

# Creekside Church of the Brethren Connection

March 2025

## *Trees and the Fruit They Bear*

*They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season. Psalm 1:3*

It is no secret that I am a fan of trees and tree imagery. There are many reasons for this, including passages like the one cited above from Psalm 1, comparing those who delight in the law of the Lord to flourishing and fruitful trees. Creekside has used this text and others to illustrate our vision of Rooted in God, Growing in Jesus, and Bearing Fruit in the Spirit. I was delighted to see Stewardship Sunday resources from Everence which use these same texts and imagery to illustrate what it means to flourish as a congregation.

Sunday, March 16 will be Stewardship Sunday at Creekside, and we will be joined by Everence representative Kent Miller, Financial Consultant and former pastor. During the Sunday School hour that day, Kent will share information and answer questions about giving and planning legacy gifts. I am grateful to the Finance Team and Everence advocate Larry Ford for making this connection, and for working to revise Creekside's Gift Policy (*see more in this Connection*).

We have all been blessed by the generosity of members of this congregation. Thanks to your financial gifts, after our March payment our mortgage will be below \$100,000; it will be paid off in 2027. You have given over \$65,000 to Raise the Roof; this means that our roof will be paid for with funds we had in reserve plus your giving, and we will not have to use other funds or borrow money to complete that project. We have a Mission and Vision Fund to support new ministries and outreach programs. These are all signs of health and hope for future growth.

We know that mission drives giving. Our worship services, Christian education, fellowship, media, outreach and other ministries of Creekside are all in the service of Seeking, Celebrating, and Sharing God's love. Keeping that mission before us is how and why we are here. With God's help and committed leaders and volunteers, we keep seeking new and faithful ways to grow and be fruitful.

If you are someone who has blessed the work of Creekside with financial gifts for years, thank you. We could not do this work without your support. If you have not supported Creekside financially, please consider the value of Creekside and its mission to you and the resources which you have to share. We are always looking for new ways to be faithful to God's mission and to be partners with Christ.

Thank you for helping us to blossom and grow! May we continue to flourish for the sake of Christ and the church.

God bless you.  
Pastor Rosanna



## PASTOR'S REPORT

Grace and peace to you! As I write this report, temperatures are in single digits in Elkhart. A week in Arizona and Nevada have given me a new appreciation of getting out of Indiana in February. It was great to visit with Shelly and Tim Randall in Cave Creek, and even have a throw-back Super Bowl party.

Thanks for your great response to the Souper Bowl soup donations! (*see final results in this Connection*). There are some exciting opportunities on the horizon for outreach, as well as a great need in our community. Cold temperatures which are inconvenient for me are life-threatening or budget-breaking for some individuals and families.

I am working with Worship Team on Lent themes and services. We are pleased to have devotionals from Brethren Press available for you to pick up beginning March 2. A late Easter (not until April 20!) means there has been time for a sermon series, For the Love of God, before Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, March 5. It also gives some of our snowbirds time to come home and celebrate Easter with us.

I am grateful to Deb Kauffman for organizing a Children's Disaster Service training at Creekside on March 28-29. I am grateful for this and other programs of the Church of the Brethren to help families in need following a disaster. Please pray for the work of the Mission and Ministry Board on March 7-9. I am on the Executive Committee of that board, and have a busy few weeks of preparation prior to meetings. Pastor Janet Shaver, who many of you will remember fondly from Creekside, will be our guest speaker on March 9.

Thank you for your acts of kindness to each other, your neighbors, and others in our community. We share God's love when we love one another. God bless you—  
*Pastor Rosanna*

## CREEKSIDE GIFTS POLICY

In January, the Finance Team approved a suggestion that Pastor Rosanna and I review the Creekside Gifts and Memorials Policy to see whether it needed to be updated. We worked on it and spent time making changes we thought needed to be made along with help from our advocate at Everence, Marlene Kroeker. We ended up with a new title of "Creekside Gifts Policy for Memorial and Legacy Gifts". The policy defines memorial gifts, memorial projects, and legacy gifts and who is responsible for their administration and for communicating about them to the congregation. There is an invitation to talk to Creekside leaders if you are considering, or if you have already planned, a legacy gift.

We also developed a new brochure which also explains the importance of leaving a legacy at Creekside with a gift to help carry on our ministry, mission and maintenance programs and projects. Both the brochure and the Gifts Policy will be available on Sunday, March 16 when we will have an Everence financial expert and former pastor to talk to Sunday School classes on topics such as saving on your taxes, and making sure your wishes are carried out in a will or estate. There will be an opportunity to ask questions of this financial planner, Pastor Rosanna and members of the Board or Finance Team who are present.

So what's the secret to proper stewardship? In 2 Corinthians 9:7, Paul says "Give what you decided in your heart to give". Be cheerful givers. Return a portion to God of the blessings you have received throughout your life and especially your life at Creekside.

*Larry Ford, Finance Team member*

## ASH WEDNESDAY AND LENT

March 5 is the first day of Lent. Lent is a time of prayer and preparation before the celebration of Easter. Easter Sunday is April 20 this year. Worship Team will have Lent devotionals, *Take Up Your Cross*, by pastor and former Annual Conference moderator Tim Harvey available by Sunday, March 2. Look for an insert prayer card from Creekside for your own Ash Wednesday prayer and reflection.

