

Creekside Church of the Brethren Connection

November 2023



The End and the Beginning

*But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. 2 Peter 3:18*

Sometimes the month of November feels like just holding on until the holidays—just wait until we get to Advent and can finally start getting ready for Christmas and fun activities. It's getting colder and darker, and Thanksgiving dinner may mean either a lot of travel or a lot of cooking and cleaning the house.

Although giving thanks is a great practice any time of the year, I want to remember the other thing which is going on at this season of the church year: this is the end of the year (the Christian year begins with Advent), and we are invited to consider the end of time, and what that means for us and for the church. The last Sunday of the year (November 26, 2023) is variously known as Christ the King, or Eternity Sunday. Each of these titles describe what we know the end of time will be like in the reign of Christ. Natalie Sleeth captured this theological truth in the poem which is set to her music for "In the bulb there is a flower":

In our end is our beginning; in our time, infinity;
In our doubt there is believing, in our life, eternity.
In our death, a resurrection; at the last a victory.

Within the chilly days, long nights, and barren landscape of November is the promise of God's faithfulness and new life; every year that new life comes to us again in the form of Jesus Christ, God's Incarnate Word, born in a humble stable in Bethlehem. The story begins with a humble birth, and ends as Christ the Lord of All, and ruler of time and eternity. Christ the King is the end of the story, but it is also the beginning of a story which will never end. Halleluiah!

This year there is an opportunity which does not happen every year: there is a Sunday following American Thanksgiving before the beginning of Advent. At Creekside we will celebrate this as Christ the King Sunday, and remember in worship, prayer, and especially our music the proclamation that Christ is Lord, and that even when we do not know what the future holds, we know who holds the future. This is cause for rejoicing—whatever the season brings.

Blessings to you and your families as you prepare for Thanksgiving, and as you find ways to give thanks every day. We will have a feast of praise at the end of November: all are welcome, it is low-calorie, and there's very little clean up. What a joyous occasion!

Pastor Rosanna

PASTOR'S REPORT

October has been a busy month in my life and in the life of the church. I'm grateful for work which has been happening on and off of our property. Here are some highlights from the last month:

- Honey harvesting and spinning out 295 lbs of honey
- Picking produce (still!) in the Seed to Feed garden
- Assembling backpacks for unhoused people in Elkhart
- Ramp construction at Schmucker home
- Cleaning out the garden
- Camp Mack Festival
- Fish Fry
- Kids' Fall Party
- Trunk or Treat

All of this is over and above the regular meetings for ministry teams and Sunday worship. I have continued my leadership for monthly gatherings of Women Creating Community at Camp Mack, and spent October 20-22 in Elgin, IL for Mission and Ministry Board.

I am grateful for the leadership of the Board and ministry teams, and want to say a special Thank You to team leaders who are stepping away from those roles: Kathy Royer and Jan Weaver, who had served as co-chairs of Christian Education Team; Maryann Zerbe who will be stepping down from Worship Team January 1, 2024; and Jan Nicodemus who will be resigning as Everence advocate. Please make an opportunity to thank these people for their service.

Thanks to Jessica Prah! for her work to assemble and promote Grab N Go Sunday School lessons for children, and for those who have volunteered to teach.

Our Advent theme will be "How Far is it to Bethlehem?" Beth Sollenberger and Creekside kids are helping to create something special for those services.

I give thanks for the ministries which we are doing, and the volunteers who make them happen.

God bless you—

Pastor Rosanna

FROM THE CHURCH BOARD:

This month the major topic of discussion was the 2024 Church Board budget. We also heard reports concerning the wall removal in the Sunday School classroom, stained glass, our Board goal of welcoming and providing activities for children and families, and the 2023 Love Offering.

The Budget for 2024 took up most of our meeting time. In the end, we put together a budget which has a 1.5% increase over last year, and includes a 3% increase to Pastor Rosanna's compensation package, as well as a 3% increase in pay for Marita Barsoda, our Administrative Assistant.

