



crossroads farm

Down on the Farm

The Quarterly Newsletter of Crossroads Farm
January, February, March 2024

Prayer Event: Jericho March

Shed-13 schools with 64 participants

Lanes-8 schools with 24 participants

Mine-3 schools with 25 participants

"One student got up at 4:30am to be there!" -branch director

The Jericho March is one of four specific prayer events throughout our year. Based on Joshua six, students arrive prior to the beginning of school and silently walk around and through their buildings in prayer, that God may break down strongholds in Jesus' name.

"That's where kids go to vape and make out...we should pray over there." -HS boy



Scan Here
Nathaniel
Jericho March



Scan Here
Kamedon
Jericho March



Scan Here
Aiden
Jericho March



Thank you for the Scholarship!
 It was the best decision for me to come and I'm glad that I had the opportunity for that I will never forget it
 It opened my eyes!



Scan Here
 Life After
 Winter
 Retreat

"Wild Wild West" Winter Retreat 2024



Scan Here
 Winter
 Retreat:
 The Followup



February found the CRF Staff and students circling the wagons, line dancing and gun fighting... all in good fun, of course. 288 attended the 24th annual Winter Retreat, and 11 students responded to the Gospel for the first time. The theme was Wild West, and it is safe to say that Michindoh Conference Center has been roped and branded for now. Our speaker, David McDonald, led students in a study about Nehemiah while the worship band, New Anthem, was a homecoming of sorts. This year featured a raucous BIG Game which has become a staple of the CRF event, but the special surprise may have stolen the program show- our very own rodeo! Incredible. Every student survey said something about how great it was. Pro Edge Arena loved our students well. This year brought many students closer to their Lord via Happy Trails. 🐾

To try and have
 Merc Faith

giving myself to god



That god Loves me



To Start reading
 My bible more



I learned why we see god as our savior

That its ok to stop and pray after something
 bad happened.

Worship!!!
 So much fun!



I came back to god after
 walking away from him



I let god take Control

Be bold with my faith



Yes, I accepted god into my life this weekend.

That its ok to stop and pray after something bad happened.

Jesus understands what I go through - I so often forget that He once walked this same earth so he understands the human side of me.

that no matter what god will always love me

yes, to ~~the~~ go to Jesus



Baptism



Jesus' baptism led the way for us as an example of this important event. What a thrill to be an extension of the local rural church, their youth ministry, in this way. Six students, three high school and three middle school, were baptised this quarter. Amen and yahoo! 🙌

WHY DO YOU WANT TO GET BAPTISED?

As a Christian, you try and do what He (Jesus) does.
-HS boy



WHAT IS YOUR STORY?

I grew up in an abusive household. I tried to be a ghost in my father's presence. I tried to find my value in other people but it didn't work. He's (God) the reason I feel loved, where I feel safe, where I trust.
-HS boy

WHAT CHANGED SINCE JESUS?

I've felt more like me, as weird as that sounds. I wanna make it official.

WHY DO YOU WANT TO GET BAPTISED?

I wanna show the world what He can do and what He can do through me.
-HS girl

Welcome New National Board Member



I am grateful for the invitation to be on the board at Crossroads Farm. My hope is that I can bring my expertise, in finance, and heart to this wonderful ministry. I try to live my life daily using the words from Proverbs 1:7, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction." My hope and prayer for our youth revolves around them discovering our Savior and heeding His direction for their life. I am so thankful for the ministry of the Crossroads Farm. Our youth are constantly attacked with lies about themselves and about our Lord. My hope for them is that they discover the truth. I wholeheartedly believe that this ministry is working hard to show that truth through how they love these teenagers not just in this stage in life but loving them after leaving this ministry. My wife Kate and I have one son, Jack and we live in a rural town in Indiana. My goal and prayer for this ministry is for strength and longevity. 🙌



From the Desk of the President

March 2024



Dawn and I were reading together the other morning as we have over the past 30+ years. We've found the time to be one of the most critical components to our getting our hearts and minds on the same page. It doesn't hurt that it affords us the luxury of a second cup of coffee together. Those unscripted moments are our most treasured and protected. We get ourselves lined up against the day which comes at us like a linebacker in a game of Red Rover. If our grasp breaks, we lose.



These last three months have been some of the most demanding of our lives as leaders at CRF. That's not a complaint. In fact, it's the opposite. We have always desired a ministry which demands all that we have, every day we live, for as long as we live. We continue to see God's hand doing exceedingly more than we can ask or think. At the beginning of November, which seems a million years ago, we took our first sight visit to Rosebud County, Montana. After three days in America's prairie land, we returned home with faces and names attached to our burden. Jabin, Rosebud County's Ministry Director in Training, has been with us for several months now. He is actively seeking and praying for an Administrative Director to join the CRF The Ranch effort. Perhaps you know someone.

On the weekend of January 19th, we took our next step trip to Waupaca County, Wisconsin. We met with pastors and community leaders. Again, our burden was met with faces and names. One pastor, currently working with two different churches arrived months earlier, a missionary from the Philippines, to America's dairy land. He said our visit was an answer to his prayers. He has developed a small group of teenagers and sees what CRF does as a way to win the lost generation of rural American teens. Weight. Tears. A need for two directors. We have spoken, traveled, represented, planned, and written into the next 25 years. We have been preparing a renovation and completion project at CRF The Lanes slated for this summer. CRF The Mine has nearly outgrown its current facility. CRF The Shed is finding its rhythm and has fully transitioned to the current leadership. We have seen God do much. We believe He intends to do much more.



