

Creekside Church of the Brethren Connection

June 2023



Sown and Grown

"These are the ones sown on the good soil: they hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirty sixty and a hundredfold." Mark 4:20

This week has put me in a Pentecost state of mind—not only the physical preparations of streamers and banners and candles for the Worship Center, but a renewed consciousness of the activity of the Spirit in the people and the settings around me.

Pentecost was a Jewish harvest festival; on the Christian calendar it is the seventh Sunday after Easter, which means it falls in late May or early June. Often, as it does this year, Pentecost is the same weekend as Memorial Day. In Europe, especially Great Britain, red poppies like the ones pictured at the top of this page are worn for remembrance of those fallen in war. They are called Flanders Poppies, and are a reminder of the killing fields of World War I: the war to end all wars. In the United States, Memorial Day is a time to remember the sacrifice of veterans and their military service.

For me, these papery-petaled, red-orange flowers are a reminder of the people of God. Poppies grow in tended flower beds, but they also flourish along roadsides and fields, and even in the cracks and crevices of stone walls and broken concrete. They are self re-seeding, and can spring up and multiply almost anywhere they can get a foothold. They are beautiful; and varied. The red, orange and yellow colors which blaze with the fire of Pentecost are some of the most common colors, but poppies can also be white, pink, or purple.

We will celebrate the power of the Holy Spirit and the birth of the church on Pentecost, May 28. That is the beginning of a time for the church to re-visit its mission and the mission of God. From the end of May through the first Sunday of July our worship services will focus on "Courageous Acts," a book study of the earliest ministries of the apostles, and how that might inform our ministries today. Texts will be taken from Acts chapter 2 through chapter 6 and will examine acts of care, healing, boldness, faith, and sacrifice.

Poppies are not the sturdiest or longest-lived flowers, but they are some of the most tenacious. I hope that their brilliance and beauty will be an inspiration as we remember and celebrate the work and witness of the Holy Spirit and the first followers of Jesus Christ.

May we grow in the Spirit together—
Pastor Rosanna

PASTOR'S REPORT

May has been an inspiring month! I was touched by the care of our congregation for the family of Janet Vardaman, and am grateful for your support for me in the form of a card shower for my birthday. Thank you for all the expressions of care and encouragement—they were varied and lovely. The fellowship time and display of delicious cookies made by Beth Sollenberger was a great way to extend that celebration.

I have completed the spring session of the Women Creating Community group which I led monthly at Camp Mack from Feb-May. That has been a blessing for me, and I was especially grateful that Deb Kauffman was able to be part of that group. We'll begin another session Sept 2023 through May 2024.

I have had several additional Zoom meetings for Mission and Ministry Board this month, as well as attending the delegate briefing session for Annual Conference with moderator Tim McAlwee. I am grateful to Creekside's delegate, Ted Noffsinger, for his preparation for Annual Conference in July, and hold in prayer Conference officers, denominational staff, members of the Mission and Ministry Board, and delegates from across the country. These are servants of God who are working hard. We pray for the unity of the Spirit, even in the midst of differing perspectives and opinions.

You may not be aware of those serving the N Indiana District who are associated with Creekside: Mike Kauffman is the District Board chair, Roger Griffith began this year as the treasurer of the district, and Marita Barsoda (Rock Run CoB) is now a member of the District Board. We are grateful for the often un-sung service of these and others who serve our district.

I continue to be inspired by the efforts of Creekside's landscaping team, volunteers who work with our gardens (including container gardens), and Property Team. There has been a lot of planting, mowing, weeding, trimming, wiring, and cleaning going on—thanks for the good work! Worship Team and ladder-climber Ted Foland facilitated the beautiful Pentecost worship installation. I trust it will remind us of the Spirit over and around us—and in and through us.

Pastor Rosanna

FROM THE CHURCH BOARD:

The church board continues to work toward our goal to have nursery care and Sunday school activities available for any children in attendance. So far we have met with members of the Christian Ed. and Hospitality teams. Our discussions with these teams resulted in the formation of a separate committee to work through the details and determine a plan of action. The committee members are Scott Harney (Board), Judy Gables (Christian Ed.), Brynne Spiritoso, Deb Kauffman, & Tim McFadden (Hospitality).

Finance team reports that we ended 2022 in a good financial position. It is wonderful to have a congregation that is supportive of the church both in actions and giving. Thank you. Finance recently brought 3 recommendations to the board for our consideration:

- A written description of the current offering counting procedures.
- A request to change the frequency giving statements are distributed to members—from the current 4 times per year down to 2 times.
- They propose that Marita be trained to count offering also.

The Board unanimously approved all 3 recommendations.

Property team brought a proposal to the board to create a larger classroom by taking down the wall between the Overcomers and the Jr. High classrooms. The plan is to keep the current cabinetry but to move it. A supportive header and a small amount of the dividing wall will remain so in the future either a curtain divider or the current cabinetry could be used to divide the rooms again, if necessary. The estimated cost for this project is less than \$500.00. The Board endorsed this project.

Other items to note are: the Board approved purchase of a new computer tower for Marita. The new computer has more memory and processing power to handle all the design software and financial programs she uses. We have agreed to have the current phone system evaluated and research other phone systems more functional for our needs.

