

FEBRUARY 2026

OCKER BRETHREN CHURCH

Serving Christ, Serving Our Community



From the Pastor....

Happy February Ocker! I can't believe we are already into the second month of 2026, time doesn't stop for anybody or anything... does it!?

I want to take this opportunity to remind you of our Mission Focus here at Ocker. Ocker takes Jesus' command to spread his Kingdom to the ends of the earth very seriously. We support (and participate in) an array of missionaries and ministries that we believe are at the vanguard of advancing the Kingdom of God.

As a member of the Unity of the Brethren, Ocker also supports the missions of our denomination as well. Recently, the Unity elected me to be the Vice President of Missions. Essentially, my job is to (along with my Missions Team) oversee and manage all foreign and home missions associated with the Unity. In addition, the Unity wants me to help connect our missionaries to our churches...we want to get the word out!

Over the years, Ocker has hosted several Unity missionaries, but we haven't been as engaged as we should have been. And I want to confess...that is mostly my fault. I can give you reasons as to why, but the reasons don't excuse the fact that Ocker has not had a distinctive focus on foreign missions the past several years. Our financial support has never wavered but our spiritual focus did. But, I want to change that...I want to fix that fact.... if you will help me.

Part of the way we "fix that" is by writing this article. I think "awareness" is always one of the first "steps" towards fixing a problem. That makes sense...once I was aware that the Unity actively supports five different missionaries, I immediately wondered who they were and when I learned who they were, I started praying for them and when I started praying for them, I wanted to find other ways to help them...and before I knew it – I was focused on them.

I want that to happen to Ocker....

So...let me introduce you to our Five Missions/Missionaries:

Pavel and Stania Kozak — Pavel and Stania are dear friends of Ocker. They engage in street evangelism in the Czech Republic. They have visited Ocker many times...and they bring with them amazing reports of people they meet on the streets. The way they introduce Jesus to the lost is fascinating. You can follow

The next Board of Elders meeting is **Wednesday, February 11, 2026 at 6:30 pm** in the Conference Room. Meetings are open and **ALL** are invited to attend.

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At the January meeting John Brinkley was elected Board President, Mark Wilfert - Vice President, Robert Stephens - Financial Secretary, and Amanda Parker - Board Secretary. Other members are John Paul Chervenka, Stephanie Phillips, Lynne Cassens, John Shank and Mike Beimer.

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their work by reading their newsletter (<http://ske.me.cz/MIN/>). The login information is: Czech, Password: Mission. (*Information taken from newsletter*)

Phil and Eunice Raiford – Phil and Eunice are missionaries primarily in southern Mexico. Phil and Eunice have a passion to see Jesus known to all peoples. Dr. Eunice Raiford runs medical clinics, treating patients from the Miskito people in Nicaragua to the Mixe people in Oaxaca. She has a strong passion to heal others and teach women about God and how to serve Him faithfully. Phil has served discipling people and helping men become Godly fathers, brothers, husbands, and friends. He came to Mexico in 2005 and has been living among the indigenous people ever since. They both have a heart for teaching people about creating small businesses and a future of economic stability within the culture in which they live. Phil and Eunice value learning first about others and seeing how God changes their lives, preserving their culture and worldview. They have two children; Ian, 9, and Hannah, 6. They work with several mission organizations...you can read more about their bio (which this portion was taken) if you go to this link: <https://www.cten.org/mexico-missionaries/philip-and-eunice-raiford> (*Information taken from website*)

Joel and Teresa Jelski — The Jelskis are missionaries in Israel. They have been working in chaos since the attack in October 2023. Their story is such a roller coaster...if you would like to follow more closely, you can receive their newsletter. Visit www.fieldsofwheat.org for more information.

