

California Road Missionary Church

November–December 2017 Newsletter

Pastor's Pen, November-December 2017

Since we live with Elkhart's Conservation Club in our backyard, I have regular opportunity to enjoy it in a variety of ways. One recent work project has been on a pond left over from the outdoor trout hatchery the Club had years ago. The hatchery had to be moved to a building when people took advantage of the readily available and easy-to-take fish! The pond remains, though, and it's about 25 feet across, and in the middle, it's only about 16 inches deep.

Fifteen years ago, the first time I saw that little pond, it was a slimy, green mess. It was hard to recognize that it was a pond, at all, but after poking around, I discovered parts to the original fish hatchery. They were still there, but overgrown by vegetation. I felt motivated to explore, so I grabbed my rubber boots, a shovel, and I started cleaning out the decades of decayed logs and plants. That effort revealed a long channel with concrete sides with a lot of water in it. That water came from the hill that was above it. The whole hill is flowing with springs. As I looked at that I saw a solution for the stagnant pond. I dug a trench from the channel over to the pond and buried a 4" pipe in the ground. Then I took my sledge hammer and broke some of the old concrete to allow the water to flow from the channel into the pond. I put a board at the end of the channel to block up the water, and after a few hours, there was a nice steady flow of water through the pipe into the pond and then out to the creek. As long as that water keeps flowing, the pond looks pretty good.

Fast forward fifteen years . . . Last week there I was looking at a pond filled with water weed and mat algae, a big green blob covering the whole pond. It has been a couple of years since I gave the channel a good clean out, so there were rotted leaves and fallen branches from trees. Basically, the water wasn't flowing as well as it should have been; and as a result, the pond looked a mess . . . again! Time for boots and a garden fork to clean all the weeds from the pond. This time, I also purchased some wild rice seed and planted that in the pond. My hope is that as the wild rice grows next year, it will use the nutrients in the pond to produce nice 6' tall stalks of wild rice instead of a slimy mess. Besides the rice working as a filter, we're also hoping to harvest and eat the rice!

It's interesting to realize that, just as Scripture reminds us, all creation points us to the Creator! Consider how our lives might look like that pond at any given stage, depending on where our relationship is with Jesus Christ, our source of Living Water! In the Gospel of John, we're told about a time that Jesus traveled to Samaria. He met a woman in a village there who had come to the well to get water. Jesus asked her, "Will you give me a drink?" The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.) Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."

Jesus offers to us living water! Much like the springs in the hillside are available to provide life to a pond, Jesus is our source of living water that truly brings us life. When we neglect the care needed to keep creepy crud out of our lives, things start to rot and create an unhealthy environment. Consequently, the build-up of decay hinders the flow of living water in our lives. The only way to regain proper *water flow* is to allow the Holy Spirit to do a complete and thorough cleanse.

It can be so easy to allow the equivalent of broken branches and dead leaves to clog up our lives, but I'd like to encourage you to let the Holy Spirit do the work that only He can do so that good things grow. First, allow Jesus Christ, the Living Water, to flow to you much like the pipe was needed to connect the springs of water to the pond. Then, allow Him to flow in and through you to bring life and wholeness to your soul and environment. Just as I hope the wild rice will act as a filter in the pond, allow the Holy Spirit to be the filter in your life that will protect you from unhealthy breakdown and slime-producing decay. While I can't be sure if we'll have rice to serve at our dining table next year, I do know that the Living Water will produce a good crop that will also be a blessing to others!

In His service, Pastor Bud

Let's Learn...

Let's Learn...about Spiritual Gifts. Last month, we began a series on spiritual gifts. Let's continue to study this topic together:

Natural Talents vs. Spiritual Gifts:

- Talents are often inherited through genetics and/or nurtured through one's environment (such as athleticism, musical talent, organization, public speaking, etc.). Spiritual gifts are given to believers by God when they accept the Holy Spirit's work in their lives (including faith, service, prophecy, words of wisdom, etc.). Some skills like leadership can be both an inborn talent and a spiritual gift.
- Every person (Christian or not) is born with talents, but since the Holy Spirit is the source of spiritual gifts, only believers have spiritual gifts.
- Talents can be developed through hard work, but spiritual gifts are increased as we mature in our relationship with God.

It's important to note that both gifts and talents come from God. God creates each person with talents, just as He gifts all believers with spiritual gifts. Since we are God's children, we have the privilege and responsibility to use every skill we have—whether natural or spiritual—to bring Him glory. *Information from J. Warner Wallace*

Discerning Your Gifts: Last month, we referenced a "Spiritual Gifts Assessment," if you would like a resource to discover what your spiritual gifts might be. Copies of this assessment are available at the Welcome Center.

