



The West Side Story

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West Side Christian Church

A Note from Rev. Brown!

In the sixth grade, as a part of gym class, we were required to participate in learning how to square dance. Of course, this was a lofty requirement for a bunch of kids who could not look at a person of the opposite gender without blushing or giggling, let alone be forced to dance with them. For me, however, it was not the prospect of looking at a girl that brought me anxiety. Rather, it was the idea that I was to learn how to dance with a girl. On the one hand, it was simply not cool. On the other hand, it was simply terrifying.

On our first day of lessons, I remember being completely clueless to the direction of our instructor. She was using foreign words like “promenade” and “do-si-do” while I stumbled over my partner’s feet. In fact, I could not even swing my partner without looking completely foolish and awkward. That day I went home hopeless, fearful of having to go back to face my square dancing partner again the next day.

Surprisingly, though, as the lessons continued I learned not only the meaning of the words promenade and do-si-do, but also how to perform these steps with my partner when they were called. I am not sure I have ever admitted it before, but by the end of our lessons, I was actually enjoying myself. I looked forward to gym class and to learning something new about the art of square dancing.

While it seems a trivial comparison, I cannot help but think that my experience with learning square dance is somewhat like navigating the season of Advent. We all begin in the darkness, unsure about where the journey will take us. We struggle through that darkness, listening for direction but stumbling along the way. We feel awkward and foolish. We might even dread the thought of continuing.

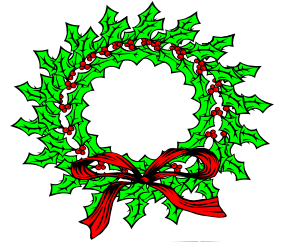
Nevertheless, somewhere along the journey something changes. A light shines its way along our path and the prospect of finding from where the light illumines excites us. We hurry toward the light with anticipation and anxiety, hoping to learn something new along the way. Finally we arrive at a stable and a manger. Within the manger lies the hope for which we have been looking—the light in the midst of the darkness.

We live in a world where fear and hopelessness are pervasive—a world where war, catastrophe, pain, and broken relationships continue. We struggle to find Christ, stumbling in the darkness as we search for answers. However, we stumble with profound hope and we endure the struggle along the way because we know the end will bring us great joy.

During this season of Advent, may we partner together as we dance toward the light, stumbling along the way, but doing so with great hope for our Savior to be born into our lives again.

Peace.

DECEMBER
2006



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IMPORTANT DECEMBER BOARD MEETING

All Board Members are needed to be present at the December 12th meeting. The Visioning Team needs your help in providing information about where our Church is now. This information is critical in developing our future plans.



Disciples of Christ

WEST SIDE CHRISTIAN CHURCH
535 CHEROKEE RD.
PORTSMOUTH, VIRGINIA 23701
(757) 488-0514 • www.westsidccdoc.org
REV. NATHAN BROWN, MINISTER

MARY'S WELLNESS CORNER

Quotes of the Season

“Advent is concerned with that very connection between memory and hope which is so necessary to man. Advent’s intention is to awaken the most profound and basic emotional memory within us, namely, the memory of the God who became a child. This is a healing memory; it brings hope. The purpose of the Church’s year is continually to rehearse her great history of memories, to awaken the heart’s memory so that it can discern the star of hope....It is the beautiful task of Advent to awaken in all of us memories of goodness and thus to open doors of hope.”

-Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger

“Take time to be aware that in the very midst of our busy preparations for the celebration of Christ’s birth in ancient Bethlehem, Christ is reborn in the Bethlehem’s of our homes and daily lives. Take time, slow down, be still, be awake to the Divine Mystery that looks so common and so ordinary yet is wondrously present.” An old abbot was fond of saying, ‘The devil is always the most active on the highest feast days.’ “The supreme trick of Old Scratch is to have us so busy decorating, preparing food, practicing music and cleaning in preparation for the feast of Christmas that we actually miss the coming of Christ. Hurt feelings, anger, impatience, injured egos—the list of clouds that busyness creates to blind us to the birth can be long, but it is familiar to us all.”

