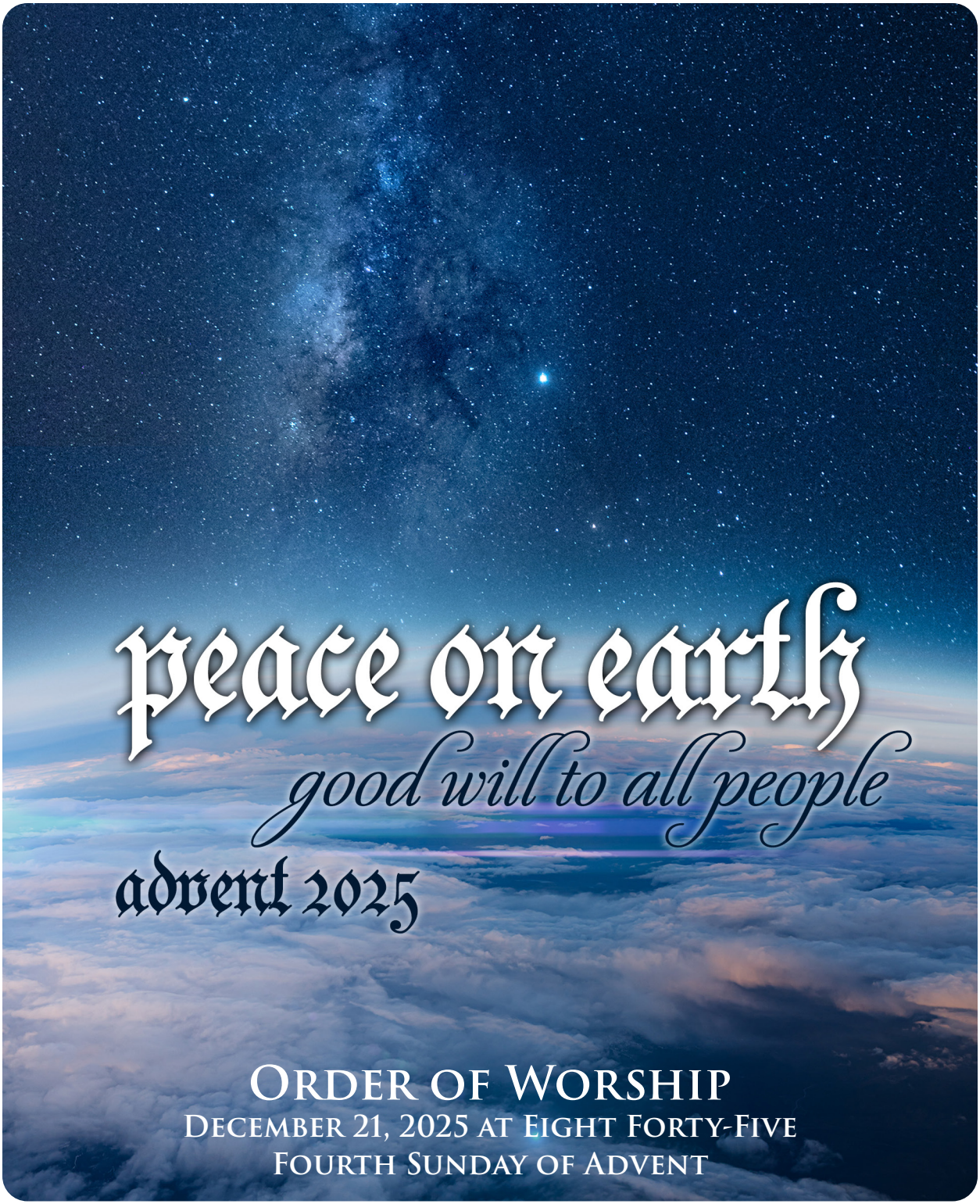

Order of Worship

December 21, 2025 at Eight Forty-Five

Fourth Sunday of Advent

GATHERING

Voluntary: Three Chorales .....Marcel Dupré
Creator of the Stars
Jesus, Redeemer of Humankind
Hail Mary, Star of the Sea

Welcome.....Carol Cavin-Dillon
Please take a moment to let us know you are here today
by either filling out the attendance form in the pew or by visiting westendumc.org/attendance.

