

# Inside Wayside

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The season of Lent comes early in 2024. Ash Wednesday is Valentine's Day, February 14th. It seems odd that on the same day we may share a few Valentine cards and candy, we also impose the ashes on our foreheads to remind us that our life is short. The starkness of the ashes is not a denial of the reality of love that is with us all the way from before we are born and that holds us after we die; the ashes are a visible message of "nevertheless." In his suffering and temptation, Jesus affirmed this love that nothing can sever. In his ministry, and in his unfailing message to us, Jesus teaches us to live in this love. If there is anything that has power to transform us from dust into eternal messages of compassion, kindness, and peace, it is the love of God in Jesus Christ. The love that passes from our lives into the lives of others outlasts us and leaves its goodness, working far more than we imagine. This makes ashes and Valentines a perfect pairing – a sign of love that endures forever.

During Lent this year we will be focused on what we cultivate and grow in our lives, and what it is we need to let go so that we can grow as God's people. Watch for information on a book study that Nathan will be leading and that Gregg and Sallee Rabenold will lead and host in their home on Thursday nights. I invite you to join me in prayer practices during Lent, online on Tuesday mornings, and in person Wednesdays at 5:15 PM in the Prayer Room at Wayside. We will use the book *Prayer: Forty Days of Practice*, as well as engage in centering prayer for those who are interested. You can find the book online or order through a local bookstore. It is by Justin McRoberts and Scott Erickson.

On Sundays during the month of February, Nicholas and I will be selecting hymns and songs that come from the African American Christian heritage in celebration of Black History Month. We will be sure to emphasize that, so keep your ears listening and your eyes watching for those songs to inspire us.

Grace and peace to you all,

*James*

Let's give thanks for those who served as elders and deacons of Wayside and completed their terms of service in 2023. Deacons: Georgia DelFreo, Kelly Fremer, Aurora Fuchs, Colin Hurley, Paula Reade, and Marilyn Russell. Pat Bennett will serve a second term. Elders: Donna Bittner, Paul Bittner, Matt McCullough, Leslie Momeyer, Mac Pollard, and Ed Snyder. Mark Catrabone will serve a second term. Thank you all for all your energy, intelligence, imagination, and love.

### **A note from the Presbytery of Lake Erie:**

Dear Session and Members of Wayside,

As a church with a vibrant ministry and as the congregation who contributes the most to the mission of Lake Erie Presbytery, I am both proud and grateful to be associated with you. Thank you for your partnership in ministry! In 2023 alone, together we have held cooperative youth events, had a 5-week Preaching Seminar in March/April, sent humanitarian relief to Ukraine and Turkey, and offered many leadership training events – to name a few of the ways your mission and per capita dollars have reached out. Your generous gifts make a difference and I say "Thank you!" on behalf of the whole presbytery. You are truly appreciated.

Gratefully,

Rev. Anita Bernhardt, General Presbyter



## BUDGET BYTES FROM THE BUDGET/FINANCE COMMITTEE – 2023 RECAP

Oh, what a pleasure this report will be for the writer to write and for the reader, to read. The final numbers are in for 2023 and they are very good. We begin with thanks to our Creator for the blessing of being able to end the year far differently from the way we began it. In January 2023 we had approved a budget with a deficit of (\$41,000) and yet, we closed the year in the black with a \$4,000 surplus!

Let's get into a few details regarding this turnaround. Our pledges ended about \$12,000 short while our unpledged gifts showed a surplus of approximately \$8,700. The Per Capita Appeal garnered \$1,800 above projections and the fundraising line item was \$4,250 above projections. And for the proverbial icing on the cake, we received \$37,000 from special one-time donations from several generous Waysiders. That last item enabled us to move from red to black at year's end.

There is more. Thanks to those one-time donations, we were able to provide 2023 bonuses to our staff to compensate for no raises in the proposed 2024 budget and still have that \$4,000 surplus. What a blessing to be able to do that for our very deserving employees.

