

# River of Love

**CROSS CREEK**  
BAPTIST MISSION  
*Moving Mountains!*

1050 South West 15th Street,  
Oak Grove, MO 64075  
[www.crosscreekbaptist.com](http://www.crosscreekbaptist.com)

**Pastor Ray Gurney**

## **ROOTED by Pastor Ray**

Cross Creek lost a good man when Bill Neland was called home last month. Bill's fight with cancer was fast. He had severe pain at work, went to get help and by the end of the day he landed in North Kansas City Hospital's heart floor. Tests were ordered and soon discovered that Bill had esophageal cancer. Those words can take the wind out of your sails and that's what happened to Bill. He had great care at NKC Hospital and hated to leave there but was sent home. He had a feeding tube placed and learned the art of self-feeding. His instructor was Sue Ashley, retired RN. She went far beyond just teaching Bill to feed with the tube. Home less than a week, Bill was taken by ambulance to St. Luke's East where they discovered the severity of his illness. He was advised his best option was hospice given the circumstances. Bill's sister, Cindy, was informed that it was time for hospice to take over so he was moved back to North Kansas City Hospice House where he lived most of a day.

That was Bill's ending, but not his life. Vickie and I met Bill in 2000 when he cooked at Sandy's Restaurant, then close to the church in Grain Valley. It took years for us to build a strong relationship as Bill often moved seeking work. Eventually Bill settled back in our area and he began attending Cross Creek and became a longtime member. Seldom have I seen a life transformed as Bill's. Bill read the Word of God faithfully morning and night. He watched old Billy Graham Crusade preaching on TV. He loved Christian music and loved listening to our Praise Team worship on Sunday. Bill believed that everything in his possession actually belonged to God and it was just on loan to him. That's why Bill called everything he had God's; he drove God's van then God's SUV. He had God's banking account. He lived in God's apartment. He managed God's money and gave God's money in the offering plate. If he ever missed a Sunday,

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### **Special points of interest:**

- DAY LIGHT SAVINGS TIME BEGINS MARCH 12TH
- LAUREL TAYLOR AT CROSS CREEK

## Men's Breakfast

Men; you will have your monthly Breakfast Saturday, March 18th, 2023, 8:00 AM at **Dan Slate's house** 803 North Pine Court, Oak Grove, MO. He has been cooking up some ideas for your Breakfast for some time. Join him at his house for a time together. Please sign up on our signup sheet. Please invite a friend!

## **MARCH 11TH** **SPRING CHURCH** **CLEANING DAY** **8 am-2:pm**

Pastor Ray said come and join us. We need too clean windows , pickup limbs and sticks. Some windows need to be washed and baseboards cleaned there are a few easier things on the list. If you are able, come and join in the fun!

## ROOTED...continued from page #1

which was rare, he brought God's money to my office as soon as he could. Are we so faithful to God that we consider what we have as it belonging to Him?

Bill was faithful to his employer. He worked for the company and did his best. He had a friend who lives near the church and Bill stopped by and checked on him after church on many Sundays. That man is now in the same shape in which Bill found himself just weeks ago. The two went to school together and never lost contact. Bill was certainly a faithful friend to me. Sometimes he could get pretty demanding wanting me to do things for him that he couldn't do for himself. What are friends for? We will miss Bill's kindness and generosity to the Cross Creek family.

## Rooted Series starting March 19th!

We are going to break from the Revelation to get focused on the eternal Jesus Christ and his ministry while on this earth. He did incredible things folks and He expects incredible things from us. Just think, the King called you to help expand the Kingdom. We are blessed to be the called but it's a difficult calling. Jesus laid the foundation on which the church is built. Peter, the rock, as Jesus called him, was called. "Peter, you are the rock man! On you I'm going to build My church and the gates of Hell will not overpower it." Our church is surviving but not growing. We have to do something. We are in spiritual ICU. We have to sow some kingdom seeds and grow.

