

Life Together



A Message from Pastor Karen

Do you have "**ENOUGH**" to be content?

A classroom of middle school students was given the assignment to write out their list of hopes and dreams for the coming year. As the teacher sorted through their essays, she chuckled at the predictability of their answers. On page after page, she read their hopes for peace, cures for cancer, solutions to hunger and racism and economic distress. Most of her students wished for bucket loads of money and more time to spend doing "fun stuff".

But little Malinda's one-word essay was downright philosophical in its simplicity and truthfulness. Scrawled in letters large enough to take up the entire page she wrote: "**ENOUGH**".

Curious, the teacher asked Malinda for clarification.

"Well... I guess we all need different things to make us happy. What's good enough for you may leave me flat. And what's good enough for me might leave you feeling empty and eager for more. So, my prayer for the new year is that everyone has **ENOUGH**...

Malinda, in her youthful innocence, may have been closer to the truth than most of us who are older and seemingly wiser. Finding true happiness – true contentment - begins and ends when we discover what it means to have **ENOUGH**.

Trouble is, we live in an era where accepted values have muddied the definition of what **ENOUGH** includes.

A psychotherapist by the name of Wayne Muller points an uncomfortable critique at our culture by describing how the "Seven Deadly Sins" have been repurposed as the new Seven American Values: "We're number one! (Pride) You can have it all! (Greed) Sex sells! (Lust) I just want to be famous on TV! (Envy) All you can eat! (Gluttony) The world owes everything to me! (Sloth) If any bad guys stand in my way, well, bring 'em on! (Anger)."

History proves that such upside-down thinking causes nothing less than feelings of inadequacy, broken relationships, and a corruption of values. Members of our own community complain despite our booming economy, they feel more frazzled and fearful than ever. They are concerned about a future with limited resources,

Abiding Hope Lutheran Church

2402 W Grandview Blvd
Erie, PA 16506
814.868.8685

www.abidinghopeerie.org
Office email:
ahadministrator@hotmail.com



Pastor Karen Parsh

Cell: 814-881-3266
pastorparsh@gmail.com



Church Hours:

Office:
Monday & Tuesday
9:30 to 3:30;
Wednesday 9:30 to 12:30
Sunday Worship: 9:30
Bible Study: 11:00

Sunday services can be viewed, live streamed, at 9:30 on Facebook or anytime on the website.



Staff

Office Assistant:
Denise Miller

Coordinator of Music:
Sheryl Williams

Sexton:
Kayla Miller

inadequate bank accounts, shallow relationships - and an almost infinite list of potential catastrophes.

Maybe it's time we all reassessed our values and considered what God would have us do. After all, one person has the power to change the world. Mahatma Ghandi wrote "If we could change ourselves, the tendencies in the world would also change. As a man changes his own nature, so does the attitude of the world change towards him. "

Be the change you wish the world to be: Be mindful of God's presence in your life and open your heart to the blessings that surround you. Reshape your expectations to a smaller, simpler scale that gives priority to deep listening, serving others, and grounding yourself with gratitude, compassion, joy... and of course, love for all of God's creation.

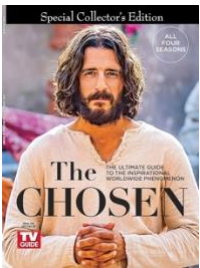
As we step into the New Year, with all the twists and turns that lie ahead, we would be wise to remember Malinda's heartfelt prayer. May God grant you **ENOUGH** light to find your way through the darkness... **ENOUGH** joy to get you through the bad times... And **ENOUGH** wisdom to be content with who God created you to be.



A Message from the Parsh Family

Many thanks to each of you for the countless ways that you made Christmas rich with delight and joy for the Parsh family... Your many greetings of love and concern, your offers to help as we moved from one house to our Erie home, AND your many expressions of kindness, gifts, and PRAYERS! Dave and I are honored and blessed by the family bonds that hold us to this WONDERFUL worshipping community.

May God continue to bless each of us with his PRESENCE through the coming year, THAT WE MAY REJOICE IN THE ANTICIPATION OF ADVENTURES THAT BIND US TOGETHER. Pastor Karen & Dave



Presentation of The Chosen continues in Fellowship Hall following worship on the first 3 Sundays of January. After worship on the fourth Sunday, we will convene in the Fellowship Hall for our Annual Congregational meeting.