John Brinkley (Prosthetic Promises) — Ocker knows and loves John Brinkley and his ministry. If you don't know about Prosthetic Promises, please ask John to tell you about it. In short, Prosthetic Promises was founded in the fall of 2012 by John Brinkley, BCO and Chris Reiff, CP, two medical specialists from Central Texas. The pair had just returned from a mission trip to Zambia, Africa, where they helped more than a dozen people by providing prostheses and ocular prostheses. John and Chris were moved by the experience and decided to continue their mission work by establishing a nonprofit. (*Information taken from website*)

Since 2012, hundreds of people have been helped with a prostheses through the services provided by Prosthetic Promises in a rural area of Zambia. The mission has continued to expand over the years with greater numbers of people served each trip and new opportunities unfolding to better help those in need. For more information about this amazing ministry, go to: <https://www.prostheticpromisesinhisname.org/>

Ashley Dusek — Ashley grew up in the Unity and felt the call to be a missionary while attending a church in the Unity. Since 2024, Ashely has been serving in Guatemala. Our mission team has been praying in earnest for Ashely. Recently there was a massive prison break in her area and things were really bad. We just got a report that things have calmed a bit...but the reality of Ashely's situation is clear — it is dangerous! We don't have a link to follow her ministry yet...but we will soon.

I hope you follow and pray for our missionaries...they are doing such good work...and we need to do a better job of supporting and loving them. Thanks for your help!

I will see you on Sunday...it is shaping up to be a great day...I will save a seat for you.

Brad

♥Sunday School – CEC News♥

Please note that the CEC will be meeting on Sunday, February 15 immediately after worship service. We will be discussing our spring and summer events and activities such as Easter, Graduates Lunch, VBS, summer schedules, Sunday School teachers, classes and a Sunday School budget.

Our meetings are open to all who may be interested in our education committee and/or any of the items for discussion or any item you would like to present. Please feel free to join us. We hope to see you there.

Christian Sisters News

The Christian sisters met on January 20 with 8 members present. Wynona Williams gave the devotional on modern Israel. New officers for 2026 were elected as follows:

Deanna Naiver, President ,
Elaine Moore, Vice President,
Lanelle Lesikar, Treasurer and
Sharon Marek, Secretary

Annual dues of \$12.00 are due and should be given to Lanelle Lesikar.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 17 at 11:30 in the youth building. Hope to see you ladies there.

A note about Unity dues...

Ocker has a responsibility to the Unity of the Brethren to pay "membership dues". These funds supply the needs of the Unity in order to fulfill it's monetary obligations to meet the Unity Budget. Current dues are \$40 per member. Ocker will pay those dues from the General Fund. If you would like to offset that expense you may designate an additional \$40 in your regular tithes and offerings. This is voluntary and not a requirement.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

PRIMETIMERS FELLOWSHIP
April 11, 2026 at the Hus Encampment

Church Giving Statements

End of Year Giving statements were mailed out recently. See Robert Stephens if you have questions or concerns.

Is your address up to date? This is a great reminder that it's important to update the church office with any changes.

Children's and Youth Information

February-March 2026

State Youth Retreats at the Hus Encampment

February 21-22 (deadline Wed. Feb. 11)

This is the rescheduled retreat from January. Youth (6th grade and up) **MUST** re-register. Forms are available in the fellowship hall and at www.unityofthebrethrenyouth.org. The bus will depart at 7:30am Saturday and return at 2pm on Sunday. Late arrivals are permitted.

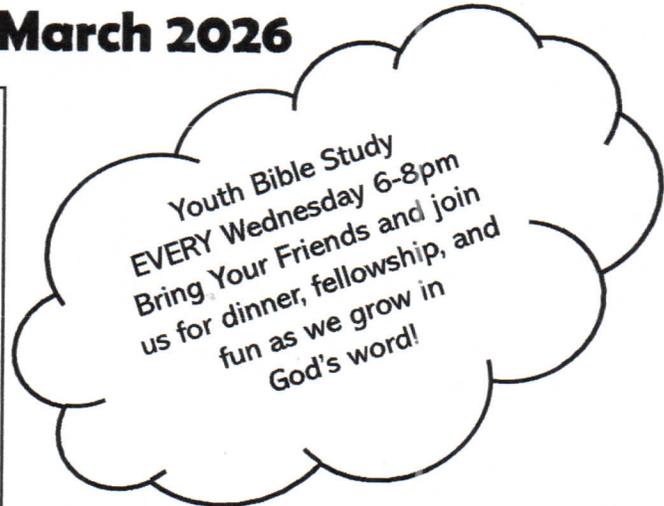
March 13-15 (deadline Sun. Feb. 22)

No late registrations will be taken for this retreat. Youth must pay \$20 of the fee, and no refunds will be issued (due to shirts and supplies). Transportation will be determined once registration is finalized.

