

THE HOPE OF EVERY



GENERATION

ADVENT 2022

THE HOPE OF EVERY GENERATION



On the first Sunday of Advent, I often open worship by saying, "Happy New Year," not because my calendar is a month off but because the first Sunday of Advent is also the first Sunday of the Christian year. We begin the year with the anticipation of Jesus' birth and walk together through a season of waiting and preparation.

This year's Advent will prepare for a particularly special year together. In 2023 our congregation will be celebrating 150 years of ministry in Nashville. We will have many special events throughout the year, and one of the things that will guide us on our journey is reading through the Bible together. As we recount the story of West End UMC, we will hear it in the context of God's great story with humankind revealed to us in scripture. We will celebrate the generations of faithful people who

helped build West End, as well as the generations of faithful people who followed God throughout the ages of history.

Advent will launch us into 2023 with the theme "The Hope of Every Generation." Each week during this season we will hear a voice from the generations who came before Jesus, preparing the way for his birth. We'll begin with Jesus' genealogy recounted in Matthew. Then we'll hear from the prophet Isaiah, from John the Baptist, and finally from Joseph—all members of generations who prepared the way.

The Advent season is a time that stirs up many memories of the past but also calls us forward into the hope of God's future. May this season be for you a time to reconnect with old traditions and lean forward into new expressions of God's love for every generation.

Carol Cavin-Dillon, Senior Pastor

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THE ADVENT SEASON

November 27 ♦ Matthew 1:1-6, 16-17 December 4 ♦ Isaiah 11:1-10 December 11 ♦ Matthew 11:2-11
December 18 ♦ Matthew 1:18-25 December 24 ♦ Luke 2:1-20 December 25 ♦ Matthew 2:1-12

MISSIONS AND OUTREACH ADVENT OPPORTUNITIES

CHRISTMAS GIFTS FOR KIDS IN FOSTER CARE

We are pleased to announce that we will once again be providing gifts for kids in foster care in our area through the Tennessee Alliance for Kids. You can select the kids you'd like to purchase gifts for at westendumc.org/angeltree.

Gifts should add up to around \$150 per kid and are due to the church no later than November 30. Questions? Ask Stacey by email sharwelldye@westendumc.org

ADVENT SPECIAL OFFERING – LUNCHES FOR HOPE PROGRAM

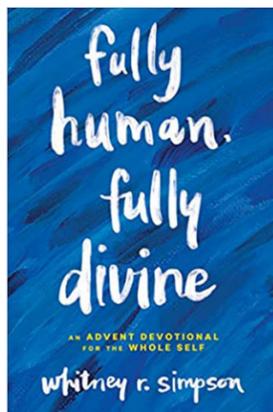
This year's Advent Offering will go to the Lunches for Hope Program in the Dassa-Zoume region of Benin, Africa. The funds will be used by former West End member Hilarion Vegba who worshipped and studied with us when he was enrolled in a program at Vanderbilt. He had a great idea to provide a daily lunch to the 30 girls enrolled in the program. These thirty girls will receive lunch five days a week for nine months of school. Before this program, girls without this lunch money asked for the money from men who took advantage of their situation. West End funded this program last year and there was a dramatic decrease in girls dropping out of school, early pregnancy and trafficking. Our goal is \$5400 which will fully fund lunches for one year. You can give online by marking the "Other" and writing in "Advent Special Offering" or by check with "Advent Special Offering" in the memo line.



ADVENT MISSION MARKETS

We are excited to provide opportunities for you to financially support organizations that have a social mission. During the Sundays of Advent we will have vendors in Reed Hall, including Chimes for Justice (the stained glass/stepping stones), Harvest Hands (coffees and soaps), The Little Match Girl, Ten Thousand Villages, as well as items we've brought back from our trip to Guatemala. These vendors will be in Reed Hall shortly before early service through to fifteen minutes after the late worship service.

SPIRITUAL FORMATION ADVENT OPPORTUNITIES



FULLY HUMAN, FULLY DIVINE: AN ADVENT DEVOTIONAL FOR THE WHOLE SELF

A Resource for Personal Devotion and Group Study

Fully Human, Fully Divine is an invitation to an embodied Advent. Over the course of four weeks, Author Whitney Simpson encourages us to embrace the experience of the Advent season fully, with our whole selves, and remember that Jesus showed us what it meant to be both fully human and fully divine. She challenges us to live right here, right now as we await the birth of the Christ Child, the embodiment of God's presence in our midst.

During a season that can often become stressful and overwhelming, we are rarely permitted time to be present in our own bodies. We forget that our bodies are blessed and consecrated. God did not create the body to bring us doubt or shame; instead, God created us as living, breathing human beings who have the ability to live wholly—body and spirit together.

In this book, Simpson suggests practices that will help us focus on the body God created and embrace what it means to be fully human. By letting go of external demands and giving ourselves permission to be present as we listen for God in our lives, we can learn what it looks like to notice and pay attention to our bodies.