Introit: Of the Father's Love Begotten .....Divinum Mysterium

Lighting of the Advent Candle: Love.....Peter Bigelow
Robert Harrell, Sam Wilson

† Processional Hymn No. 211: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.....Veni Emmanuel
(vs 1; 5-7, see hymnal next page)

† Call to Worship .....Shannon Baxter
Liturgist: We have been looking for a sign.
People: Emmanuel—God with us.
Liturgist: We have been waiting for a savior.
People: Emmanuel—God with us.
Liturgist: The time is near—can it be?
People: Emmanuel—God with us.
All: Come let us worship the God of love, wonder, and promise.

† Call to Confession and Prayer of Confession
O God,
we are easily distracted and slightly jaded, and cannot believe Christ is almost here. We get so caught up in the busyness of it all that we miss the gift the season is meant to be.
We have heard the scriptures and stories so often that they have become white noise.
Where is the time to sit, to sleep—never mind to dream? For our frenetic pace, for our exhaustion, for our tunnel vision, for our missing the wonder and awe of a baby born to fulfill promises made long ago, forgive us.
Restore in us the sense of surprise that you came to us as a little baby - unexpected, yet longed for.
God of the visioners and dreamers, may we always be ready to receive your gifts.

† Silent Confession

† Words of Assurance
Liturgist: Hear the good news: Christ died for us while we were yet sinners; that proves God's love toward us. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!
People: In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!
All: Glory to God. Amen.

† Passing the Peace
Liturgist: As a forgiven and reconciled people, let us exchange signs of reconciliation and love. The peace of Christ be with you.
People: And also with you.

† Gloria Patri.....No. 71
Glory be to the Father
and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning,
is now and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen. Amen.

PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE

Prayer for Illumination .....Brant Phillips
Prepare us now, O God, to hear your Word and to receive with joy the proclamation of your peace and good will to all the earth. Amen.

A Lesson from the Gospel.....Matthew 1:18-25

Response to the Lesson
Liturgist: The Word of God for the people of God.
People: Thanks be to God.

Children's Moment
Children's church is located in Scales Chapel, which is down the hall from the sanctuary.
If it's your first time, a grown-up should please follow us after the children's moment to drop off.
Pick up will at the same location immediately following the service.

Sermon: Redirecting Obedience..... Will McLeane

† Affirmation of Faith .....Carol Cavin-Dillon

We are not alone, we live in God's world.
We believe in God:
who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus, the Word made Flesh,
to reconcile and make new,
who works in us and others by the Spirit.
We trust in God.
We are called to be the church:
to celebrate God's presence,
to live with respect in Creation,
to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope.
In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us.
We are not alone. Thanks be to God. Amen.

Joys and Concerns of the Church

Salutation
Liturgist: The Lord be with you.
People: And also with you.
Liturgist: Let us pray.

Prayers of the People

The Lord's Prayer
Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory, forever. Amen.

Offertory: Magnificat ..... John Rutter

My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my savior.
For he hath regarded the lowliness of his handmaiden.
For behold, from henceforth, all generations shall call me blessed.
For he that is mighty hath magnified me, and holy is his name.
And his mercy is on them that fear him, throughout all generations.
He hath shown strength with his arm;
he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
He hath put down the mighty from their seat
and hath exalted the humble and meek.
He hath filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich he hath sent empty away.
He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel;
as he promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed forever.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

† Doxology ..... No. 95

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise God, all creatures here below:
praise God above, ye heavenly hosts,
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

SENDING FORTH

† Recessional Hymn No. 220: Angels from the Realms of Glory..... Regent Square

† Benediction

† Benediction Response

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to Thee, O Israel.

