

# The Spire

WOODMONT CHRISTIAN CHURCH

NOVEMBER 5, 2019

## DIVORCE *Care*®

Surviving the holidays

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 20, 6:15 PM



Trunk or Treat 2019  
*Photos by Steve Lowry*

## CHURCHWIDE THANKSGIVING DINNER

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 20  
5:30 PM, DROWOTA HALL



Walk Thru  
Bethlehem  
SUNDAY, DEC. 8, 1-7 PM



**This Wednesday**  
*All classes begin at 6:15 PM*

# HENRI NOUWEN: CRISIS AS OPPORTUNITY FOR TRANSFORMATION



LED BY DR. BEN CURTIS



## Support Boy Scout Troop 92

Purchase a 20-inch fraser fir wreath with a red velvet bow on Sundays November 10, 17, or 24 in the Gathering Hall and your home will be filled with its lovely evergreen scent. And, better yet, your will help the young men in Troop 92 to participate in many outdoor activities like camping, canoeing, hiking, etc., and to learn to live the attributes of a Scout: trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent. Our church's troop is growing and we appreciate your support! Wreaths are \$25 and cash, checks, or credit cards will be accepted. Or, order online at <https://ScoutSales.org?1313.10.685>

Wreaths will be available for pick up on Sunday, December 1 from 9:15 -12:15 or starting December 2 in the church office. Questions? Contact Christi Williams.



**WOODMONT**  
CHRISTIAN CHURCH

[woodmontchristian.org](http://woodmontchristian.org)

### MINISTERIAL STAFF

**Dr. Clay Stauffer, Senior Minister**

Dr. C. Roy Stauffer • Minister of Adult Education & Church Life

Rev. Justin Gung • Minister of Children & Congregational Care

Rev. Chris Cox • Minister of Youth & Their Families

Dr. Donovan McAbee • Minister of Spiritual Formation

Farrell Mason • Minister of Family Life & Pastoral Care

### PROGRAM STAFF

Michael Graham • Music Ministry Director

Abby McLean • Children's Ministry Director

Katie Sheridan-Gossage • Assistant Youth Ministry Director

Andra Moran • Creative Director, The Bridge

Martha Duff • Preschool Director

Anne-Marie Farmer • Small Groups & Connections Director

Lauren Lucas Beuerlein • Young Professionals & Couples Director

Steve LaForge • Missions Field Coordinator

Dr. Ben Curtis • Spiritual Director In Residence

Anne Mitchell • Parish Visitor

### SUPPORT STAFF

Chris Beck • Business Administrator

Amber Moss • Executive Assistant

Matt Diffenderfer • Communications Director

Jan Anderson • Administrative Assistant

Dr. Tom Gormley • Capital Project Representative

Sam Marsh • Property & Facilities Manager

Cliff Browning • Facility & Property Maintenance

Steven Austin • Facility & Property Maintenance

Cortney Akridge • Facility & Property Maintenance



For the most up-to-date information, download Woodmont's Realm church directory app. Search for "Realm Connect" in iTunes & Google Play.

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# Challenges for the 21st Century Church

by Clay Stauffer

A few years ago, Brett McCracken, who writes regularly for *Christianity Today*, wrote a very interesting article titled “21 Challenges Facing the 21st Century Church.” It was later turned into a book titled *Uncomfortable*. Brett was very honest and forthright in his assessment of what the church needs to pay attention to both now and in the coming years. I recently shared this article with the Woodmont Elders. As a pastor who thinks about the future of Christianity and the Church on a regular basis, I found this article very interesting. Here are ten of the challenges that he identifies:

**BIBLICAL ILLITERACY** - Biblical literacy is a huge problem in the American church, and it makes many of the challenges on this list all the more challenging. Quite simply, people in churches (and even more so those not in churches) may pay lip service to the importance of the Bible, but by and large they do not read it or know it.