Our Winter Retreat is completed and our teams worked hard with the National Office to provide the best possible environment for students to encounter Christ. Competitions, a rodeo(!), housing assignments, transportation, medical releases, stage decor, and caring for every minute detail filled our days, and often our nights.

We are savoring the working of His Spirit at retreat and already moving on to the next. Branch encouragement and development has both of us meeting with our branch directors often. We continue to write into manuals and policy for the benefit of dynamic youth ministry in every rural place. I am currently writing three specific additions for our director's training. The most exciting piece is a Biblical exploration of the necessary intangibles leaders require.

Of course, we continue to strategize and plan recruitment tactics in order to "Deepen the benches." Next year, as a result, we have prepared for significant college campus presence. Your prayers would be so appreciated. In keeping with this emphasis, we have been given an opportunity to co-host a rural and small church meet-up in Atlanta, in April, at the Orange Conference. Although we are not sure what short term benefits exist for CRF through this relationship, we do look forward to meeting with rural leaders and beginning new relationships.



The pressing schedule holds two incredible events for CRF supporters, friends and alumni. On Saturday, April 20th, we will be hosting our 25th anniversary student alumni night. It is a regular CRF ministry night designed to reconnect former CRF students to the ministry and each other. IT WILL BE A BLAST! On Saturday, May 25th at 3:30pm, CRF will be celebrating its 25th anniversary event titled, Things Unseen! We anticipate 500 attendees. You should have already received an invitation in the mail. Please plan now to celebrate with us.

Doug Routledge

Doug Routledge
President
Crossroads Farm

Dawn and I are enjoying each other, being grandparents and adventuring on the road! On our walks we talk about God's faithfulness and often, YOU! Some of you are coming by for a visit, we'll see the rest of you on May 25th! 🌍



Letter Jackets Awarded

John 15:13 "There is no greater love than this: that a person would lay down his life for the sake of his friends."

Our Crossroads Farm coaches lay down their lives for their students. Time, talent and treasure are given so that rural youth may know and experience the love of Christ. At CRF, when you have served five consecutive years, you are awarded a letter jacket with green sleeves. When you have served 10 consecutive years, you are awarded a white sleeved letter jacket. What a privilege to give six green sleeved and one white sleeved jackets this year as a part of our Winter Retreat. Take a minute right now and pray for all our coaching staff team, who love and invest in rural youth for the glory of Jesus Christ. 🌍



New Missionary



Crossroads Farm The Shed welcomed John Barstow this quarter as a Seasonal Resident through August of this year. Although John calls the east coast home, he has lived in Hillsdale County for six years, first as a Psychology Major at Hillsdale College, then overlapping those years with two and a half years of volunteerism with students at CRF. John's residency is giving him a variety of experiences from programming to property maintenance, trip planning to lunches in our public schools with students. "I wanted to serve at CRF because I remember being a rural student who felt lost, and now I can show students like me the way to be found through Christ." As a special noted extra, John was recently engaged to Ellerie, one of The Shed's coaching staff volunteers! 🌍

Prayer Event: Good Friday

"He is not here. He is risen as He said." This truth allows us to remember His death and the cost of our salvation.

Each branch of CRF hosted special events centred around Maundy Thursday/Good Friday with interactive programming from foot washing to ACTS prayer stations. We also served beautiful brunches to students at two of our branches. 🌈



"It was really encouraging to see students washing each other's feet, and to see students approach coaches and wash their feet."

-Shed Director

For the ongoing work in the lives of rural youth, special gifts were given:



In Memory Of

LaVeeda Clawson



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Loving The Rural Teenager



Prayer Closet

Yahoos:

- CRF The Mine got a bus and will begin student transportation soon
- CRF The Lanes purchase and expansion campaign is nearing a close and Lord willing we will break ground on that portion this fall
- CRF The Shed's Administrative Director, Janelle, married one of their awesome volunteers, Bennett, in the Prayer Chapel in March.



Take It To Jesus:

- The Alumni Event on April 20th (<https://bit.ly/CRFAlumniEvent>)
- The 25th Anniversary Celebration on May 25th! (<https://bit.ly/CRF25thAnniversaryCelebration>)
- The discipleship process with the eleven students that made professions of faith at winter retreat 🌈



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Special Bulletin Amen and Yahoo

On April 3, 2024, (we simply couldn't wait until the next quarter to share!), Crossroads Farm was deeded/GIFTED 24.9 acres of land adjacent to CRF The Lanes, Kalkaska County, MI. This is property on which The Lanes have hosted their past three Murder Mystery Outreach events and land for which they have been praying.



We are humbled and overwhelmed at God's generous provision. In the short days to follow, another layer of miracle was uncovered, as Dawn walked around The Lanes building with a potential builder for their expansion project. It was on the walk around that Dave shared that that property used to belong to his parents, and how his mom had daily stomped around that property (she was a feisty, 100lb red head), praying that God would use it! But it was a machine shop property, it seemed an odd prayer. A few property transfers and nearly five decades later, this very property is fulfilling Sarah's prayers and our vision: Crossroads Farm desires for every secondary student in our surrounding area to hear the Gospel of Christ and have the opportunity to say "yes" or "no" to that message. That IS happening. Students have already accepted Christ on that property, it now belongs to God through CRF, and will be used to continue to bring Him glory.



Please scan the QR code to hear this story first hand.

(continued on back)



Our God is so good. The pictures shown here are some of the meetings and prayer over the development of the expansion plans for The Lanes with ground breaking soon to follow.

Amen and Yahoo! 🙌

