



MAYFIELD CHURCH

January 2024 Newsletter

Rev. Beth Wilterdink, Lead Pastor • Pastor Jill Scott, Associate Pastor • Newsletter Editor: Rebecca Sulzer

Our mission is to offer Christ through an *inclusive community of faith* that worships God, cares for people, *equips* disciples, and *works* to transform the world.

BURN THE BOOK OR TURN THE PAGE?

By Rev. Beth and Jon Wilterdink

My family and I want to express our sincere and deep thanks for the many ways you as a church community have cared for us in the midst of Cora's unexpected passing. Helping with the prayer vigil and memorial service, providing meals, gift cards, donations in her memory, cards, texts, prayer, and presence with us have all provided comfort as we wrestle with our grief. Thank you to the church staff, office volunteers, and the lay church leaders for stepping into the needs of the church from Christmas Eve as well as in the coming months as I gradually return back to lead the church and preach.

As I have spoken, hugged, and cried with many of you over the past few weeks I also want to say thank you for acknowledging that there are no easy explanations or words to express the reasons why Cora is gone. Thank you for not giving into the temptation to say easy but theologically untrue phrases like "God needed another angel in heaven" or "God only gives the hardest things to the people who can bear the burden."

As Jon and I shared in Cora's memorial service, we do not believe God caused or planned Cora's death. We live in a weary and broken world and God gives us the free will to choose to work as a follower of Christ in the hope of redemption of this world and to point to God's redeeming work in our lives.

Thank you for your spiritual maturity that is willing to sit with us in the tragedy and know that God is present, your faithfulness to hold onto the promise that even in a broken world God is still good, and your willingness to continue pursuing a life following Christ that over time turns graves into gardens and laments into love songs.

So, where do we go from here? I confess that over the past few weeks I have struggled to collect my thoughts on how to turn the page into 2024 and at times have considered burning the whole book instead. Nisha Zenhoff, PhD in her book "The Unspeakable Loss," notes that it is natural for parents who have lost a child to ask "How will I go on living?" It is natural for a parent to be uncertain about how they will move forward and back into the regular rhythms of work and family life. I have certainly felt those questions. How can I go on when a piece of me is lost? How will I find the energy for family and work when so much is consumed by grief? How will I stay connected to my family, staff, and congregation when sadness at times feels so isolating?

I know that the answers to these questions will take time to live out. C.S Lewis shares in "Mere Christianity" that one of the most remarkable characteristics of a Christian is the ability for the person to get back up after failing so miserably. The grace of God will not quit even on the darkest days. I have certainly been knocked flat by the past few weeks and getting back up will take some time but my faith has been a foundational part of knowing that in time our family will get back up. In Romans 5:1-5 Paul writes;

(Continued on page 2)

MINISTRY EVENTS

See where you can invite a friend or neighbor to join in our community of faith.

- **THURS., JAN. 11 @ 10:30 AM - 1 PM**
GOD'S CARING COMMUNITY
FELLOWSHIP HALL
- **THURS., JAN. 11 @ 6:15 - 7:15 PM**
WOMEN'S MINISTRY FELLOWSHIP
B26/YOUTH ROOM
- **SUN., JAN. 14 @ 9:30 & 11 AM**
HOLY COMMUNION SUNDAY
- **SAT., JAN. 20 @ 8:30 - 9:30 AM**
MEN'S MINISTRY BREAKFAST
FELLOWSHIP HALL
- **FRI., JAN. 26 @ 5 - 6:30 PM**
FREE COMMUNITY DINNER



M.U.M.S. ANNUAL

Winter Ball

SATURDAY, MARCH 9

6-8 PM

MAYFIELD CHURCH

Join the Mayfield United Methodist Stars, our special needs ministry, for a fun filled evening of dancing, food, drinks and more! Dress up in your formal (or comfortable) attire.

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WE HAVE AN APP!

Our new church system has an app, called church center, for your smart phone, where you can update your personal info, find out what's happening at church, and request rooms for your groups.



“Therefore, since we have been made right in God’s sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us. Because of our faith, Christ has brought us into this place of undeserved privilege where we now stand, and we confidently and joyfully look forward to sharing God’s glory. We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation. And this hope will not lead to disappointment. For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love.”

These words of encouragement also apply to us as the church. Many of you have shared stories with me of how Cora impacted you and I saw your loving influence on her beginning to blossom. As Jon and I have debriefed each day about what we are working through, we have continued to wonder how a person without faith or a church community could endure the pain of losing a loved one. As the church, we have experienced heartbreak. As the church, we have mourned a loss. As a church, we have proclaimed our belief in the hope of heaven and that through Christ, death has lost its power. As a church, we will turn the page with the expectation that God is still writing our shared story into actions that shine Christ’s light. Even in loss and hurt, God persists, grace persists, and the church persists.

In this hope, there are several things I believe that we as a church can expect in the coming year. First, grief will affect each of us differently. My family will continue to work through our grief together as well as with the help of professional counseling. God is present in the grief and God works with grief. I encourage all of you, if you are struggling with grief or depression, to seek out help. The church has trained Stephen ministers who can provide support through listening and reflection with you. This past fall, we highlighted mental health resources through Ravenwood Health, who can direct you to helpful resources, as well as Hospice of the Western Reserve and Cornerstone of Hope, which offer specific grief groups and counseling.

Second, we as a church will continue to worship and serve our community. We will continue to be a place where people can gather to hear the good news of Christ, lift up prayers for one another, go deeper in faith, help children and youth grow in their knowledge of God and know they are loved. We will continue to be a space where the physical, social, emotional, and spiritual needs of the community are met.