**PRESENCE** - Christians ought to be people of *presence*, connected to God and to one another through the inhabiting, unifying power of the Holy Spirit. But the 21st century world busies our lives and distracts us so that every moment pulls us away from presence. The church must re-prioritize its vocation as *presenters of God's presence in the world*, and to do so we must cultivate habits and liturgies that create the space and contours for that presence to be felt and known.

**BOREDOM** - We are an antsy culture. Everything is fast-paced and harried; we can hardly remember which Netflix show we loved last month or which restaurant was the rage last year. We have short attention spans and get bored easily, and this poses a huge challenge to the church.

**CONSUMER CHRISTIANS** - The ubiquity of consumerism in late capitalism has fully infiltrated the church, to the extent that “church shopping” and “what I got from the sermon” are things we say without thinking anything of it. People go to Sunday services to “get something.” They choose churches that “fit them” and match their checklist of preferences, just as one would choose a car or a new pair of jeans. But churches must challenge rather than cater to this mentality. Church is a place where members of a body come together for purposes beyond themselves. It's an invitation to join Christ in what he is already doing in the world, not an invitation for Christ to affirm our self-actualization.

**AVERSION TO COMMITMENT** - We live in a culture that is commitment averse. Millennials are the FOMO (“fear of missing out”) generation, preferring to keep

options open rather than committing to something or someone and foreclosing other possibilities.

**SOCIAL MEDIA** - There are some positive things social media offers, but there are many things about it that pose challenges to the contemporary church. Chief among them is the challenge of *posturing*, a performative obsession that feeds pride and hypocrisy.

**RACIAL RECONCILIATION** - The church should be no haven for racism, and yet too often the church has let racial wounds fester and prejudice (whether explicit or implicit) go unaddressed. The 21st church must not be on the sidelines in the work of justice, healing and reconciliation; she must actually *lead* these efforts.

**GENDER AND SEXUALITY** - This is a vast area that encompasses a wide range of things (homosexuality, gender identity, marriage, divorce, egalitarian vs. complementarian gender roles, pornography, etc.), each of which could be its own category on this list. We are already seeing how this issue creates fragmentation within churches, denominations and parachurch organizations, and this will only continue.

**DISTRUST OF AUTHORITY** - For many (very valid) reasons, younger generations today have a real distrust of authority. This makes church inherently challenging for them, not only because they have a hard time trusting leaders but (more importantly) they struggle with submitting fully to the authority of Christ and the authority of Scripture. Yet churches must lean into the “transcendent authority” of Christ, countercultural as that may be.

**ENTANGLEMENTS OF ALLEGIANCES** - This has been a struggle for the church since her earliest days. In what sense does a person's allegiance to empire or nation or some other secular community interact with their allegiance to Christ and his church? Today we're seeing this play out in the messy entanglements of Christians in politics, to the point that we have to say out loud that trickle-down economics and the right to bear arms are political, not biblical values. Today's focus on identity politics makes this even more challenging, as any given member of a church may see their Christian identity as secondary to some other identity (gender, race, political affiliation, nationality, etc.). (Brett McCracken – October 27, 2016)

What would you identify as being the most pressing challenge for the future of the church? How can we talk openly, honestly, and respectfully about these topics and others? Better yet, are we willing to take these challenges seriously?





## Why Stewardship?

by Christi Williams, Elder

In the church where I grew up, it was emphasized to us that when we joined the church, we ought to make a pledge to the church budget. Tithing 10% was explained and reiterated in the financial campaign announcements we heard during that season of the church year.

Dutifully, I made my pledge: \$1 per month, from my \$12.50 monthly allowance. Not quite a tithe, but close! The trouble was, I'd forget, or be short any given month because of the other things I wanted to buy. So December would come (the church was on a calendar year), and I'd owe a big portion of my pledge.

Fast forward many years, and when Richmond and I joined Woodmont, we were pleased to have our monthly pledge deducted from our checking account. We could make sure that our commitment to the church didn't ever "miss a month." For others, placing funds in the offering tray is a sacrament, and I honor those of you who fulfill your gift to Woodmont in that way.