Voluntary: Paean on *Divinum Mysterium*.....John Cook

The postlude is the final Alleluia of our worship.
All are invited to remain for a time of joyful prayer.

† *The congregation is invited to rise in body or in spirit.*

ABOUT TODAY'S SERVICE

The altar flowers are given today in loving memory of Rubye Lynn Thomas and Stephanie Alice Thomas by the Bethel (Bo) Thomas family.

A rose on the table celebrates the birth of Edward Davis Rand, born December 14th, to Eleanor and Patrick Rand. He is also welcomed by grandparents, Allen and Liza Lentz.

Helen Wilkinson Tucker, daughter of Harrison and Kara Tucker, will be presented for baptism at today's late service.

Today's liturgy was adapted by Rev. Maggie Jarrell from the "Worship Elements" blog on ministrymatters.com as written by Joanne Carlson Brown.

Music Participants
Sanctuary Choir
Andrew Risinger: Director / Organist
Matthew Phelps: Assisting at Organ

Today's Music

During Advent vespers in monasteries as early as the nineteenth century, the eight days before Christmas, seven "O" antiphons and an eighth antiphon to Mary were sung before and after the Magnificat (Mary's song from Luke, chapter 1). A metrical form of the antiphons was prepared as early as the 12th century and a version printed from the 18th century was used by John Mason Neale for his translation—O Come, O Come, Emmanuel—in *Mediaeval Hymns and Sequences*, 1851. For the first week of Advent, we sang verses 1-4, this week we complete the hymn as we bring Advent to a close.

Bulletin Cover

Our bulletin cover for Advent is an image of the earth, covered by clouds, taken from beyond the atmosphere. The lower half of the image is of the earth while the upper half is deep space with parts of the Milky Way galaxy in view.

Prayer Requests

Our neighbors in South Nashville, immigrants and refugees, and those whose family members have been detained by immigration officials; individuals in the hospital having procedures, recovering from illness, those in treatment, and the families that are caring for them; peace in Palestine/Israel, Iran, Haiti, Sudan, Syria, and Ukraine.

If you have an emergency and need to contact one of the pastors after hours, please call 615.321.8500, Ext. 8853. The Pastor-on-Call for Dec. 22-28 will be Rev. Carol Cavin-Dillon. To submit a prayer request, visit *westendumc.org/prayerrequest*.

BUILDING ON THE BEDROCK - FAITHFUL GIVING 2026

Our church depends on the financial support of its members to carry out the ministries and programs that allow West End UMC to be the loving light of Christ, connecting, transforming. By turning in your 2026 Estimate of Giving, you help our church staff and leaders plan and budget for the coming year. You can find a estimate card in the pew back or visit *westendumc.org/estimatenow*.

As of December 15, we have received 296 Estimates of Giving for 2026 for a total of $2,125,085.20 towards our budget of $3,047,000.

END OF YEAR FINANCIAL UPDATE

We are blessed by habits of generosity in our congregation, inspired deeply by the remarkable ministries that have a significant impact on the lives of our congregation and community. Thank you to those who so generously participate through financial gifts and/or who make other contributions of time and talent that enable our mission to "live the light, the loving light of Christ, so that lives and communities are transformed by God's grace." God has been good to our congregation. Here is a summary of the church's general fund through December 17.

Year-to-date Giving as of December 17, 2025 .....$2,730,087
2025 Total Budget $3,216,597
Year-to-date Difference ..... -$471,051

Amount of donations needed to achieve 2025 Budget: $471,051

WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

Linda and Ron Bodien

Karen McGee

Emma Severs and Joshua Nahm

ADVENT MINISTRY MARKET // REED HALL

Our final Advent Ministry Market is this moring in Reed Hall Don't miss the exciting vendors that have joined us! Come purchase items that help support a social mission here and around the world!