Kurt Vardaman, Church Board Chair

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING: SUNDAY JUNE 4, 8:30 AM

You are cordially invited to breakfast and Creekside's spring Congregational Meeting! It will be on Sunday, June 4. Breakfast will be served in the Gathering Area beginning at **8:15 am**. The meeting will begin in the Gathering Area at **8:30**. Reports and the agenda of the meeting have been sent out electronically; there are paper copies available on the usher's table. Please review the information before we gather on June 4. We do not have slate or budget items to vote on in the spring, but there are important actions to make you aware of. If you have questions about anything in the meeting packet, you may contact Kurt Vardaman (Board chair), Roger Griffith (Property chair/Treasurer) or Pastor Rosanna. Breakfast by our Fellowship Team is always a welcome addition to a Sunday morning!

We will have worship at 9:30 after the meeting. The congregational meeting will not be livestreamed, but the worship service will be livestreamed as usual.

Pastor Rosanna

MINISTRY INFORMATION AND CARRY-IN MEAL: WEDNESDAY JUNE 28, 6:00 PM

Thee Seeker's Sunday school class is planning an opportunity for people who are interested in hearing about De Pue's daughter and son-in-law's ministry on Wednesday evening June 28th. The event will start with a carry-in meal at 6:00. Everyone from Creekside is invited to come and bring food to share. They will begin sharing info around 6:45. They will be inviting other interested folks to bring food to share and join us at 6 or drop in for the sharing time around 6:45.

MESSENGER

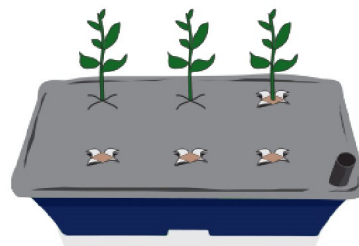
Now is the time to subscribe or re-subscribe to the Church of the Brethren's magazine, Messenger. Messenger publishes 10 issues/year. The cost is \$14.50 for one year, or \$27 for two years. First time subscribers to Messenger magazine can receive a one year subscription for half price (\$7.25).

Let Marita know **by Friday, June 9** if you would like to begin a Messenger subscription (send her an email at creeksidecob@gmail.com or leave a note on her desk). *If you already have a subscription, check your email for info from the Creekside office about re-subscribing.*

CONTAINER GARDENS

Thank you to everyone who helped plant and deliver container gardens on May 20! We planted 38 containers: 16 EarthBoxes planted with lettuce, peppers, or radish seeds, and 22 pots with tomato plants. One box is staying at Creekside for kids to plant and tend, and the others have been delivered to neighbors through Oaklawn, ADEC, and the Council on Aging. The container gardens are an Outreach ministry of Creekside; many of the plants were grown in the greenhouse at Church Community Services. As of this writing, there are still plants left in our greenhouse; if you are interested in taking them for your home garden, see Tim Lund or David Hoke.

Thanks to Tim Lund, Judy De Pue, and Cary Kelsey for contacting recipients and organizing materials and plants. We hope these containers will be a blessing in our community.



THANK YOU

We have been deeply touched by the outpouring of love and support shown to us from our Creekside Family while we spent precious final days with Mom Vardaman and in the weeks following her passing. We have been deeply blessed by your calls, messages, deliveries of food, filling in for us in the media center, oh so many cards, flowers, and all the hours of service dedicated to our family for the Celebration of Life and delicious lunch. You have been examples of Jesus' love to us during our grief and we are grateful and blessed by it.

Kurt & Lisa Vardaman

EVERENCE

The **MyNeighbor credit card** from Everence is a great way to spread generosity in our community. With **MyNeighbor**, each time you make a purchase, Everence will donate 1.5% of the purchase total to the charity of your choice. Creekside could be one of the nonprofits that you donate to. Each January, Everence sends checks to the charitable organizations the cardholders have selected.

Also, don't forget about the **FREE Medicare Monday** events Everence offers to discuss information about retirement income and transitioning to Medicare. Go to everence.com/Medicare-Mondays.

Jan Nicodemus, Creekside Advocate

ANNUAL CONFERENCE: JULY 4-8

This year's Annual Conference will be held in Cincinnati, Ohio, from July 4-8. Ted Noffsinger will attend as Creekside's delegate, Pastor Rosanna will attend as Creekside's pastor and as a member of the Mission & Ministry Board, and some other Creekside folks will be there, as well.

Please keep the following in your prayers: Ted and the other delegates; the officers, denominational staff, and Mission & Ministry Board; and safety for all who are traveling to and from Cincinnati.

The theme for this year's Annual Conference is "Living God's Love", based on Ephesians 5:1-2. (Below is a statement on the theme from Moderator Tim McElwee.) Even if you cannot attend Annual Conference in person, you are welcome to participate in the worship services online on the evenings of July 4-7 and the morning of July 8. Worship services are free; you can also pay a registration fee to watch business sessions and some other activities online. More information at www.brethren.org.

