

# The Westside Story

A Newsletter for Westside Fellowship \* Elon, NC

September 23, 2020



## 'Separate But Engaged' Message Series Continues

Throughout the months of September and October, Westside is going through a sermon series titled "Separate But Engaged."

The series examines how Daniel and his Jewish friends engaged the Babylonian culture during Israel's captivity. Such a look at the Book of Daniel provides practical insight into how we can engage our broken world today.

The series features teaching from each of the staff pastors and two of Westside's elders. The nine-week series is expected to conclude in early November. To listen to previous messages from the series, go to [westsidefellowship.org](http://westsidefellowship.org) and scroll to the bottom of the home page.

## Celebrate with Us

*Westside's 20th Anniversary Celebration Will Be Oct. 25*

"Celebrate good times, come on!" What happens when you read that quote? Do you think of the 1980 hit song "Celebrate" by Kool and the Gang? Do you think of birthdays and anniversaries?

Westside Fellowship has a milestone anniversary to celebrate this year, and "there's a party goin' on right here" – right here on the campus of Westside. It will be Sunday, Oct. 25, beginning with our 10:45 a.m. worship service.

That 10:45 a.m. service will be offered as a Drive-In Service, allowing everyone to worship together while maintaining the safety protocols made necessary by the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Following the drive-in worship service, those who are comfortable with an outdoor event can stay for a fellowship lunch on the lawn.

Families who are not able to stay or who are uncomfortable gathering for a meal with others, can pick-up food to-go. Plans are in the works to even provide a drive-through line for those folks, so that they can attend the entire event



without having to leave their vehicles.

For the event to be a success, several of the Westside W-Teams will come together to plan and carry out the celebration.

Westside held its first formal Sunday morning church service at Elon Elementary School on Oct. 29, 2000. The service came after four families gathered in homes and visited other churches to collect ideas for several months.

Six families attended the Oct. 29, 2000, service. Members from three of those families – the families of Mark and Lisa Miller, David and Tammy Brown, and Chris and Elaine Shepherd – are still active members of Westside.

Please make plans to attend the special celebration Oct. 25.

# Elders Provide Update on Pulpit Search, Other Items...



**Mark  
Miller**



**Preston  
Sockwell**



**Kevin  
Mansfield**

From Westside Elders

The Westside leadership is excited about this Fall. The “Separate But Engaged” Daniel series enters its fourth week this Sunday, Sept. 27. Please make all effort to attend either the mask-only service at 9 a.m. or the 10:45 service. Both have been well attended; come join us.

## **Schedule:**

The pastoral staff and W teams are active in engaging all of us during this transition season through fellowship events, community outreach and discipleship. Doing activities outdoors allows us to respect the concerns of COVID 19, yet reasonably interact with each other. Stay tuned for a drive-in movie night, friendly/fun outdoor games, our Homecoming / 20th Anniversary Celebration, and Thanksgiving/ Christmas activities. We want to

come together for our sake but also want to turn our focus to the growing needs in our community.

## **Pulpit Search Committee:**

This committee has been hard at work, putting in long hours. The senior pastor criteria (see below) will guide the decision process. Applications go live this week with a deadline of Oct. 23. There will be a question and answer session after church on Oct. 4. Please come with your questions. The committee members will review the applications per the criteria, inquire further as needed, interview the leading candidates and then ultimately present to the church their leading candidate. That candidate will preach for two Sundays, and then the church will vote. There has and will be much prayer and seeking God’s face during this time. The committee covets your prayers greatly. The committee is a group of 10 very diverse folks who represent the diversity of our congregation who love the Lord and are willing to go the extra mile in service to us and the Kingdom.

## **Children’s Facility Expansion:**

The children expansion monies are being held in reserve this Fall as

we see how the pandemic is going to play out in the future. Facility plans may need to change to accommodate distancing if need be.

## **Youth:**

Pastor Steve has been very proactive this Fall to engage the youth in exciting learning activities outdoors, where they are serving the community and learning Biblical concepts. Please encourage your middle and high school youth to attend.

## **Children:**

The pandemic has made children’s church challenging. Steve has some new thoughts on changing things up - stay tuned. This pandemic has certainly led to more family time, and we desire that families worship together as much as possible. We desire to engage the children within the pandemic restrictions in Christ’s name but realize that their main classroom for faith is in the home, being taught daily by their parents.

This is a quick summary of things in store for this Fall. Look for the upcoming activities, pray with us and for us, and really treasure purposeful family time in the Word.

In Christ, The Elders

## **Senior Pastor Criteria (As Established by the Westside Pulpit Search Committee)**

### **Major Criteria:**

1. Proficiency in handling the Bible with sound doctrine and able to refute unsound doctrine, Titus 1:9
  - Bible degree – undergraduate or graduate
  - Evidence of being a learner, Proverbs 1:4-5
  - Ordained minister from a sponsoring church
  - Committed to the inerrancy and authority of the Bible
2. Demonstrates a spirit of humility and contriteness, Psalm 51:17, Isaiah 66:2
3. Effectively communicates to a wide audience, 1 Timothy 3:2

### **Minor Criteria:**

1. Prefer senior pastor experience more than three years.
2. Demonstrates leadership experience that is team-based and servant-based, 1 Peter 5:2-3
3. Demonstrates a passion for local community and local/world missions, Matthew 28:19
4. Lives a Biblical view of money, Matthew 6:24
5. Demonstrates ability to counsel others, 2 Timothy 3:16

# Rachel Wade: Newest Member of Westside Family

"It was just not working for us."