Using Your Gifts: God entrusts us with talents and spiritual gifts for the purpose of using them to minister to others. He delights to pair the passions and gifts He instills in us with the world's deepest needs! There are numerous ways to use your gifts within our church family and beyond! If you would like personalized guidance on ways to serve according to your gifts, fill out a "Spiritual Gifts Assessment" and feel free to connect with Pastor Bud, Cris, or a trusted spiritual mentor to learn more about how to do so at Cal. Road and elsewhere. May the Lord bless you and the body of Christ as you use your spiritual gifts to honor Him!

Young Adult Fellowship

Young adults are invited to enjoy lunch and fellowship together **each Sunday afternoon** following the worship service. The coming schedule is as follows:

- **November 5:** All young adults are invited to Pastor Bud and Cris' house for homemade pizza.
- **November 12 & 19:** Tim and Sue Matteson are hosting the younger group (college students and graduates), and Pastor Bud and Cris are hosting the older group (college graduates and young couples and families).
- **November 26:** There will be no YA Fellowship on Thanksgiving weekend. Enjoy the extra time with family!
- **December 3:** All young adults are invited to Pastor Bud and Cris' house.
- **December 10:** Tim and Sue are hosting the younger YA's, and Pastor Bud and Cris are hosting the older YA's.

Please note that young adults are welcome to join either dinner when there are two options!



There will be a Children's Resale on **Saturday, November 4** from 8 am to 1 pm at the Northern Indiana Event Center (21565 Executive Pkwy, Elkhart 46514). There will be children's clothing, shoes, toys, books, bedding, infant supplies, and more. This is usually a well-attended event, so if you're looking for a popular item, you may want to arrive early. Make sure to bring your own shopping bag and cash or a check (with valid ID) to pay. More information is available online at freewebs.com/wakarusaesale.

Newsletter Schedule

In order to avoid producing newsletters around Thanksgiving and Christmas, our next couple newsletters will follow a different schedule than usual. This newsletter covers CRMC events for November through mid-December. The next newsletter will be distributed in mid-December and will cover the remainder of 2017 and January 2018.



Euchre Night

Join us at Dan and Renee Bridges' house on **Friday, November 3** at 6:30 pm for an evening of Euchre fun. From 6:30-7 pm, we will enjoy carry-in snacks before starting the game at 7. The evening will conclude at 10 pm (even if 10 rounds have not yet been completed). Please RSVP if you're

able to attend, either online at signupgenius.com/go/5080e49ada82ea6f94-november or by letting Bridges' know.

On **Friday, December 1**, Dennis and Penny Schmucker will host Euchre Night. Snacks will be shared at 6:30 pm, and the game will begin at 7. An online sign-up will be available via Sign-Up Genius in a few weeks, or you can let Schmucker's know if you're able to attend.

Children's Resale

Time Change

Daylight Saving Time ends on **Sunday, November 5** at 2 am. Don't forget to set your clocks back an hour on Saturday night!

Youth Events

Check out the upcoming activities that the youth are hosting:

- **Youth & Parents Fellowship:** Youth and parents are invited to Aaron and Kelli's house on **Saturday, November 4** at 1 pm.
- **World Missionary Press Night:** Everyone is welcome to join the youth as they volunteer at World Missionary Press on **Friday, November 10** and **Friday, December 8**. The group will meet at church at 6:15 pm and return by 9 pm. Please let Aaron know if you plan to attend.
- **Youth & Parents Meeting:** Youth and parents (and anyone interested in learning more about our youth ministry and activities) are encouraged to attend an informational meeting on **Sunday, November 12** at 6 pm.
- **Finding God in Movies:** You are invited to join the youth for their monthly Finding God in Movies event. Join them in the Youth Room on **Sunday, November 19** at 5:30 pm. Enjoy popcorn, movie, and great conversation!
- **Caroling:** Everyone is invited to go Christmas caroling with the youth on **Sunday, December 10** at 6 pm.



Feel free to ask Aaron Grosse if you have any questions or would like more information. Additionally, there are lots of resources at the youth table in the office foyer.



Work Day

A church work day will be coming soon to take care of the fallen leaves and some of the other upkeep around our church grounds and building. Keep an eye on upcoming bulletins for more information!