Take Time to be Aware.....Edward Hays,
A Pilgrim’s Almanac

Let us remember that the Christmas heart is a giving heart, a wide open heart that thinks of others first. The birth of the baby Jesus stands as the most significant event in all history, because it has meant the pouring into a sick world of the healing medicine of love which has transformed all manner of hearts for almost two thousand years...Underneath all the bulging bundles is this beating Christmas heart.

-George Matthew Adams

Christmas is spiritual, full of gifts and gift giving. Let’s not forget to give the gift of Christ this Christmas. It’s the one gift among all the others that is truly priceless.

Priceless Gift
by John Fischer

May your Christmas be filled with love and joy
and
Your New Year be filled with God’s Blessings!

Mary W. Peris, Parish Nurse



“Exercise for Living” will only be offered on the 3rd Saturday of each month, along with the BP/BS clinic. This change will begin on Sat., January 20, 2007. BP/BS clinic will begin at 9:00AM and continue until noon. Exercise will begin at 10:00AM for those interested. Blood pressure screening will also be offered on Sundays and on Pot Luck Supper nights. Contact Parish Nurse, Mary Peris for more information.

MEALS ON WHEELS!

On the 4th Thursday of every month a group from West Side helps with the Meals on Wheels program. We are in need of more volunteers for this important part of our church outreach. We could especially use some younger, retired volunteers. Please contact Barbara White (757) 986-3201 if you are interested in helping.



Did you know that the weekly bulletin and the monthly newsletter can be read online!

P.S. It’s in color!

www.westsidccdoc.org

Tom Larson is our webmaster!

SERVING LUNCH AT OASIS!

In order to extend our feeding of the homeless ministry, West Side will be serving lunch at Oasis from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM on Tues., December 5th. If you are able to help in this ministry, please sign up on the information board outside the sanctuary. We will meet at the church and car pool. Contact Rev. Brown for more information.



Games and Reading Materials for the Homeless



WSCC will feed/house the Homeless from March 4th–10th, 2007. Current reading materials such as Reader’s Digest, family/religious books and magazines are needed for them this week. Board games such as checkers, chess, and cards are also needed. Please bring items to the church by March 1st.



Merry Christmas



CWF Reports

LYDIA CIRCLE had 5 present in November with an offering of \$23.00 and \$25.00 for blankets. Lydia used their talents with 1 teaching and 2 leading. They also provided outreach by contacting 35 through cards and visits and 2 food. Lydia also read 2 Disciple and 1 Regional Papers and 2 books.

REBEKAH CIRCLE had 7 present in November with an offering of \$59.00 and \$49.00 for blankets. Rebekah used their talents with 2 teaching and 2 leading. They also provided outreach by making 32 calls and 6 crafts/cooking, Rebekah read 9 books, 6 Daily Devotionals, 2 Disciples and 4 Regional Papers.

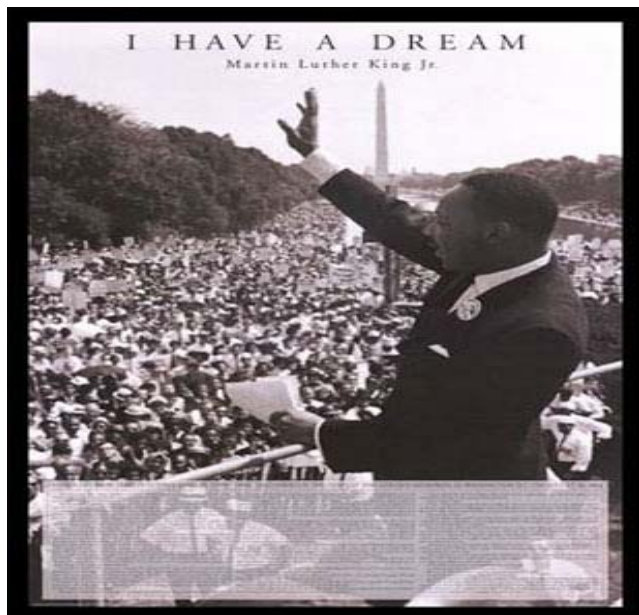
SARAH CIRCLE met on November 2nd with Brenda Hayth. We had 6 present with an offering of \$53.00. Our next meeting will be on December 7th at the home of Nancy Fritz. Please bring a your favorite Christmas snack.

