

The Spire

WOODMONT CHRISTIAN CHURCH

JANUARY 9, 2024

GAZA, UKRAINE, IMMIGRATION, AND AMERICA'S VOTE

SAMAR ALI
WEDNESDAY, FEB. 7
6:15 P.M. IN THE CHAPEL



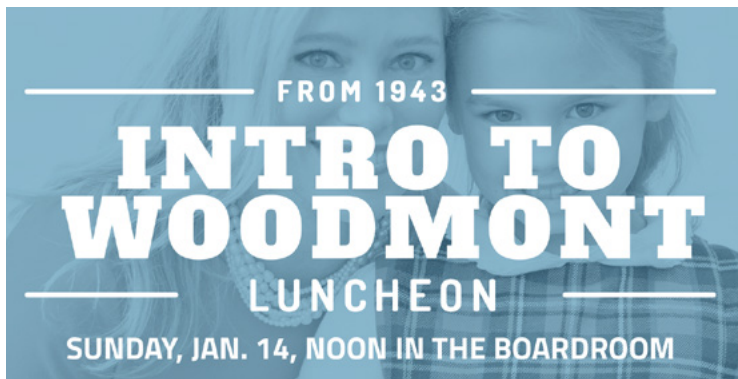
WOODMONT WORSHIP NIGHT

TUESDAY, JAN. 23
6:00 P.M.
CARPENTER CHAPEL



FROM 1943 INTRO TO WOODMONT LUNCHEON

SUNDAY, JAN. 14, NOON IN THE BOARDROOM



HOW TO GROW IN 2024

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 10
6:15 P.M.
CARPENTER CHAPEL



SUPERHERO SUNDAY

JAN. 28



2024 FATHER DAUGHTER DANCE

SUNDAY, FEB. 4, 4-6 P.M.





WOODMONT
CHRISTIAN CHURCH
woodmontchristian.org

MINISTERIAL STAFF

Dr. Clay Stauffer, Senior Minister
Rev. Jay Hutchens • Executive Minister of Small Groups & Discipleship
Rev. Farrell Mason • Minister of Family Life & Pastoral Care
Dr. Roy Stauffer • Minister to Older Adults
Rev. Justin Gung • Minister of Pastoral Counseling

PROGRAM STAFF

Michael Graham • Music Ministry Director
Andra Moran • Creative Director, The Bridge
Abby McLean • Director of Children's Ministry
Moriah Dombay Pirtle • Director of Young Adult Ministries
Katie Gossage • High School Youth Director
Jake Patterson • Middle School Youth Director
Jerry Johnson • Missions Director
Dr. Ben Curtis • Spiritual Director In Residence
Anne Mitchell • Parish Visitor
Rev. Ashley Buchanan • Children's Curriculum Coordinator
Tammy Morgan • Connections Director
Russell Carpenter • Youth Ministry Assistant

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Chris Beck • Business Administrator
Matt Diffenderfer • Communications Director
Amber Moss • Executive Assistant
Jan Anderson • Administrative Assistant
Steven Quinn • A/V Director
Sam Marsh • Property & Facilities Manager
Rellie McLaurine • Custodian
David Vanetta • Custodian

Check out Realm, our online church directory, by searching for "Realm Connect" in the App Store.

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Nashville, Tennessee 37215
615.297.8563

www.woodmontchristian.org



Focus Areas for 2024

BY CLAY STAUFFER

We have entered a new year! Every year at Woodmont, we select focus areas for the year. For 2024, we have selected 4 focus areas, so here they are:

1) *Youth Ministry* – We want the entire church to support and take ownership of our youth ministry. We have two new leaders (Katie and Jake) and we want to get behind them. Volunteering with our youth is a great way to serve. Encouraging your kids to get involved also makes a difference. We are well-positioned to continue growing our youth ministry.

2) *Hospitality* – We want to make sure Woodmont remains a warm and welcoming church. We have done a number of things to enhance our campus security but we don't want that to be at the expense of hospitality. Let's welcome new people. Say hello on Sunday mornings.

3) *Bible Study* – We have started a new sermon series on the Sermon on the Mount. I encourage you to read it on your own. Bible study is a big part of Christian growth and coming to know Christ. Many people say the Bible is SO important but they never take the time to read it.

4) *Visioning* – We have formed a task force to look ahead to the future. Specifically, since we decided not to renovate South Hall, what plans do we have for that part of our campus? The building is very old and dated. What space limitations do we currently have? Healthy churches are always looking and planning ahead.