Intercultural Update

We are delighted to embrace Leon and Anne Amstutz, who have recently settled in our “neck of the woods” to work with SonSet Solutions. Recently, Leon shared a bit of their story in our worship service, but for those unable to be present at that time, we want to make sure you get acquainted with our new friends. Here’s a portion of some of their recent updates:

“Two years ago, we began a process that would lead us toward a goal of joining the team of missionaries at SonSet Solutions headquartered in Elkhart Indiana (formerly HCJB World Radio Engineering and HCJB Global Technology Center). Leon will be serving primarily in the Broadcast Services department, responsible for helping other ministries establish and maintain

radio stations in many locations around the world to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ. Anne plans to help out part-time in various areas such as hospitality.

“We have found answering God’s call to join SonSet Solutions and using technology to share the abundant life in Christ is somewhat like running a marathon. Runners choose the race, then apply or register for the event, then they solicit coaches and partners to support them in running the race. Finally, they go to the course where the race is held. As the appointed time nears, they take position on the course, and get on their mark – they are in position. They get set – they are ready and eager to begin. But they must wait for that final word ‘go.’

“I’m excited to say that Anne and I are at the ‘set’ stage for our next run. When we felt God calling us back into missionary service, we checked out various agencies and selected SonSet Solutions as our ‘venue.’ We made application, and successfully navigated the screening process and were approved as ‘missionary appointees.’ We then began the process of preparing to serve by enlisting a group of ‘partners’ to support us in prayer and finances. Recently we moved to the Elkhart area and have taken our place on the starting line.

“We were able to reach enough support level that SonSet allowed me to start full time on October 9 after I returned from Africa. We found a lot of people had been waiting to begin financial support until we ‘actually began serving.’ This month, SonSet reports they have received almost the full support level for our account. However, we know that some of the gifts received in October were ‘one time’ or once a year gifts, so we could still use some more financial partners. In the meantime, SonSet will allow us to tap into the ministry account reserves to make up any monthly deficits in support.”

If you would like to subscribe to Leon and Anne’s newsletter, you can do so in the following ways:

- Sign up online at <http://eepurl.com/c9nl2n>.
- Ask Leon and Anne to be added to either their electronic or paper mailing list. You can email them at lamstutz@sonsetsolutions.org or ask them in person.

Mexico Team Meeting

There will be a Mexico team meeting on **Sunday, November 5** for those who are potentially interested in attending the short-term mission trip in April 2018. The meeting will take place at 6 pm at Pastor Bud and Cris’ house to discuss trip costs and fundraising ideas. Let PB&C know if you have any questions.

Christmas Cantata

This year's Christmas cantata, *The Christmas Story*, is coming up quickly!

Practices:

- Practices take place on **Sunday evenings** from 4:30-5:45 pm. If you enjoy singing, we encourage you to join the choir. Participating in the cantata is a wonderful way to participate in worship and fellowship.
- The final rehearsal is scheduled for **Saturday, December 16** from 9 am - noon. Please bring a dish to share during the brunch!

Presentations:

- The cantata will be presented on **Sunday, December 17** during the worship service (10:15 am).
- Our choir has also been asked to sing that evening at Hubbard Hill at 6 pm.

If you have any questions, see Mike or Janis Kendall.

Partners in Prayer

Angel Tree is a ministry of Prison Fellowship that reaches out to local children who have an incarcerated parent and their families. Angel Tree connects parents in prison with their children through the delivery of Christmas gifts and the gospel. Volunteers purchase gifts for each child on behalf of their incarcerated parent.

We all have the opportunity to reach out to these families and show them that they are seen and loved! Here are some ways you can help:

- We could use some help setting up and decorating our Cal. Road Angel Tree. This needs to be done by **Saturday, November 11**.
- As early as **Sunday, November 12**, you can take a tag from our Angel Tree and purchase a gift for that child. Wrapped gifts should be returned and put under the tree by **Sunday, December 17**. Please pray for that child and their family as God brings them to your mind.



- We need at least 12 dozen homemade cookies brought to church by **Tuesday, December 19** for our Angel Tree open house (when children and their families come to pick up their gifts).
- We need people to be hosts (simply showing families that they are welcomed and loved) during the open house from 7-8 pm on **Wednesday, December 20**.
- Most importantly, we ask that you pray for the children, incarcerated parents, and other family members who will be touched by this ministry. Please pray for God's provision and healing in these lives, that His love is clearly perceived through our actions, and that these families come to know Jesus as their Savior.

If you have any questions, please contact Kathe Stowe or the church office, if Kathe is unavailable. Thank you for showing Jesus' love to these precious families!

