

# "THE WEST SIDE STORY"

PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY  
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*"Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."*

*(Luke 2:11-12)*

I'm ready for Christmas! Impressive, huh? I got your attention, didn't I? Well, I'm not quite ready. I haven't done my shopping. I haven't decorated the house. I haven't made the first Christmas cookie. But, I am humming Christmas carols and I am thinking about those other things.

It is a fact that every year the season starts earlier and earlier. I used to fight it. I used to think it almost sacrilegious to even think about Christmas before Thanksgiving, let alone before Halloween! But this year I have decided to go with the flow. It's not that I'm folding to the merchants. I have just decided that getting ready early is a good thing.

Advent and Christmas are such wonderful, exciting times for Christians. I want to be able to experience the season to the fullest. So my plan this year is to get all the "things" done early so that I can focus on, enjoy, and experience the true meaning of the holidays. Recently, I ran across these commandments for Christmas that I hope will help me keep Christ in the center of Christmas. Perhaps they will help you too!

"The Ten Commandments for Christmas"

1. Thou shalt prepare early. Don't wait until the last minute to get into the Christmas spirit.

2. Thou shalt keep Christ at the center of Christmas. Don't allow yourself to be overwhelmed by the commercialism of the season. Resolve to read one of the Gospels during December, and meditate upon what it means that Christ came into the world.

3. Thou shalt make Christmas a family time. Do things together: Decorate the tree, play games, bake cookies, shop, write cards, have devotionals, go caroling, attend church together.

4. Thou shalt remember those who are less fortunate. Contribute significantly to an organization serving the needs of others throughout the year. Give a Christmas gift to your church.

5. Thou shalt give thyself with every gift. Put some thought into the gifts you purchase. Give a gift that represents you. If possible, make something instead of buying something.

6. Thou shalt learn to be a good receiver. Many of us have trouble receiving graciously and gracefully.

7. Thou shalt put music into Christmas. Buy several Christmas CD's and play them again and again. Attend church choir cantatas and special Christmas programs. Sing carols with loved ones.

8. Thou shalt slow down. Remember: Christmas is supposed to be a season of peace, not hypertension.

9. Thou shalt remember to worship. The church is the place you are most likely to be reminded of the true meaning of Christmas.

10. Thou shalt receive Christ into thy life. Don't just talk about the Christ of Christmas; receive him into your life as Lord and Savior.

As your pastor and friend, I pray the blessings of Christ and Christmas for you and your family during this special season of the year and always.

Merry Christmas!  
Love, Jane

*"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."  
(Luke 2:14)*

### MARY'S WELLNESS CORNER



We are spiritual beings, made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27). Our spiritual nature is in the center of our whole being. All parts of our being are inter-connected and impact the whole person God has created. Recognize the close connection between your sense of well being and self esteem to your overall health.

Prepare for the arrival of your Savior, Jesus Christ, during this advent season. Each week, take one part of your being. (mind, body, relationships, and spirit) and examine it. If you find that one part of your being is unhealthy, reach out to God through scripture and in prayer, and ask for healing. When Jesus comes to you on December 25<sup>th</sup>, let your whole being be ready, mentally, physically, spiritually, and humanly.

\*Week 1 – Body – 1st Corinthians 6:19-20

\*Week 1 – Mind – Romans 12:2

\*Week 3 – Relationships – Matthew 22:39 & 6:14-15

\*Week 4 – Spirit – Psalm 32:1 & John 3:3

May the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit, soul, and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.  
I Thessalonians 5:23, RSV

May you feel the Spirit of God's love, joy and peace this Christmas season.

Mary Peris, Parish Nurse

## ARTICLES FOR THE JANUARY, 2005 NEWSLETTER WILL BE DUE DECEMBER 12.



Help Needed for Decorating The Church, Saturday, December 4 – 9:00 a.m.



### CWF NEWS

Lydia Group had 6 present. Offering was \$34, Blanket Offering was \$50. They read 3 Daily Devotions, 2 Disciples, 1 Regional Paper, 1 leader magazine and 2 books. They spent 9 hours on crafts and made 28 contacts. December meeting will be at Province Place with Ruth Blackman. Meet at church to carpool.

Rebekah Group had 8 members present. Offering was \$52 and Blanket Offering was \$37. They read 16 books, 7 Daily Devotions, 3 Disciples, 7 Regional Papers, 2 teaching, 1 leading and 7 cooking/craft magazines. They made 42 contacts.

January, 2005 is "Brown Bag Month." Everyone is asked to be sure to pick up a brown bag located in the back of the sanctuary and fill it with groceries.