However we offer our treasure to Woodmont, it is vital. Woodmont is my home, and I know it is for so many others, as well. We have to keep it up - the grounds, the electric bill, the maintenance. The sustenance I receive from the programs I participate in is worth a lot, and words can't express how much I love the staff at Woodmont. And these don't even cover the many missions Woodmont supports! Please remember these and your own reasons to give as you make your offerings to Woodmont. We are blessed beyond measure.

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## Angel Tree Update

Thank you, Woodmont, for the great response to this year's Angel Tree supporting Fannie Battle Day Home! If you selected an Angel but did not sign your name on the sign out sheet or take an information packet with instructions, please email Tracy Crawford or Ann Wiles this week or stop by the Angel Tree in the Gathering Hall on Sunday.

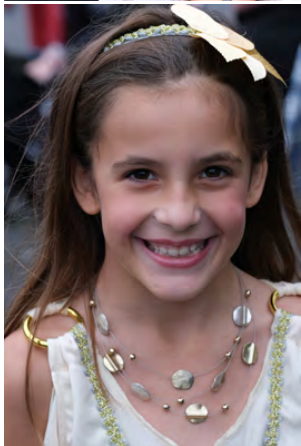
Questions? Contact Tracy Crawford at [crawfordbt@icloud.com](mailto:crawfordbt@icloud.com) (615) 294-4157 or Ann Wiles [annwiles@gmail.com](mailto:annwiles@gmail.com) (202) 607-4159.

## Trunk or Treat

Oct. 27 • Photos by Steve Lowry









# 2019 Guatemala Mission Trip

Oct. 26 - Nov. 2



## Small Group Spotlight: The Woodmont Book Club

By Anne Marie Farmer

Do you enjoy reading for pleasure? Do you love to talk about books, characters, and what you've been reading recently?

If you're like many avid readers, you may relish the idea of a book club, but perhaps your circle of friends hasn't been as enthusiastic, or the idea of getting the house ready and inviting folks over for a book discussion has been too daunting. Well, I have welcome news – Woodmont has a longstanding book club that meets every month! It's open to all, and new participants are always welcome.

The book club meets on the third Tuesday morning of each month, from 10:30 AM until noon, in Room 107 at church. This group reads and discusses a wide variety of recent and classic novels throughout the year, and is currently putting together its selections for upcoming months.

If you'd like more information on the book club, or to find out what book will be discussed at the next meeting, email Wilson Wattenbarger at [forwilwat2@gmail.com](mailto:forwilwat2@gmail.com).

## NEXT BOOK CLUB MEETING

Tuesday, Nov. 19, 10:30 AM in Room 107  
*All You Can Ever Know* by Nicole Chung  
Discussion led by Anita Demster

## THIS WEEK

### SUNDAY, NOV. 10 CHRISTMAS WREATH SALE

- 8:30 AM Seekers Bible Study, Room 105
- 9:30 AM Challenge Class, Room 200
- 9:30 AM Disciples Class, Room 105
- 9:30 AM Informal Worship, Sanctuary
- 9:45 AM 21st Century Class, Boardroom
- 9:45 AM The Bridge Worship, Drowota Hall
- 10:45 AM Life in the Balance Class, Bay Room
- 11:00 AM Pathways Class, Boardroom
- 11:00 AM Points of View Class, Room 105
- 11:00 AM Reflections Class, Room 200
- 11:00 AM Traditional Worship, Sanctuary
- 5:00 PM Jubilation Rehearsal, Choir Room
- 5:30 PM CWF Circle #7, Bay Room
- 5:45 PM Youth Group, Youth Wing

### MONDAY, NOV. 11

- 3:00 PM "Geezers," Boardroom

### TUESDAY, NOV. 12

- 9:00 AM Women's Prayer Group, C.S.
- 10:30 AM CWF Circle # 2, Room 105
- 6:00 PM Handbells Rehearsal, Choir Room

### WEDNESDAY, NOV. 13

- 6:15 AM Men's Small Group, Room 100
- 7:00 AM "Original" Men's Bible Study, 105
- 7:00 AM Younger Men's Bible Study, Board Rm.
- 5:30 PM Grace Notes, Kids Commons
- 5:30 PM Wednesday Fellowship Dinner, D.H.