This American Christian historical drama television series was created, directed, and co-written by filmmaker Dallas Jenkins, The series is the first multi-season series about the life and ministry of Jesus of Nazareth. Primarily set in Judaea and Galilee in the 1st century, the series centers on Jesus and the people who met and followed him.



A 6-week class in Lutheranism

Are you interested in brushing up on your LUTHERAN KNOWLEDGE? Would you enjoy studying the great stories of how we became a church and what we believe? Then sign up for the class – LUTHERANISM FOR ALL BELIEVERS at 1:00 – to be held at Pastor's new (almost tidied up) home on January 16, 23, 30, February 6, 13, 20 - at 3649 Gerry Ave. Sign-up sheet is in the narthex.

So, be ready to brush up your Lutheran skills, and have some fun with studies, great films and of course, the best part... great conversation! See page 7 for graphic.



Please keep these members and friends in your prayers: Mary Randall, Jonathan & Analee Cree, Damian Santabene, Pat Kerr, Linda Allen, Marjorie Wonner, Jackie Seib, Ed Whitbred, Judi Pacileo, Ron Froess, Sam & Dorothy Elder, Judy Nordin, Carolyn Mariotti, Larry & Barb Ruhlman, Tom Cirillo, Esther Klakamp, Kathi (Cindy Filson's sister), Dave Parsh, Don & Donna Holder, Evelyn Senger, and prayer requests from our Little Library friends.



Please call or email Pastor Karen with prayer requests. Phone: 814-881-3266, pastorparsh@gmail.com or the church office, 814-868-8685.

KAFP Project Dignity: The KAFP continues to provide food and personal care items bi-monthly to over 110 Millcreek families in need. Each month members are invited to donate personal care items for distribution the following month. Donations can be placed in the basket on the shelf in the Heritage Room. **January Item ~ Deodorant.**



Congregation Budget Meeting report – December 15, 2024

The following AHLC members volunteered and were elected to fill the terms for 2025:

- Judi Pacileo and John Holmberg volunteered as our representatives to NWPAsynod for 2025.
- Bonnie Cleaver, Donna Holder and Jeanne Tropper volunteered to serve on the Audit team.
- Nancy Cunning, Bob Reid, Lon Jenkins volunteered to serve on the Nominating Team in 2025.
- Paul Mirone will become a member of the 2025 Church Council. He will become a full member of Abiding Hope on December 22nd.

The 2025 AHLC Budget was the next topic.

- AH's electric is still high, even with no air conditioning. Penelec should be contacted to do an audit on our usage. Need to make an appointment and find a member to be there or schedule during office hours.
- Staff increases for everyone except Sheryl. Sheryl spoke up and stated she does not want a raise.
- Phone cost is high. It is a law that the elevator must have a separate land line.
- Water bill is based on the size of the meter that the building has.
- Ed Whitbred has stepped down from coordinating Lunch and Listen. Hoping a member will step in and oversee this outreach program.
- Budget for 2025 is \$137,000. 2024 was \$133,900. Currently, we have \$96,000 pledged for 2025. A thank you from Lon Jenkins to the Financial team for all their work to prepare the budget. The 2025 budget passed.

Respectfully submitted by Analee Cree Council Secretary

Upcoming Annual Congregational Meeting ~ Sunday, January 26 at 11:00

Members will review and approve the 2024 Annual Report; discuss old and new business. The Annual Report will be ready to review by Jan 19th.



24 Days of Advent ~ Share Your Blessings

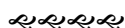
This is a time of great need and rising costs for us all. Direct costs have risen dramatically and contributions from Second Harvest have been reduced for the Kearsarge Area Food Pantry. If you haven't already done so, please consider contributing nonperishable food items (See listing for the 24 Days of Advent on page 9) are your Blessing program or contribute financially to the KAFP.



Last year the response to this program was amazing. Thank you for your generosity. For more information, see display in the narthex and see KAFP report on page 9.



Altar Flowers for 2025: Anyone who wishes to donate flowers for Sunday worship, weekly sign-up and request forms are on the table in the narthex. Arrangements remain at \$20 each. Place completed form and payment in the offering plate or return to the office by the Monday prior to your chosen date.



