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Pastor's Article

Friends, what a wonderful Advent and Christmas Eve we have had together! Our theme, *How Does a Weary World Rejoice*, felt fitting for so many reasons this year. We've been weighed down by loss, grief, transition, stress, and worry. Yet the Christ Child was born again into our world! We rejoiced amidst and within the weariness. And I know our weariness doesn't just magically disappear once the New Year starts. As this New Year begins, we'll still make space for our weariness. And we will begin to make space for new things – new ideas, new events, new visions, new friends. There is an energy and eagerness that I feel at Northwest – an energy that is eager to burst forth – and I'm eager to welcome it. Over the next weeks and months, I hope you'll find time and ways to share your hopes and dreams with me about how you sense God calling Northwest to serve our neighbors. Together, let's create opportunities to hear from one another, while listening for guidance from the Spirit. Let's invite ourselves to imagine what our future can look like, then invite ourselves to make it happen.

What can stop us? "We've always done it this way." "We've tried that, and it didn't work." "We wish we had _____ just like we used to." Family of faith, this is a new year. It's a time for us to envision our future and engage boldly in mission and ministry that speaks to our world and our neighbors today. I'm excited for what comes next. Do I know exactly what that is? Not at all! But together we can explore new ideas and create new opportunities. God's world is waiting for us to engage.

Through Advent we sang "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel!" Emmanuel means God With Us. O Come, God be with us! Be with us as we begin this new time together. Be with us as we get to know one another and dream your dreams for the world you desire. Be with us and guide us to be the church you desire in this time and place. May it be so.

Pastor Joyce Wealand

Extravagant **GENEROSITY**

Romans 12:1-3 So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you. I'm speaking to you out of deep gratitude for all that God has given me, and especially as I have responsibilities in relation to you. Living then, as every one of you does, in pure grace, it's important that you not misinterpret yourselves as people who are bringing this goodness to God. No, God brings it all to you. The only accurate way to understand ourselves is by what God is and by what he does for us, not by what we are and what we do for him. --The Message

When a new year starts, we are tempted to begin again by making resolutions to be better. Unfortunately, under our own power, these changes often do not last until the end of January.

However, as soon as we submit ourselves to God, we are already new creations. He will change us into who He wants us to be. The progress comes from what He does, not what we do. When we are changed on the inside, the outside shows the evidence of those changes.

Let us renew our commitment to God and allow Him to remake us into what we need to be.

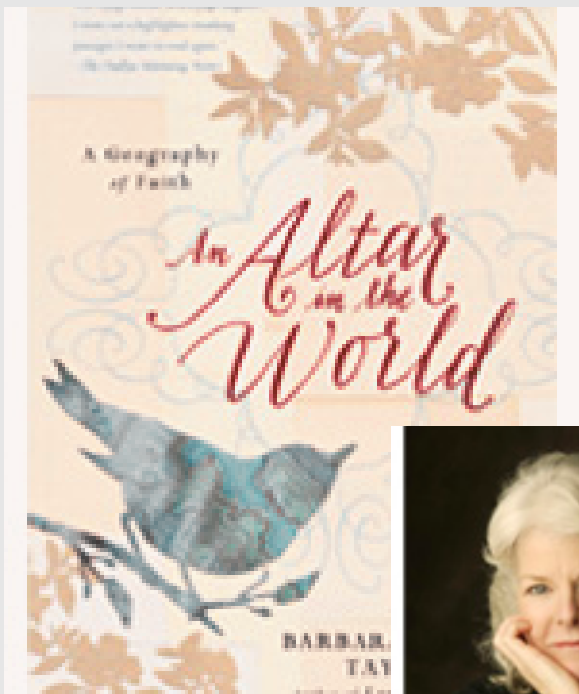
Carla Nuenke
Extravagant Generosity



HeartSisters

Connecting...to God, to each other, to community

We are looking forward to another year of Heart Sisters' programs in 2024! Our next gathering will be Monday, January 22nd and we will be exploring passages from the first four chapters of *An Altar in the World*, by Barbara Brown Taylor. In this book, Taylor shares how she learned to find God beyond the church walls by embracing the sacred as a natural part of everyday life. The author shows us how to discover altars everywhere we go and in nearly everything we do as we learn to live with purpose, pay attention, slow down, and revere the world we live in. Sounds like a good resolution for the new year, doesn't it?



Feel free to read this book on your own, or just come and enjoy the discussion. If you would like more information about Heart Sisters or have ideas for programs, please contact Debbie Stephan, Carolyn Abels, or Jane Russell.

THANK YOU!

Because of your generosity

we raised

\$5,667



#3 Giving Team in Central Ohio!

Bruce and Linda Anschutz - Team Captains



Christmas Dinner

We had a wonderful time at the Christmas Dinner! Good food, good fellowship, good singing - and Santa!

Thanks to all who made this event possible.



