

Creekside Church of the Brethren Connection



January 2026

Seek, Celebrate, Share

*Wise men from the East came to Jerusalem asking,
"Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews?" Matthew 2:1b-2a*

The wise men, magi, or kings have a cameo appearance in Matthew's gospel, but they have figured large in our imaginations, celebrations, and nativity scenes. We don't know how many there were, but three gifts are mentioned; we don't know what animals came with them, but the Old Testament references camels; we don't know their names, but tradition has suggested Melchior, Caspar and Balthazar, regions they represent, and which gifts they bring. We certainly don't know how anyone could pin-point a particular house with star navigation, but it's certainly impressive.

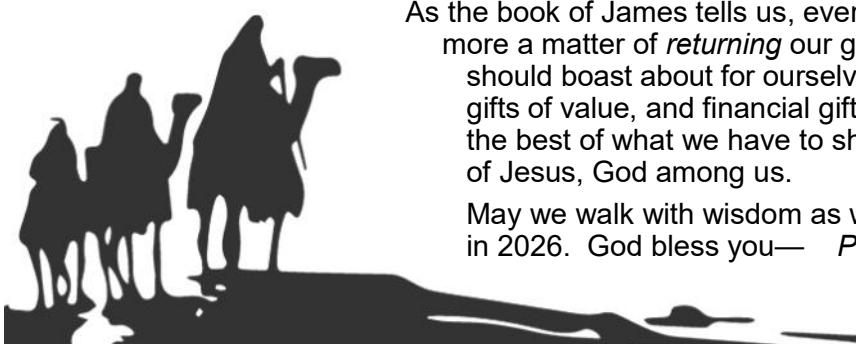
I like that there's so much about this story that we aren't told. Although we need to be aware of what is biblical and what is speculation, there is ample space for imagination and wonder. Our understanding of Christmas tends to emphasize our *preparation* for the birth of Jesus without considering what our response to the birth of Jesus should be. The wise men give us a chance to consider how believers behave when they find Jesus. Consider these verses from Matthew 2:9-11 in light of Creekside's mission statement to Seek, Celebrate, and Share. I have underlined some phrases to help you out:

They set out, and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen in the east, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

This is a pretty good guide for Creekside as we stand on the threshold of a new year. In order to get somewhere, we have to leave something—physically, emotionally, intellectually. If we try to keep everything we've had in the past, we're not going to get very far. We need to celebrate when we arrive at our destination, but also the landmarks along the way, markers that we are still following the right path and the star is still in front of us. We need to offer our gifts to Jesus.

As the book of James tells us, every good gift is from God, so this is more a matter of *returning* our gifts to God than it is anything we should boast about for ourselves. If we have been blessed with gifts of value, and financial gifts may be the least of these, that is the best of what we have to share as our response to the miracle of Jesus, God among us.

May we walk with wisdom as we seek, celebrate, and share in 2026. God bless you— Pastor Rosanna



HAT & MITTEN TREE Thank you for your donations of hats, gloves, mittens and scarves—some of them handmade!—which have overwhelmed the tree in the Creekside Gathering Area! These items will be donated to Shepherd's Cove and CCS by early January, 2026. *Outreach Team*

PASTOR'S REPORT

Best wishes for the new year! I know many of you have already celebrated Christmas with your families, and many of you were able to be a part of Creekside's Christmas Eve service. Thanks to Diane Lund and our Media Team for their preparation, and to musicians and other participants for their planning. This service is a highlight of the season for many of us. Thank you for the Christmas cards and blessings for me and my family, and for the gifts and signs of your care. Some of them were anonymous, or got separated from their cards, but all were appreciated. The sweetest gift of all may have been the kind words from Deana Ward on Christmas Eve on behalf of Creekside. It means so much to me to be known and loved by this congregation; I can't thank you enough.

This past year has had significant loss for some members of our church family, and we pray that 2026 will bring new and more hopeful days to individuals and families who are grieving. It is a privilege for me to visit with people and hear how important the support of this church family has been to them. Thank you for your prayers, cards, visits, and to our deacons for their care in this season.

Thanks also to all the volunteers who have helped with seasonal activities here at Creekside—from Advent decorating to worship participation, to baking and decorating cookies, to building ramps for low-income neighbors in need. These are all ways of witnessing to Jesus in our midst and sharing the good news with our neighbors. I am grateful for your response to the Love Offering and for the Church Board's matching donation. Watch for the final figures in the bulletin and February *Connection*.

The Church Board did not have a regular meeting in December; we will re-organize with new members in January. In the meantime the Board has approved a revised position description by email and had a brief meeting to approve a change in 401(k) investments by Eder Financial, the financial services organization of the Church of the Brethren. This one-time action does not change anything at Creekside, but had to be approved so Eder could submit changes to the IRS for 2026.

Tim and I are not traveling over the Christmas holidays this year. I plan to visit my mom in California in February, along with Katy and Rory Carlson. Mom is still in her independent apartment at Hillcrest and needs some encouragement to move to a higher level of care. It's unlikely we'll get that accomplished this trip, but it's a good reason to get away from N. Indiana for a few days and for Mom to meet her newest great-grandchild.