Each chapter covers one week of Advent, and each week focuses on one of the following themes: Slow Down and Hope, Simplify for Peace, Sit with Joy, and Savor God's Love. Within each week are a rotation of daily practices including breath prayer, mindful movement, lectio divina, visio divina (which utilizes beautiful, colorful works of art each week), Christian meditation, creative contemplation, and practicing presence.

We encourage you to use this book in one or both of the following ways:

- ♦ As a guide for personal devotion. The book is designed to use daily beginning on the first Sunday of Advent (November 27). Simply purchase the book and begin using it as Advent begins.

- ♦ As a small group study or group reflection. The book includes suggestions for small groups and small-group leaders, as well as advice on creating safe sacred space for small groups. The daily exercises and weekly themes can be used as a foundation for discussion, reflection, and prayer. If your Sunday morning class or other small group would like to use the book during Advent and you have questions about how to adapt it for group study, contact Pastor Erin for more assistance: eracine@westendumc.org.

You may purchase the book at Cokesbury (<https://www.cokesbury.com/9780835820097-Fully-Human-Fully-Divine>) or Amazon (<https://www.amazon.com/Fully-Human-Divine-Advent-Devotional/dp/0835820092>).

ADVENT MINI-RETREAT WITH WHITNEY SIMPSON

December 3 ♦ 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. ♦ McWhirter Hall

Start the Advent season with an experience that seeks to connect you with your whole self, both your humanity and the spark of divinity that God has given you. Join us for a mini-retreat led by Whitney Simpson, author of our Advent Devotional, *Fully Human, Fully Divine: An Advent Devotional for the Whole Self*. Over the course of three hours, Simpson will discuss the Advent themes of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love outlined in her book. She will also lead us through contemplative practices and mindfulness techniques that engage our entire bodies and help us to be present with God as we savor this time before Christmas. This retreat is designed to be accessible for both beginners and the most practiced contemplatives, and is appropriate for people of all physical abilities. We invite you to fully embody the gifts of this season with us!

Cost for the mini-retreat is \$10 per person. Scholarships are available. Free childcare is also available upon request by November 30. To request a scholarship or childcare, contact Erin Racine at eracine@westendumc.org.

Register for the Mini-Retreat at westendumc.org/advent-retreat.

About Whitney Simpson:

In 2005, at age 31, a stroke forced Whitney to slow down and listen more deeply with her body. In the process of her healing and recovery, she discovered how to listen more deeply to God and began exploring ancient practices to re-connect her body and spirit. Whitney is now an experienced registered yoga teacher (E-RYT 500) with certifications in Trauma Informed Yoga, Chair/Senior Yoga, and Kids Yoga. Through her work as a certified spiritual director and retreat facilitator, Whitney incorporates yoga, meditation, energy work, and other ancient tools, encouraging the sacred connection of breath, body, and spirit. As a deaconess in the United Methodist Church, Whitney also advocates for peace and human equality and seeks to create safe space for all. To learn more about Whitney's work, visit WitneyRSimpson.com.



EVENTS DURING ADVENT

4TH STORY THEATER NATIVITIES

Sundays and Wednesdays during Advent ♦ 4th Story Theater

During the season of Advent on Sundays from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., an impressive array of nativities will be on display in the 4th Story Theater Lobby. The Drama and Visual Arts Ministry invite you to come take a self-guided tour of creches from around the world, old and new, and in all shapes and sizes. Members of our West End UMC community have generously loaned their precious nativity sets for this popular installation.



ADVENT WREATH WORKSHOP

Sunday, December 4 ♦ 4 - 5:30 p.m.

The Advent Wreath Workshop will be December 4 from 4 to 5:30 p.m. We will be in the gym this year making wreaths to prepare for the Advent season of waiting and hoping for the birth of Christ. We will be asking everyone to register to attend the event so we can be ready for everyone with space and supplies.

The wreath making will include an Advent worship time, celebrating the 2nd Sunday of Advent! Resources and devotional materials will be available for church families to observe lighting the Advent wreath candles in their homes during the Advent season.

We'll also have crafts, cookies and cocoa, and a mission station!

Our mission focus again this year is snack bags for people experiencing homelessness.

Check out the Amazon list below to see what supplies we need for the bags, and we



encourage you to bring 1 or more item from the list. You can also bring a monetary donation (suggested \$10). We will have an assembly line set up for making bags after you finish your wreath!

Snack bag items: nutri-grain bars, handwarmers, peanut butter crackers, apple sauce pouches, crunchy granola bars, individual peanut packs, slim jims, and tuna and cracker kits. For the full details see the link: <https://a.co/8bvJoE3>

Please register online by December 1 at westendumc.org/adventwreath.

OEF CHRISTMAS PARTY

Saturday, December 10 ♦ 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.