Visioning Team

The Visioning Team has met three times and is currently gathering demographic data about our neighborhood and our congregation. We will begin to gather information from the Board at the December Board Meeting. In January, the congregation will be asked to provide input in the form of a questionnaire. The Team will meet with the Board in late January in a 2-1/2 hour session to discuss the Board's vision for West Side. Check your bulletin and our new Visioning Team bulletin board for updates.

LT. GOV. BILL BOLLING

All are invited to hear Lt. Gov. Bolling as he will address members and guests of the Olive Branch Cooperative Church Ministry (OBCC) at West Side Christian Church on January 6, 2007 at 11:00 a.m. It is requested that guests please be seated by 10:45 a.m. He will speak about some of the pending litigation at the next General Session of the Virginia State Congress, like Transportation and Education. Reception is to follow and there is limited seating and parking available. A Nursery will be provided. If you are planning to attend, please notify WSCC (488-0514) for tickets by December 22, 2006. Contact Larry Hackler for more information.



5th ANNUAL CELEBRATION

Disciples of Christ and United Church of Christ

In Partnership Together

HOSTED THIS YEAR AT

DIAMOND SPRINGS CHRISTIAN CHURCH

5612 HADEN ROAD

VIRGINIA BEACH, VA

Worship Service

January 14th @ 3pm

Potluck and Fellowship following Service

Contact for further information at 464-5650

ADMINISTRATIVE CABINET!

*Administrative Cabinet will meet
On Sunday, December 10th, @ 1:30 PM.
Please have your
committee reports to Trish by
December 6th.
THANKS!*

FAITHFUL DIALOGUE

FINAL SESSION

Monday, December 18th @ 7:00 PM



Elder's Meeting Rescheduled

Tuesday
December 5th
7:00 P.M.



December's Member Spotlight

*Phil & Elnora
Phillips*

December's spotlight is on Elnora and F. P. ("Phil") Phillips. Phil was born in Craddock as Furnifold Prichard Phillips and Elnora in Rocky Ford, Colorado. Each would grow up, marry and have a family before their paths would cross. And "cross" is just what happened. They met on the dance floor at a Parents Without Partners Social when Phil accidentally bumped into Elnora. But, I'm getting ahead of my story.

Elnora's parents moved from Colorado to Kansas when she was in Junior High and she stayed there through High School. While in High School she was in the band and played several instruments—French Horn, Cymbals, Viola, and occasionally the Drums. She married a neighborhood boy and they had 4 children, 3 boys and a girl. Then she and her family moved back to Colorado, a state she truly loves for its beauty and majestic mountains. Elnora said she didn't miss the dry hot summers or the tornadoes she experienced in Kansas. After 26 years of marriage, Elnora and her husband divorced. By then one of her sons was in the Portsmouth area and the birth of her first grandchild prompted Elnora to pack her belongings in a trailer, hitch it to her car, and move to Portsmouth. Elnora recalls that was around 1973. When she came to Portsmouth she worked in a bank like she had when she was in Colorado, but soon she went to work for C I Travel as a travel agent. Elnora just recently retired from C I Travel but works part time now for Fun Tours as a tour escort. During her travel agent career she has been on 8 or 9 cruises, mostly to the Caribbean and Bahamas, but also one to Alaska. She has been to Spain, Italy, Portugal, France, Switzerland, Germany, Scotland, Ireland and Iceland to name a few countries.

