

Creekside Church of the Brethren Connection

March 2026



Live Well

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. Matthew 7:17b-18

Is it spring yet?

This is a question which gets asked a lot by folks who live in N. Indiana—at least those who have not been spending January and February in Florida or Arizona. It was also asked by our spiritual forebearers in Europe who were also longing for longer days and warmer weather. This is the origin of the name Lent, which means lengthening of days. Lent is more than the anticipation of spring, it is the preparation for Easter, which always falls in springtime. Preparation for Easter included preparation for believers to become baptized as members of the church, and remembering the ministry of Jesus, and especially his journey to the cross.

At Creekside Church we will be anticipating Easter by celebrating the wondrous works of God. This includes the works of God the Creator, but also the ways in which God works in our lives and in our community to bring about growth and new life. In addition to the Lenten devotional “The Wondrous Works of God,” by Carol Davis, Worship Team has created a bookmark with a metal token. One side is some information about the devotional, and on the other is prayer which you are invited to use during the season of Lent. We’ll share it in worship, as well. The token has a tree on one side (pictured above) and on the back are the words Live Well.

Jesus’ teaching from the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew asserts that bearing good fruit is the natural and inevitable result of living well; growing and bearing good fruit is the *reason* for living well. This is the biblical vision which is the basis of Creekside’s vision statement which begins, “Like a tree which is planted by the river of God’s love . . .” Jesus understood that people flourish when they are connected to the source of Creation and nourished by the love of God. Bearing fruit is what happens when we are rooted in God and growing in Jesus; it is not something we create by our own effort or for our own glory.

The fruit trees on our property have not yet awoken for spring; they may not even be blossoming by Easter, on April 5th. But the people from Creekside who learn from the Word and pray for each other and for our community and world and seek to follow the example of Jesus Christ have the opportunity to deepen our roots and branch out this Lenten season. Whatever the weather, we are given the opportunity to bear good fruit and to practice what it means to live well.

Blessings to you as we look forward to the promise of Easter.
In Christ, *Pastor Rosanna*

PASTOR'S REPORT

February was a challenging month. Thank you for your prayers and support as my family and I travelled to California for my mother's Celebration of Life. The service went well, and we were especially grateful that Shelly and Tim Randall travelled from Arizona to be in La Verne with us that weekend. That physical, as well as spiritual, companionship from Creekside folks was a blessing. Tim and I spent several days with my brother and sister-in-law cleaning out Mom's apartment. We have been under the weather since our return; one of the casualties of not feeling well is that I'm not able to visit people in person. I trust that will change soon, and I am looking forward to brighter days ahead.

We are now in the midst of Lent (see Pastor's Page), but the visit from SAWs staff and sharing from Anne Griffith about Brethren Disaster Ministries was a welcome change of pace. On Sunday, March 15 we will hear from Bryan Jackson of SonSet Solutions about his international work to spread the gospel with technology in under-served areas. I will be at Mission and Ministry Board meeting that weekend. Those meetings are usually held at denominational headquarters in Elgin, IL, but these meetings will be off-site in Modesto, CA. I don't mind the travel to CA, but it will extend the time that I am away from Creekside: I will leave Thursday, March 12 and return Monday, March 16.

I have appreciated the work of the Church Board, and am grateful for the engagement of our newest members Julie Birr and Grace Mishler. We have been working through the recommendations from the Pathfinder Team and considering the best way to use bequest funds which we have been given. The younger adult gathering on Feb. 22 is one way we have responded to your suggestions about living into our mission. Thanks to Creekside ministry teams who are helping us to reach those goals.

Stay tuned for more information about Lent and Holy Week activities: this is a busy season of the Christian year. Holy Week is the beginning of April; Love Feast is Thursday, April 2, the Community Egg Hunt will be Saturday, April 4 and Easter is Sunday, April 5.

God bless you— *Pastor Rosanna*

FROM THE CHURCH BOARD

The Board met on February 19 at 12:30 starting with a time of conversation with Captain Mike Culp of the Sheriff's department in response to the directive from the fall Congregational Business Meeting. Captain Culp went over a "Church Risk Mitigation Checklist" with us. We talked about our risks at Creekside and the chances of them as well as possible solutions. As a follow-up from that conversation we selected a short-term Risk Management Team consisting of Mike Kauffman, Tim McFadden, Ted Noffsinger, and Jason Ward to bring back recommendations to our March meeting.

Roger reported as treasurer that our mortgage is now under \$55,000; the Finance Team recommends planning a celebration to retire the mortgage. Gen. Fund giving rebounded after low giving in December.