Annual Conference 2023: Living God's Love Ephesians 5:1-2

Prior to and during the 2022 Annual Conference, our former Moderator David Sollenberger invited us to apply our recently adopted vision statement by sharing Jesus with each other, by living in harmony, and embracing one another as Christ embraces us. Building on that inspiring message I urge us to share God's gift of inclusive love with one another as we fulfill our 2023 theme by *Living God's Love*.

In the fifth chapter of the book of Ephesians, the Apostle Paul writes: "Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love" (NRSV). The Trappist monk, Thomas Merton, shared a similar observation when he wrote: "To say I am made in the image of God is to say that love is the reason for my existence, for God is love." Love is the reason for our existence. We are called to live in love.

This invitation is grounded in the words of Jesus who taught us by saying, "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35, NRSV). Jesus's command to love one another is an ethical imperative. And through the word of God, we also receive God's indicative proclamation: You are a beloved child of God. When we combine this grace-filled affirmation with the moral obligation inherent in Jesus's love command, our calling can be summarized with this declaration: As beloved children of God, we are to love as God loves. God affirms and comforts us through the indicative statement and confronts and challenges us through the imperative.

We are made in the image of God and our calling is to love like God loves. We know how God loves through the life and teachings of Jesus and through the love we share with and receive from each other. We know how God loves because though we are sinners and none of us could be worthy of God's love, nevertheless God loves us fully and unconditionally. And we know how God loves because Jesus: the descent of God into our world and into our lives, loved inclusively, without limits, and extravagantly.

Everyone at God's banquet is invited around the table as equals. By loving inclusively, we celebrate God's joyous delight in the diversity of creation and the divine breath animating all humankind. Blessings on your journey as you live God's love.

Tim McElwee, Moderator

**Viviendo el amor de Dios
Viv Lanmou Bondye A
Rayuwan Kaunar Allah
Living God's Love**

The Bee Line

As you may recall, last month we told you about the disappearance of one of our hives this Spring. This occurrence is called Colony Collapse Disorder. (CCD).

CCD is a problem when we have a disappearance of all the adult bees. This was first reported in 1996 when a beekeeper in Florida called attention to the unexplained disappearances of his bees. No dead bees were left in or around the hive. They didn't die. They just packed up and left. In recent years, beekeepers have reported as much as 30-90% of their bees leaving.

Something to be concerned about? Maybe. CCDs occur more often in commercial hives. Still, we need to remember that 30% of the food we eat is accounted for by bee pollination. Commercial beekeepers load their bees on flatbed trailers and send them to farmers all around the country to pollinate their crops. In fact, some of our bees have spent winters in California to pollinate almonds. (We have purchased bees from a Nappanee beekeeper who does this with his over 1500 hives.) So, honey bees are critical for agricultural production. Their pollination adds more than \$15 billion in value to about 30 crops, especially crops like berries, nuts, fruits, and vegetables.

W.R. Roach Company Orchards reported on a Pollination Experiment comparing the quality of some crops with and without pollinators.

	<u>With Honey Bees</u>	<u>Without Honey Bees</u>
Pears	344 lbs. of fruit	99 lbs. of fruit
Alfalfa	220 lbs. seeds/acre	62 lbs. per acre
Apples	1200 apples per tree	25 apples per tree

What causes CCD? At this time, nobody knows. One theory that was tested indicated that a particular type of cell tower for mobile phones could screw up honey bee navigation. This turned out to be a false big scare. A good thing. Would you want apples or cell phones? Raising bees is very challenging. Daily we are battling parasites, mites, pesticides, and weather conditions. All honey bee colonies are suffering from a toxic whammy of multiple negatives.

But, we're doing our part here at Creekside by planting fruit trees and a vegetable garden. Our wildflower garden is a new exciting pollinator project providing pollen and nectar for our bees, as well as adding beauty to our landscape. Now, the question is how can you personally help?

Ron Nicodemus, for the Bee Team



JUNE 2023

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

BIRTHDAYS

- 3 Carlson, Miles
- 14 Miller, Myron
- 17 Vardaman, Kurt
- 23 Green, Ron
- 24 Behr, Steve
- 29 Noffsinger, Sue

ANNIVERSARIES

- 2 Barsoda, Marita & Robert
- 13 Lund, Tim & Diane
- 14 Borem, Jeff & Cheryl
- 17 Nicodemus, Ron & Jan
- 19 Zerbe, John & Maryann

EVENTS

Garden work day every Tuesday & Thursday, 9:00-10:30 am

- 4 Breakfast in Gathering Area, 8:15 am
Cong. Business Meeting, 8:30 am
Show & Tell with Larry Ford
- 6 Church reserved (Zerbe), 5-9 pm
- 8 Fellowship Team, 6:30 pm
- 9 Church reserved (Griffith), 8:30-noon
Game Night, 7:00 pm
- 11 Barton's Deacon Group, noon
- 13 Brunch at Angel's, RSVP to **Steve B.**
Outreach Team, 6:00 pm
- 14 Finance Team, 3:00 pm
- 18 Father's Day
Hoke's Deacon Group, 12:30 pm
- 21 Church Board, 6:30 pm
- 28 Ministry Update & Carry-In, 6 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.