Another factor in this turnaround is our lower-than-expected expenses. Every department came in under budget except building and grounds (and theirs was over only because we paid for the removal of the four trees from that account rather than from designated funds because we had the cash). We ended up with a total savings of \$14,000, showing a true team effort to hold spending where we could.

As the saying goes, "That's a wrap." Let's enjoy the feeling of gratitude for a positive ending to the year and then roll up our sleeves, Wayside-style, and dive into 2024 and another deficit budget. May God be with us on the journey.

### FINANCIAL REPORT

<b>Dec. Rev</b>	<b>\$47,124.85</b>	<b>Dec. Exp</b>	<b>\$63,850.52</b>
<b>YTD Rev</b>	<b>\$560,613.21</b>	<b>YTD Exp</b>	<b>\$557,047.43</b>

### THE INREACH FUND

This is money set aside to assist Wayside members and friends who face an unanticipated need.

To make a request, contact James or Nathan.

Confidentiality is assured.

## MOBILE FOOD PANTRY

The February distribution for the Second Harvest mobile food pantry at the Federated Church in East Springfield is February 26. Volunteers can park behind the church at 11995 Main Street in East Springfield to begin set up at 11:00 AM. Please see Harry or Sue Hain for more information or sign up in the lobby.





### **Wayside Co-Sponsorship Team with the Multicultural Community Resource Center (MCRC)**

The Afghan family we had been expecting to arrive on the 23rd will be going to Sacramento, California. They have family in Sacramento and somehow there was a miscommunication that put them on the list to come to Erie. That has been corrected and now we will be sponsoring a Sudanese family of six: a mom, dad, two girls ages 14 and 7, and two boys ages 16 and 10. They should arrive on February 2nd. We have received all the furniture we need - THANK YOU! What we have collected will work great for the new family. Our congregation has done an amazing job donating items to set up their home!

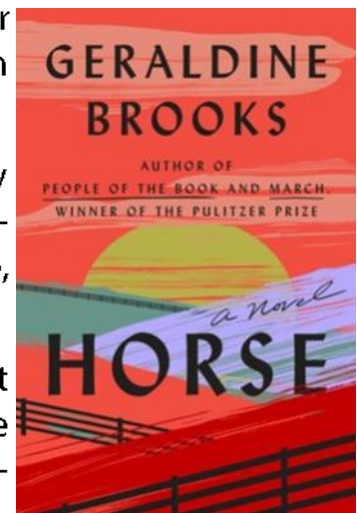
The Wayside Co-sponsorship team (Gwen and Mark Smith, Jane and Peter Gilewicz, Karen and Jim Haas, Nicki Jares, Susanna Merwin and Linda Lorah) will begin the process of helping this family adjust to their new home and get settled in as soon as they arrive. There is a lot of paperwork, visits to government agencies, meetings with their caseworker at MCRC, and registration for school. The first weeks are full of adjustments. Please watch the bulletin and weekly news from church to see ways you can help. Once we meet the family, we will work on getting appropriate clothes and school items for the children. We appreciate everyone's generosity and willingness to help! Please contact Karen Haas if you have any questions regarding items for donation. Please keep the Co-Sponsorship team in your prayers. We are counting on the Holy Spirit to guide us and help us navigate this process.

### **RAUCOUS READERS BOOK CLUB**

We invite anyone who likes to read and discuss good books to join us, either regularly or whenever you see that the book we are reading for a particular month interests you. We meet on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of every month (except July, August, and December) at 6:30 PM in the parlor.

Wayside's Raucous Readers February book selection is *Horse*, by Geraldine Brooks. This book is based on a true story of the record-breaking thoroughbred Lexington. It is a novel of art and science, love and obsession, and our unfinished reckoning with racism.

We will discuss this moving narrative on Tuesday, February 27, at 6:30 PM in the parlor. The discussion will be led by Amy Valentine and everyone is welcome to join us. Contact Mary Marsh (814-392-3241 or [mmarsh43@gmail.com](mailto:mmarsh43@gmail.com)) with questions.