That's how Rachel Wade described the attempt by her family to split time between two churches.

Rachel's husband, Jerry, had found community at Westside Fellowship several years before their marriage. And Rachel was plugged in and serving at her church.

"I tried to rotate between the two churches, coming to Westside every other week, but that just did not work; it was just not working for us," Rachel explained.

So in late July she made the decision to complete her Westside membership homework. Within days of making that decision, Pastor Mike announced that he was the leading candidate for the senior pastor position at Riverview Baptist in Virginia.

"What do you think we should do now?" Rachel asked her husband.

Jerry responded: "We will keep doing what we are doing and keep going."

Rachel got a similar response when she mentioned her hesitancy to join to Westside Worship Pastor Jacob Danieleu. "We were talking about Mike and Stephanie



Jerry and Rachel Wade

leaving, and I asked Jacob, 'What's Westside going to do now?' He responded quickly, saying, 'We will keep serving Jesus!'"

The responses from Jerry and Jacob reminded Rachel that Westside Fellowship was more than just one person or one family.

"To some, it may seem crazy to join a church that is currently looking for a senior pastor," she said. "But we have known for some time that this is our church. This is our church now, and it will be our church for the future."

With that in mind, Rachel completed her membership homework and submitted it for review. Having previously received Christ as savior and having been baptized following that decision, she has been welcomed into membership.

If you are interested in joining Westside, you can contact Mark Smith to participate in the next membership class.

The class provides the basic beliefs of Westside and explains the various reasons we "do church" the way that we do. To contact Mark, call him at 336-202-6339 or e-mail him at [msmitty51@yahoo.com](mailto:msmitty51@yahoo.com).

## Mike Issues Challenge to Remain Faithful in Resignation Letter

*What follows is the text from Pastor Mike Mitchener's resignation letter, which was submitted to the Westside elders on Sept. 5. The letter came approximately two weeks after Pastor Mike accepted the senior pastor position at Riverview Baptist Church in Ripplemead, Va.*

Dear Westside Fellowship,

Twenty years ago the Lord brought together four, five and then six families to start Westside with great excitement! Stephanie (with Josiah in her womb), Mitch, Mac and I worshipped with the Millers, Nor-tons, Woodsons, Browns, and Shepherds (and all their children) on Sunday, October 29, 2000 at Westside's first Sunday morning worship service. We were all clueless what lay ahead. As the years have come and gone, so have many folks. But, twenty years

down the road it humbles us that four of those six families are still actively involved in Westside.

The Lord has added to those four families many other faithful believers that love Jesus, His Word, His Church, and His world. Westside indeed has developed into a strong core group of faithful followers. That group of people is why the excitement of twenty years ago is paralleled with equal excitement today as I officially resign as your pastor to pursue the next phase of ministry we have received from the Lord.

Excitement for what God will do next with and for such a faithful core group of Westside-ite believers. Excitement that God will lead you to call a pastor that takes Westside to new levels of intimacy with Him, with one another, and faithful love for the community. Walk humbly with the Lord

and with each other as you lead the church through this transition process.

- ALWAYS seek His face before His hand with Scripture-fed, Spirit-led, worship-based prayer.
- ALWAYS lead His church to be a praying church.
- ALWAYS walk in Christ-like humility.
- ALWAYS handle His Word with a literal grammatical-historical hermeneutic.
- ALWAYS pursue perfect oneness in His One True Church.
- ALWAYS make disciples, passing His Word on to the next generation.
- ALWAYS share the gospel with the lost and dying world around you.
- ALWAYS BE FAITHFUL. It will all be worth it when you see Jesus face to face.

I love you and the entire church.

- Mike



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## How Is God Working In Your Life?

Before ascending to Heaven following His resurrection, Jesus told His disciples, “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you and you will be my witnesses” (Acts 1:8). Today, followers of Jesus Christ continue to have many opportunities to be His witness by telling others about the various ways we have seen Him work in our lives. Are you willing to be Christ’s witness? We are in search of a few people who are willing to talk about how God is working in their lives — in your personal life, in the life of your family, at home or at work. Your story may be exactly what God uses to encourage someone else. You can share your story by contacting Pastor Kurt Ward at [kurt@westsidefellowship.org](mailto:kurt@westsidefellowship.org) or 336-516-3762.

## Q&A Session Set for Sunday, Oct. 4

The Westside elders, along with other members of the Pulpit Search Committee, will host a Q&A Session Sunday, Oct. 4, following the 10:45 a.m. service. The session is expected to start at about 12:10 p.m. If you have questions about the search process, you should plan to attend. More info (including the search criteria) is included in this newsletter.

## Wednesday Now Features Fellowship

In an effort to provide additional fellowship opportunities, the Westside Mall is open each Wednesday from



*Wednesday*  
**FELLOWSHIP MEAL**

5:45 to 6:30 p.m. Tables are set up in the mall, and families are encouraged to bring their dinner with them and eat with others from the church. The Wednesday Worship Service begins each week at 6:30 p.m., and it currently features teaching on the Attributes of God.

## Youth to Retreat to Cheerio Oct. 9-11

All middle and high school students are invited to participate in the Fall Youth Retreat, Oct. 9-11 at Camp Cheerio in the N.C. mountains. The cost is \$99 per student and covers all meals upon arrival, lodging and bed linens. Each student should bring a bagged meal (for the ride to Camp Cheerio) and a face mask. Money and registration are due by Wednesday, Sept. 30. To register, scan the QR code or go to [westsidefellowship.org/youth](http://westsidefellowship.org/youth).