Updating our 7 recommendations from the Pathfinders, we are excited about the progress of the Young Adults from their initial meeting. They met on February 22 at Angels for Brunch while their children were cared for at Creekside. They also have other activities planned. We talked some about the Bible Study and will be asking Christian Ed to discuss this at their next meeting. Part of the discussion was the possibility of an inter-generational class during the Sunday School hour focusing on Bible Study. We started suggesting names for a Sustainability Team and will be looking at this further at our March meeting along with progress from 3 of the other 7 recommendations.

In looking at the need for reviewing the Constitution and By-Laws, besides some typos and formatting, we will be asking the Sustainability Team to make proposals as they look at an "organizational structure that supports the mission of Creekside". Rosanna is following up with Colin Saxton of Everence as a possible consultant to this group.

Rosanna talked a bit about her mom's memorial. The first Sunday of Lent will be observed on March 1 as we are having SAWs and BDM on February 22. Rosanna will be at Mission and Ministry meetings over the weekend of March 15.

For the good of Creekside we prayed for neighbors of Julie's and heard about Julie traveling to Camp Ithiel in Florida for a FaithX service trip.

Mike Kauffman, Church Board Chair

VIETNAM FUND

Global Mission and Service sent \$1,500 to Vietnam prevent blindness due to Retinopathy of Prematurity. Thanks to Creekside, and especially the Onward/Overcomers Sunday School class for their support of this program, which was started by Grace Mishler, who continues as a ministry partner. The money arrived just before the Lunar New Year Tet holidays (Feb. 15). Doan Thanh, ROPVN Project Manager confirmed the arrival with deep appreciation.

Your generosity will provide ROP educational training to doctors in Highlands and southern provinces of Vietnam. Creekside contributions will cover research about the "Economic Burden of Families whose infant/child has ROP".

Without Global Mission and Service Social Work Presence from 2016-2025, 98 ROP children would be blind today.

Grace Mishler

EASTER FLOWERS

Worship Team invites you to purchase flowers for the Easter chancel at Creekside! Separate order forms will be available by Sunday, March 1. Please pay at the time of your order: you may put orders in a box in the office, payment can be attached to your order, or you may include it with other giving (mark it on your offering envelope or check memo). Flowers will be yours to take home following worship on April 5, Easter Sunday. Selection and prices are as follows:

	Daffodils	\$10 each
Tulips (red, pink, orange TBD on Easter)		\$10 each
	Easter Lilies	\$10 each
	Hydrangeas (blue)	\$25 each
	Azaleas (pink)	\$25 each
	Ferns	\$25 each



CAMP MACK NEWS

Camp Mack is not slowing down as it begins its one hundred and first year. Camp has exciting plans for 2026.

First, **REGISTRATION IS OPEN** for summer camp! Registrations are entered online at <https://www.campmack.org> and must be completed at least one week ahead of the event.

There are overnight camps for children who have completed 1st grade up to youth who have completed 12th grade. First and Second grade students can enjoy a 3-day / 2-night stay. Older children and youth can participate in 6-day / 5-nights of fun and activities.

Camp offers specialty camps with a focus. Some of these include Target Sports, Splash, Creative Arts, Eco Adventure, Survivor, and the very popular Culinary Camp.

In addition to the summer camps listed above, 2 new camping opportunities are offered this year. **DAY Camp** is a 5-day camp for K-6 that runs from 8:30-4:30 daily. There is an opportunity for the camper and a parent, grandparent or adult to stay overnight on Thursday to experience dinner, evening activities, vespers and breakfast.

Travel Adventure Camp is for 6-11 graders. The week starts and ends at Camp Mack, but in between these campers will join other Church of the Brethren youth at Camp Carmel in North Carolina enjoying outdoor activities, including a natural water slide and a hike to a mountain summit.

Continued on next page...

These camps do not happen without volunteers. Some areas of service are kitchen help, housekeeping, facilities work, camp counselors, and health care volunteers (with an RN or above).

There are retreats and get-a-way days happening throughout the year. I'll try to keep you updated, but they are all listed on the website <https://www.campmack.org>. Kurt and I are participating in the Knit and Crochet Get-a-Way day on Feb, 28.

Here's what's happening this spring

- Spring Board Game Weekend – March 6-7
- Mother – Daughter Retreat – March 21-22
- Spring Break Day Camp – April 6-10 for K-5
- Quilt Retreat – April 15-19
- Adventure Day/5K/Open House – April 25
- Pastor's Sabbath – May 4-5
- Big Birding Day – May 9
- Women's Camp – May 28-30



I cannot forget to mention Family Camping opportunities: **Grand Camps** provide opportunities for grandparent(s) and up to 3 grandchildren ages 5-10 to bond while swimming, boating, singing, crafting and perhaps napping. **Colony Camp** provides its own leadership, meals and group activities. Bring your RV, tent or stay in a cabin during this August weekend at Camp Mack! **Labor Day Family Camp** is one of my favorites. This camp also provides its own leadership and activities like swimming, boating, crafts, community worship, talent show, and age-appropriate classes. Meals are provided family-style by camp.