# PW NEWS



## SOPHIA CIRCLE

The Sophia Circle will meet on **Tuesday, February 20th, at 7:00 pm in the parlor.** Mary Marsh will lead us in Lesson 6 "A person with a Physical Disability Encounters Jesus." The scripture lesson is Acts 3:1- 10. The key idea is God calls us to affirm that each person is a child of God who should be treated with dignity and equity. All women are invited to attend! Start your year off right- come to a Circle Meeting!



## ELIZABETH CIRCLE

Thursday, February 22  
at 11:30 AM in the parlor.

## WAYSIDE LUNCH BUNCH

Thursday, February 8  
12:00 Noon  
Sarah Reed Senior Living  
227 W 22nd St.  
RSVP to Jean Moore  
814-461-9665

## Wayside Children Select Animals to Donate to Heifer International

PW is excited to announce that we raised \$675 in donations to purchase animals for Heifer International. Animal donations can provide families a hand up, increasing access to medicines, school, food, and a sustainable livelihood. This year Heifer also added a category of **sending a girl to school** and that received the most votes! The top animal selected was a **pig**. We also will purchase a **goat, bees, 2 chicks, 2 shares of buffalo and 4 shares of sheep**. Thanks to the children for helping select these awesome animals that will help change lives. Thanks also to the very generous support of many donors and to Karen Sidorowicz and Pattie Pora for chairing an amazing Potato Dinner!



## PW to sponsor Church World Service

### Blanket Sunday February 4<sup>th</sup>

God has blessed us with so much and one great way to show your love and share with those in need is to purchase blankets on CWS Blanket Sunday. Each blanket cost only \$10. These blankets can be a vital resource for someone needing help after a natural disaster. They provide warmth, can be used for shelter, or can help to carry supplies. They definitely provide encouragement and love! Together we can help many families. **Our goal is to provide 100 blankets.** Please consider donating to our Blanket Sunday Offering. Envelopes will be in the pew racks on February 4<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>. Checks can be written out to Wayside Presbyterian Women or Church World Service. Thank you!



## PW Homemade Soup Sale – Sunday February 25

Our great chefs—Jane Gilewicz and Jill Abbott—will be making **Vegetable Beef Soup** (Mary Marsh's famous recipe) and **Broccoli Cheddar Soup**. The soup can be picked up before and after both services on February 25<sup>th</sup>. You can reserve your soup by signing up in the lobby. A quart container will be available for a \$12 donation. **All proceeds will support the Wayside Cosponsorship of our refugee family.** Please plan on enjoying some yummy soup and help PW raise money to help resettle our new neighbors!



## Presbyterian Women's Annual Mission Fundraiser and Program Book

Presbyterian Women mailed out in mid-January our 2024 Program Booklet and a request to contribute \$20 or more to help fulfill our challenging mission budget. We hope you will join us in our many activities scheduled throughout the year. **Donations can be made out to Wayside Presbyterian Women** and mailed or dropped off at the church office or you can give on the churches e-giving portal (category Presbyterian Women – subcategory mission fundraiser.) **All contributions are greatly appreciated!**

### Save the Date

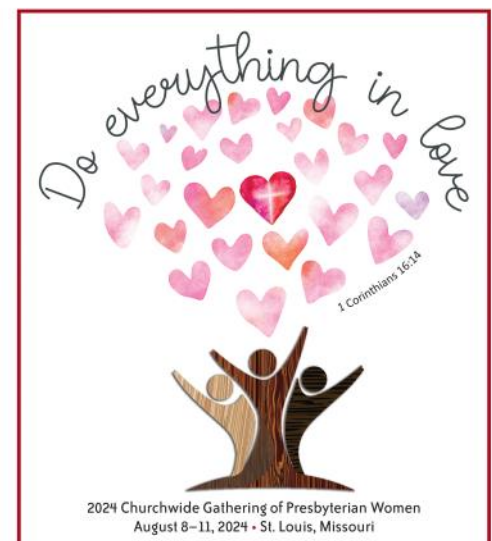
to gather in person and  
in faithful community  
**at the 2024 Churchwide Gathering**  
of Presbyterian Women  
**August 8–11, 2024**

***"Shall we gather at the river..."***

at the confluence of  
the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers,  
that is—in the city of St. Louis!