I am grateful for each one of you, for my family and friends, and for the many blessings of this season. Wishing you the joy and the peace of Christ for 2026— *Pastor Rosanna*

CREEKSIDER NEEDS FUND

Creekside has a non-lapsing account where we hold funds to use to assist with emergency expenses for Creekside members or those closely related to Creekside (e.g. grandchildren of members). We have three sources of funding for this account: matching funds from the Everence Share Fund, matching funds from the Brethren Share fund, and donations from members. Everence and the Brethren fund have different criteria and different forms for reporting. My thanks to Larry Ford, who serves as our Everence advocate, and who regularly shares financial information in the *Connection*.

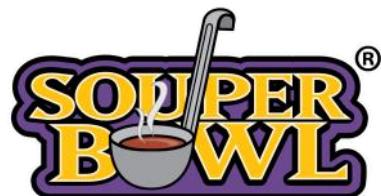
From Dec. 2024-Dec. 2025 we shared \$2872.97 with Creekside members. If you have questions or would like to request funds, please see Pastor Rosanna; requests and payments are confidential. If you wish to contribute to this mutual aid fund, you may at any time: mark your offering "Creekside Needs."

Thank you, and God bless you— *Pastor Rosanna*

SOUPER BOWL 2026

Help tackle hunger with food donations for 2026! Creekside will once again be collecting canned soup to donate to the Church Community Services food pantry. Bring in your donations starting Sunday, January 4 through Sunday, February 8—this is the date of the Super Bowl (something to do with football, I think). We will take soup to CCS as we receive it and keep track of our total donation.

Thanks for shopping on behalf of our neighbors! *Pastor Rosanna, for Outreach Team*



The Bee Line



Happy New Year, everyone! This month's Bee Line will be short and sweet... but not too sticky, I hope.

Our honey sales were a success last month, thanks to members of the church. We're nearly sold out. When all was said and done, there were nearly one hundred pints of honey total.

Statistics tell us that a pound of honey requires two million flower visits. That seems incredible when you consider that a single honeybee can only produce about **1/12th of a teaspoon** of honey in its lifetime! It's amazing what nature does to benefit humans and animals. *Should I feel guilty eating a teaspoon of honey every morning?*

Anyway, I want to thank Ron & Jan Nicodemus, for taking care of the Bee Team Table and the honey sales, and thank all of you who purchased honey. I hope you enjoy it. We look forward to the year ahead and hope that we can do an even better job of caring for the little bees and their hives.

Remember to **Bee Kind**.

Steve Barton, for the Bee Team

A NOTE FROM EVERENCE

More Young Adults are Reading the Bible

Research and anecdotal evidence indicate a slight shift: young Christians who desire a deeper and more authentic spiritual connection are returning to church or visiting for the first time. Christianity Today reports that while the reading habits of 18-29-year-olds have remained mostly the same over the past three years, more young men are reporting engagement with Scripture, and Bible reading is up 29% among American millennials, now in their 30s and early 40s. Millennials' reading habits lean print-heavy, though they also use digital tools, like apps on their phones. Meanwhile, Gen Z Christians are the least likely to read a printed Bible.

Larry Ford, Everence Representative for Creekside

THANK YOU

If we haven't met yet, allow me to introduce myself. My name is Crystal Waggy, and I've been cleaning your church for 2 years now. I am grateful to have steady employment in a peaceful lovely building, filled with caring, faithful, hard-working people.

Thank you for your continued kindness and generosity towards me. When I bump into anyone in the building while I'm here to empty trash cans or vacuum floors you always have a smile ready.

Recently someone even left a generous anonymous gift. I want to say that in this world that feels off balance in the sludge of bad news nationally every day, I felt loved by you. That kindness means a lot and goes a long way towards a more peaceful world. Thank you. *Crystal Waggy*

We would like to thank everyone for the wonderful support we received during Carolyn's recovery. We received many cards, food, calls, visits, texts and prayers. It is all so much appreciated.

Lester and Carolyn Krull

Thank you for the many Christmas gifts and cards! Happy New Year to you all! *Marita Barsoda*

Thank you for saving pop cans. Deana Ward and I took the pop cans you saved for us to be recycled. We got \$20.00 for the cans. This money is given to the church. *Lodema Hoke*

JANUARY

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fri	Sat
					1	2
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 Kohler, Karen
- 2 Prahls, Benjamin
- 10 Borem, Jeff
- 12 Rodriguez, Zoey
- 13 Pletcher, Rosemary
- 14 Supancik, Shirley
- 23 Colver, Carolyn
- 27 Kelsey, Betty
- 30 Mishler, Grace
- 31 Walters, Reid

EVENTS

- 6 *Outreach Team, 6:00 pm
- 9 Game Night, 7:00 pm
- 13 Brunch at Angel's, 10:45 am
- 14 Finance Team, 2:00 pm
- 20 Church Board, 6:30 pm

*Everyone is welcome at the Jan. 6 Outreach Team meeting; bring ideas for Outreach events in 2026!

The Creekside Connection

A publication of Creekside Church of the Brethren



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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.