Creekside's Christian Education Team (C.E.) wants to financially support those who attend Camp Mack*.

- For Creekside's children and youth, a 50% financial sponsorship will be provided. Please complete a form for Creekside Children or Youth found in the Christian Ed. mailbox or available to be emailed by the office. When the completed form returns to C.E., you will be given a sponsorship code to use when you register for camp.
- For Creekside's adults who participate in events at Camp, there is a similar form. Requests may be made for up to 50% of the cost. C.E. will review each request and consideration will be made based upon available funds. A custom sponsorship code will then be supplied.
- Lastly, if you are aware of someone who does not attend Creekside, but is planning to attend camp, there is a form to request financial sponsorship for Camp. C.E. will also review these requests based upon available funds and if granted, a custom sponsorship code will be given.

*Colony Camp and Labor Day Family Camp are excluded from the above financial support options.

Remember that Camp Mack has facilities to rent, for retreats, reunions, weddings, etc. Dining services can be included. Contact Chris Power in Guest Services for assistance.

Early this year, Camp Mack was awarded a \$1 million dollar grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. to fund critical infrastructures by installing a modern, unified wastewater treatment system, providing stable internet and a safer, more reliable electrical system. These items might not seem exciting, but these costly necessities provide a strong foundation to allow for future growth in staff lodging, bath houses, retreat spaces, handicapped accessibility, and paved roads. These new structural items will require fundraising, with matching grant money from the Lilly Foundation.

If you have not heard, Camp Mack's Executive Director, Gene Hollenberg is retiring January 1, 2027. Gene's tenure at Camp is far more than 10+ years as its executive, but also 40 years of volunteering previously. That's a 50 year legacy of dedication to Camp Mack.

If you have questions please ask, or call the friendly staff at Camp Mack 574-658-4831.

Lisa Vardaman, Camp Mack Representative

SPREADING P B & J



Outreach Team is collecting peanut butter and jelly through the month of March. You are invited to bring donations (16 oz or smaller jars are better) to the Gathering Area, and we will see that they are shared with a local food pantry. At Creekside, PB&J is more than something to put on a piece of bread: it is an opportunity to share praise, blessing and joy with our neighbors. Thanks for helping!

Pastor Rosanna, for Outreach Team

A NOTE FROM EVERENCE

My Christian faith shapes everything about how I see finances. In 2 Timothy 1:14, Paul reminds us to “guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you – guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit.” For me, that “deposit” isn’t only money, it’s my time, skills and opportunities. God has placed them in my hands for a purpose and I’m called to use them wisely, joyfully and with eternity in mind.

I think of Luke 21:2 where Jesus notices the widow who gave two small coins. It wasn’t the amount. It was the heart behind it. Stewardship isn’t measured in dollars but in devotion. Stewardship is about honoring God with what you have, right where you are – and trusting Him to do far more than you could imagine.

Excerpted from an article in Stewardship magazine by Everence and author Damaris Lopez.

THANK YOU

Dear Creekside Church family,
Thank you for the cards, emails, texts, and prayers as I am recovering from shoulder surgery. Thank you for your prayers and encouragement during the loss of my brother, Freeman. We are blessed to be a part of a loving church family. May God bless you.

Pauline Arnold



SPRING FORWARD

Set your clocks **forward** one hour on Saturday evening, March 7. We will see you bright and early for worship on March 8 at 9:30 am. We’ll be sure to have plenty of coffee ready that morning!

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
- 4 Vance, Darren
- 5 Snyder, Karen
- 8 Carlson, Katy
- 19 Harney, Alex
- 30 Barton, Jean
- 31 Emeis, Peggy

ANNIVERSARIES

- 5 Houser, Eric & Sharon
- 7 Graber, Cal & Sharon
- 10 Zehr, Mike & Suzanne
- 28 Rassi, Terry & Irene
- 31 Harney, Scott & Angi

EVENTS

- 3 Outreach Team, 6:00 pm
- 8 DST: “spring forward”
- 10 Brunch at Angel’s, 10:45 am
Worship Team, 11:00 am
- 11 Finance Team, 2:00 pm
- 13 Game Night, 7:00 pm
- 14 Church reserved
- 19 Church Board, 6:30 pm
- 25 Christian Ed, 6:00 pm

The Creekside Connection

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The logo for Creekside Church of the Brethren, featuring a stylized cross with a wave-like base, followed by the text "Creekside" in a serif font and "Church of the Brethren" in a smaller sans-serif font below it.
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