Remember that leadership nominations are open through the end of January. Please submit the names of people you would like to see serve at woodmontchristian.org/nominate.

For all of us personally, the new year is a time to start over, wipe the slate

clean, and reaffirm our priorities in life. Socrates once reminded us that “the unexamined life is not worth living.” Here are a few guiding principles as we begin 2024.

1) *Name your top priorities and intentionally invest your time and resources in them.* Don't spread yourself too thin. In life, we cannot do everything so we must do the things that matter the most. Many people quickly find themselves “an inch deep and a mile wide.” That is not a healthy way to live.

2) *Seek to be a steady, non-anxious presence in the midst of a chaotic world.* Anxiety is contagious. Strong leaders are able to remain steady when everybody else is afraid. Edwin Friedman said that managing emotion (self-differentiation) is the most important component of leadership. We have too much fear and anxiety in our culture.

3) *Practice kindness every day* which can be defined this way: “Evidence of impenetrable strength. Kindness is the willingness to stay soft in a world that tries to harden you at every corner. It is the ability to absorb your own emotions and diffuse them, to decide what you want to act on and what you want to put back out into the world, regardless of what the world has put you through. Kind people are not just good, they are heroes in their own way. Their ability to not reciprocate unkindness to a world that often deserves it makes them catalysts for the deepest healing to occur.” Kindness remains a choice we make, even when we are stressed.

4) *Surround yourself with people who tell you the truth and make you a better person.* Invest in the most important relationships that you have. Some people make you better. Others criticize and tear you down. Some share your values. Others do not. Choose your company wisely.

5) *Avoid negativity, cynicism, and people who have a problem for every solution.* Life is too short to spend large amounts of time with people who suck the joy and magic out of living. People want to be around positive energy.

6) *Recognize your blessings.* Don't take them for granted. When we fail to be grateful, we become entitled. We also spend our time focusing on what we wish we had. Gratitude is the key to finding contentment.

7) *Practice self-care which is never selfish.* It must be a top priority. Nobody else can do your self-care. We all have physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual needs that are interconnected. We cannot neglect them. If our cup is empty, we have nothing to pour out.

8) *Reduce time on social media and be with people face to face.* Social media is an addiction that seems to have no limits. We all need face-to-face interaction as human beings. Also, body language and eye contact matters.

9) *Pray, meditate, and reflect on a regular basis.* Whether you are religious or not, downtime is essential. This allows us to remain grounded. We must learn to slow down the mind and block out all the noise.

10) *Choose your battles wisely. You cannot fight them all.* Live humbly and civilly. Howard Baker always said, “Remember that the other guy might be right.” Our culture needs more agents of peace, healing, and reconciliation. We should listen more and do our best to reduce conflict, tension, and drama.

Most importantly in the new year, remember that the greatest joy in life comes from relationships. The happiest and most fulfilled people recognize this and win the relationship lottery. And most people “don't care what you know until they know your care.” Here's to a great 2024!



Youth Group

SUNDAY, JAN. 7 • PHOTOS BY STEVE LOWRY





Accompaniment

BY JAY HUTCHENS

David Brooks, in his book *How to Know a Person: The Art of Seeing Others*, relates a story from the life of American naturalist, Loren Eiseley. Hiking along the Platte River, hot and thirsty from his trip, and noticing that there's no one around for miles, Eiseley removed his clothes and laid down in a shallow portion of the river. Gently buoyed, and feeling the water flow around his body, Eiseley experienced an "extension of the senses" and in his imagination became deeply aware of the river, the long path the river had followed to get to this spot, and where it would go on. Brooks describes that Eiseley's posture toward the river changes from one of "investigation" (as a naturalist) to one of "accompaniment" - being present with and in the river as the river simply does that thing a river does - flow.

This, Brooks suggests, is a moving metaphor for how human beings can be present to each other and truly "see" each other.

There are so few places where we have an opportunity to simply "be" with

others. In almost every circumstance, we are generally with others for a purpose, to accomplish something, and with a goal in mind. In his book, Brooks takes the reader on a journey from this kind of "instrumentalist" thinking - seeing others in terms of how they fit into our particular way of seeing the world - to learning to enjoy, appreciate, and value others as they are.

When I imagine where this process of opening up to others happens most naturally, for Susan and me, it's almost always around food being served! I've been amazed in our Dinner For Eight groups, how easy it is to get a conversation going among people who have just met each other when there's food involved. I believe people today are hungry for these kinds of relationships where there is no other agenda than showing value *for* others by being present *to* others.