This is a special service retreat that is done in conjunction with the state children's rally. Friday evening attendance is mandatory.

More info is provided:

All participants must arrive on Friday evening for set up, decorating, and coordinating of the rally event. Youth will arise early Saturday morning and volunteer as leaders of the children's event on Saturday. After the children's dismissal, youth will clean the camp, have a debrief and study time, and have dinner. After dinner, youth will travel for a social event (TBD). Dismissal will be at 10am on Sunday morning. Forms at www.unityofthebrethrenyouth.org.



State Children's Rally at the Hus Encampment MARCH 14

Age 3 through those in 5th grade

Cost \$20 (scholarships available)

Registration Deadline: Sunday, February 22

Bible stories, crafts, games, and more.

T-shirt included.

The Ocker bus will be available, and travel details will be announced closer to date. Forms at www.unityofthebrethrenyouth.org and in the fellowship hall. See Jenn if you have questions or need more information.

Summer Camp

Registration opens February 1. Use coupon code OCKER. Campers are responsible for a \$50 deposit, and the church pays the rest. If you have a friend that would like to attend camp, there are full and partial scholarships available through the camp. Let Jenn know, and she will get you information on those scholarships.

Encounter (2nd-4th grade) June 14-17
Alpha (5th-6th grade) July 12-16
Pioneer (7th-8th grade) July 5-10
Discovery (9th-10th grade) June 7-12
Hus (11th grade- college freshman) June 19-27

Jennifer Chervenka
UNITY OF THE BRETHREN
DIRECTOR OF YOUTH &
CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES



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www.unityofthebrethrenyouth.org
www.brethrenunity.org
State BYF Retreats

Alaska Mission Trip Frequently Asked Questions:

May 24th – May 31st, 2026

The good people of Ocker have already been so supportive (through prayer, giving of time, talent, financial support) of Ocker's Alaska Mission Team....Thank You So Much. Because Ocker is already so invested we thought it might be a good idea to explain exactly why we are going and what we are going to do when we get there....in the form of an FAQ!

Why are we sending a team on a "Mission Trip" to Alaska? *About a year ago...several people approached me with a desire to do more to be "the hands and feet of Christ" both here in our community and outside of our community. That sounded like a very worthy goal...so we pray-fully set about forming two groups...a local missions group and a non-local group. This mission trip is a result of the non-local group coming together and praying about what type of ways we could spread the love of God to other hurting cultures....thereby, hopefully, gaining a deeper appreciation of God's love for all people.*

To that end...after a lot of thought and prayer...the group decided that the Spirit was leading us to go on a short term mission trip and do two things....spread the good news of Jesus through hosting a VBS to community children with the help of local churches; and through construction labor (helping fix a dilapidated church). With that in mind, we sought a missions partner (para church missions organization) that could help us find the best place to live out those goals.

We settled on Praying Pelicans Missions. They told us the people who are in the most need...who are hurting the most (on the continent) are the people in Appalachia and the people in rural Alaska (they...are the most forgotten). We were immediately drawn to the most forgotten.

Where in Alaska are you going?

We are going to be working with a new C3 Church (a bit more Pentecostal) in a formerly "rough" Anchorage neighborhood. **Chugach Covenant Church** started in the **Muldoon Elementary School** several years ago. Muldoon Elementary is literally the most diverse school in the entire nation. However before the church moved in, the neighborhood was in terrible

shape...drug dealers, crime and alcohol loomed large. When the church moved in, they really tried to claim the neighborhood for the Lord. So they "re-claimed" the park right by the school and started running ministries there...and they helped church-goers in the neighborhood repair their homes. Eventually, they bought a home right by the school and park. Now, they hold worship services in the driveway during the summer and in the school in the winter.

We are going to hold VBS style ministries in the afternoon for the kids. The pastor said that these summer VBS ministries keep the kids from getting bored and moving towards trouble. I like that our ministry helps prevent the devil getting a stronghold.

Tell Me More about Praying Pelicans Missions Team

Praying Pelicans has been great. Think of them as a mission team guide to mission trips. We thought...since Ocker hasn't been on a mission trip in a while, we should rely on some professionals to help us out this first time.

Praying Pelicans has also set us up with a service organization that is taking us to three separate dilapidated churches for us to help fix up.

We have people going who are excited to put their skills to use for no other reason but that they see a need and God has called them to help.