4th, 5th, and 6th Graders are invited to join us for a Christmas Party on Saturday December 10 from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. in McWhirter Hall. We'll have lunch, play Christmas themed games, and watch a festive Christmas classic movie. Each child should bring a gift-wrapped candy bar for the candy bar game and a donation of new men's socks or underwear for the Room in the Inn closet.

Register online by December 8 at westendumc.org/oefchristmas.



CANDLELIGHTING SERVICE

Sunday, December 11 ♦ 5:30 p.m.

Join West End's choirs and handbell choirs in our annual tradition of lessons and carols. Early arrival is recommended. Livestream is available.

THE GRINCH: FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT

Wednesday, December 14 ♦ 6 p.m.

Presented by the Drama and Visual Arts Ministry in the 4th Story Theater Children and their families are invited to a special screening of "The Grinch" at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, December 14 in the 4th Story Theater. The evening begins with a short, staged reading of the original Dr. Seuss book followed by a screening of the 2018 animated movie. Grab your favorite Christmas PJs and bring a blanket and snuggle-up on the padded stage in front of a huge widescreen with full surround sound! Fresh popcorn and holiday cookies will be served. Admission is free. Childcare will be provided for those too young to attend at no charge, but prior registration is required. To register for childcare, please contact John McGuire at johnomcguire@gmail.com. Runtime is about 2 hours for the reading and film.



YOUTH PROGRESSIVE DINNER: CHRISTMAS PAJAMA THEME!

Friday, December 16 ♦ 5:45 - 9 p.m.

This is an evening for ALL of our 7th -12th graders to come together for fun, fellowship, yummy food and a lot of laughter. We will ALL meet at the church and then travel to the homes of Anna and Peter Bigelow, Alex Stirling and Trip and Lochlan Cook and then return to the church. Bring a fast food gift card to share with our friends who live on the street AND a gift for our Dirty Santa Gift Exchange!. Please don't buy your gift - try to find something unique in your home to exchange! Please RSVP to Emily at erobbins@westendumc.org by Sunday, December 11, so we have plenty of vehicles and food!



SERVICE OF THE LONGEST NIGHT

Wednesday, December 21 ♦ 6:30 p.m. ♦ Sanctuary and Online

The Christmas season is often advertised as a time of celebration and cheer, yet for many the holidays can heighten feelings of loneliness, grief, and pain. Events in our lives, such as illness, the death of a loved one, job loss, divorce, infertility and more can make the season feel particularly difficult. Services of the Longest Night, traditionally held on the longest night of the year, are meant to hold space for those who may need a quiet place for reflection, prayer, and tears. In the midst of the darkest time of the year, a Service of the Longest Night draws people into a community of those who "get it," where candles are lit as a reminder that even in the midst of darkness, the Light of Christ is coming into the world.

On December 21, at 6:30 p.m. West End will hold a Service of the Longest Night, both in-person and online. We will gather, physically and virtually, to hear words from Scripture, light candles, hear comforting music, receive Communion, and pray. Those joining us online will be able to submit prayer requests and someone in the Sanctuary will light candles on your behalf. Even if you are not experiencing a difficult season yourself, you are invited to attend and pray for those who are.

The word, "Immanuel," means "God with us." Our Immanuel is indeed with us, even in the midst of struggle. During West End's Service of the Longest Night, we will claim that promise for ourselves and our loved ones. We hope that you'll join us.

For more info, contact Rev. Erin Racine at 615.321.8500 or eracine@westendumc.org.



FAMILY CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

Saturday, December 24 ♦ 4 p.m. ♦ Sanctuary and Online

All ages of children and families are invited to participate in our Family Christmas Eve Worship Service on December 24 at 4:00pm. We are excited to have our children lead us in worship and participate in bringing the story of Jesus' birth to life for us on Christmas Eve.

We will have kids lead us as liturgists, ushers, scripture readers, and communion servers. Any children who want to are invited to dress in costume to provide a visual image of the scripture. Children can choose to be a shepherd, a Wise One, one of the animals, or an angel.

Children, who wish to dress in costumes, should come to the 4th floor theater between 3:15 and 3:45 p.m. to choose their costume. Costumes will be laid out on tables or hanging on clothing racks by category. Children will sit with their families until it is time to come forward to the chancel area for the Proclamation of the Word. All children in costume or not will be invited to come forward.

After the story and a brief children's sermon, children will return to their seats for the rest of the service. Families are encouraged to stay in the sanctuary (kids in costume and all) for Holy Communion. Following the service, costumes should be returned to the 4th floor theater.

This service is lots of fun for all ages and we hope you will join us as we celebrate the birth of Christ! If you want to volunteer to help or have questions, contact Maggie Jarrell at mjarrell@westendumc.org.



TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

Saturday, December 24 ♦ 10:30 p.m. ♦ Sanctuary

With the sacrament of Holy Communion and music of the choirs, this traditional service is one of the highlights of our West End worship, celebrating Christ's birth as a gift for all time. An organ prelude of Christmas music begins at 10 p.m. and the service begins at 10:30 p.m.



WEST END

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



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