Brooks describes this kind of relationship this way: "When you're accompanying someone, you're in a state of relaxed awareness — attentive and sensitive and unhurried. You're

not leading or directing the other person. You're just riding alongside as they experience the ebbs and flows of daily life. You're there to be of help, a faithful presence, open to whatever may come. Your movements are marked not by willfulness but by willingness — you're willing to let the relationship deepen or not deepen, without forcing it either way. You are acting in a way that lets other people be perfectly themselves."

In January, we opened registration for our spring "semester" of "Dinner For Eight" groups. These groups are opportunities to meet folks at Woodmont for a meal, to have real conversation, and to "accompany" others for a time on their journeys.

If YOU would like to take the next step and go a little deeper in getting to know some of the people you see at church on Sunday, click on the link below and let us know you'd like to be a part of a "Dinner For Eight" Group!

tinyurl.com/mv9453xd

Looking for support
after a **divorce**?

EVERY WEDNESDAY
BEGINNING JAN. 10
6:00 P.M.
THE BAY ROOM

*Join us and
discover help and
encouragement!*

GRIEF  SHARE

EVERY WEDNESDAY
BEGINNING JAN. 10

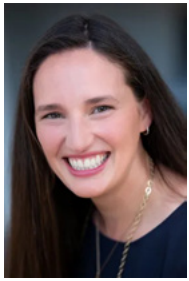
6:00 P.M. AT CAMPBELL WEST

Vicki Askew & Mary Clare Pyron join the team of the Gilead House

This month, we are welcoming Vicki Askew and Mary Clare Pyron as they add their gifts and talents to serve Woodmont and the community at large in the former Campbell West house. Their addition enhances the programs and services that we offer to all who seek to grow in their relationship with the Creator and with others.



Vicki joins as the executive director of the house, coming back to Woodmont after a few years attending Brentwood United Methodist. Some of you know Vicki as a former deacon and her husband, Fred, as a former elder. She brings years of business acumen to the house, along with her practice as a spiritual director at Lipscomb University and as a master facilitator for equipping others to work with those who have experienced trauma through the Trauma Healing Institute. She will be focused on building knowledge around what the house offers and on creating more opportunities for the community to become engaged with both Woodmont and the house. You can reach Vicki at vaskew@woodmontcc.org.



A lifelong member of Woodmont, Mary Clare joins the team as a coach whose practice will help people uncover their potential and grow to be the person they were created to be. As a nurse practitioner and a trained nurse coach, she is equipped and passionate about using her skills to look at the whole person – body, mind, and spirit. Mary Clare believes that in order to feel healthy in our body we also need to feel healthy in our mind and in our spirit. She welcomes any and all questions on her practice and is available for coaching sessions by appointment. You can reach her at maryclarepyron@gmail.com.

NewsChannel 5 anchor Rhori Johnston to speak at Jan. 23 G.E.M.S. meeting



Emmy-award winning journalist Rhori Johnston can be seen weeknights as co-anchor of NewsChannel 5 at 5, 6, and 10 p.m. Rhori volunteers his time speaking to area students, and as emcee of a number of annual fundraisers and events, including the Salute To Excellence Awards, the Strobel

Awards Luncheon, the Button Ball, the Nashville Adult Literacy Council's "Bee", the Scleroderma Walk, Crohns & Colitis Walk, and Goodwill's annual Impact Luncheon. Rhori has received a number of awards during his career, including seven regional Emmys.

G.E.M.S. meets on Tuesday, Jan. 23, at noon in Room 200.



Book Club Jan. 16

The next meeting of Woodmont's Book Club is Tuesday, Jan. 16, at 10:30 a.m. in Room 100 as the group discusses *The Maid* by Nita Prose. Questions? Contact Betty Williams at byotwilliams.net.

- THIS WEEK -

SUNDAY, JAN. 14

YOUTH SKI TRIP

8:30 AM Full Breakfast, Drowota Hall
9:30 AM 21st Century Class, Boardroom
9:30 AM Disciples Class, Room 105
10:45 AM Connection Class, Room 100
10:45 AM Pathways Class, Boardroom
10:45 AM Reflections Class, Room 200
11:00 AM Points of View Class, 105
3:00 PM Pickleball, Drowota Hall
5:30 PM Youth Basketball, Drowota Hall

MONDAY, JAN. 15

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY CHURCH OFFICE & BUILDING CLOSED FOR THE HOLIDAY

TUESDAY, JAN. 16

10:30 AM Book Club, Room 100
6:30 PM Alateen (ages 12-19), South Hall
6:30 PM Parents AL-ANON Group, 105
8:00 PM AA Meeting, South Hall