[presbyterianwomen.org/gathering](https://presbyterianwomen.org/gathering)

Lake Erie PW is offering 4- \$500 scholarships to women from our Presbytery that want to attend. The scholarships are on a first come—first serve basis. Please contact Karen Haas if you are interested in a scholarship.







# SAVE THE DATE!

Presbyterian Women of Lake Erie Presbytery

**Spring Gathering - Saturday April 20th**

10:00 am - 1:30 pm

(registration and tours of the church from 9-10)

**Girard Presbyterian Church**

## “Rebuild, Restore, Renew”

“...God has extended to us his steadfast love before the kings of Persia, to give us new life to set up the house of our God, to repair its ruins...” Ezra 9:9



You will not want to miss this outstanding program!

Registration details will be sent out in early 2024.

If you have any questions, please contact PWLEP Moderator Karen Haas at [karenhaas79@gmail.com](mailto:karenhaas79@gmail.com) or call 814-397-1619.

Keynote speaker Katie Kretz, Executive Director of the Multi-Cultural Community Resource Center in Erie, will share with us how MCRC assists refugees in resettling in our communities. MCRC is a welcoming environment where all people are treated with integrity and are always provided the highest quality of service. MCRC provides compassionate and empathetic support to refugees as they seek to live a full, free and enriching life so their dreams can come true.

Coming with Katie will be a few refugees who will tell firsthand about their journey to Erie and about their experiences learning to rebuild their lives in a different country.



Dee Roberts of Girard Presbyterian Church will give a history of the church, including how they listened for God's guidance and made the decision to rebuild their church after it was destroyed by fire. She will give us insights regarding this major undertaking and how their new church building showcases their church's mission.

# SPRING CONVOCATION



## Christian Vocation in a Time of Climate Change

Avery Davis Lamb  
Co-Executive Director of  
Creation Justice Ministries

April 13-14

Saturday at 10am--Worship, Lecture, and Lunch with Discussion at First Presbyterian Church of the Covenant  
Saturday at 6pm--Lecture and reception at Cathedral of St. Paul

Sunday Morning--Preaching (8:30 and 11:00) and teaching Sunday School (9:45) at Wayside Presbyterian Church

*\*Further details pending\**

Avery Davis is a Co-Executive Director of Creation Justice Ministries. Avery has a background in both ecological research and faith-based environmental organizing, studying ecology in various ecosystems and organizing faith communities across the country in support of action on environmental justice. Avery has a Bachelor of Arts in Biology and Sustainability from Pepperdine University, Master of Environmental Management in Ecosystem Science & Conservation with a certificate in Community-Based Environmental Management from the Nicholas School of the Environment at Duke University, and a Master of Theological Studies, with a certificate in Faith, Food & Environmental Justice from Duke Divinity School.

### RECOMMENDED READINGS ABOUT CREATION CARE AND FAITH:

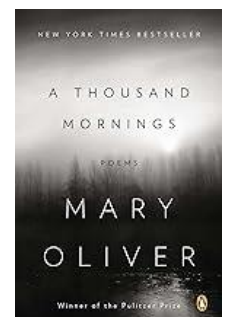
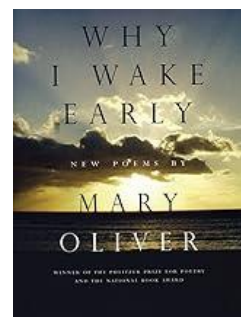
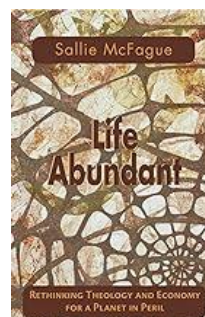
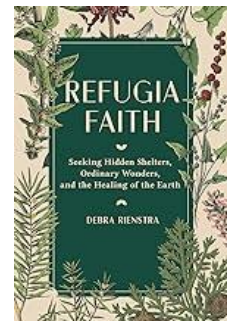
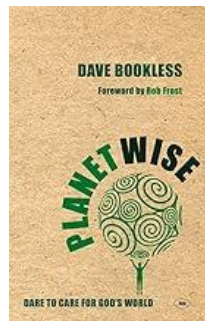
**Planetwise** by Dave Bookless: A helpful introduction to how creation care is a part of the biblical narrative and Christian life.

