

WAYSIDE CROSS MINISTRIES

WCM⁺IMPACT

2023 HOLIDAY NEWSLETTER

Bright Christmas Blessings



DON'T MISS... 2 Walking in the Light

3 A mother breaks away from her dark past.

4 Help brighten someone's Christmas.

Transforming Lives • Restoring Families • Life-changing Programs

For more information: (630) 892-4239 x 224 waysidecross.org





A Message from **JAMES LUKOSE**



Walking in the Light

Dear Friend,

Every year, after Christmas dinner, our family likes to gather together for some good conversation. Everyone is fed, relaxed, and enjoying each other's company.

At Wayside Cross Ministries, we do the same. Our residents are grateful to be in from the cold for a hot meal. Dinner is baked ham with all the trimmings, served with a smile. As they finish their meal, this is when the good conversations happen.

There are stories of pain, loneliness, abuse, and loss. People are hurting, right here in Aurora, but being welcomed with a warm smile and a heaping plate of good food gives some relief for the day. Many times I share how Jesus came for those who need Him ... the sick, the broken, those disappointed with life. Trusting Him overcomes our pain and fills our empty hearts — not just today, but every day. These conversations can lead to warm Christmas moments experiencing God's love. There is nothing quite like it.

You are part of sharing the joy of Christmas with men, women, and children who have lost so much. Some decide to stay, wanting to turn their lives around. Light has come into the world, and we no longer need to walk in darkness. Merry Christmas!

In His bond,

James Lukose
Executive Director, Wayside Cross Ministries

P.S. This Christmas, I hope you are blessed with good conversations with those around you. Sharing the joy Jesus brings is a wonderful Christmas gift.

"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom His favor rests."

Luke 2:14 NIV



A mother breaks away from her dark past.

Growing up, Jennifer was always unhappy. Drugs and alcohol were commonly used in the household, and she herself became an addict at an early age. As a young mother, she raised two sons but could not escape the sadness.

Years went by and Jennifer's addictions followed her. She gave birth to a girl but was still constantly surrounded by the wrong crowd. She hit a breaking point when she came home to find her husband and mother using drugs right in front of her daughter.

"I looked in the mirror, and knew I was missing something," she says. "I had enough. I was hurting and in a dark place, but I knew there was something more to my life — I needed Jesus."

Jennifer made a life-changing, brave decision. She left the home she knew and brought herself and her daughter to Wayside Cross Ministries to join the Lifespring program. "At first, I wanted to leave, but then I found something really beautiful," she says. By embracing her classes and new routine, Jennifer began to learn more about Jesus and how He can heal her hurting soul.

"I had enough. I was hurting and in a dark place, but I knew there was something more to my life ..."

Today, Jennifer is active in her Bible studies and learning how to forgive her family. She works hard at her classes and finds they give her stability. She loves being surrounded by people who care about her and her daughter and feels God filling the empty void in her heart.

"Lifespring is an amazing program. The structure and the love they have for us and our children is life-changing. We were even given a Thanksgiving and Christmas celebration last year ... including gifts from the donors. We were all so happy and thankful!"



Jennifer works and saves her money to secure a new home for her family. One day she hopes to work as a preschool teacher and in ministry. She is also looking forward to her baptism and raising her daughter on the solid foundation of Christ.

As Jennifer pursues her journey, she is thankful for everything gracious people like you do for her ... and so are we! Your generosity helps men, women, and children find healing and learn how to live full lives in Christ. Thank you for making the holidays bright for everyone here at Wayside Cross Ministries!

To learn more visit:
www.waysidecross.org/jennifers-recovery/

Three ways to share what Christmas means to you

More than 600,000 people have recorded stories with StoryCorps, an organization founded to capture stories and preserve them at the Library of Congress.

You also have a story your loved ones want to hear. Here are three ideas to share it this holiday season:

- 1 Interview yourself.** Find interview templates online or simply come up with your own questions to answer and share.
- 2 Go online.** There are apps and web-based tools like Storyworth or Remento available to prompt and capture stories.
- 3 Impact others.** At the heart of your story are the values important to you, as well as the causes you care about deeply. Including a gift in your will to Wayside Cross Ministries is a meaningful way to share that with your family — and impact others.

Your faithful support over the years makes you a significant part of our story, and we're so grateful. You and your story embody these words from Mother Teresa, "I alone can't change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples."

Visit christianwill.org/waysidecross to bless your family with an up-to-date will. For the full version of this article, request a FREE copy of "4 Ways to Share Your Story this Christmas" by contacting Birnie Harper at (630) 723-3427 or bharper@waysidecross.org.

"I alone can't change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples."

Mother Teresa



Help brighten someone's Christmas with a good meal

Christmas is a time of giving, and we look forward to welcoming every man, woman, and child in need of help this holiday season. A warm greeting and a hot meal are a great start to helping people get back on their feet.

This year, we are expecting a larger crowd than last year, and we need your help. The pantry needs to be stocked and ready to feed those in need. In order to welcome and feed the expected crowds, preparation has to begin now.

Please provide for your neighbors in need. Your generosity will truly make the holidays bright for those who need it most. Thank you for being a friend to Wayside Cross Ministries. We are all grateful for your support!

Please bring donations to 215 E New York St., Aurora, IL by December 8th or contact Dion Moore, Kitchen Coordinator, at 630-723-3405 or 630-892-4239 x230. **Thank you for your kindness. May God bless you this Christmas!**

Food Items Needed:

- ☐ Ham
- ☐ Mashed Potatoes
- ☐ Canned Cranberry Sauce
- ☐ Canned Corn
- ☐ Canned Green Beans
- ☐ Canned Soup
- ☐ Coffee
- ☐ Bottled Water
- ☐ Napkins
- ☐ Salt
- ☐ Pepper
- ☐ Sugar
- ☐ Creamer
- ☐ Spices