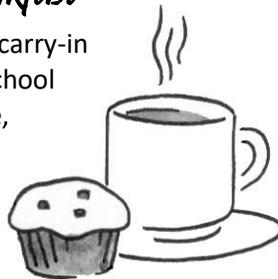
Thanksgiving Breakfast

On **Sunday, November 26**, there will be a carry-in breakfast in the gym, in place of Sunday school classes (9 am). Please bring a dish to share, based on the first letter of your last name:

A-H: Fruit

I-R: Egg or meat casserole

S-Z: Something sweet



Volunteers

Some of you have already communicated your willingness to serve our church family in some capacity. Making yourself available to come alongside our leadership, exercise your spiritual gifts and use your talents in effort to lighten the load for everyone is beautiful and greatly appreciated. Thank you! Actually, there's a long list of ways you can serve here at Cal. Rd., and the range is wide! For example, we'd welcome assistance keeping our "DC" (Deacon Closet) organized and available to our church family (and beyond). This is a great fit for those who thrive on being attentive to details, but there are other responsibilities that require a different skill/gift set. Rest assured that we want to help make good "match-ups" so that our church family remains healthy and fruitful. Please consider the "Let's Learn" portion at the beginning of our newsletter. If you've never done a "Spiritual Gifts Inventory" or it has been quite some time since doing yours, feel free to pick one up from the Welcome Center, fill it out, and return it to our church office if you would like. While there is certainly no requirement to do this, it will be valuable for us to know how God has gifted our church family as we prayerfully pursue ministry matters and match-ups!

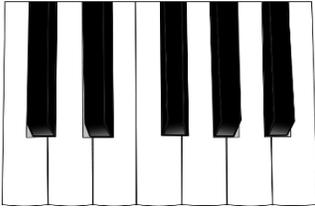
Thanksgiving Cancellations

A few regular CRMC activities will be cancelled around Thanksgiving, in order to clear your schedules to enjoy time with family and friends:

- Midweek meal/classes (**Wednesday, November 22**)
- Men's Prayer (**Thursday, November 23**)
- Women's Bible Study (**Thursday, November 23**)
- Sunday school (**Sunday, November 26**) *Please note that there will be a carry-in breakfast during this time, in place of Sunday school classes.
- Young Adult Fellowship (**Sunday, November 26**)

Genesians

The Bethel College Genesians will be performing "The Long Road Home" by Earl Reimer during our worship service (10:15 am) on **Sunday, November 19**. The play shares Jesus' parable of the prodigal son, beginning shortly after the return of the lost son.



Precital

You are invited to enjoy Anna Matteson's "precital" at CRMC on **Sunday, November 26** at 4 pm. This practice recital will serve as valuable practice for Anna before

her final recital at Ball State, as well as make it possible for her to share her music with family and friends unable to travel to Muncie to hear her perform. Refreshments will be served afterwards.

CAN Cancelled

Since several of our regular participants are unavailable this time, Creative Arts Night (scheduled for the evening of Sunday, November 5) has been cancelled. We're sorry to miss your fellowship during CAN this fall, but we look forward to the time together during CAN next spring!

More Notes to Notice

- The next Ministry Board meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, November 14**. Dinner will be served at 6 pm, and meeting will start at 6:30.
- The Administrative Board will meet on **Thursday, November 16** at 7 pm.
- The proposed 2018 budget will be posted on the bulletin board outside of the church offices by **Sunday, November 26** for you to review.
- On **Sunday, December 10** following the worship service, there will be a short Business Meeting to give everyone a chance to discuss and approve the 2018 budget.

are \$8/adults and \$7/students and seniors. Tickets are not yet for sale, but they should be by mid-November.

There are lots of other upcoming performances and events at Bethel College. If you're interested in browsing them, you can view a calendar at bethelcollege.edu/campusevents.

Singles

The last two Singles gatherings of the year will take place on **Fridays, November 10** and **December 8** at 5:30 pm.

- On **Sunday, December 24**, the Christmas story will be presented in place of the sermon through the performance "What Child is This?"

We look forward to worshipping God together as we listen to His truths presented through drama.

Thank You

From Beth Kroa & Family:

"Cal Road, Our family appreciated the beautiful peace lily from our friends in 'California.' Thank you for covering us with your prayers.