**Church of the Wild** by Victoria Loorz: One writer's reflection on discovering God in a renewed relationship with the wilderness

**Refugia Faith** by Debra Rienstra: Exploring how the Church can be a place of refuge and hospitality in the midst of ecological devastation

**Life Abundant** by Sallie McFague: A theological work that contrasts consumer culture with an ecological mindset in Christian thinking

**Why I Wake Early** and **A Thousand Mornings** by Mary Oliver: collections of poetry with an eye to observing the sacred in the natural world





### WOW CLUB SCHEDULE

WOW Club is Wayside's fellowship  
for 2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> graders,  
meeting Wednesdays at 4:00-6:00

#### **FEBRUARY**

- 7** Celebrating Diversity with Shayla Jones, Pt. 4
- 14** Ash Wednesday Art Project and Lesson
- 21** Creation Care Lesson
- 28** Bowling

### ISSUES OF FAITH

Issues of Faith meets Sundays at 9:45 for stimulating conversations about spirituality and social justice. Upcoming topics include:

#### **FEBRUARY**

- 4** **Mabel Howard**, Bethany Outreach Center
- 11** **Barb Kurkas Lee, CNM**, "Aromatherapy: a comfort tool for prayer and meditation"
- 18** **Rev. Jim Haas**, Habitat for Humanity
- 25** TBD

## **WAYOUTH SUNDAY SUPPER**

February 11 from 3:00-6:00 PM

Youth in 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade and parents are invited to help serve at a weekly dinner for the homeless at First Presbyterian Church of the Covenant. Please RSVP to Pastor Nathan.



## **PREPARING OUR HEARTS FOR LENT**

### **FOCUS ON PRAYER**

- *Prayer: Forty Days of Practice* by Justin McRoberts and Scott Erickson
- Centering prayer
- Led by James Bernhardt
- Tuesday mornings via Zoom
- Wednesdays at 5:15 PM in the Prayer Room

### **BOOK STUDY**

- *If You Want to Walk On Water, You've Got to Get Out of the Boat* by John Ortberg
- Wednesdays at 6:30 PM at Wayside (starting Feb. 21) with Nathan Royster
- Fridays at 7:00 PM at the Rabenold residence (starting Feb. 16)

### **SERVICES**

- Ash Wednesday, Feb. 14, 7 PM
- Service for Healing and Wholeness, Feb. 28, 7 PM







## WORSHIP IN FEBRUARY

**Sunday, February 4**

Mark 1:29-39

5th Sunday after Epiphany

"What Riles the Demons"

Holy Communion

James Preaching

**Sunday, February 11**

Mark 9:2-9

Transfiguration of the Lord Sunday James Preaching

"Keeping the Vision"

### The Season of Lent—Cultivating and Letting Go

**Wednesday, February 14**

Ash Wednesday

7 PM

**Sunday, February 18**

Luke 4:1-13

1st Sunday in Lent

"Cultivating Trust, Letting Go of Power"

James Preaching

**Sunday, February 25**

Luke 13:31-35

2nd Sunday in Lent

"Cultivating Purpose, Letting Go of Anxiety"