ADVENT SPECIAL OFFERING: LUNCHES FOR HOPE

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 the great idea to provide a daily lunch to the thirty girls enrolled in the program. Before this program, the girls would often have to ask for the money from men who would take advantage of their situations. Now, the thirty girls in the program will receive lunch five days a week for their nine months of school. 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 of $10,800 will fund lunches for two years.

DECEMBER COMMUNION OFFERING

December's communion offering supports the ways we do direct financial assistance in our community through helping with utility bills, rent, mortgage, bus passes. We put all of December's communoin offering in a pot called the Pastor's Discretionary Fund and use those funds throughout the year. The needs are higher than ever. With layoffs, furloughs, and SNAP benefits' disruptions, to name a few, we have a record number of callers for our limited funds.

JANUARY INFO FOR SEASONED SENIORS

Our Seasoned Seniors meet on the first Thursday of each month, therefore since January 1, is a holiday and the church will be closed, we will not gather in January. We are planning a volunteer opportunity to Second Harvest later in January so watch for news of that. We will continue our monthly gatherings on Thursday, February 5, from 12:45 - 2 p.m. Special plans to follow.

TAIZÉ LABYRINTH SERVICE // JANUARY 4

Experience the beauty and peace of Taizé worship around the labyrinth in the 4th Story Theater. Our labyrinth service that is usually on New Year's Eve will take place on Sunday, January 4 at 5:00 p.m. Opportunity is offered for individual prayers and anointing for healing. The Taizé team will welcome you with beautiful music and warm smiles. Let go of the burdens of 2025 and enter 2026 with renewed hope and peace.

NEW YEAR, DEEPER YOU // JANUARY 2026

Join us for a 4-week exploration of spirituality and integrated living as part of the GoSolutions® lifestyle framework created by West End UMC member Brian Payne. In leading the class, Brian will create space for faith, doubt, wonder, and everything in between so that participants can discover and renew their authentic spiritual lives. The class will meet on Sundays in January from 9:45 to 10:45 am in Room 319. All materials are provided. Register online at *westendumc.org/newyear*.

BREWED THEOLOGY // JANUARY 6, 2026

All young adults are invited to join us for trivia at Bottle Cap (12 South) on January 6 at 6:30 p.m. If you have questions, email Aimee Baxter at *abaxter@westendumc.org*.

FIRST WEDNESDAY
READING THE NEW TESTAMENT IN 2026 // JANUARY 7

West End UMC will read through the New Testament in 2026, seeking God's fresh voice and direction through our ancient Scriptures. On Wednesday, January 7, Rev. Will McLeane will lead an introductory-level orientation to reading the Bible, discussing Scripture in community, and connecting God's living Word with our lived experience today. Furthermore, the class will offer an excellent opportunity to learn how to use our "Reading the New Testament Guide" and to receive steps and connections to join a small group. You do not need prior experience reading the Bible to attend the event. The program starts at 6 p.m. Registration is required for dinner at 5:15 p.m. RSVP at *westendumc.org/firstwednesday*.

A Service for the Longest Night

On Sunday, December 21, at 6 p.m. West End will hold a Service for 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.

Find out more at westendumc.org/longestnight

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

Child Led Service

Wednesday, December 24 ◆ 3 p.m. ◆ Sanctuary and Online

All ages of children and families are invited to participate in our Child Led Christmas Eve worship service at 3 p.m. We are excited to have our children lead us in worship and participate in bringing the story of Jesus' birth to life for us. Any children who want to be included 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. This service is lots of fun for all ages, and we hope you will join us as we celebrate the birth of Christ!

To volunteer or for questions, contact Maggie Jarrell at *mjarrell@westendumc.org*.

Wednesday, December 24 ◆ 5 and 10:30 p.m. ◆ Sanctuary

Join us at 5 p.m. on Wednesday, December 24 for our Christmas Eve service that will include carols, communion, and candles.For our 10:30 p.m. service, we will have the choirs, communion, and candles. Organ Prelude begins at 10 p.m.

These traditional services are highlights of our West End worship, celebrating Christ's birth as a gift for all time.