The family of Karen Brown"

From Pastor Bud & Cris:

"Dearest Church Family, You're a treasure, and you've refreshed us in so many ways, especially during Pastor Appreciation month! Thank you for that. Your constant ministry of prayer, your words of encouragement, and your kind gifts have been great blessings, and we're so grateful to and for each of you. We count it all joy and an incredible privilege to serve at Cal. Rd., and we pray that the Lord will use us in partnership with you to communicate the love of Jesus Christ to one another, to our community, and to the world. May the Lord bless! PB&C"

Bethel Performances

- **Fall Show:** Bethel College's Theatre Department will perform "To Kill a Mockingbird" in the Everest-Rohrer Auditorium on **Thursday, November 9** and **Friday, November 10** at 7:30 pm and **Saturday, November 11** at 1 pm and 7:30 pm. Tickets are \$15/adults and \$13/students and seniors. You can purchase tickets online at tickets.bethelcollege.edu/Attractions.aspx or by calling Bethel's ticket office at 574-807-7080.
- **Christmas concert:** Bethel's 70th annual Christmas concert will be performed on **Friday, December 1** at 7:30 pm and **Saturday, December 2** at 2 and 7:30 pm in the Everest-Rohrer Auditorium. Tickets



Drama

Our resident thespians, under the direction of Cobey Bartlett, have been preparing various skits and dramatic presentations to enrich our worship services in the coming weeks.

- On **Sunday, December 3**, the skit "Heavenly Expectations" will be performed.
- On **Sunday, December 10**, the skit "Hearts Adorned with Wonder" will be presented.



Sledding

Join us on **any snowy Sunday** afternoons for sledding. We will meet at the Conservation Club at 2 pm and finish in time for 4:30 choir practice.

Inclement Weather

In the event that we need to cancel a worship service or any CRMC events due to bad weather, we will announce the cancellation via the prayer chain and WNDU.

JOY Group

JOY (Just Older Youth) Group will meet on **Wednesdays, November 15 and December 20** at noon for lunch and fellowship. Please bring a dish to share, and come enjoy the time together!



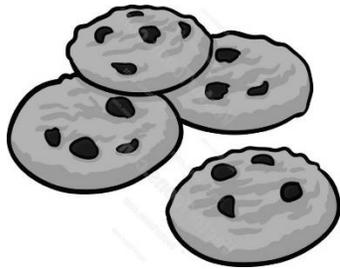
Directory Updates

We're so glad to have new directory inserts to share with you in the coming weeks, so please watch your mailboxes for pages to take home and insert into your CRMC directories. Additional pages will be available at the Welcome Center. A couple reminders:

- 1) **If you do not yet have your own directory binder**, please contact Hannah or Cris to receive yours.
- 2) **If you still need a directory page or your current one is out of date**, please fill out a red information half-sheet and return it to Hannah so that we can create your page. This is an extremely valuable tool for matching faces to names and keeping up-to-date contact information.
- 3) **The directory is also available on our church website** (californiaroad.org) under the "CRMC Member Resources" tab. See Katya, Cris, or Hannah if you need the password to access this resource.

Prayer Chain

Daily Advent devotionals will be sent out on the prayer chain again this year. If you would like to be added to or removed from the prayer chain, please let either Cris or Hannah know.



We have an opportunity to minister to Bethel College students by providing them with cookies during their finals week. The cookies will be served in Bethel's Learning Center for any students to enjoy as they work on their final projects. In order to get these to students in time, we need 100 homemade cookies delivered to the church by **Tuesday, December 12**. A sign-up sheet will be available in a couple weeks. Please send your cookies in non-returnable containers. Thank you for showing care to these students during a stressful time of their year!

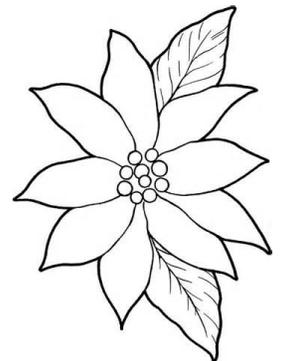
Cookies

Prairie Camp Help

There are two upcoming work days taking place at Prairie Camp on **Saturdays, November 4 and 11** from 8 am to 4 pm. Your help is appreciated whenever you're available, even if it's for a couple hours. Please bring any helpful equipment or tools you have (such as rakes, wagons, leaf blowers, tarps, trailers, loaders, work gloves, etc.). Lunch will be provided for any who let Ben Hahn know in advance that they are coming. You can sign up online at signupgenius.com/go/5080c4aaef28aafd0-2017 or by contacting Ben at ben@mcncd.org or 574-612-2241. Come enjoy the fresh air and good company as we serve together.

Poinsettias

If you're interested in ordering a poinsettia plant to both decorate our sanctuary for Christmas and honor a loved one, please fill out a poinsettia order form and return it to Cris. Poinsettias (7.5" double plant pot with 4-11 blooms) are \$9.25 and are available in red, white, pink, marble, and jingle bell. Order forms are available at the Welcome Center, and completed forms and payments are due to Cris by **Sunday, November 19**.



Thanksgiving Thoughts

*Oh come, let us sing to the LORD; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!
 Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!
 For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods.
 ...Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker!
 For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand.
 Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts...*

– Psalm 95:1-3, 6-8a