**OUR SHUT-INS:** Hazel Jarvis and Sandy Cotton, Sentara Nursing Center, 4201 Greenwood Dr., (P); Leona Brodie, The Heritage, 515 S. Warley, Florence, SC 29501; Mary Mingis, 4107 Heritage Rd., Richmond, 23227; Ruth Blackman, 1 Bon Secours Way, Cedar Pt. #241, (P); Martha Gray, Maryview Care Center, (S); Sylvia Dickens, Autumn Care, 3610 Winchester Dr., (P).

**OTHERS ON OUR PRAYER LIST:** Betty McCrickard; Sid Price; Beverly Baker Jones; Evelyn Thomson; Linda Britt (daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Mullins); Adean Wyatt (sister-in-law of Mary Wyatt.); Sarah Crawford; Tracy Lenderson (Pre-school parent); Hilda and Glen Weaver (former minister); Pete Darden (Maud Hemby's brother); Paul Thompson.

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WE EXTEND OUR CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY to Janey Culpepper and family upon the death of her brother, B. L. Hardison, III, who died November 4 in Warsaw, Missouri;

AND

To Cindy Wallace and family upon the death of her brother-in-law, Gary McClenney who died on November 17.

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# HAPPY BIRTHDAY

## DECEMBER

- 1 Kathy Saunders
- 2 Leon Passareillo
- 5 Kathryn Bean
- 6 David Bond
- 10 Karen Brown, Nora Davenport
- 15 Ken Bryant, Gladys Smith, Marleen Whitehurst
- 17 Leo Gibbs
- 21 Shannon Wilson, Jennifer Larson
- 24 Rick Oliver, Cassie Honeycutt
- 25 Ethelyn Huddle
- 28 Emily Gray, Wendy Redmon, Cecil Dillon
- 29 Alison Ehlers



For David and Brooke Kays. Ellagrace Elizabeth was born November 12 and weighed 7 lbs. and 2 oz.

**CONGRATULATIONS!**

### LECTIONERY TEXT

Dec. 5: Isaiah 11:1-10; Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19; Romans 15:4-13; Matthew 3:1-12

Dec. 12: Isaiah 35:1-10; Psalm 146:5-10; James 5:7-10; Matthew 11:2-11

Dec. 19: Isaiah 7:10-16; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-25

Dec. 26: Isaiah 63:7-9; Psalm 148; Hebrews 2:10-18; Matthew 2:13-23



### NEW ADDRESS FOR

Chris and Amy (Gray) Blazek  
7824 Celeste Lane, Hixson, TN 37343

Brant and Theresa Honeycutt  
1202 Indian Dr., Kill Devil Hills, NC 27948  
252-449-0938



### LIVE NATIVITY

It would be great to do a live nativity this year. A sign-up sheet will be in the Gathering Area for those interested in participating—youth and adults needed.

**HOMELESS – WSCC** will feed and house the homeless during the week of January 23-29, 2005. Volunteers are needed. Additional information will be forthcoming.

Outreach Department



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### CHRISTMAS OFFERING

**GOAL: \$2,000**

**December 12 and 19**

These monies will be used for regional ministries in the region where funds are contributed for implementation of the church's imperative "to strengthen congregational life for this mission."

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**FYI:** WSCC Disciples Men are available to shut-ins, women divorcees, widows, elderly, and the disabled, for minor car/home repair/maintenance. Please note, if the required home and/or car repairs are considered too large or too expensive for us, then DMF will assist the owner in obtaining an equitable/fair price for the required repairs-maintenance. Contact Larry Hackler, 488-5997 for additional information.

### SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE

It was with great disappointment that the Search Committee had to announce that our most recent candidate, Joe Hodges, accepted a position in Regional Ministry. We were caught completely off-guard as Joe had been the one to suggest the congregational viewing of his sermon video so that

we could gauge overall reaction to his style, etc. Like every candidate we've interviewed, Joe was in dialogue with multiple congregations. We were unaware that a regional opportunity was added to the mix in the time between our last conversation on Nov. 5 and his announcement on Nov. 12.

So, why, you are probably asking yourself, is West Side always on the losing end of these deliberations? There are a number of factors, the most important of which, is supply and demand. There are simply many more openings than there are candidates. In some cases we have entered into discussions too early in their search – meaning we're one of the first churches to initiate contact. They know they have time on their side and are not ready to make a commitment that soon. With other candidates we find ourselves in "competition" with as many as 3 or 4 other congregations, often in the candidates "own back yard." Geography is seemingly the second biggest obstacle we face. Especially with those candidates that have young families, opportunities in their home state or an adjacent state outweigh a move that could be 1,000 or more miles away.

A third factor that we're dealing with is our own geography. To someone not familiar with Metropolitan Tidewater, Portsmouth is not the most appealing city, especially to ministers with school age children. Rest assured your committee addresses our geography quite early in the conversation and offers each candidate a very positive image of our area.