Third, as a church we will lean into our Mission: *To offer Christ through an inclusive community of faith that worships God, cares for people, equips disciples, and works to transform the world.* We are highlighting this focus and vision for our future with a special Sunday morning on February 4, 2024. We will have one worship service at 10 AM to present this mission and how we as the church can live it out. After worship, we will have a meal together that will lead to invitations for how each of us can be a part of what God is doing through Mayfield UMC.

As I gradually return to work and worship in the coming month alongside you, John Parker (Executive Chairperson) and Ben Sassé (SPRC Chairperson) are available to answer questions about the operation of the church.

Your partners in ministry,
Rev. Beth and Jon Wilterdink



MAYFIELD CHURCH

MISSION

Sunday

FEBRUARY 4 @ 10 AM

WITH ALL-CHURCH MEETING AND LUNCHEON FOLLOWING OUR ONE SERVICE

New Members Class

Sundays @ 4 - 5:30 PM

January 14 - February 25, 2024

Rev. Beth and Pastor Jill will lead this 7-week class for anyone interested in becoming a member of Mayfield UMC, who would like a refresher, and/or who is interested in becoming a follower of Jesus. We will be using the book, "A Disciple's Path."

Please contact Pastor Jill: jill@mayfieldchurch.org.



MAYFIELD CHURCH
a United Methodist Congregation

SUNDAYS AT MAYFIELD
9:30 AM Modern
11 AM Traditional

January 7

9:30 and 11 AM:
EPIPHANY

January 14

9:30 and 11 AM:
UNITY AND DIVERSITY
with Guest Preacher, Dr. Sheena Cameron

NEW SERIES:



We may never notice guardrails, but they are important barriers between us and certain danger.

Join us for this next series to find out how to implement guardrails in our everyday lives.

January 21

9:30 and 11 AM:
GUARDRAILS: PART 1

January 28

9:30 and 11 AM:
GUARDRAILS: PART 2

SKIPPING PART 3

February 4

10 AM ONLY:
GUARDRAILS: PART 4

February 11

9:30 and 11 AM:
GUARDRAILS: PART 5



February 14

ASH WEDNESDAY

DRIVE-THRU ASHES

7 - 9 AM

11 AM - 1 PM



EVENING SERVICE
7 PM

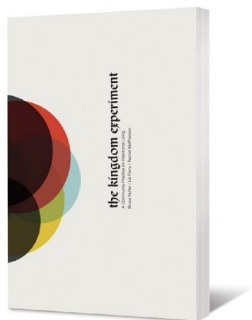
Sunday, March 31

EASTER SUNDAY SERVICES

7:30 AM

9:30 AM

11 AM



Lent Series:

The Kingdom Experiment
Lessons on the Beatitudes
from the book of Matthew.

WAYS TO GIVE

IN-PERSON OR MAIL

Contributions may be placed in the baskets near the exits after the service.

MOBILE



ONLINE OR EFT

mayfieldchurch.org →

Give



Mayfield UM Church
7747 Mayfield Road
Chesterland, OH 44026
440-729-4006
mayfieldchurch.org

"HANDS THAT SERVE" WINTER CLOTHES DRIVE

The Mission Outreach Council, in collaboration with Eve Circle, are collecting winter clothing for Rowland School and adults in Geauga County. Please place donations in the gray bins near the church entrances. Thank you!

Items include: hats, mittens, gloves, boots, gently worn jackets, scarves, and sweaters



Isaac Scott Murugesan Dec. 19, 2023

Dr. Rev. Scott and Babs Wilson welcomed their first grandchild on Dec. 19. Erin and baby are doing great!



Church Cancellation Notices

It's that time of year in NEO when we never know when weather conditions may warrant cancellations. If you are in doubt, there are several ways to find out if your activity will go on as scheduled if the church office is closed. If West Geauga Schools are closed due to inclement weather, we are also closed. Please check our website.

OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHIES

...to Jim Burich and family on the passing of his son, Daniel Fess, on Dec. 5. His memorial service was held on Sat., Dec. 16, at Mayfield UMC.

...to the Wilterdink family and their village on the passing of Cora Elizabeth Wilterdink, on Dec. 10. Her service was held on Mon., Dec. 18, at Mayfield UMC. *Please see her obituary below.*



CORA ELIZABETH WILTERDINK was born on November 9, 2021. Cora was the light in any room, and pure joy to be around. Even at her young age, she was already so smart, spunky, strong, brave, and determined. Her church family, beyond what she even knew, embraced her and cared for her. Cora was loved so much by her big brothers, Robert and Clayton. Her mom and dad were so proud of all that she was already able to do and could see her beautiful spirit. She left this earth too soon on December 10, 2023, but is home in the arms of Jesus, her Creator and God.

She is survived and will be so deeply missed by her parents, Beth and Jon Wilterdink; brothers, Robert and Clayton; grandparents, Mary and Duane Wilterdink and Gary and Peggy Streiff; aunts, uncles, and cousins, Fritz and Alison Streiff (Philip and Luke), Gretchen and Dan LaBonte (Ben and Oliver), Peter and Kelly Streiff (Amos), Chris and Emily Wilterdink (Graham and Lulu), Harrison Wilterdink and Rayna Oliker. And an amazing village of people who loved her and had adopted her as their own.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in Cora's name to:

Camp Asbury
10776 Asbury Rd.
Hiram, OH 44234
easthiocamps.campbraingiving.com

Mayfield United Methodist Church
7747 Mayfield Rd.
Chesterland, OH 44026
mayfieldchurch.org "Give"

Lake County YMCA
36909 Ridge Rd.
Willoughby, OH 44094
lakecountyyymca.org

Please be sure to make note that the gift is in memory of Cora.