Little Free Library/Pantry: With the harsh weather of December, we continued to have visitors carefully stepping through the snow to reach the Library/Pantry—taking several books at a time, and items from the pantry. To date the most popular of the items people seem to appreciate are easy to prepare **packaged meals such as those with tuna, noodles, mac n cheese, rice, quinoa as well as cereals—oatmeal and small boxes of dry cereals are popular. Nuts, peanut butter and jams in plastic jars, crackers, graham crackers, cheese crackers, peanut butter crackers and anything similar would be appreciated donations. Thank you for your generosity!**

The donated bookmarks are just beautiful—thank you for all your efforts! Books are not needed at this time, but Friends of the Library will be announcing their book drive in early January, so please hold those books and consider donating to this organization, which raises funds for our public library through this sale.



Prayer Warriors: Prayer Warriors will meet on Wednesday, January 15 1:00-3:00. The sanctuary will be open for prayer/meditation as we focus on the needs of our congregation, neighborhood, community, state, nation and world. No problems are too big for our God! If you cannot meet with us, please pray from where you are during this time. God honors our prayers and this gift of our personal time to spend in his Presence.



Erie Night to Shine - February 7, 2025

This event is a prom-style celebration for people with special needs. It is a faith-based event being held at the Shrine Club. Night to Shine is a global movement with 725 locations across the world hosting this event started by the Tim Tebow Foundation. Abiding Hope has pledged \$500 to help support this no charge event that includes a meal, dancing, favors, hair and makeup as well as corsages and boutonnieres. Please mark your donations Night to Shine and help the Night to Shine for over 180 people in our community. Check out the folders in the narthex for more information.

Analee Cree,



Green Corner NWP A Synod Green Team

Eco-Friendly New Year's Resolutions

2025 is here and it's time to make a fresh start. Why not add some eco-friendly ideas to your New Year's resolutions? Even incorporating one new habit will help make a difference!

- Turn off lights in areas where they aren't needed.
- Cut back on paper towels; use cotton cloths instead.
- Use rechargeable batteries.
- Develop the habit of using reusable shopping bags for all purchases, not just groceries.
- Shop locally and reduce online shipping containers.
- Carpool and/or consolidate errands to reduce gas usage (and time).
- Encourage and participate in tree planting initiatives.
- Change your eating habits. Purchase local meat and produce or plant a small vegetable garden.
- Reduce food delivery packaging; make more meals and snacks at home.
- Pick plastic-free packaging, when it is available.
- Bring your own food containers to restaurants for take-home food.
- Refuse plasticware that is included in take-out orders.
- Bring along a trash container for picking up litter when you are walking/hiking.
- Advocate for environmental justice by addressing the disproportionate impacts of climate change on marginalized communities.

Host a creation-focused Bible study for church and community members using the "Our Kairos Moment: An ELCA Climate Care Study Guide". <https://lutheransrestoringcreation.org/our-kairos-moment-an-elca-climate-care-study-guide/>

It's never too late to start new habits. Tiny steps can bring great rewards!

The Green Team's purpose is to "raise awareness of and advocate for the care of creation." Our mission is to support and encourage creation care ministries, raise awareness, model creation care advocacy consistent with ELCA teachings in our faith communities and public life. nwpasynodgreenteam@gmail.com

Like and follow us on Facebook: Northwestern PA Synod Green Team – Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.



AHLC Welcomes New Member

On Sunday, December 15th, Abiding Hope welcomed Dr. Paul Mirone into the congregation of believers. As an associate member, Paul has been active, among other things, in the 2023 revamping of our sound system and playing guitar most Sundays with Brian Gresh. In 2025 he will join the Church Council as a member fulfilling the term of Larry Ruhlman who resigned due to health issues.

We welcome Dr. Paul and thank him and his wife Priscila, for their dedication to AHLC.



2024 Contribution Statements will be placed in your AH mailbox during the first half of January as well as emailed to you. If you need to have the statement sent to you by US mail, please let Cindy Filson know by either calling her at 814-833-6875 or email AHfinsec@outlook.com. Please verify the statements with your records and if you have a question or find an error, please notify Cindy.

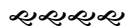
Cindy Filson ~ Financial Secretary ahfinsec@outlook.com.



Current Budget Update

November Finances

Income	\$13,484.56	Year to Date	\$135,976.18
Expenses	\$23,566.06	Year to Date	\$126,505.67
Difference	-\$10,081.50	Year to Date	\$ 9,470.51
2024 YTD Budget		\$123,367.93	



January Music Notes

Start the New Year with a Song!