A fourth factor is our own church demographics. We are on the cusp of small to mid-size in attendance numbers, do not have a professional in Youth Ministry or an Associate Pastor. We have about 15% of our population over age 65 and have only had 3 ministers in the past 34 years. These facts, which must be a part of our Congregational Profile that is given to candidates, often gets misinterpreted as "too traditional," "not open to change" and we either get eliminated or put in the low priority category. Certainly, if we open a dialogue with a candidate, we fill them in on our history and progressions.

We have analyzed our process numerous times. Are we moving too fast or too slow? Do we tell

them too little or too much? The feedback we've gotten from those that turned us down has been that our process has been "on target." They say we ask the right questions, do our research and present our congregation in a very favorable light. We do not come across as "desperate" as many are surprised we've been in the search process so long. They commend us for treating the process as a calling and not a "hiring" process.

One thing has clearly emerged over these past 3 years. The candidates, whether they be 25 or 50 years old, have been very traditional in their theology but contemporary in their view of how to fulfill the Great Commission. Many have been second, third and even fourth generation Disciples and they value our traditions, especially communion, but they have come to realize we need to expand on how we share the Good News. We must meet the unchurched where they are in today's society. We must communicate in language and methodologies that they can relate to. This doesn't mean abandoning tradition, it simply means creating new traditions. Today's candidates are clearly focused on social issues and evangelism.

They are open to new programs and ideas and they view the "job" of evangelism as a congregational one, not just the minister's "job." They speak of committees as ministry teams and they are excited about reaching out beyond the borders of the individual church congregation.

So, where does that leave us? We are confident in God's faithfulness. We know he has a candidate for us and we continue to be in prayer for his discernment. We thank you for your prayers and support and ask that you continue to pray for God's will. We are waiting on the Lord, but I can't help but wonder if the Lord isn't waiting on us? Pray about it.

Kitty Baker,  
Search Committee Chairperson



#### ORGAN FUND

As our congregation knows, West Side's nearly 40-year old organ is reaching the end of its playable life, and we have begun to consider a replacement. At the November Board Meeting, Ralph Spoettle of Organ Sound Design presented information about the

Ahlborn-Galanti line of instruments and proposed installation of an exciting new organ with accompany-ing speakers designed for WSCC.

Built using the latest computer technology, the Ahlborn-Galanti line of instruments is engineered to sound like a pipe organ, while lending themselves to a wide range of musical needs, including the latest contemporary sounds. Many local churches, including St. Andrews United Methodist, St. Andrews Presbyterian, and Community Methodist, have chosen this instrument for its excellent sound qualities, outstanding record of reliability, and competitive price. Installation of the SL250 model with speakers and an additional sound module would cost \$20,800, which includes the trade-in value of our current instrument. At the Annual Congregational Meeting, a motion was made and passed to buy and install the new instrument with the expectation that it could be in place for Christmas worship services.

To fund the project, the congregation voted to use monies from the Memorial Fund and to begin a program of fund-raising to cover the rest of the cost, approximately \$7,500. Plans are already underway for fund-raising efforts, but a unique opportunity comes to mind: a Christmas Gift to West Side that will help ensure the next 40 years of music to complement our worship services. No gift is too small (or too large) to help make beautiful music during the Christmas season and far beyond. Please consider making a special contribution to our organ fund, designating organ fund on the memo line of your check.

Becky Barclay and the  
Worship & Fine Arts Comm.



“OPERATION SANTA CLAUS”  
December 3, 11:00 a.m.

Fourth St. Baptist Church, 726 South St.  
Coffee at 10:30 a.m.



ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PAGEANT  
Sunday, December 12, 5:00 p.m.

“The Best Christmas Present Ever”  
A cookie reception will follow the pageant



CELEBRATION OF CHRISTMAS IN

WORSHIP AND MUSIC  
With Dr. Amy Miller  
December 12, 11:00 a.m.



CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT  
COMMUNION SERVICE,  
December 24, 8:00 pm

Make some little (or big) girl happy this Christmas!  
Take Barbie home!

**SPECIAL EDITION  
1996 CHRISTMAS BARBIE**

**DONATION: \$1 PER TICKET**  
(Proceeds will go toward the purchase of our new organ)

**DRAWING WILL BE DEC. 12, 2004**

You do not need to be present to win.

**WELCOME** new member, Sid Price. Sid has been attending West Side for many years and comes by way of transfer!

**WEST SIDE CHRISTIAN CHURCH**  
**535 Cherokee Road**  
**P. O. Box 3345**  
**Portsmouth, Virginia 23701**



**Rev. Jane Cherry,**  
**Interim Minister**

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*MERRY CHRISTMAS*

FROM THE CHURCH STAFF

A  
N  
D

THE PRE-SCHOOLSTAFF