Roger Griffith reported the wall removal is complete. Thee Seekers Class has been meeting in the expanded space, and Fellowship Team is in the process of moving items into their storage room. Thanks to Ted Noffsinger, Mike Kauffman, & Roger Griffith for their hard work to complete this project.

The stained glass committee has been busy. Rosanna reported they have decided the location and dimensions of the windows, and will be working with artists Don and Carol Burling of Don's Custom Stained Glass in Granger. The project is fully funded; some of the windows will still be available to sponsor.

We will have a Love Offering at the end of this year for those who can donate over and above their regular giving to outreach projects. 50% will go to local organizations, and 50% will go to organizations which support international outreach. Outreach Team/Followers of Faith will make recommendations about which organization we will support.

Scott Harney reported on the Board Goal Committee's work for Trunk or Treat on Saturday, October 28. Along with New Life Sunday School class members, they will pass out candy, magnets with information about Creekside, and sponsor booths to share about ministries.

Reminder: November 19 is the Congregational Business Meeting. We will meet in the Gathering Area following worship that day.

Kurt Vardaman, Church Board Chair

SEED TO FEED POTLUCK, NOVEMBER 9

Creekside is once again hosting an end-of-season garden party! The Seed to Feed potluck will begin at 6 pm on Thursday, Nov. 9. Representatives from all of the Seed to Feed gardens are invited; any volunteers or interested people are welcome to attend. Wear your Seed to Feed shirt, if you have one!

Thanks to Creekside's Fellowship Team, who will be providing the main dish and hot drinks for the entire group. Please bring your own table service and join us for an evening of food, fellowship, and education about the gardens in Elkhart County.

Pastor Rosanna, for Seed to Feed

CONGREGATIONAL BUSINESS MEETING, SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 19

Creekside's Fall Business Meeting will be November 19. We will meet in the Gathering Area following worship. Look for the meeting packet, it will be sent by email on Friday, November 3, and there will be printed copies available at Creekside by November 5. The packet will have the agenda for the meeting, which includes the 2024 Budget and affirming new Board members and congregational representatives for District and Annual Conference.

Please read through the materials prior to the meeting. If you have questions, you may be able to get those addressed personally before the meeting. Thank you for your engagement in the mission and ministry of Creekside.



CREEKSIDE'S COOKIE CANDY WALK, DECEMBER 2

Calling all cookie and candy makers: it's that time again!

The leaves are changing color, there's a chill in the air, and snow is falling out west. It is time to start thinking about all things sweet!

Creekside's *Cookie Candy Walk* is Saturday, Dec. 2, 2023 from 8 am - noon.

This annual event is a wonderful way to interact with our community and to raise funds for outreach. Your help is needed: start thinking now about what you can bake or make. *We want to offer as many varieties of cookies & candy as possible.*

New this year: supplies will be available for guests to create their own cookie plate, candy dish, treat box, or treat bag to give as gifts.

Cookies and Candy are due at the church on Friday, December 1 or by 7:30 am on Saturday, December 2. Watch and listen for weekly updates and reminders regarding this fun event.