Phil has a similar story, albeit more local. Phil graduated from Craddock High and then did a single 4 year hitch in the Navy. He then joined the Air Force which was much more to his liking. He, too, married and had 3 children. He's been around the world twice and visited 21 countries. He retired from the Air Force as a Master Sergeant and then went to work at Norfolk Naval Shipyard as a machinist. He retired from the shipyard in 1993. And while Elnora experienced tornadoes, Phil has been through an earthquake while on a Caribbean island! To me it's pretty obvious these two had too much in common not to match up at some point in time.

In addition to a love of travel, they both love to fish and to dance, which brings us back to the Parents Without Partners social. After their chance encounter they began to date and four years later they were married. That was in 1980. In their 26 years of marriage they have continued to travel, fish and camp. They belong to the Virginia Peninsula Campers Association and still have an RV. While the two of them did not have children together, they have been loving parents to Dusty, a 12 year old Pomeranian. He is seldom far from Phil's side and it is obvious Dusty loves them as much as they love him. Even though between them there are 7 children, 5 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren, none of them are local. Elnora says her great church family has helped to fill that void. And when Elnora had to have back surgery several weeks ago, her sister, Wilma, came to lend a hand. What a compliment to Wilma that Phil said to me that she was leaving in a few days and how much he hated to see her go!

In this last year Phil was diagnosed and treated for lung cancer, Elnora was in a horrible car accident and now has had back surgery, but they have not lost their zest for life. Elnora says that while getting out to Church, etc, is painful, so is sitting at home, so why shouldn't she do what brings her enjoyment in spite of the discomfort. And Phil's philosophy is one he shares with Minnie Pearl---"I'm just glad to be here!" As I was wrapping up the interview Phil shared with me, "Love makes it all worthwhile. I love her as much now as I did in the beginning." Now, that's the power of love, folks!

(Submitted by Kitty Baker)

Sympathy

We extend our deepest Christian Sympathy to

Jennifer Larson and family

on the loss of her Grandmother,

Margaret Mallory

~

We extend our deepest Christian Sympathy to

Joyce Thornton and family

on the loss of her Husband,

Thomas

~Lectionary Readings for Dec. 2006~

<u>DATE</u>	<u>READINGS</u>
December 3:	<i>Jeremiah 33:14-16</i> <i>Psalms 25:1-10</i> <i>I Thessalonians 3:9-13</i> <i>Luke 21:25-36</i>
December 10:	<i>Malachi 3:1-4</i> <i>Luke 1:68-79</i> <i>Philippians 1:3-11</i> <i>Luke 3:1-6</i>
December 17:	<i>Zephaniah 3:14-20</i> <i>Isaiah 12:2-6</i> <i>Philippians 4:4-7</i> <i>Luke 3:7-18</i>
December 24:	<i>Micah 5:2-5a</i> <i>Luke 1:47-55</i> <i>Hebrews 10:5-10</i> <i>Luke 1:39-45 (46-55)</i>
December 31:	<i>I Samuel 2:18-20, 26</i> <i>Psalms 148</i> <i>Colossians 3:12-17</i> <i>Luke 2:41-52</i>

IN NEED OF PRAYER:

Thornton Family	Jim Ligon
Powell Family	Steven Wells
Kelly Witomski	Jay Naclerio
Eloise Lowman	Barbara White
Barbara Nelson	Elnora Phillips
Thomas Thornton	Emily Nutting
Juanita Gray	Myrtle Henderson
Margie Robinson	Mike Johnson
Edith Ross	Phil Phillips
Sarah Crawford	Roland Thornton
Betty Lou Fox	Masil Jones
Connie Hutto	Sid Price
Kathryn Bean	Esther Daniel
Tata Weinmann	Ellen Nelson
Bobby Ryder	Melodie Bronson
Bill Wagner	Jordan Blount
Chris Louer	Ted Gibson
Frankie Louer	Martha Hewitt

ALSO PRAY FOR OUR SHUT-INS:

Ruth Blackman	Sylvia Dickens
Rev. Glenn Weaver	Sandy Cotton

~ Thank You ~

Dear West Side Family,

My sincere thanks to each of you for your prayers, calls, cards, flowers, visits and food during my recent stay in the hospital and nursing home. All of your thoughts and concerns are greatly appreciated.

