



# GOOD NEIGHBORS

Restoring Lives Together in Western New York



What Loving  
Your Neighbor  
Looks Like



Thanks to you, Erika knows what it means to receive the gift of neighborly love. See how your kindness turned her life around.

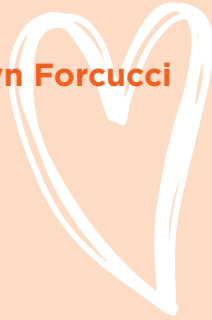


SUMMER 2025

# Live Your Faith, Love Your Neighbor



## A Message from Marilyn Forcucci You're Such a Good Neighbor!



*"Who is my neighbor?"*

When one of the religious leaders tested Jesus with this question, Jesus shared the story that we know as The Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37).

Jesus essentially said that a true neighbor is one who shows kindness and mercy to others. He finished by telling that particular religious leader to "go and do likewise."

That's what we aim to do every day at Buffalo City Mission, to "do likewise" by serving our struggling neighbors. We do this by meeting their practical needs for food, shelter, clothing, and other essentials, but also by addressing their emotional and spiritual needs. The goal is to help neighbors become whole in every way possible, equipping them to face their futures with hope, joy, and confidence.

You're also "doing likewise" through your support of the Mission. It's one of the most neighborly things you can do for those in our community who struggle just to make it through each day. And I'm grateful for your faithfulness.

**Thanks for being such a good neighbor!**



*Marilyn Forcucci*  
Marilyn Forcucci  
Chief Operating Officer,  
Interim CEO

**"Jesus told him, 'Go and do likewise.'"** - Luke 10:37

**Open Your Heart to  
Transform Lives  
This Summer**

**LOVE YOUR  
NEIGHBOR**  
92-DAY SUMMER CAMPAIGN

**Your gift is needed by August 31  
to help provide:**



**36,500**  
Meals



**Hundreds**  
of Hygiene Items



**18,250**  
Nights of  
Shelter



**Countless**  
Hours of Education  
and Job Skills Training

## Give Nourishing Meals

**\$2.40**

provides a hot,  
nourishing meal

**It's a wonderful  
way to love  
neighbors in need!**

**Give Now!**



**Thank you for giving hope to those  
in need this Summer!**

Thanks to You,  
**Erika Feels  
Worthy Again!**



Erika's childhood was filled with hardship and heartache. Her father left when she was 2. People she trusted abused her at a very young age.

***"I've been through some traumatic experiences,"*** she says. *"I've been diagnosed with extreme anxiety disorder, PTSD, and some other stuff."* Though she's worked hard to build a positive life, in many ways, the struggles of her youth have stayed with her.

To ease her pain, Erika turned to art. The act of creating can be a healing outlet for strong feelings, even the painful ones — and often, *especially* the painful ones. She channels many of her emotions through the arts, particularly dance.

*"For 90 percent of my life, I've danced with either a contemporary or traditional West African company,"* she says. *"And I'm a liturgical praise dancer at my church."*

It's remarkable that Erika has found the grace and strength to praise God at all, considering what she's been through. But years of financial hardship

left her in increasingly difficult circumstances.

More recently, after losing her housing, she stayed in a 10-by-10 storage unit she was renting rather than live on the streets. She slept on the floor, and the building was infested by roaches. *"That was an uneasy time,"* she says. *"It was scary."*

Even then, Erika created art to cope — making things on her sewing machine, designing costumes, crafting jewelry ... all in that 10-by-10 unit. *"I kept creating,"* she says.

Erika ultimately found her way to Cornerstone Manor — the Mission's women and children's shelter. It was just what she needed. While with us, her faith has grown, and just as importantly, so has her self-worth.

*"Cornerstone has been amazing,"* she says. *"It has totally shifted my mindset. Now, because of my personal relationship with Christ, I know there's a greater purpose for me."*

Part of that purpose includes another kind of art — the culinary kind. While at Cornerstone, Erika went through culinary school and is now a certified chef. When she moves on from the Mission, she wants to run her own catering business.

For now, she has a message for you:

***"Your giving is not in vain! It's appreciated. It's needed. Thank you!"***

***"Now, because of my personal relationship with Christ, I know there's a greater purpose for me."***

***- Erika***