Questions? Contact Diane Lund: 574.304.7595, thelunds57@msn.com. *Thank you!*



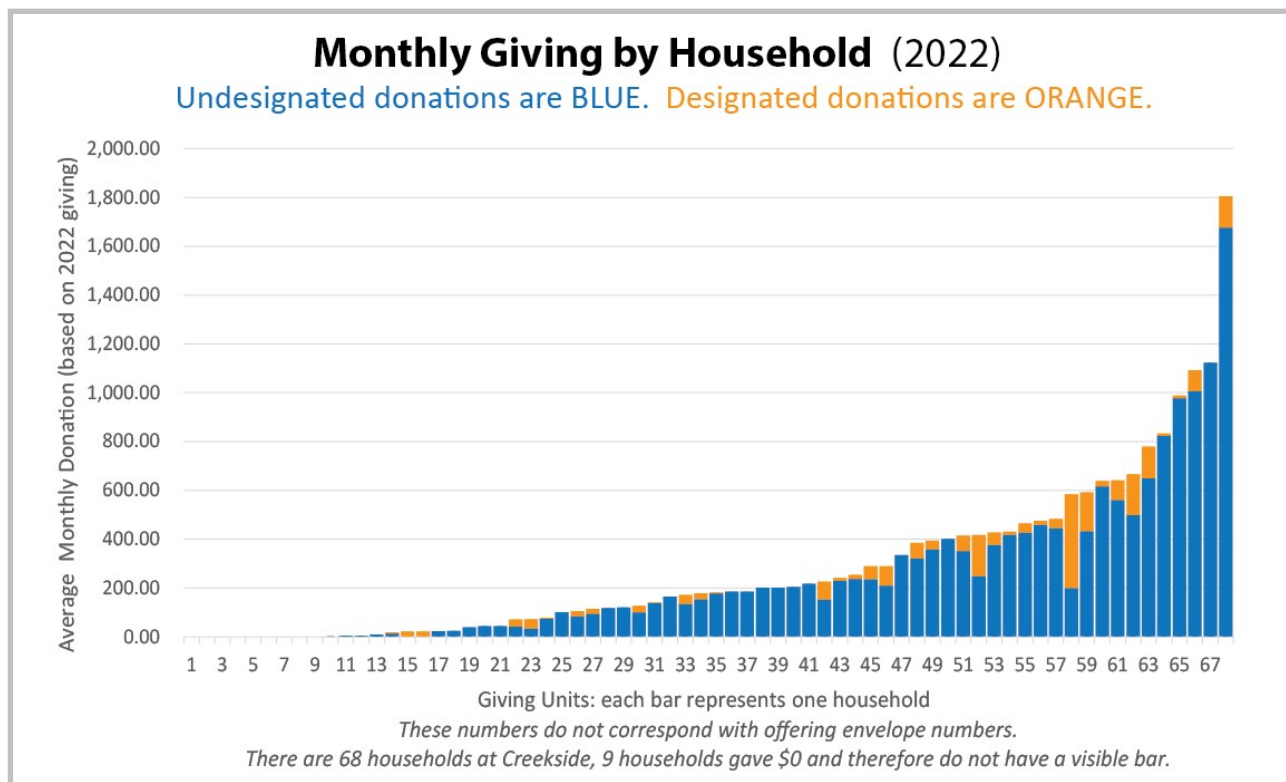
EVERENCE

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, loss of a job, funeral, transportation & daycare. We are very appreciative of this support from Everence.

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

Jan Nicodemus, Creekside Advocate

INFORMATION FROM FINANCE



The Finance Team had this graph created for several reasons. The most important is to say THANK YOU for your financial support of Creekside Church. There are many ways to give to Creekside, but financial giving is the easiest one for us to measure and quantify. This is a big picture view of personal giving; General Fund contributions are how we meet all of our yearly operational expenses.

In a campaign before we moved to our current building, a consultant told us, “Not equal gifts, but equal sacrifice.” We are grateful to those who have much to give and are willing to share it, but we also need people who are willing to give what they can, not matter what the amount.

Find your household on this graph; could you move over to the right? If you are one of the households who attend regularly but made no financial gift in 2022, we pray that you would experience God’s generosity and become a financial giver—whatever the amount of that gift. A note about how this graph was created: it is based on giving for 2022; we used total yearly giving and divided by 12. Numbers and households for 2023 might be somewhat different, but our aim was to share general information, not a specific giving record. If you have questions about your personal giving, consult the giving statement which you received in September, or call the Creekside office. No one on the Finance Team knows names related to specific gifts on this graph or otherwise, but we would be happy to answer questions about how we handle finances at Creekside.