EPIC

EPIC, our group for seniors, will have a pot-luck gathering on the third Tuesday, January 16th, at 6 p.m. After dinner, we will write cards for low-income seniors who are served by the Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging. Cards will be supplied, as well as suggestions for brief messages to write.

**You are invited to the
"Welcome to 2024"
Pancake Breakfast**



When? Sunday, January 7, 2024 from 9-10am

Where? Northwest Christian Church Fellowship Hall

Why? Because we love fellowship events at NWCC!

**Invite your friends, families and neighbors and share the
hospitality of NWCC with others.**



Thank you, Northwest Christian Church, for your generous donations to the Holiday Shoppe. Over 1600 children received gifts through this important outreach!

Dear NWCC,
The NNEMAP Food Pantry would like to thank you so much for your continued support of our mission and your recent gift of \$1,782.



Your gift is gratefully acknowledged, and we truly appreciate your recognizing the importance of helping the hungry and less fortunate members of our community.

With Gratitude, Roy Clark,
Executive Director

Thank you for your support

Jack and I would like to say thank you for all the prayers, get well wishes, and cards received during this time. My surgery went well. Further treatment will start in the next few weeks.

I'm recovering and hope to be back with you soon.

Thank you, Carole and Jack Strawn



I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude over the love and support I have received over the past month and a half through cards, emails, a beautiful prayer shawl, texts, phone calls, meals and prayers. Whether I received something from you in person or not, your prayers and the love of this beautiful family we call Northwest Christian Church came through loud and strong. I am truly a blessed person to have so many who really care. Thank you for being God's Angels to me in my time of need. – Bruce Anschutz



Dear NWCC family,

Thank you for your love and support over the past year+ as we navigated the adoption process to legally become a family. We started this process four years ago, specifically with our children nearly two years ago. That being said, we wanted to share that as of Monday, the adoption process was finalized! As many of you know, we made the decision to return to Ohio specifically to adopt our children and to be closer to our family and community of support as started this next chapter of life. Northwest has been such an integral part of that community since we became members and everyone has been so supportive along this journey. We find it fitting that in this season of anticipation, we are not only celebrating the birth of Jesus, but we're celebrating what this first Christmas as a family will bring. Thank you for the role that you have played, the continued support and love you give to our family, and the hope for the future.

Wishing you a blessed holiday season,

Josh, Cody, Ah'meen (7), SeKani (4), Layla (3), and Siah (2)



Advance Conference - Adult Summer
Camp



Winter Weekend Retreat

January 5-7 : Friday afternoon to Sunday Morning

Camp Christian

10355 Maple Dell Rd, Marysville OH 43040

What's in your Mental Health Toolbox?

- Taking a personal inventory of what we have in our "toolboxes" that we can use when presented with a challenge
- Join us for a cozy lodge weekend away from the world with other young adults ages 18-30. We will also be playing fun games and hanging out at the beautiful campgrounds.
- All are welcome of all faiths and backgrounds

Scholarships and Financial Aid Available!

\$30 off for first-timers or if you bring a new friend!

Full Attendance Optional

Questions? 614-595-9922 or
officers@advanceministry.org
Instagram: @advanceminoh



Registration: <https://www.ccinoh.com/ministries/adult/advance-ministry.aspx>

High School Youth ~ CYF Winter Retreat ~ January 12-14, 2024

THE Lord's PRAYER

Every week in worship, hundreds of millions of Christians join to pray a prayer that Jesus taught his followers nearly two thousand years ago. There are variations of the prayer with slight differences, and we pray in many different languages, but we unite around Jesus's words and instructions for how to pray.



Come in and help take down Christmas decorations.

5 PM

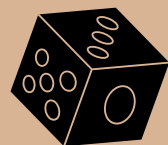
Then let's pass the hat and get pizza to share before the games begin!



**Saturday
January 13**

Join us in the narthex gathering space for a night of family-friendly, multi generational fun! Bring your favorite board/card game, snack to share and a spirit of friendly competition.

7-9 PM



Happy
Birthday

1/1 Betty Hill
1/1 Tim Jameson
1/2 Jacob Badgeley
1/2 Tina Jameson
1/4 Lucy Frank
1/5 Debbie Stephan
1/12 Michiel Brongers
1/19 Lisa Beaverson
1/21 Noah Allen
1/23 Rob Steffy

Happy
Anniversary!

1/1 Jesse and Becky Rogers
1/17 Clint and Amy Taylor
1/31 Lanny and Bev Rhodes

Disciples
LGBTQ+
Alliance

Should you have any pastoral needs or concerns, please let our Pastor know.
Rev. Joyce Wealand, Minister: pastor@northwestchristian.org
Dr. Tim Sarsany, Minister of Music: tsarsany@gmail.com
Tracy Qian, Accompanist / Organist
Rebecca Bean, Secretary: office@northwestchristian.org
Madison Buty, Child Caregiver
Karly Dearth, Child Caregiver