The Choir invites you to make it your New Year's Resolution to join the Choir! We are a fun-loving group of singers of all ages who strive to make a joyful noise unto the Lord! After singing our Epiphany anthem on Jan. 5th, the choir will take a well-deserved rest for the rest of January, returning to regular rehearsals on Sunday, Feb. 2, 2025. Please join us after worship on Feb. 2nd for our first rehearsal of the year! For more information, please contact Sheryl at (814) 882-2830 or sheryl4013@yahoo.com.

Many Blessings in 2025!

Sheryl Williams ~ Coordinator of Music



Donations for Bethany and Chosen Continue

Collection of used clothing and household items for **Bethany Outreach** continues as well as collection of shoes and boots (pairs only) in good condition for **Chosen**.

Drop off in the Heritage Room. **Thank you! Analee Cree.**



January Dates to Remember

- Jan 6 Committee Reports due to Nancy Cunning
- Jan 6 & 19 10-12 Prayer Shawls Gathering
- Jan 15 1-3pm Prayer Warriors
- Jan 16 Lutheran Theology classes begin
- Jan 21 12:30 Care Team mtg
- Jan 26 11:00 Annual Congregational meeting



January Birthdays

- 1/1 Jackie Seib
- 1/1 Abigail Meier
- 1/3 Jonathan Cree
- 1/5 Bill Sontheimer
- 1/9 Bill Getson
- 1/16 Carol Whitbred
- 1/16 John Holmberg
- 1/23 Judy Johnston



Abiding Hope Leadership

2025 Church Council

President

Andy Saska

Vice-President

Penny Gresh

Secretary

Analee Cree

Treasurer

Michele Rion

Financial Secretary

Cindy Filson

Council Members

Pastor Karen Parsh

Lois Kuhns

Rich Filson

Dave Cuning

Diana Stoker

Paul Mirone

Hospitality at Abiding Hope

We hope everyone had a joyous Christmas. Our ladies were very busy during the Advent season doing all kinds of things in preparation for Christmas. However, we found time to get together for the Ladies Night Out Christmas Party. It was wonderful to celebrate the birth of Jesus together and enjoy each other's company.

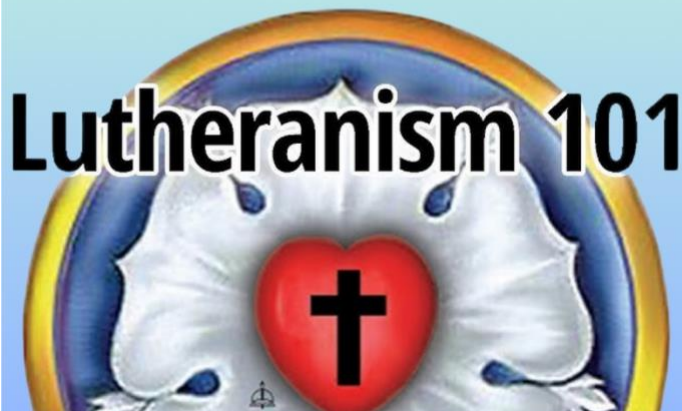
As we end another busy year, we wish to thank everyone for all their donations, and time and talent offered to the Hospitality Committee. We could not have provided the quality of events without each and every one of you. You are the best.

May God Bless You ~ Carolyn Hayes



Have you ever wondered what makes Abiding Hope different from other churches? What do Lutherans believe and why? Are you interested in brushing up on your LUTHERAN KNOWLEDGE? Would you enjoy studying the great stories of how we became a church and what we believe? Well, sign up for the 6-week class on Lutheranism and find out!

Lutheranism For All Believers



WHEN: First Class is Thursday, January 16th at 1PM and continues every Thursday for 6 weeks

WHERE: 3649 Gerry Ave. (Pastor Karen's new house)

WHO: Anyone with an interest in learning, especially new members

TEACHER: Pastor Karen

INTERESTED? Sign-up sheet is in the narthex or call the church office at 814-868-8685 to RSVP.



Recap

Council
of
December 10 Meeting

As we gathered for the last time in 2024, we took time to reflect on the year and years that council members have been serving our Abiding Hope Family. No one complained, said get me off council. In my opinion this shows the love and dedication they have for Abiding Hope. We thank you for your support and welcome new members.