Thank you again for giving to Creekside Church! Our finances for 2023 have been strong, thanks to your generous support. God bless you.

Finance Team: Karen Kohler (chair), Roger Griffith (treasurer), Cal Graber, Kathy Royer, Jay Ganger, Deana Ward, Pastor Rosanna (ex officio)

THANK YOU!

Thanks to everyone for your help and support following my car accident! —*Paulajean Ritzmann*

Thank you to the many friends who helped with the Seed to Feed garden this year. A special thanks to Roger and Roger, Rosanna, Mike, Doris, Gail, Ron, Deana, Larry, Diane, and Deb. I am grateful for all of you and your help; thanks for another successful year. —*Cal Graber*

The Bee Line

It's déjà vu time at Beeline. Remember the fun we had with our children when we would play peek-a-boo? One of the best times was when we would take a spoon full of food and fly it into their mouths. When the game became tiring for us and we quit and cleared their tray, they often cried their little hearts out. Those cries may even turn into a temper tantrum.

Well, this year's honey harvest turned into a bee temper tantrum extraction day. Normally our girls (honey bees) are glad to see us and peacefully buzz around minding their own business. Well, this year they caught us in the act of stealing their food and had a temper tantrum, and we bee keepers paid for it.

Let me explain. We usually harvest the honey outdoors (on the table outside of the kitchen). Open air harvesting usually is not a problem. This year, the bees caught us in the act! It was a beautiful warm day. A few bees were flying around looking for a "treat" when they found us and their favorite food. Lickety-split they flew back to the hive, did their dance routine, and told the other bees exactly where they could find their favorite treasure.

Hundreds of bees came and visited us. They usually just sniff around. We cranked away, but when we disturbed their flight, WATCH OUT. You guessed it. But we won the battle! Ouch! However, in the process, each of us got a few stings – the cost of making our bees mad. This year we harvested almost 180 jars of honey and tithed 18 jars. You may purchase a pint jar (1½ pounds) for yourself now for \$8. Free tithe jars are available for you to share with someone who may be experiencing a rough time in their life and is in need of some love and kindness.

Don't delay! Get yours before we run out! We will again be selling our honey at the Osceola Methodist Christmas Bazaar on November 11. It's time for our bees to have a long winter's nap. Stay tuned for the details on how we prepare the hives for Michiana's cold and blustery winter.

Ron Nicodemus, for the Bee Team



The new COVID vaccine booster is available in this area. You can get it at CVS or Walgreens. —Tim Lund

NOVEMBER 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

- 5 Schmucker, Beth
- 7 Arnold, Maddison
- 7 Buchanan, Esther
- 7 Hoke, Lodema
- 7 Marcin, Tiara
- 7 Shultz, Wylan
- 8 Prael, Jessica
- 12 Griffith, Anne
- 16 Ganger, Jay
- 16 Vardaman, Lisa
- 17 McFarren, Doris
- 19 Carlson, Kyle
- 24 Barwick, Cathy

ANNIVERSARIES

- 3 Miller, Myron & Sandy
- 27 Ellis, Donald & Vicki

EVENTS

- 5 Daylight Saving Time ends; fall back
- 5 Church reserved, 4:00 pm
- 7 Christian Ed, 6:00 pm
- 8 Finance Team, 3:00 pm
- 9 Seed to Feed potluck, 6:00 pm
- 14 Brunch at Angel's, RSVP to **Roger N.**
- 19 Congregational Meeting, after worship
- 19 Church reserved, 1:00 pm
- 23 Thanksgiving Day, *office closed*
- 24 *Office closed*

The Creekside Connection

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Address:
60455 CR 113
Elkhart, IN 46517-9183

Phone:
574-875-7800

Website:
www.CreeksideCoB.com

Pastor:
Rosanna McFadden: CreeksidePastor@gmail.com

Administrative Assistant & Editor:
Marita Barsoda: CreeksideCoB@gmail.com

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.

