!

Cal Graber, Seed to Feed Garden Coordinator

The Bee Line



This year the Bee Team has raised more than honey bees. We have also tried to raise awareness about today's food insecurity. We shared why this tiny 6 legged insect is so important. In April we sponsored a pollination workshop where we shared the importance of the honey bee in our food production. We are reminded that every third bite of food is because of honey bees and other pollinators. Pollination is the movement of pollen from the male part, stamen, to the stigma, the female part of the flower, This is the first step in successful seed and plant production by flowers.

In May, we provided a program for the Garden Club on the Sunflower serving as an important source of pollen and nectar. Marcia Sowles, our guest speaker, shared that the Sunflower is also the national flower for Ukraine and how this war has affected the children's lives in this war torn country. We supplied Sunflower Seeds for each of the kids to take home and plant in honor of Ukrainian children. Our gardeners even participated. Check out the beautiful Sunflowers now blooming in the Creekside Garden—to the delight of our honey bees.



Because of the Bee Team's interest, the Sunflower became special to me. For Father's Day, Jan gave me a beautiful sunflower plant in a green pot that was blooming with several bright yellow flowers. I soon learned that the sunflower was not only important to honey bees but its seeds are a special treat to some animals. To my dismay, some animal came and obliterated my plant and stole all the flowers! Well, this was not going to stop the enjoyment I got from this plant, so I went out and bought another sunflower with beautiful bright yellow blooms... but in a few days, (you guessed it) gone again!

Sadly, I don't have a sunflower to enjoy at home, but with a trip to Creekside Garden I can enjoy the beauty of the bright yellow blooms on the giant flowers!

Ron Nicodemus for the Bee Team

SCHOOL KITS

Outreach is once again collecting donations of school supplies for School Kits. They would like to fill 200 bags this year. They plan to assemble the kits on Sept. 4 after worship; please bring your donations to Creekside by Sunday, Aug. 28. Each kit contains:

- 4 WIDE ruled spiral 70 page notebooks
- 2 black or blue pens
- 8 no. 2 UNSHARPENED pencils
- 12 inch ruler
- 1 pink eraser
- 12 colored pencils



Questions can be directed to Lodema Hoke.

CUSTODIAN WANTED

Creekside's custodian has resigned from her position. If you or someone you know would be interested in this [paid] position, please contact Property Chair Roger Griffith for more information: 574-707-9872.

EVERENCE

The **Everence Sharing Fund** boosts the ability of churches to help their members, community members, or community organizations in crisis situations. Creekside has benefited greatly from this fund. We may submit an application for reimbursement from the Everence Sharing Fund for 50% of the amount our congregation spends on providing assistance to an individual within our church or our community for basic living needs in an emergency situation. Following are examples of some of the opportunities available for Creekside to apply for a 50% reimbursement from Everence: Expenses related to medical, rent, mortgage, utilities, food, job loss, funeral, transportation & daycare. We are very appreciative of Everence's support.

Contact Everence for assistance in integrating your finances with faith. Everence offers banking, insurance and financial services. Go to everence.com for more information regarding their services.

Jan Nicodemus, Creekside Advocate

SEED TO FEED GARDEN VISITS

You are invited to tour other Seed to Feed gardens this summer and learn about their programs. Here are the Garden Visits scheduled in August:

Monday, 4, 7:00 pm: Olive Community Garden, 61081 CR 3, Elkhart. RSVP to Sid Richard: 574-538-9073 or sidrichard@gmail.com.

Tuesday, Aug. 16, 7:00 pm: Creekside!, RSVP to Meg Mitzel: 607-797-3065 or mmitzel55@gmail.com.

AUGUST 2022

BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Bueter, Adam
- 5 Grant, Karen
- 9 Hadley, Amber
- 9 McFadden, Joel
- 12 Marcin, Alysa
- 16 Schmucker, Chris
- 17 Vance, Kristina
- 18 McFadden, Tim
- 19 Kohler, Joe
- 20 Foland, Lynne
- 20 Gable, Judy
- 23 Stutsman, Roger
- 25 Barsoda, Marita
- 29 Foland, Ted
- 30 Heeter, Garnett
- 31 Connett, Justin

ANNIVERSARIES

- 2 Ehret, Larry & Vicki
- 9 Neal, Roger & Bonnie
- 9 Noffsinger, Ted & Sue
- 18 Vance, Cody & Kristina
- 20 McFadden, Tim & Rosanna
- 23 De Pue, Stephen & Judy
- 27 Vance, Jim & Kristen
- 29 Vardaman, Kurt & Lisa

EVENTS

Garden work is on Tues & Fri mornings, and select Mon & Thurs evenings.

- 7 Show & Tell with Cary, 10:45 am
- 9 Feed the Children, 9-11:30 am
- 10 Finance Team, 9:30 am
- 12 Game Night, 7:00 pm
- 16 Church Board, 6:30 pm
- 28 Sabbath Rest Welcome Home!
- 30 Christian Ed, 6:00 pm

The Creekside Connection

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The Creekside Connection is published monthly to keep members and friends informed of church programs and to report news about the people of Creekside Church.



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