- Motion made and passed to accept Paul Mirone as a member
- Issues with posting on Facebook. Other churches are using YouTube. A member is looking into this avenue.
- Addressed a letter from one of the groups using the community room. Reviewed the contract. Pastor to setup a meeting to review.
- Extreme snow issues discussed. Contact plow company to keep food pantry doors clear. Snow rake needed to clean off awnings.
- On February 9, after church, there will be a council retreat

We close with prayer and special prayer concerns. Your council looks forward to serving you in 2025, will welcome a new member and always welcomes concerns and suggestions.

Respectfully submitted by *Analee Cree*, - Council Secretary - Peace and Christmas Blessings



Erie Conference Epiphany Service with Burning of the Greens

Monday, January 6, 2025, 7:00 p.m.

at Faith Lutheran Church, 5414 East Lake Road
"Arise, shine, for your light has come!"

The congregations of the Erie Lutheran Conference will celebrate the Epiphany of our Lord together with a Service of Holy Communion with Rev. Kristen Papson preaching, followed by Burning of the Christmas Greens. All are welcome!

The Scandinavian custom of an Epiphany burning of the greens was introduced to Faith Lutheran several years ago and it has become a beloved local tradition. You are welcome to bring the Christmas trees and greens from your congregation or home to add to the bonfire; just give us a heads-up first.

Refreshments and fellowship will follow in the social hall. Be sure to dress warm for the bonfire; you may also watch from the comfort of the social hall if you prefer.

For more information, call 814-899-9653 or e-mail faithlepastor@gmail.com.



Prayer Shawl Gatherings continue at 10a-12noonish for prayer, good conversation, knitting/crocheting shawls, prayer cards, lap robes for the homebound. Start a new project or complete a piece you've started. Experience not necessary, yarn and instruction available to all.

The group will meet Monday, January 6th and 20th (the 1st and 3rd Monday of each month) in the Conference Room.




KEARSARGE AREA FOOD PANTRY

24

DAYS OF

Advent

SHARING YOUR BLESSINGS



Each day of Advent, add an item from the grocery list to your giving box. Donate the contents each Sunday during Advent or donate it all (or a monetary gift) on Epiphany Sunday, January 5th to celebrate the bearing of the Wise Men's gifts.

GIVE A LITTLE EACH DAY AS A THANK YOU TO GOD

Day 1	box of cereal	Day 13	beans (kidney, pinto, black)
Day 2	peanut butter	Day 14	chicken ramen
Day 3	noodles	Day 15	package of rice
Day 4	cream of chicken	Day 16	oatmeal
Day 5	macaroni and cheese	Day 17	pasta
Day 6	grape/strawberry jelly	Day 18	spaghetti sauce
Day 7	canned tomatoes	Day 19	chicken noodle soup
Day 8	canned tuna	Day 20	tomato soup
Day 9	cream of mushroom	Day 21	canned corn
Day 10	can/pineapple chunks	Day 22	canned mixed vegetables
Day 11	mandarin oranges	Day 23	canned chicken
Day 12	canned peaches	Day 24	canned green beans

Abiding Hope Lutheran & New Hope Presbyterian Churches

Food Pantry News

In November the KAFP served 112 households consisting of 414 people (179 adults, 160 children and 75 seniors).

November 21st was Annual Turkey Day. Folks received a turkey with all the fixings for a complete Thanksgiving meal, including an apple pie. Volunteers from Abiding Hope and New Hope were available to assist.... along with the regular crew.

On November 19th, the KAFP invited AHLC, New Hope and Temple Anshe Hessed to an Open House. Sixteen people attended. Guests enjoyed a tour of the KAFP facility with an explanation of the workings of the KAFP and answered any questions. New Hope and the Temple are interested in doing some fundraising as well as volunteering. It was a very positive Open House. Thank you, Cheryl Filley, Assistant Director.

24 Days of Advent Sharing your Blessings is a wonderful way to give a gift of food every day during Advent to thank God for all our blessings. See information above. If you cannot donate food, please feel free to donate money to assist us with the purchase of food for our families. Please remember when giving prepackaged or canned food to KAFP, we are not permitted to give away expired food. ~~ Rich Filson, Director of KAFP



Thank you Notes

Dear Abiding Hope Family, Many, many thanks for my Christmas gift. Your kindness and generosity are so very much appreciated.