*Pastor Rosanna, for Worship Team*

## FROM OUTREACH TEAM:

We are grateful to have team leader Lodema Hoke back with us! Outreach has been brainstorming activities for 2025. We have an immediate need, an opportunity over the next two months, and a longer-term ministry opportunity to share.

**Concord Intermediate School** is in need of VIPs—Very Important People—to meet with 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders for student-led conferences. These adult volunteers listen to children share projects and about what they are doing at school. Dates are March 11-14, between 12:30 and 3:15 pm. You can sign up for the date and time slots which work for you.

If you are available to serve as a VIP, please let us know by February 28th. **(This coming Friday!)** There are two ways to communicate your ability to help:

Call the school at 574.303.0300 and let them know what days/times you're available OR  
Complete this Google Form: <https://forms.gle/KdQsfgXx45bWqKy28>

In order to be a VIP, you need a Volunteer Background Check completed. Those are available at the following link: <https://bit.ly/42FW2DB>.

See Jessica Prahll if you have questions, or need paper copies of the forms.

**Church Community Services** Development direct Chet Miller-Eshleman is challenging local congregations to support financial services at CCS. The program "Home Together" provides support for families who might otherwise be evicted from their homes; each \$500 donation will sponsor a family and help them stay home together. Outreach Team has committed \$500 to Home Together, and is challenging the Creekside congregation to match (or exceed!) that \$500 to sponsor a second family. We will be accepting donations through April 20, Easter Sunday. Please mark your giving envelope Home Together or CCS, or include that on the memo line of your check. Thank you for giving to support our neighbors in need.

**Servants at Work** Outreach is gathering more information about a partnership with Servants at Work, based in Indianapolis. SAWs uses volunteers to build ramps for homeowners who are disabled and need access to their own homes. There are needs in Elkhart County, and we believe that this could be a good match with the skills of folks at Creekside. The average cost of a ramp is \$1750. That cost is not charged to the homeowner; volunteer workers do not need to pay for the ramps, but donations are welcome. To learn more about this ministry, go to [sawsramps.org](http://sawsramps.org). We are hoping to have a Zoom meeting with president Rik Hagarty in March to learn more about this ministry and how we might partner with them. Build season is late March to mid-October.

*Pastor Rosanna, for Outreach*

## SOUPER BOWL

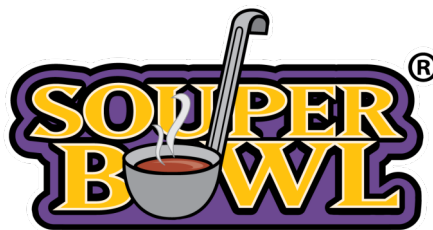
*Thank you for your donations of canned soup for Church Community Services! Creekside shared 14,157.70 ounces, or over 110 gallons of soup! See details below from District Minister Torin Eikler:*

Creekside leapt out of the gate in the first couple of weeks, doubling the amount collected by any other congregation and nearly overtopping all the other collections combined. Through the middle of the challenge, they continued to hold onto the lead though others gained ground. And here at the end, in one final red-zone push, Columbia City took the lead with more than 16,000 ounces of soup donated. And so, it is my honor to declare Columbia City the inaugural Souper Bowl of Caring champions.

What's even more amazing to me is that the churches that participated collected over 500 GALLONS of soup that will go to help ameliorate food insecurity across Northern Indiana. Here is a list of the organizations that will benefit from your generosity:

Grace Lutheran Church Food Pantry, Church Community Services, Fort Wayne food banks, Goshen City Blessings Box, various food pantries around Nappanee, the Northern Indiana Food Bank, St. Martin's Soup Kitchen, Milford Food Pantry, First Light Mission, and Grace Food Pantry.

You all are amazing! Well done, good and faithful servants.



## POLICY FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FROM CREEKSIDE FOR CAMP MACK

**Children and Youth who attend Creekside:** CE team will continue to provide 50% sponsorship to Camp Mack for each child and youth who attends Creekside. Please fill out a yellow application (in an upper right mailbox near the office at Creekside) & contact our church's camp representative, Lisa Vardaman, for registration assistance.

**Adults who attend Creekside:** If adults from our congregation need financial assistance in order to attend a Camp Mack event, we ask that interested parties contact one of the Christian Ed chairs: Judy De Pue, Deb Kauffman, or Roger Neal, PRIOR to seeking registration.

The CE chairperson will help them locate the orange application form (in an upper right mailbox near the office at Creekside) and will present their completed request to the CE team for consideration.

**Other Applicants:** If Creekside attendees have a request for financial assistance to Camp Mack for a child, youth, or adult who is not a Creekside attender, speaking to one of the CE team co-chairs listed above will start the process of asking for that assistance.

The CE chairperson will help them locate a green application form (in an upper right mailbox near the office at Creekside) and will present their completed request to the CE team to be evaluated individually with consideration given to available funds.