*God Bless each of you,
Edith Ross*

PRAYER TEAM

The prayer team is finally functional and now serving. The team's purpose is two-fold. It's primary purpose is to serve as a prayer chain. When an immediate concern emerges within the life of the church, the prayer chain can be contacted for instant corporate prayer. If you have a prayer concern that arises, please contact the church office first. If no one is available, call Rosemary Lahy, (Facilitator of prayer team) at 488-0141. You may also email Rosemary your concerns at r.lahy@cox.net. The second reason for the team is ongoing, communal prayer for the prayer list, the visioning team, West Side Christian Church and any other perpetual prayer needs (the sick, peace in times of war, those who mourn, etc.) If you have something you would like the team to focus their prayers toward, please contact Rosemary. Also, continue to keep an eye out for prayer cards that will be available in the pews soon. These will provide another opportunity for those in need of prayer to request it of the prayer team, minister, or church.



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Michael Gardner
48 Channing Anenue
Portsmouth, VA 23702
558-2651
Spouse: Libby Gardner
Children:
Trevor, Connor & John-Michael

Christopher Larson & Heather Massey
1312 Yeadon Road
Chesapeake, VA 23324
313-1627
Children:
Matthew, Christian, Zachary & Keirsten

December Birthday's

- 1st: Kathy Saunders
- 3rd: Brian McCrickard
- 5th: Kathryn Bean
- 6th: David Bond
- 8th: Michael McCrickard
- 10th: Karen Brown
Nora Davenport
- 15th: Marleen Whitehurst
Gladys Smith
Ken Bryant
- 17th: Leo Gibbs
- 21st: Jennifer Larson
Shannon Wilson
- 24th: Rick Oliver
Cassie Honeycutt
- 25th: Ethelyne Huddle
- 28th: Wendy McNelis
- 29th: Alison Ehlers
Cecil Dillon
- 30th: Karen Hartzog



We Moved !

Margaret Poole
403 Pelican Lane
Clemmons, NC 27012
(336) 775-2400

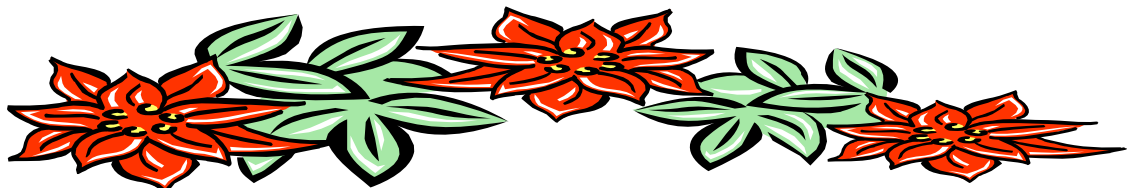
Joyce Thornton
1 Crawford Parkway #903
Portsmouth, VA 23704

BASKETBALL TEAM



West Side Christian Church is forming a Basketball Team for the upcoming season. If you are interested in playing with us this winter, please sign-up on the information board outside the sanctuary.

Games begin on January 6, 2007



CHRISTMAS SPECIAL OFFERING

This year's Christmas special day offering will be collected on December 17th and 24th during the normal worship hour. The Christmas offering goes directly to the Virginia Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). In order to meet our congregation's overall Disciples Mission Fund goal of \$18,000, we must meet our Christmas offering goal of \$3,000. Some of the ministries in which your region participates include: assisting congregations in claiming their unique mission, sharing resources for worship, education, and outreach, providing camp and conference opportunities to strengthen spirituality, helping connect pastors to our congregations, nurturing candidates for ordination and licensed ministry, and providing pastoral care to the clergy and congregations of Virginia. Your region is the support for the local congregation. By giving to this special offering, you are giving to a ministry that is local and that directly affects the future of West Side Christian Church. Please prayerfully consider contributing to this special day offering.