SHARE THE GIFT BROCHURE NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE

Each Advent season, we make our Share the Gift brochure available that has oppotunities for you to support several of our parnters. The focus of this alternative giving. The focus of this alternative giving catalog is to invite you to spend and give differently by making a donation to a local or global ministry in honor of a loved one.

Scan the QR code or visit *westendumc.org/sharethegift* to check out the gift options.

CHURCH CLOSED DECEMBER 25-26, AND JANUARY 1

The Church Offices and Preschool will be closed the afternoon of December 24 and all day on December 25 to allow our staff and clergy to celebrate the Christmas holiday with their families as well as January 1 for the New Year's holiday. If you have an emergency, please call 615.321.8500 and you will be directed to the minister on call. Please note that Room in the Inn is still happening on our campus on both dates.

ONE WORSHIP SERVICE ON DECEMBER 28

On Sunday, December 28, there will be one worship service at 10 a.m. with no Sunday School that morning. Childcare will be provided for ages 2 and under, but there will be no Children's Church during the service.

OVERFLOW PARKING AT WEST END UMC

Since our parking lot can fill up quickly at times, there is a parking garage available for free of charge where you can park and walk over to West End UMC.

◆ Head east (toward downtown) on West End Ave. Turn left on to Louise Ave. Turn right on to Hayes Street and the garge entrance will be on your right.

A Warm Welcome

Welcome to West End United Methodist Church!

We seek to be the loving light of Christ in Nashville and beyond.

We gather as the people of God with a wide range of religious backgrounds, education levels, political, and theological perspectives, and we value that diversity. We welcome and celebrate the gifts God has given to all without regard to gender identity, race, sexual orientation, economic or family status, ethnicity, or mental or physical ability.

Scan this QR Code or visit *westendumc.org/links* to register your attendance with us, find out more about our Sunday Morning Classes, sign up for our weekly email, and learn more about the different ways to give at West End.

We believe that God loves everyone unconditionally!

West End Staff

Members of West End UMC ..... *Ministers*

Rev. Dr. Carol Cavin-Dillon ..... *Senior Pastor*
Rev. Will McLeane ..... *Spiritual Formation*
Rev. Aimee Baxter ..... *Young Adults*
Rev. Shannon Baxter ..... *Hospitality and Operations*
Rev. Stacey Harwell-Dye ..... *Mercy and Justice*
Rev. Maggie Jarrell ..... *Children and Families*
Emily C. Robbins ..... *Minister of Youth*
Dr. Matthew Phelps ..... *Minister of Music*
Andrew Risinger ..... *Associate Minister of Music*
Katelyn Glass ..... *Music Ministry Intern*
Rea Green ..... *Pastoral Intern*
Rev. Seulbin Lee ..... *Pastoral Intern*
Melody Suite ..... *Youth Ministry Intern*
Cindy Siemer ..... *Senior Administrative Assistant*
Andrew Callis ..... *Administrative Assistant*
Whitney Jones ..... *Administrative Assistant*

Shannon Meffert ..... *Human Resources Director*
Lazaro Kapella ..... *Church Financial Officer*
Shelley Kuhlmeyer ..... *Communications Director*
Stephen Lackey ..... *Multimedia Coordinator*
James English ..... *Building and Property Manager*
Ronnie Franklin ..... *Building Superintendent*
Andy Ulm ..... *Safety and Security Coordinator*
Richard Thomas ..... *Custodian*
Tosha Jackson ..... *Receptionist*
Kathryn Ware ..... *Receptionist*

West End Preschool

Corye Nelson ..... *Executive Director*
Christina Shoptaw ..... *Operations Manager*
Karina Gurgenidze ..... *Childcare Coordinator*

WEST END
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

2200 West End Avenue ◆ Nashville, Tennessee 37203 ◆ 615.321.8500 ◆ westendumc.org

If you need to contact our security coordinator, Andy Ulm, to report any activity, please use the following phone number: 615-617-9010.