Nathan Preaching

**Wednesday, February 28**

Service for Healing and Wholeness 7 PM

CULTIVATING  
& LETTING GO



Feb 2 Kerry Moyer  
 Feb 3 Sheila Kocan  
 Feb 3 Claus Fuchs  
 Feb 3 Grace Melaragno  
 Feb 3 Maely Gehrlein  
 Feb 3 Isla Hu  
 Feb 4 Tim Feltmeyer  
 Feb 4 Evan Grimm  
 Feb 5 Brooke Weaver  
 Feb 5 Georgia Del Freo  
 Feb 5 Leanne Keibler  
 Feb 7 Jackie Tingley  
 Feb 7 Colin Hurley  
 Feb 8 Lindsay Kopac  
 Feb 8 Ryan Marsh  
 Feb 9 Nathan Royster

Feb 9 Leslie Weber  
 Feb 10 Brian Zimmerman  
 Feb 10 Nicholas Jones  
 Feb 12 Ashley Fischer  
 Feb 12 Lisa Read-Rzepecki  
 Feb 13 Genna Feltmeyer  
 Feb 13 Hillary Skala  
 Feb 14 Sheldan Moelk  
 Feb 15 Annabelle Pentz  
 Feb 15 Cindy Yahn Grode  
 Feb 16 Leslie Momeyer  
 Feb 16 Vincent Knight  
 Feb 18 Pat Fish  
 Feb 18 Greg Sbrocco

Feb 20 Emma Lewis  
 Feb 20 Richard Decker  
 Feb 20 Jamie Borowicz  
 Feb 21 Kristie Reagle  
 Feb 22 Logan Mitten  
 Feb 24 Ellen Gruber  
 Feb 25 Edythe Endean  
 Feb 26 Beckie Jackson  
 Feb 26 Ashley Lewis  
 Feb 26 Katie Potocki  
 Feb 26 Maxwell Wallace  
 Feb 26 Roxanne Diehl  
 Feb 28 Brian McGill  
 Feb 28 Paul Carpenedo  
 Feb 28 Elaine Brinling  
 Feb 29 Oliver Paris

## BIRTHDAY CAKE BOX

Are you celebrating a birthday in your family this month? Consider donating a "Birthday Cake Box" to West Millcreek Food Pantry to help a neighbor in need with a celebration. Purchase a disposable cake pan with a lid, a cake mix, a tub of frosting, and a can of lemon-lime soda which can be used in place of the eggs, oil, and water in the cake mix. Also consider including birthday candles and party plates and napkins. More information and printable notes can be found at [desertchica.com/birthday-cake-box-donations/](http://desertchica.com/birthday-cake-box-donations/).



## Anniversary Wishes

Feb 3 Marion and Robert Gallivan  
 Feb 14 Gary and Linda Behn  
 Feb 14 Mark and Gwen Smith  
 Feb 18 Tim and Peggy Glass



