



Welcome to West Side!

WE'RE GLAD YOU'RE HERE!

June 12, 2022

Guns, Violence and Spiritual Darkness by Tim Tripp

We live in a broken culture. The evidence of it is in the news almost nightly. The slaughter of innocents has become, for far too many, a way to express frustration, anger or hatred. Generationally broken homes, a cultural sense of hopelessness and rapidly rising occurrences of mental illness are all signs that we are hurting and we need to find solutions before it gets far worse.

Every time a horrific shooting takes place, guns become the central topic of discussion. I do not plan to debate the pros and cons of gun control but I will say that I have little hope that increased gun legislation will dramatically improve anything.

Others have suggested that increased security around schools, houses of worship and public gathering areas might be the more appropriate response. The concern is that there are simply too many soft targets out there. Secure one and people bent on the slaughter of innocents will simply choose another.

I do believe that not all is hopeless. I believe that there is something Christians can do about this. I do not believe the ultimate solution will be found in Washington DC. The action that we can all take is found in the promises of God and in the church bringing God's love to the world.

What I believe cannot be overlooked is the fact that dark spiritual forces are at work in these acts of evil. Some of those who plan and carry out these attacks may be dealing with mental illness. Some may have been bullied and mistreated. They may have been abused and neglected at home. Some have been the unfortunate victims of all these things. People (especially young men) sometimes allow the feelings caused by emotional trauma to fuel a rage that looks for an outlet. Rage has no room for rational thought. Rage is a weapon of the spiritual enemy. Without rational thought to challenge it, rage can be directed by the darkness to carry out the will of its master. His aim is division and destruction and violence is one of his favorite tools.

Here is the encouraging news. God gave the followers of Jesus authority over the spiritual forces of darkness. Prayer and fasting are their primary tools against these forces. I believe this calls for more than just a mention over a meal. Each community should consider gathering Jesus followers in fasting and prayer for their schools, houses of worship and public gatherings. It would be so encouraging to see Christians stand in unity, joining hands around each school in their community and praying prayers of spiritual protection over the buildings and gathering places there. It would be inspiring to see fasting promoted in churches before each school year asking God to protect our kids and especially those vulnerable to dark thoughts and actions.

I also believe it is past time for Christians to join forces in unity to invest in broken families and find real ways to help them. How beautiful it would be to see churches of all kinds set differences aside, not worry about who gets credit and just talk about how we can help the struggling and hurting families in our community. I know these kinds of things are going on around Russellville right now. However, we need more than just one person or one church taking action. This is a call for us all to work together for the good of our community and to God's glory. For sure, this is what Jesus called us to do. If this isn't something we can come together around, I don't know what is.

Last Week

Class -	Giving: \$12,690
Worship - 258	Weekly Budget: \$13,380
Wednesday Night	YTD Giving:\$ 273,827
Bible Study - 41	YTD Budget:\$ 307,749

Prayer Requests

Niles Raines, father of Kristen Davis, came home Monday following hospitalization to treat an infection. He is still very weak and suffering from many things due to a wound and leukemia. Please keep Niles and his family in your prayers as they are providing care for him.

Christie Reed is doing well following recent surgery. Please keep her in your prayers for a full and rapid recovery.

Please continue to pray for Tami Robinson as she deals with complications caused by her immunotherapy. Continue to pray for complete healing.

Newcomers/Visitors Potluck Today!!

If you are new to the West Side Family, or are visiting with us today, please join us after worship as our honored guests for a potluck lunch.

We will gather in the Family Center just across the road for a time of food and fellowship and making new connections. Hope to see you there!

A message from Grayson Taylor.

"As the new Director at Renew/CCSC, I'm looking to boost the alumni base. If you are an alumni, or if you have connections with those you went through Renew/CCSC with, I'd love to connect with you and get updated information on our new alumni list. Our desire is that by focusing on networking, we will be able to do a better job of utilizing our amazing alumni! If you fall within this category, please follow this link to the Renew/CCSC Alumni survey."

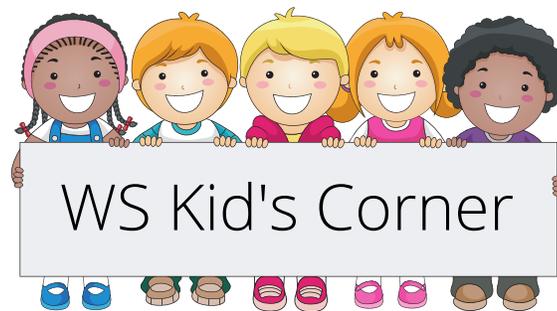
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Baby Shower

We will have a baby boy shower in honor of Rebekah Spradlin in the Rock on Sunday June 26th at 2 pm.

Alex and Rebekah are expecting their first child in July, and are registered on Amazon.



Welcome to Kids Corner!
An informative section where you can find information about our children's programs and activities!

Sign up now for VBS, July 11-15.
Any Questions contact Vandy Moore.

The Bible tells us in I Thessalonians 5:15 to be kind to one another. This week in Little Kids Worship we will be learning ways to be kind to everyone even if we are treated unfairly. We had lots of smiling faces last week and a visit from Rebekah with her twins, Esau and Jacob! A special thanks to some of our young moms Stephanie, Lauren, and Melanie for your help. All parents and grandparents are always welcome to drop in and help. You'll never regret being a part of your children's spiritual activities and the children love it!

Parents don't forget the Newcomer Potluck this Sunday after church. Bring your family and lots of food and meet some new folks.



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