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 17

6:00 AM Roy Stauffer's Men's Group, 105
7:00 AM Clay Stauffer's Men's Group, Board.
8:00 AM Men's Bible Study, Room 105
5:30 PM Grace Notes, Kids' Commons
5:30 PM Fellowship Dinner, Drowota Hall
5:45 PM Disciples Women's Bible Study, 200
6:00 PM Daystar Series, Carpenter Chapel
6:00 PM DivorceCare, The Bay Room
6:00 PM GriefShare, Campbell West
6:30 PM Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary

THURSDAY, JAN. 18

10:00 AM Sit & Stitch, Gathering Hall
1:00 PM Mahjong Group, Gathering Hall
5:30 PM Handbells, Choir Room
6:30 PM Andra Moran Virtual Vespers, Zoom
6:30 PM Naranon, Room 105
8:00 PM AA Meeting, South Hall

FRIDAY, JAN. 19

ROOM IN THE INN

3:00 PM Pickleball, Drowota Hall

SATURDAY, JAN. 20

ROOM IN THE INN

10:00 AM Al-Anon, Drowota Hall

**THIS SUNDAY,
JAN. 14**

**“THE
BLESSED LIFE”**

DR. CLAY STAUFFER

MATTHEW 5:1-11

“TAKING JESUS SERIOUSLY” SERIES

**SUNDAY
SCHEDULE**

8:30 A.M. FULL BREAKFAST

9:30 A.M. INFORMAL & LIVESTREAM

9:40 A.M. THE BRIDGE & LIVESTREAM

11:00 A.M. TRADITIONAL & LIVESTREAM

**NO YOUTH ACTIVITIES THIS
SUNDAY DUE TO THE YOUTH SKI
TRIP IN NORTH BEND, IN**

GIVING

DEC. 17: \$129,177

DEC. 24: \$162,655

DEC. 31: \$286,820

JAN. 7: \$161,053



Congratulations!

**OUR WOODMONT GIRLS YOUTH BASKETBALL
TEAM WON 39-14 THIS WEEK**

**PRAYERS FOR OUR
CHURCH FAMILY**

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

- Tom & Ronnie Woodard on the birth of their granddaughter, Eleanor Louise Rainey
- Ray & Cass Meeks on the birth of their grandson, Elvis Ray Meeks, on Jan. 2

SYMPATHY TO:

- Chip & Cynthia Peay on the death of their mother, Sarah Peay, who passed away Jan. 5. Service is Friday, Jan. 19, at 2:00 pm in the sanctuary with a reception to follow at 3:00 p.m.
- The family of Marilyn Gardner, who passed away Dec. 23. Service is Friday, Jan. 26, at 2:00 p.m. in the sanctuary with a visitation one hour prior to the service.
- John Hartong and family on the death of his father, John Gordon Hartong, Sr.
- Bill Thetford and family on the death of Martha Thetford on Jan. 8
- Marc Taylor and family on the death of his mother, Elizabeth Ann (Tibby) Taylor, on Dec. 27. Service is Saturday, Jan. 13, at 11:00 a.m. at First Presbyterian Church in Franklin, TN.

IN THE HOSPITAL:

- John Shelton
- Walter White

NEW CONCERNS:

- Infant Walker Sharpton, son of Katie & Scott Sharpton
- Cass Meeks

CONTINUING CONCERNS:

- Lindsey Cooper
- Angela Powers
- Liz Ramsey
- Kris Stewart
- LuAnn Brent
- Laura Crenshaw
- Randy Smith
- Mike Stewart
- Barrett Sutton
- Frances Wood

FAMILY & FRIENDS OF MEMBERS:

- Sandy Dickerson's brother, Jack Frost
- Stephanie Bowman's father, Eugene Johnson
- Lee Moss



The Spire

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Racial Bridges Ministry

WOODMONT CHRISTIAN CHURCH



Woodmont's Racial Bridges Ministry invites you to connect in 2024. It is our mission to build racial bridges and foster equity and inclusion in Nashville through **Education, Activation, and Building Relationships.**



MLK Jr. Day March

Join us as we walk in the Martin Luther King Jr. Day March, Mon., Jan. 15. Meet at Woodmont (by the buses) by 8:10 or at Jefferson Street Missionary Baptist, 2708 Jefferson St. March starts at 9.

The Racial Bridges Ministry is open to anyone interested in learning more and reflecting on our role as Christians to build bridges in our community.

Join the email list to stay up to date on upcoming programs and field trips by contacting Bob Faricy at faricy@comcast.net

