

**ST. JAMES WEST**  
**United Methodist Church**

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*Real People.*

*Real Life.*

*Real God.*

# THE WEST WIND

A publication of St. James West United Methodist Church



VOLUME 25, ISSUE 12

DECEMBER 2021

## Joy To the World and Stress

The month of December is joyous and stressful. Matthew 2:23, "Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a son, and they shall call His name Immanuel, which translated means 'God is with us.'" And in Luke 2:10 we read, "But the angel said to them 'Do not be afraid; for behold I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people.'" December is pure joy. And Good News. God is with us! And yet for some reason the angel said to the shepherds, "Do not be afraid." Apparently stress and fear are not unique to 2021. I recently read an article about leading the Church during "collective chaos." December is full of joy. And also stress. Kind of like our life.



**Gene Backes, Pastor**

Thinking about the first Christmas brings to mind the joy and stress that Joseph and Mary endured. The joy of their first born child. And the stress of going into labor away from family in a strange place. For us Christmas is Good News in the flesh. Immanuel! God is with us! And Macy's Thanksgiving Parade and the Shrine Circus kicks off a month of celebrations, Christmas cookies and the opening of your Aunt's much anticipated fruit cake! And yet all of the joy is full of stress. Just like Joseph and Mary.

May I suggest that we read Philippians 4:4-7 each time we feel stress. "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice! Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus!"

Rejoice! And stress? Yes, probably a little. Let's take our stress to God and allow His peace to envelop us.

*-Blessings, Gene*

*Celebrate Christmas with us at St. James West!*

**December 19th 10:30am: Children's Christmas Program**

**December 24th 11:00pm: Christmas Eve Candlelight Service**

**CELEBRATE! IMMANUEL! GOD IS WITH US!**

## December Birthdays

- 1  
Riley Kremer
- 2  
Ashley Lancaster
- 6  
Jean Bailey
- 9  
Randy Toelle
- 11  
Delayna Backes
- 13  
Helen Seifert
- 14  
Abbie Bennett, Susan Pressley
- 16  
Bonnie Toone
- 17  
Fawna Martin, Emily Williams
- 19  
Pastor Gene,  
Casey McDonald
- 20  
John Deem, Harper Lamble,  
Anna Logsdon
- 21  
Kim Gibson
- 23  
Debra Effinger, Adam Roehr
- 24  
Carol Bittrolff
- 25  
Jesus Christ,  
Katherine Wilson
- 28  
Mark Mitchell
- 29  
Andrew Craig, Isaiah Egan  
Janice Peckenpaugh,  
Don Utley, Angie Wilson
- 31  
Debi Doninger

## Words of Thanks & Praise

"Thank you for providing yet another delicious meal for our groups! Your presence and your meals warm our clubhouse. Thank you for supporting us in this way each month!"

*-Your Cancer Pathways Midwest team*

"Thank you to all who supported the annual Church Chicks Holiday Bazaar. Through your generosity we raised over **\$1,600** for local charities. Special thanks to the local businesses and individuals that donated so many wonderful auction items!"

*-St. James West Church Chicks*

Thank you to our St. James West Children's Ministry! It was a delightful surprise and such a heart-warming performance from the kids that sang their "Fruit of the Spirit Song" during the November 21st worship service. Thank you Ashley, and thank you to all the kids that were able to perform, you did a great job!



### *In Memoriam*

*We extend our deepest sympathy to the family of Gloria Fickas, who passed away November 4th 2021. Gloria is a member of St. James West.*

## St. James West By the Numbers

### Apportionment

(January –October 2021)

Conference ..... \$19,345.00

District ..... \$2,320.00

### General Fund

(Year-to-date weekly average)

2020 ..... \$4,516.00

2021 ..... \$4,397.00

% Change ..... -2.6%

Weekly Average	October 2020	October 2021	% Change
General Fund	\$4,085.00	\$4,150.00	+1.6%



# St. James West News & Notes

## United Caring Shelters Monthly Breakfast

Four volunteers are needed to help prepare and serve breakfast on **Saturday, December 11th** at the United Caring Shelters, 8:00-9:30 a.m.

Contact Lisa Toelle at (812) 457-8327 for details.



## Church Calendars

**2022** wall calendars, compliments of Pierre Funeral Home, are available in the church vestibule and Welcome Center.

## Church Chicks

There is no Church Chicks meeting in December. The next one will be January 5th, 2022. All ladies are welcome to attend!

## Scheduling Note

The St. James West church office will be closed Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. The office will have limited hours on December 27th through the 30th.

## Community Christmas Celebration

Simpson UMC cordially invites our congregation to attend their *Christmas Dinner Theater*. This event will include a gourmet dinner and a choral concert. They will be performing "Our Joy Has Come." They have limited FREE tickets available by reservation for Saturday, December 18th (which is filling up!) or Sunday, December 19th. Doors open at 5:30 p.m., the meal is served at 6:00 p.m., and the concert begins at 6:30 p.m. They will be taking a love offering to help cover expenses. *Reservations taken until 3:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 9th.* Please call (812) 423-7637 Monday–Thursday, 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.



# St. James West Ready for Advent!



**HOPE LOVE JOY PEACE**

# A Story from our Brother in Christ: Kurt Buck

Isn't it funny how some words in the English language just seem to carry a more force than others? The negative power of words like suicidal, seething, murderous, or volcanic is obvious. A person described with these words is in a bad way. Other words sound more benign...frustrated, disillusioned, or discouraged. But the cumulative effect of this mindset can be a heavy load.

In the beginning of "It's a Wonderful Life" Clarence the angel is told that George Bailey is discouraged. My first reaction used to be "so what?"