With wishes for a Happy and Blessed New Year, denise

Thank you to the congregation for my very generous Christmas gift. I am so blessed to have such loving and supportive friends who appreciate the many musicians who share their offerings with our church! Merry Christmas! ~ Sheryl Williams

January 2025

Abiding Hope Calendar



2402 W Grandview Blvd. Erie, PA 16506 ~ 814-868-8685 ~ www.abidinghopeerie.org

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>24 Days of Advent Food donations due Jan 5th or 6th. See pg. 9.</p>	<p>Jan 6: Epiphany Service at Faith LC @ 7pm See pg. 8.</p>		<p>1 Happy New Year 2025 Church office closed</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4 M Lessons 8-12 Overeaters 10:30</p>
<p>5 Worship 9:30 Choir @ 9 The Chosen @ 11:00 24 Day of Advent donations due</p>	<p>6 Prayer Shawl Gathering 10-12 Epiphany Worship @ FC 7p Music Lessons 4-6 Al-Anon 7:30</p>	<p>7 Ministry Team 10:30 M. Lessons 4-6</p>	<p>8 Note: No Lunch & Listen this month</p>	<p>9 KAFP 9-11</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11 M Lessons 8-12 Overeaters 10:30</p>
<p>12 Worship 9:30 The Chosen @ 11:00</p>	<p>13 Music Lessons 4-6 Al-Anon 7:30</p>	<p>14 Ministry Team 10:30 M. Lessons 4-6 Council 6:30</p>	<p>15 Prayer Warriors 1-3</p>	<p>16 Lutheranism @1pm Ladies Night Out 5:30 at The Cab</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18 M Lessons 8-12 Overeaters 10:30</p>
<p>19 Worship 9:30 The Chosen @ 11:00</p>	<p>20 Prayer Shawl Gathering 10-12 Martin Luther King Jr. Day Music Lessons 4-6 Al-Anon 7:30</p>	<p>21 Ministry Team 10:30 Care Team Meeting 12:30 M. Lessons 4-6</p>	<p>22 Men's Night Out 6:30 at The Bullfrog</p>	<p>23 KAFP 9-11 Lutheranism @1pm</p>	<p>24 DL Newsletter</p>	<p>25 M Lessons 8-12 Overeaters 10:30</p>
<p>26 Worship 9:30 Congregational Mtg. 11:00</p>	<p>27 Music Lessons 4-6 Al-Anon 7:30</p>	<p>28 Ministry Team 10:30 M. Lessons 4-6</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30 Lutheranism @1pm</p>	<p>31</p>	
<p>LUTHERANISM FOR ALL BELIEVERS at 1:00 – to be held at Pastor's new home every Thursday, January 16 through February 20 - at 3649 Gerry Ave. See pg. 2. Sign-up sheet is in the narthex.</p>			<p>Receiving Communion during Worship If it is a challenge for you to come forward to receive communion, please alert the usher and you will be served communion at your seat.</p>			

Ladies' Night Out

THURSDAY, JANUARY 16 @ 5:30
@ THE CAB
5442 WEST LAKE ROAD



Ladies will meet for an evening of dinner, laughs and good conversation. Enjoy All-American cuisine at The Cab on 5442 West Lake Road.



RSVP by Tuesday, Jan 14 - Sign up sheet in the narthex.

Join the Ladies this month for Ladies Night Out at The Cab. Thursday, January 16th at 5:30.

Prayer Shawl Workshops



Ladies are welcome to join the "Prayer Shawl" Gathering, 10a-12noonish for prayer, good conversation, knitting/crocheting shawls, prayer cards, lap robes for the homebound. Start a new or maybe complete a piece you've started, but not quite finished. Experience not necessary, showing "how to" will gladly be offered. Meetings to be the 1st and 3rd Monday of each month in the Conference Room.



Need some training, instruction, patterns or yarn? Ladies will provide it all! Join us. Yarn provided.

MEETINGS:
1ST + 3RD MONDAYS-
10AM TO 12NOON-ISH AT ABIDING HOPE



Men's Night Out ~ Wed. Jan 22~6:30PM



No RSVP-just show up for good eats and conversation.



2992 West Lake Road

Join the men this month for Mens' Night Out at The Bullfrog. Wednesday, January 22nd at 6:30.

The CHOSEN



Now Showing at



January showings on Sunday, January 5th, 12th & 19th at 11:00 am in Fellowship Hall.

Come join us for a share viewing experience of THE CHOSEN - an American Christian historical drama - following worship on the large screen TV in Fellowship Hall.