In addition, Praying Pelicans is providing us food and transportation to and from our various ministry sites. Two of their ministry coordinators will be with us at all times.

Who is Going?

20 of us – 18 from Ocker are going (and two good lifelong ministry friends of mine). That is about a tenth of our church. We wanted to make it very safe (one reason we involved an organization like Praying Pelicans) but genuine...because we wanted youth and children to go. We have the names listed at the bottom of this newsletter article.

Why Are You Trying to Raise SOO MUCH? Are you going on Vacation?

Praying Pelicans worked with us to create an itinerary that gives us one free day (out of five) to recover from our work. They said that is what they do for all their mission groups and churches...seems about right to me. We haven't decided if we are going to use that day...they said we can see how "we feel."

With 18 Ocker Church Members going, we set the original amount to raise at \$16,000...sounds like a lot....but...

Here is the breakdown of cost:

Praying Pelicans Charges \$875/ person for the 7 days we will be there. That includes the following: food, transportation (all of our transportation needs), setting up ministry partnerships with churches and other para church ministries and organizing ministry sites and construction time and two ministry coordinators on site with us at all times).

The Mission Team is doing other separate fundraisers (OUTSIDE OF THE CHURCH) to raise money for flights and lodging.

We are so very excited to show God's love in this new and unique way to so many so far away....we are so thankful for those who can support us in any way the Spirit leads. If you have any questions or want to know how you can specifically

help us...please ask!

Please...most of all, pray for us!

Ocker on Mission — Here are the Names of the people going on the trip...please pray for us:

1. Brad Herridge
2. Lucy Herridge
3. Mary Herridge
4. Jennifer Chervenka
5. Joanna Chervenka
6. Jaidyn Chervenka
7. Brittini Krcha
8. Jordan Krcha
9. Bailey Krcha
10. Mark Wilfert
11. Matthew Wilfert
12. Darrell Glaser
13. Shannon Glaser
14. Stephanie Phillips
15. Maycee Phillips
16. Kindra Koslovsky
17. Tessa Koslovsky
18. Jason Nesmith
19. Nigel Nesmith
20. Sandy McAdams

THE
HANDS
AND
FEET
OF
JESUS

FEBRUARY 2026

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busybaker10@gmail.com

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 3 – Oaklyn Zdroik
- 4 – Riley Hoelscher
- 6 – Janice Stepan
- 8 – Wynona Williams
- 9 – David Koslovsky
- 11 – Melody Hill
- Dorothy Haisler
- 12 – Keith Caldwell
- Bailey Krcha
- 14 – Kelly Stephens
- Tina Adams
- Debbie Bedrich
- Halstyn Dillard
- 20 – Ronnie Moore
- 24 – Mary Herridge
- 25 – Brad Herridge
- Hudson Tucker
- 28 – Michael Harper



February Anniversaries

- 13 – Roger & Lynne Cassens
- 18 – Terry & Penny Coots

Happy Valentine's Day
Join Girlfriends & God
for a lunch date and
gift exchange.

Bring one \$15 gal gift, wrapped



February 10th 2026

Hwy 77 Cafe in
Rosebud, TX

12:00

Please join our GroupMe
for up-to-date
information and details
Text Chelsey @ 254-718-2847

February 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 First Sunday Fellowship 8:30 am Worship 10:15 am	2	3	4 BYF 6 – 8 PM <i>Acts Bible Study</i> 6:30 pm	5 Senior Adult Fellowship 9 am – 1 pm	6	7
8 Sunday School 9 am Worship 10:15 am	9	10 <i>Girlfriends & God Lunch</i> 12:00 pm (Hwy 77 Cafe)	11 BYF 6 – 8 PM <i>Acts Bible Study</i> 6:30 pm Board of Elders Meeting 6:15 pm	12	13	14 HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY
15 Sunday School 9 am Worship 10:15 am	16	17 Christian Sisters Meeting 11:30 am	18 BYF 6 – 8 PM <i>Acts Bible Study</i> 6:30 pm	19 Senior Adult Fellowship 9 am – 1 pm	20	21
22 Sunday School 9 am Worship 10:15 am	23	24	25 Family Game Night 6 pm <i>Acts Bible Study</i> 6:30 pm	26	27	28 Craft Retreat sponsored by Alaska Mission Team