*Look for the new forms in yellow, orange, & green by the first Sunday in March. The Christian Ed Team looks forward to assisting you as you plan for events at Camp Mack!*

*Judy De Pue*



## A NOTE FROM EVERENCE:

I have been reading a book recommended by Everence called "Bounty". Members of the Finance Committee and the Church Board also have been reading it. Here is a section from Chapter 1:

Jesus spoke of money and possessions more than an other topic. In fact, Jesus spoke about money more often than heaven and hell combined. Eleven of the thirty-nine parables are about money and possessions. Jesus was not concerned with having possessions, but he was concerned with people's attachments to their money and possessions. Jesus urged people to become less attached to their stuff and more attached to God. Jesus knew our obsession with money would prohibit us from living in a closer relationship with our Creator.

Dealing with the control money has over us allows us to develop a more healthy and spiritually rich relationship with God.

*Larry Ford, Everence Representative for Creekside.*



## CHILDREN'S DISASTER SERVICE TRAINING

A training will be held on **March 28-29, 2025 (Friday 4:30 pm- Saturday 5:30 pm)** at Creekside for those considering being a volunteer with Children's Disaster Services. Trainers will prepare registrants by sharing personal experiences, and methods and materials necessary to care for the children affected by disasters. CDS volunteers provide support to families while dealing with the practical business of recovery from extreme loss. More information is available at: [www.brethren.org/cds/](http://www.brethren.org/cds/) or [www.brethren.org/cds/training/dates/](http://www.brethren.org/cds/training/dates/)

If you or someone you know is interested in attending or hearing more, please contact me. Blessings!  
*Deb Kauffman, 574-312-8251*

## DISTRICT WOMEN'S RETREAT UPDATE

Great news! We have a new date, **Saturday, Nov. 8** and a new host church, **Agape COB** (Fort Wayne area) for the Women's Retreat for Northern Indiana District.

The speaker will remain the same and Cedar Lake COB will be assisting Agape.

Women from Creekside will car pool to the event, so save the date and invite your women friends and family members! More information and registration to come.



*Judy De Pue*



# The Bee Line



Did you know that honey contains a substance that helps your brain work better?

I'm beginning to wonder if I'm not eating enough honey because my brain isn't coming up with much to report this month and I can't talk to the bees to get their opinion.

I wrote last month that beekeepers think ahead to warmer weather and this is the time of year to get serious doing just that. If I thought it was cold in January, it's obvious by now that we didn't have many "nice" days in February. Now that we're marching into March, we want to be ready to do whatever we can for the bees. We should know soon which of the hives survived the winter and what we'll need to do.

My plan is to have the Bee Team get together soon and begin planning for Spring weather and the work ahead. We already know that there are some repairs that need to be done on the stands (or platforms) and we can't just tell the girls to stay inside while we disrupt their homes. (I know from experience that they get upset when someone is pounding on the hive boxes!)

I also suggested last month that others consider joining us and get acquainted with what all is involved. There are things to help with that don't involve being buzzed by the bees. If you have a friend that might want to help from time to time, that would be great! They don't have to be members of the church to participate. We hope the opportunities blossom with the spring flowers.

I liked this artist's design (below) for the **Rose Parade** float in 2024 for the Union Station Homeless Service organization in Pasadena, California.

Their slogan is "Bee the solution to end homelessness." [ushs.org](http://ushs.org)  
*Steve Barton, for the Bee Team*



## MARCH

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	31					

### BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Arnold, Pauline
- 1 Ward, Deana
- 2 Martin, Mary Lou
- 3 Noffsinger, Ted
- 5 Snyder, Karen
- 8 Carlson, Katy
- 14 Nowicki, Kathy
- 30 Barton, Jean
- 31 Emeis, Peggy

### ANNIVERSARIES

- 5 Houser, Eric & Sharon
- 7 Graber, Cal & Sharon
- 10 Behr, Steve & Becky Miller
- 28 Rassi, Terry & Irene
- 31 Harney, Scott & Angi

### EVENTS

- 1 Church reserved, 5-10 pm
- 9 Daylight Saving Time begins  
Onward Class lunch
- 11 Brunch at Angel's, 10:45 am  
Outreach Team, 6:00 pm
- 12 Finance Team, 3:00 pm  
Meeting with SAWs, 7:00 pm
- 14 Game Night, 7:00 pm
- 20 Church Board, 6:30 pm
- 25 Christian Ed meeting, 6:00 pm
- 28 CDS training starts, 4:30 pm
- 29 CDS training ends, 5:30 pm

# The Creekside Connection

A publication of Creekside Church of the Brethren



**Address:**  
60455 CR 113  
Elkhart, IN 46517-9183

**Phone:**  
574-875-7800

**Website:**  
[www.CreeksideCoB.com](http://www.CreeksideCoB.com)

**Pastor:**  
Rosanna McFadden: [CreeksidePastor@gmail.com](mailto:CreeksidePastor@gmail.com)

**Administrative Assistant & Editor:**  
Marita Barsoda: [CreeksideCoB@gmail.com](mailto: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.*



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