I will be starting a 4-week series titled; Rooted! These sermons will build on the agricultural imagery that Jesus often used. *Rooted*, will help us start growing, pruning, and harvesting again. We'll discuss both unhealthy and healthy practices in the life of a believer and the process of discipleship that led to a fruitful life in Christ. The New Testament addresses life in and among the community of believers. As a pastor there isn't anything better than seeing my Cross Creek family healthy, growing, and producing kingdom fruit. Let's get excited and invite people who are looking for a healthy church that preaches the truth and church members who know God cares deeply about them in our everyday walk. Get ready.

## LADIES DAY OUT

March 21, 2023 at 1 PM the ladies will meet at the church and ride over to the 3rd Street Social in Lee's Summit for lunch. Bring a friend and come join us for a fun Spring afternoon. *Dixie*

## Guard Your Joy - It Is Worth Protecting by *Chrissy Kirkman*

The sooner we can realize that our joy doesn't just happen to us, the more joy we will experience.

Inherently, it is ours as believers. It is a gift straight from our Father's hands, rooted in the unwavering love and incomprehensible grace He pours over us with every breath that we have.

Really, joy is Jesus. He is it, personified. We never have to earn it; however, we do have to keep it. Guard it. Be alert of what tries to take it from our hands.

The enemy would love nothing more than to try to stake his territory and replace what we are "drinking". With the perfect mix— a little stress, some unnecessary anxiety, a sliver of comparison, and a teaspoon of fear, he can have us swirling into the throws of our future and completely unavailable to the present moment.

And here's the thing- we frequently hear the phrase, "choose joy!" And YES! But if we don't realize the thieves that are hoping to hijack it, our hearts will not sound off the alarms when the walls need to go up, the sirens need to blare, and we need the perfect truth of God to dispel whatever is trying to take our joy.

But today, we get to be alert. It is the most understated yet effective tool to remain on the offense, fully confident that if we ask for eyes to see, Jesus will show us when something doesn't look like Him. Of all people, our Father wants this most for us.

Something can be heavy and we can still choose to carry it lightly. Something can be unknown and unprecedented and we can still decide fear or anxiety isn't necessary. Something can tempt our eyes to switch lanes and compare but we can still decide that the next step for us has nothing to do with our neighbor's pace.

What might be trying to steal your joy today? Do you feel like you've already passed it off?

Take it back. It's okay, it has your name on it.

Then guard it. Fiercely. Offer it to as many people as possible and it will multiply. Proclaim it, stand on it, and exercise it in all that you do. When we operate in this radical joy frequently, we don't have to worry about it being stolen, as it realizes that it comes from abiding in the palm of His hands. And nothing— NOTHING — can take us from there.

## LAUREL TAYLOR

Experience God in a night of worship and testimony with Nashville singer/songwriter and recording artist Laurel Taylor. From the American Idol stage to the church leading worship, her voice speaks to every crowd. Laurel has walked the red carpet at the GMA Dove Awards alongside Anne Wilson and Toby Mac, and has toured the country performing alongside Diamond Rio, Lauren Dagle, and Jason Crabb. Using life stories to speak to people through her music, her latest single, "Old House", released in January 2023.

**Come and worship  
with Laurel at Cross  
Creek on March 24th  
7:00 PM**



**Daylight Saving  
Time**

**begins March 12th**

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### WEDNESDAY NIGHT IS FAMILY NIGHT!

**Wednesday night dinners begin at 6:00 PM.** The cost is \$6.00 a person for ages 7 years through adult. 6 years and under are \$3.00. The menu for the month is listed on the right. **Please sign-up on the list on the information table each week.** If you are running late that night, please call the church so we can set aside the proper number of meals for you.

**Mar.2, Beef Stroganoff**, mashed potatoes, green beans, rolls, cottage cheese, salad & dessert.

**Mar. 8, Chicken & Pork Burritos**, Rice, Cheese Dip, chips, salad & dessert.

**Mar. 15, Corn Beef & cabbage**, cheesy potatoes, green beans, cottage cheese, salad & dessert.

**Mar. 22, Pork Chops**, mashed potatoes, gravy, green beans, cottage cheese, rolls, salad & dessert.

**Mar. 29, Spaghetti & Meatballs**, green beans, garlic bread, salad & dessert.