I used to say, "Buck up, buttercup!"

But discouragement has a sneaky way of taking over your attitude sometimes. George had been a good friend, husband, son, and father his whole life. And now, through an innocent mistake, his life would be in ruins. He had always done his best. He was an encourager. And now, through an innocent mistake, his life would be in ruins. In that moment, he wished he had never been born.

He was supernaturally given the chance to see what life would have been like without him. His absence left a gaping hole in Bedford Falls. At the end of the film, he comes to the realization "It's a Wonderful Life." The town rallies to his aid, and his discouragement disappears.

You can attribute this whole tale to Hollywood scripts, and Christmas sentimentalism.

I could easily pass it off as well. My name is Kurt, not George. I live on the West side, NOT Bedford Falls. There are not a great deal of similarities between the movie and my life.

There was, however, a time in my life that mirrors it very closely. When my job ended at age 58, I was discouraged. You prayed for me. My last week on that payroll, I had minor surgery. I was discouraged. You prayed for me.

I went to a three week Driving School to get my CDL. I had to retake the test and stayed another week. As I prayed for my third try, I was discouraged. You prayed for me.

I ground those gears and sweat bullets, but because of your prayers, I passed. I drove home on that Monday, and made it to church at 7:10 p.m. The congregation gave me a round of applause as I entered.

Your prayers were answered. My prayers were answered. My discouragement had lifted.

Life in Christ, with His people, sharing love and prayers, really is 'A Wonderful Life.' I'll never forget it.

**-Kurt**



## ST. JAMES WEST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

DECEMBER 2021

## Sundays:

9:00 a.m..... Praise &amp; Worship

10:30 a.m..... Praise &amp; Worship

Journey With God (Middle School), Lifeguard Ministry (PS-5th grade)

## Mondays:

6:00-6:45 p.m..... Mondays With God meal

7:00 p.m. .... Mondays With God Praise &amp; Worship

Lifeguard Ministry (Kindergarten-5th grade)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>Key:</b> ADR-Alpha Domus Room CFC-Christian Family Center FH-Fellowship Hall MMO-Mother's Morning Out PS-Preschool WC-Welcome Center			<b>1</b> 8:45-11:30a PS/MMO 6-8p Student Ministry (CFC 2nd floor) 6-8p Pickleball (CFC)	<b>2</b> 8:45-11:30a PS/MMO 2-3p CFC Reserved 3-4:45p CFC Reserved 5-8p CFC Reserved 7-8:15p Church 2nd floor Reserved	<b>3</b> 8a-12p Pickleball (CFC) 5:30-6:30p CFC Reserved	<b>4</b>
<b>5 Communion</b> 2-6p CFC Reserved	<b>6 Communion</b> 8a-12p Pickleball (CFC) 6p MWG Meal (CFC) 7p Mondays With God Worship Service 7-9p AA Meeting (CFC)	<b>7</b> 5:30-6:30a Men's Group 8:45-11:30a PS/MMO 2-4p CFC Reserved 5-8p CFC Reserved 7-8p Bible Study (WC)	<b>8</b> 8:45-11:30a PS/MMO 6-8p Student Ministry (CFC 2nd floor) 6-8p Pickleball (CFC)	<b>9</b> 8:45-11:30a PS/MMO 2-3p CFC Reserved 3:30-8:30p CFC Reserved 7-8:15p Church 2nd floor Reserved	<b>10</b> 8a-12p Pickleball (CFC) 5:30-6:30p CFC Reserved 7-9p CFC Reserved	<b>11</b> 8-9:30a UCS Breakfast Volunteers
<b>12</b> 1-3p CFC Reserved	<b>13</b> 8a-12p Pickleball (CFC) 6p MWG Meal (CFC) 7p Mondays With God Worship Service 7-9p AA Meeting (CFC)	<b>14</b> 5:30-6:30a Men's Group 8:45-11:30a PS/MMO 2-4p CFC Reserved 7-8p Bible Study (WC)	<b>15</b> 8:45-11:30a PS/MMO 6-8p Student Ministry (CFC 2nd floor) 6-8p Pickleball (CFC)	<b>16</b> 8:45-11:30a PS/MMO 9a-4:30p CFC Reserved 2-3p CFC Reserved 5-8p CFC Reserved 7-8:15p Church 2nd floor Reserved	<b>17</b> 8a-12p Pickleball (CFC) 4-8p CFC Reserved	<b>18</b> 2-10p CFC Reserved
<b>19</b> 1-3p CFC Reserved	<b>20</b> 8a-12p Pickleball (CFC) 6p MWG Meal (CFC) 7p Mondays With God Worship Service 7-9p AA Meeting (CFC)	<b>21</b> 5:30-6:30a Men's Group 2-4p CFC Reserved 7-8p Bible Study (WC)	<b>22</b> 6-8p Pickleball (CFC)	<b>23</b> 2-3p CFC Reserved	<b>24 Christmas Eve</b> Office closed 8a-12p Pickleball (CFC) 11p Christmas Eve Worship Service	<b>25 Christmas</b> 12-6p CFC Reserved 
<b>26</b> 1:30-8p CFC Reserved	<b>27</b> 8a-12p Pickleball (CFC) 6p MWG Meal (CFC) 7p Mondays With God Worship Service 7-9p AA Meeting (CFC)	<b>28</b> 5:30-6:30a Men's Group 7-8p Bible Study (WC)	<b>29</b> 6-8p Pickleball (CFC)	<b>30</b> 2-3p CFC Reserved	<b>31 New Year's Eve</b> Office closed	<b>January 1</b>  12-3am CFC Reserved





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**December 2021**

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