

River of Love

1050 SW 15th St.
Oak Grove, MO 64075
crosscreekbaptist.com

CROSS CREEK BAPTIST

The Church on a Mission!

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CHRISTMAS CHANCES EVERY YEAR

RAY GURNEY, PASTOR

This Christmas season we should have a spirit among our family like never before. We have much to praise God about since last year. 2025 has been a trying year. The buildings insurance premium quadrupled, then later in the year we got some relief as the insurance company determined that the building appraisal was overvalued and by reducing that number our monthly premium was reduced but not as much as would have liked. There were unexpected expenditures in rapid succession; the kitchen fridge and stove needed replaced at the same time; \$2000. The parking lot needed sealed, the cost was \$4300, then the security system died, replacement cost; \$700 plus. Next, the audio/visual computer had to be replaced then one of the microwaves in the kitchen stopped just before the business meeting! Then the laptop we use for Livestream had an issue that cost nearly \$200 to correct but thankfully we didn't have to replace the laptop. Thanks to our faithful church members, donations were made until each of these needs were met. I would estimate that all of that was more than \$10,000. Also, during that period the budget was met. Thank you, Lord, for your faithful people who love you and your church.

When this season rolls around, I'm happier than I used to be. Age has a tendency to either make you happy or make you grouchy. I don't know how my family would say I am (happy or grouchy). My work load has been decreased. I don't put up the Christmas Tree or hang lights outdoors in the freezing wind as I have for the past 40 years. I'm happy

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about that. Our tree is so heavy that I had to have assistance to get it upstairs. I'm happy! For 50 years Vickie has cooked Christmas dinner at our home for her family. Her niece, stepped up and took it over last year and is hosting Christmas Eve dinner at their home. I'm happy. It was so nice last year to hop in the car and drive to their home, eat, visit and head home. I'm happy. I'm so thankful Dana is capable and willing to carry on the Guffey tradition. I'm happy! Now that we don't have dinner at our home on Christmas Eve, Christmas morning when I get up there won't be 15 slices of homemade pies and delicious leftovers in the fridge to sample. I'm happy. It's possible that this 2025 may be the happiest Christmas of my life. I have a wonderful family, lots of friends, a great church family to fellowship with each week and most of all a little baby who came into the world to turn my tarnished life spotless. I'm HAPPY. Merry Christmas to all of you.

Pastor Ray

CROSS CREEK CHRISTMAS DINNER

December 21st after our Sunday morning service we will have our Cross Creek Christmas dinner. Please come and bring your favorite casserole, salad, veggie dish, or dessert, as well as a friend! Ham, brisket, mashed potatoes, gravy and drinks will be provided.

Hope you will be able to attend!



LADIES DAY OUT

Ladies, saddle up your horses...we're headed to the Hereford House with some of the city's finest grill masters in addition to their generous cuts of steak and guest favorites like their steak soup, rime rib, and carrot cake. Hereford House also serves an impressive selection of seafood. Meet us at church for our Christmas Ladies Day Out, December 9th at 12:30 PM.

Vickie

We read the Christmas story about men bringing Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh to the home of Jesus. Have you actually smelled Frankincense? Here's how some people describe its aroma. Earthy and piney, Citrus, Spicy, Warm and balsamic and Smoky. Frankincense has some medicinal values. My friend in Nebraska was nearly unable to walk due to a hip pain. His wife read about Frankincense and decided to try it on her husband. It wasn't long before he began to see signs of improvement. It's really helped. Vickie read an article about its healing powers and ordered some. Lord have mercy! Skunk oil is pleasant compared. Myrrh is a strong base for making perfume since the earliest time. Thought you'd find this interesting. And gold? It smells wonderful.

HELD BY JESUS WHEN LIFE FEELS HEAVY

Struggling with your mental health doesn't make you less of a Christian. Maybe you've been told that your anxiety is a sin, or that depression means you don't have enough faith. Messages like that can make us want to hide our struggles, even from God.

But the truth is that **God welcomes us in the middle of our pain.** He sees us, He understands us, and He invites us to bring our whole selves to Him, struggles and all. Having faith doesn't mean we won't experience difficult emotions. It means we trust that God will meet us in them and help us find healing.

Christians aren't immune to anxiety, depression, or burnout. Sometimes we just act like we should be.

It's easy to think "good Christians" are supposed to have it all together. That if our faith was strong enough, we wouldn't struggle. But that's not true.

Here's the truth: Loving Jesus doesn't make you exempt from being human. Feeling overwhelmed, weary, or heartbroken doesn't mean your faith is flawed.

The Bible is full of people who struggled deeply:

- **Moses** felt overwhelmed and wanted to give up (Numbers 11:10-15)
- **Hannah** grieved in pain and desperation (1 Samuel 1)
- **Elijah** faced despair and asked God to take his life (1 Kings 19)



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- **Job** wrestled with suffering and questioned everything (Job 3)
- **David** poured out fear, sorrow, and weariness in prayer (Psalm 13)
- **Jesus** Himself felt anguish in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26:36-39)

Your struggles don't disqualify you. They don't make you a bad Christian. Often, they become the very place we learn to lean on the kindness, presence, and strength of God.

Struggling can be the thing that reminds us how much we need Jesus.

It's okay to be human. He is here, and He will carry the weight with you. You don't have to walk this road alone.

Reaching out for support isn't a lack of faith, it's proof you believe God cares for you. Your Cross Creek family is with you, and God has equipped skilled Christian counselors to walk alongside you, too.

And if you feel the weight a little more during the holidays, you're not alone. This season can stir up grief, pressure, exhaustion, and longing. Joy can feel complicated, and expectations can feel heavy. Wherever you are, Jesus meets you there. You don't have to force anything or carry it alone. He holds your heart, even now.

Chrissy Kirkman

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Let your roots grow down into (Christ), and let your lives be built on Him. Then your faith will grow strong...and you will overflow with thankfulness. *Colossians 2:7 (NLT)*

“Surely this our God; we trusted in him, and he saved us. This is the LORD, we trusted in him; let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation” (Isaiah 25:9)

MEN'S BREAKFAST, Saturday, December 20th at 8 AM - Perkins in Independence.

Please invite your neighbor or a friend to join us. It's a good time to fellowship with other men in our community.



DECEMBER MENU

\$6.00 per person (ages 7 - adult)
\$3.00 per person (ages 6 & under)

Dec. 3, Beef Stew, biscuits, sweet potatoes, salad & dessert.

Dec. 10, Chili & Hot Dogs, corn bread, cheese and crackers, salad, & dessert

Dec. 17, Ham & Cheese Sliders, Bob's beans, chips, salad & dessert