# FEBRUARY 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				<b>1</b> 9a Yoga w/Cathleen 1:30p North Coast Sewing 6p AA Non New-comers 7p Chancel Choir 7:30p AA Non	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> 6p AA Non Speaker Series
<b>4</b> Blanket Sunday 8:30 Early Worship 9:45 Sunday School 11:00 Celebration of Worship	<b>5</b> 9:30a Stronger Srs. 6:30p Sanctuary Bells 6:30p AA 7p Symphonic Singers	<b>6</b> MTWMM	<b>7</b> MTWMM 9:30a Stronger Seniors 4p WOW Kids 5:00p Primary Choir 6p WOW Dinner 7p Deacon Meeting	<b>8</b> 9a Yoga w/Cathleen 12p Lunch Bunch 6p AA Non New-comers 7p Chancel Choir 7:30p AA Non	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>11</b> Souper Bowl of Caring Youth Sub Sale 8:30 Early Worship 9:45 Sunday School 11:00 Celebration of Worship	<b>12</b> 9:30a Stronger Srs. 6:30p Sanctuary Bells 6:30p AA 7p Symphonic Singers	<b>13</b> MTWMM 10a Prayer Shawl Ministry	<b>14</b> MTWMM 9:30a Stronger Seniors 4p WOW Kids 5:00p Primary Choir 6p WOW Dinner 7p Ash Wed. Service	<b>15</b> 9a Yoga w/Cathleen 6p AA Non New-comers 7p Chancel Choir 7:30p AA Non	<b>16</b> 7p Book Study at Rabenolds'	<b>17</b> 8:30a HAAEQG Sew-In 9:30a Bag Lunch Packing
<b>18</b> Noisy Offering 8:30 Early Worship 9:45 Sunday School 11:00 Celebration of Worship	<b>19</b> 9:30a Stronger Srs. 6:30p Sanctuary Bells 6:30p AA 7p Symphonic Singers	<b>20</b> Online Prayer MTWMM 7p Sophia Circle	<b>21</b> MTWMM 9:30a Stronger Seniors 4p WOW Kids 5:15p Prayer 5:00p Primary Choir 6p WOW Dinner 6:30p Book Study 7p Session	<b>22</b> 9a Yoga w/Cathleen 11:30a Elizabeth Circle 6p AA Non New-comers 7p Chancel Choir 7:30p AA Non	<b>23</b> 7p Book Study at Rabenolds'	<b>24</b> 10:00a GenOn Workshop PW Soup Prep
<b>25</b> PW Soup Sale 8:30 Early Worship 9:45 Sunday School 11:00 Celebration of Worship	<b>26</b> 9:30a Stronger Srs. 6:30p Sanctuary Bells 6:30p AA 7p Symphonic Singers	<b>27</b> Online Prayer MTWMM 1p Newsletter Collating 5:30p HAAEQG 6:30p Raucous Readers Book Club	<b>28</b> MTWMM 9:30a Stronger Seniors 4p WOW Kids 5:15p Prayer 5:00p Primary Choir 6p WOW Dinner 6:30p Book Study 7p Service for Healing & Wholeness	<b>29</b> 9a Yoga w/Cathleen 6p AA Non New-comers 7p Chancel Choir 7:30p AA Non		





**tacklehunger.org**

Turn Super Bowl Sunday into Souper Bowl of Caring Sunday! Drop cash into a soup pot after worship on Sunday, **February 11**, to join others in our area to support Second Harvest Food Bank and help to feed the 88,670 individuals in northwest PA facing hunger.

## WAYSIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1208 Asbury Road Erie, PA 16505  
email: [wpc@wayside-erie.org](mailto:wpc@wayside-erie.org)

Phone: 814-833-7653  
[www.wayside-erie.org](http://www.wayside-erie.org)

### STAFF

- The Reverend James Bernhardt Senior Pastor/Head of Staff  
[james@wayside-erie.org](mailto:james@wayside-erie.org) 828-381-6582 (cell)
- The Reverend Nathan Royster Associate Pastor  
[nathan@wayside-erie.org](mailto:nathan@wayside-erie.org) 814-715-6367 (cell)
- The Reverend Jim Haas Pastor Emeritus
- Nicholas Nasibyan Director of Music  
[nick@wayside-erie.org](mailto:nick@wayside-erie.org) 814-490-8012 (cell)
- Mark Lockett Sexton  
[mark@wayside-erie.org](mailto:mark@wayside-erie.org)
- Karen Pastewka Financial Secretary  
[steward@wayside-erie.org](mailto:steward@wayside-erie.org) 814-600-4586 (Thurs/Fri)
- Jennifer Lockett Office Administrator  
[wpc@wayside-erie.org](mailto:wpc@wayside-erie.org)

*Be who you are  
and be welcome here.*

### WELCOME STATEMENT

**"I will show love to those who were called unloved and, to those who were called 'not-my-people', I will say 'you are my people' and they will answer, 'you are our God'." (Hosea 2:23)**

Wayside Presbyterian Church (PCUSA) is a place where the mind is nourished as well as the spirit, and where we affirm the dignity and worth of every person. As we are all created in the image of God, we believe discrimination is incompatible with Christ's Gospel of unconditional love. While we celebrate our Presbyterian identity, we acknowledge that we are not alone on the path to understanding God. We invite conversations that move us to seek a deeper understanding of life in the Spirit.