

Prayer Requests

Margaret Helms has been moved to Superior Health and Rehab. The address is 625 Tommy Lewis Dr., Room 218, Conway, AR 72034. If you are wanting to visit her, please reach out ahead of time to her daughter, Donna at 501-940-4585 to arrange a time. Of course, cards and notes of encouragement are always welcome. Continued prayers for her strength and healing please.

Lydia Franklin is having some valve issues, and is waiting for the surgeons at the Heart Hospital to decide on the best option to fix them. Please be praying for answers and solutions.

Jonah Vanderheiden has RSV, and they are watching him closely for pneumonia, so lots of prayers would be appreciated.

Please remember the family of Helen Stephens, as she passed away on Monday. Pray for them to be comforted during this difficult time. Miss Helen's funeral will be on December 29th, at Shinn Funeral Home, at 2pm., with a viewing 30 minutes prior at 1:30pm.

We want to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas! A reminder that the church office will be closed on Friday, December 23rd, and Monday, December 26th, along with Friday, December 30th.

Ongoing

Bob Clark, Tami Robinson, Jarra Family, Oliver Blankenship, Mellicent Crain.

Dinner Church

Our Dinner Church will start up again in January, on the 11th and 18th at 5:30. Please put this on your calendar for the new year, and make plans to attend. We are looking for people to sign up to help out with meals for this as well. Please reach out to us and let us know if you would be interested.

What an awesome Children's Christmas program we had last week! A big thanks to Beth Sorrells, Susan Taylor, and all of the other great helpers! We appreciate your hard work with all of the kids, that did a wonderful job!

There will be no classes on Christmas day, New Years day, or on Wednesday, December 28th. Please take this extra time to be with family, focusing on what Christmas is truly about.



We are planning a special worship on December 25th, focusing on Jesus's Birth, filled with songs, and a message, along with a memorable ending to our Christmas service that you will want to be a part of.



"A SWEET FRIENDSHIP REFRESHES THE SOUL."
PROVERBS 27:9

No Friendship Cafe on December 25



No cookie schedule for the month of December, but will start back up in January.

Volunteers Needed

Aris is looking for some volunteer teachers to help with the Citizenship, English, and Spanish classes starting in January. Please reach out to him via text at 479-970-4548 for more information.



Christmas caroling will be at the Arbors Friday, Dec. 23rd. Young and old are invited to come sing and spread holiday cheer. Song sheets and jingle bells provided. Meet at the Arbors at 1:30!



No KFC classes today

Remind your kiddos about our gracious God and the best gift He ever gave us – His Son, Jesus (Immanuel, God with us), sent to save us from our sins so we could be with God!

"By grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God" – Eph.2:8

Reminder: No KFC classes next week.

Sunday 12/25 Worship Volunteers

Leader: Keith Moore, Bass:
Zach Taylor, Tenor: Gary Jernigan, Alto: Sue Ann Jernigan, Soprano: Sheri Crosby, Opening Prayer: Zach Loudon, Communion Thought: Dale Brooks, Elder/Closing: Darol Harrison, Crows Nest: Nick Brown

ONLINE CONNECT CARD

We would love to connect with you! Please fill out our Online Connect Card at...
westsidear.org/connect



Last Week

Class - 151 Giving: \$ 12,413
Worship - 303 Weekly Budget:
Wednesday Night \$13,380
Bible Study - 65 YTD Giving:\$ 628,399
YTD Budget:\$ 682,399

Shepherds

James Cole

jamescolesr@me.com

Mike Cooper

coopdent@suddenlinkmail.com

Bill Grant

mbgrant@suddenlink.net

Darol Harrison

dh@buildeng.net

Jamie Sorrells

js@sorrellsent.com

Tracy Taylor

jamestaylor728@outlook.com

Support Staff

Krysta Allen

College Ministry Assistant

krysta@westsidear.org

Krysta.renewatu@gmail.com

Tammy Wooten

Administrative Assistant

tammy@westsidear.org

office@westsidear.org



Welcome to West Side!

WE'RE GLAD YOU'RE HERE!

December 25, 2022

Immanuel, God With Us

by Sarah Rabb

Christmas season is often busy and full of expenses. What is meant to be full of joy often ends up full of stress, empty wallets, and people in need of a “holiday”. A holiday away from the holiday. Isn’t it interesting that something that was created to be bring joy, peace, love, and relief has been turned into something known to bring about chaos, stress, exhaustion, and frustration? Instead of people enjoying the season of being present with their loved ones, they find themselves tense and searching for the perfect present or providing the perfect meal. All while seeking perfection, the very thing wanted ends up missing. We gather with our loved ones to enjoy each others presence, but spend more time looking at the presents than the ones who provided the very gifts in our hands. We wonder why after the holidays we are still missing the people we were just with.

Do you ever find yourself working and striving in order to show or receive love? Do you ever find yourself exhausted trying to prove to others how much you love them? Do you ever find yourself performing in hopes to be desired or adored or chosen?

I wonder if we end up feeling this way because we were focused on the wrong things? I wonder if we didn’t actually enjoy and relish the time we had because the very things we thought we or our loved ones wanted were the presents instead of each others presence?

Don’t we often do these same things with God? I know I do. I find myself working, striving, and performing to prove to God my love for him or even to earn his love for me, when in reality, all he wants from me is my presence. He desires time with me. He wants my all, but my all starts with simply offering my focus and my heart. The rest always follows if it’s prioritized correctly. This is true for my family, too. They want ME. Things are great, but they aren’t me. And in return, all I want from my family is time with them. Their presence matters more to me than their presents. If we believe these things to be true than we ought to live like it!

God says in Hosea 6:6, “For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.” He also says in Matthew 22:37-40 “And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the prophets.”

This Holiday season, let us all give God the desires of his heart and the desires of our family’s hearts and in turn receive the desires of our hearts. Let us correct our focus and receive the very thing we are so desperately seeking: joy, peace, love, and relief. Let us first offer the gift of our presence to God who has already given this free gift to us through his son, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. Then let us offer the gift of our presence to those we love and in return receive the gift of their presence. I hope this encourages you to leave the stress, frustration, chaos, and exhaustion behind in order to rest in the joy of what this Holiday season is all about: Immanuel, “God WITH us”. May we also be with him and those who he has so kindly given to us. Merry Christmas, friends. It truly is the best time of the year when we remember what it centers around and receive all the blessings it brings.