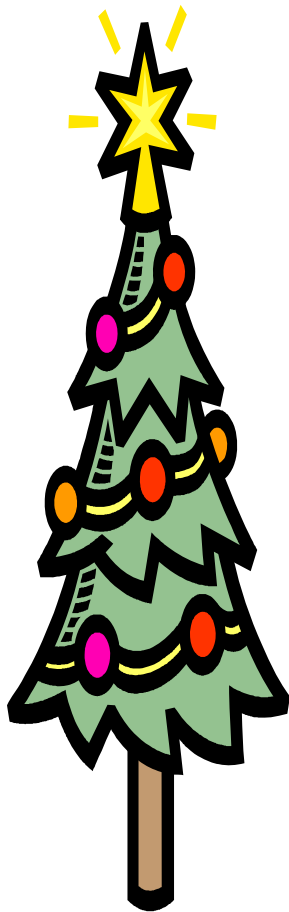
~ADVENT SCHEDULE~

Operation Santa Claus

December 1st, 10:30 A.M.

Church Advent Decorating

Saturday, December 2nd from 9 am—1 pm. Lunch provided



Bethlehem Walk

Saturday, December 2nd

Depart Church @ 1:00 PM

Walk Begins @ 4:00 PM

Hanging of the Greens

Sunday, December 3rd, 5:00 P.M.

Christmas Play

Sunday, December 10th

7:00 P.M.

Christmas Services

December 24th

Regular Service 11:00 A.M.

Candlelight Services 6:00 P.M. & 8:00 P.M.

For more information on any of these events, call the church office.

~Holiday Closings~

Preschool will be closed December 18th - January 1st

Church Office will be closed

December 25th, 26th & January 1st





WSOC YOUTH



*** NEWS FLASH ***

West Side has two youth that have been nominated for "People to People Ambassadors".

Allison Nutting

&

Stephen Milam

They will be interviewed soon, so please keep them in your prayers. Not only will they represent our community but our country as well.

Youth Parents Meeting Report

On Tuesday, November 28th @ 7:00 p.m., a group of youth and youth parents gathered together to discuss the future of programming for our young people here at West Side Christian Church. The meeting was full of passion and excitement, which produced an abundance of fruit. There were three points discussed at this meeting. First of all, it was decided that the parents wanted to support three distinct youth groups at West Side: a 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade group, a middle school group, and a senior high group. Our discussion revolved around ways in which the parents and church could support these three distinct groups and help intentionally grow these programs. The second issue discussed was communication. The parents and leaders focused on ways the groups could better communicate with the church, the parents, and each other. Through the newsletter, website, bulletin, and regular meetings, we hope to begin to better communicate to the church what the youth are doing here at West Side. Third, we discussed leadership. This year, our Senior High youth will be led by Mike Gardner, Rick Lahy, and Mary Redmon. The JYF will continue to be led by Lois Pyles. At the time of printing, a leader for the 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades had not been official. These leaders are open to your thoughts and concerns for the future of our young people here at West Side. If you should have any questions or input, please contact the group's respective leader. A youth Kick-Off event for the upcoming year is being planned for Sunday, February 11th. Keep your eyes peeled for more information about this event and others in the mediums of communication listed above.

Thanks for your support of our children and youth programs!



"GO EXPLOSIONS"

Kristen Brown's soccer team, the "Explosion"

will be playing in the Soccer Association the weekend of December 2nd in Virginia Beach.

WE ARE ALWAYS SO VERY PROUD OF OUR YOUTH!

*** THEY ARE THE BEST ***

Lois Pyles, JYF, Youth Leader

