

## ONLINE CONNECT CARD

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### Shepherds

#### **James Cole**

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### Support Staff

#### **Krysta Allen**

#### **College Ministry Assistant**

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#### **Jenifer Hurt**

#### **Ministry Assistant**

[jenifer@westsidear.org](mailto:jenifer@westsidear.org)

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### **Last Week**

Class - 124

Worship - 287

Wednesday Night

Bible Study - 69

Giving: \$ 9,556

Weekly Budget:

\$13,380

YTD Giving:\$ 421,807

YTD Budget:\$ 468,313

### Ministers

#### **Tim Tripp**

#### **Senior Minister**

[tim@westsidear.org](mailto:tim@westsidear.org)

#### **Mark Hixson**

#### **Youth Minister**

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#### **Grayson Taylor**

#### **Campus Director**

#### **College Ministry**

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#### **Aris Ortiz**

#### **Hispanic Minister**

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# Welcome to West Side!

WE'RE GLAD YOU'RE HERE!

## God Is Working by Tim Tripp

September 4, 2022

In the present time it would be easy to get discouraged about the state of the church. From our perspective in the United States, the Christian church is in decline. Before the pandemic, we learned that many younger people who grew up going to church, were leaving their faith in their young adult years and often, never to return.

The pandemic had the predictable effect of accelerating the decline. Members who were on the fence with their faith or were cultural Christians found that it only took a few months of getting out of the habit of going to church to quit going all together. Also, during the pandemic there was a "reshuffling" of Christians as people who had been watching several online churches conduct services decided to use the break of the pandemic to change where they go to church.

Some churches benefitted, some lost, but not many were at or above the numbers of attendees that they saw before the pandemic. Many churches lost a fourth to a half of their attendees. The finances took a hit too with the numbers being lower forcing churches to make choices between supporting missions or keeping staff. There have been many hard choices to be made.

There are many things to be concerned for but one thing is for sure; no matter the challenge, God is still working. His goal is for the world to follow his son and form a spiritual Kingdom of Heaven to push back the forces of darkness and claim the earth for his glory. He has not abandoned his goal and he has not abandoned us.

While we in the global north and west are experiencing a troubling decline, Christianity in the global south is booming. Christian churches are being planted in huge numbers in Africa. Disciple Making Movements are taking root and catching fire there at times seeing daily baptism rates approaching "day of Pentecost" numbers. Missionaries are returning and saying that indigenous ministers have begun to take the burden of leadership in the church and missionaries are no longer needed.

The underground church in China and Iran is growing at blazing speeds in both countries despite government efforts to contain and eliminate Christianity. Christians are worshipping and evangelizing at great personal risk some suffering abuse, torture and imprisonment for their efforts. Radical Islamic elements in Iran and parts of Africa have been known to wipe out whole villages of Christians but the work goes on and continues to grow. God is working!

Even here in Russellville, we should never see smaller churches as only a challenge. Smaller churches are often filled with the most dedicated members. Smaller churches are better positioned for movement, better positioned for discipleship, and better situated for impact in their community. This is not a time to have a fearful heart for the church. It is a time to get ready for impact. It is a time for bold movement; for leadership that takes risks and a time to make a difference.

This is a time where none of us should sit on our hands and look out at empty pews on Sunday morning wondering where everyone has gone. This is a time for action. God is working. He wants us to focus on the mission now more than ever.

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## Prayer Requests

Leigh Honnell, mother of Lauren Reed, is scheduled for tumor removal surgery on Sept. 12th. Please keep her in your prayers for a successful surgery and for complete healing.

Cathryn Cates remains in St. Mary's for treatment of Covid and a broken leg. Please continue to keep her in your prayers for healing.

Rex Chambers has been admitted to Russellville Nursing Center for Rehab. Please keep him in your prayers for a rapid and complete recovery.

Amy Vanderheiden is recovering at home following knee replacement surgery. Please keep her in your prayers for healing and restoration.

Please keep the Davis family in your prayers for Jessica to have peace and strength.

Keep Bob and Lynda Clark in your prayers as they continue to recover from Covid and ongoing health issues with Bob.

Dale Brooks is recovering from recent surgery on his knee. Please pray for a full and rapid recovery.

Wayne Baker, brother of Margaret Grant and Vicki Betterton continues to battle pneumonia. Please pray for healing on his behalf.

## Additional Prayer Requests

Chris Johnson, Nephew of Carol White, recently learned that his cancer has resurfaced. Continued prayers for complete healing are appreciated.

### Sympathy:

We extend our sympathy to the family of Bill Davis, who passed away Thursday morning. Please keep his wife Ann, grandson Preston (Kaci) Rood, and the rest of the family in your prayers for peace and comfort during this time.

## Renew Cookie Crew

If you signed a volunteer card to bake or bring cookies to RENEW for their weekly Wednesday night devotional, you will be contacted soon. The Cookie Crew rotation will start in September. If you haven't signed up and you would like to prepare delicious cookies for our college kids, contact Susan Taylor.

## Attention West Side Veterans:

We would love to honor you and your family at a luncheon next Sunday, Sept 11, in the family center after our morning worship. If you and your family would like to attend, please RSVP to:

Grayson: grayson.renewatu@gmail.com

or

Krysta: krysta.renewatu@gmail.com

479-968-2626



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

*Friendship Cafe will be closed this Sunday, 9/4 for the holiday weekend. See you next week!*

## Sunday September 11th

Margaret Grant 2 doz donuts  
Vicki Betterton 2 doz donuts

## Sunday Morning Children's 9am Bible Class Fall Quarter Schedule

Cradle Roll/1 yr olds - Nursery

2 & 3 Year Olds - Room 16

4Yr/Pre-K - Room 12

K-2nd Grade - Room 19

3rd-5th Grade - Museum Room

WSYM - 6th-12th grades -

Cornerstone

## New Fall Quarter for Adult Classes Begins next Sunday Sept. 4th

Room 2 - Overview of 12 Minor Prophets

Room 3 - 12 Significant events in the life of Jesus



## KIDS CORNER 9/4/22

by Kaitlin McCormick

We are continuing to build the foundations of our faith by answering the question "who is God?" This month in KFC, friends Barbara Builder and Believer Beaver are helping us learn about Creator God. Main Idea: The entire trinity was involved in creation and created everything out of nothing! On day 1, God created light. Bible Verse: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" – Gen. 1:1

Song: He's got the whole world in His hands.

Other Scriptures: John 1:1-3

\*KFC will meet as usual on 9/4

**Children's Sunday Morning Bible Classes will NOT meet on Sunday Sept. 4th But will resume on Sept. 11 with a New Fall Quarter!**

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