*MENU: Chickpea/Cucumber Salad  
With field greens, red onion, yogurt  
vinaigrette  
Herbed Rice  
Chicken Tikka Masala  
Naan Bread*

*VEGETARIAN: Mushroom and quinoa  
tikka masala*

*KIDS: Butter Chicken and Broccoli with  
buttered rice*

- 6:15 PM Choir Rehearsal, Choir Room
- 6:15 PM Henri Nouwen "Crisis As Opportunity for Transformation" class with Dr. Ben Curtis, Room 105
- 6:15 PM Holy Yoga, Room 200

### FRIDAY, NOV. 15 ROOM IN THE INN SOUTH HALL



## PRAYERS FOR OUR CHURCH FAMILY

### NEW CONCERNS:

- Julia Shipp will have surgery at St. Thomas Midtown on November 6

### CONTINUING CONCERNS:

- Heather Dwyer
- Hale Hooper, Richland Place, 202
- Gary Thompson
- Isse Waddey
- Rosemary Weldon
- Walter White

### FAMILY/FRIENDS OF MEMBERS - CONCERNS:

- LuAnn Brent's sister, Lynn Milray, (lives in AR) being treated here is Nashville following recent illness.
- Tara Stuart Miller, niece of Mike and LuAnn Brent, age 37 - beginning 5 months of chemo, in Memphis
- Ingrid Regen, daughter of Lilo and
- David Regen - recent surgery
- Karen Wedgworth, mother of Davis Wedgworth - ICU in Birmingham, AL

### CONGRATULATIONS TO:

- Andrew Yocius & Carly Rabideau, married at Woodmont on Nov. 2

### SYMPATHY TO:

- Gayle Cherry & family on the death of her son, Hugh Crawford, Oct. 31

## OUR ELDERS INVITE YOU TO JOIN THEM IN PRAYER FOR:

### OUR MILITARY

As we approach the observance of Veterans Day on November 11, we honor all veterans who have worked overseas and at home, on land, on ships, on planes, and in offices – all doing the same important job of defending our country.

We also honor those people who are currently serving.

We thank all of them for their dedication, courage, conviction, and love of country.

May God bless each and every one of them and their families who have all sacrificed so much that we might have our freedom.

### SUNDAY SCHOOL: TOTAL ATTENDANCE: OPERATING:

OCT. 13:	362	882	\$60,470
OCT. 20:	329	769	\$42,432
OCT. 27:	357	925	\$28,059
NOV. 3:	415	958	\$102,808

## UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

### Nov. 18: Parnassus Books hosts Nikki Haley at Woodmont

In a Parnassus Books event hosted at Woodmont, former Ambassador Nikki Haley will be discussing her new book, *With All Due Respect*, on Monday, Nov. 18, at 6:30 PM. Nikki Haley served as United States Ambassador to the United Nations from 2017 through 2019. She previously served as Governor of South Carolina from 2011 to 2017. She and her husband, Michael, an entrepreneur and combat veteran in the South Carolina Army National Guard, have two children. Tickets are required and can be purchased at [bit.ly/nikkihaleywoodmont](http://bit.ly/nikkihaleywoodmont)

### Nov. 20: DivorceCare "Surviving the Holidays"

Divorced, separated, and/or single, lonely, depressed, alone this year? Wondering just how you are going to survive the holidays?

- What do I do when these surprising emotions hit?
- How do I handle family traditions and coming changes?
- How do I get through all the awkwardness?
- How do I help my children have a good Christmas?
- Where do I find comfort, strength, peace, and hope?

We have some answers, coping tools, and hope for you! Wednesday, Nov. 20, at 6:15 PM in The Bay Room.

### Dec. 8: Save the Date! Walk Thru Bethlehem Sunday

Reserve the date on your calendars! Even with construction of our new space underway, we will be having this year's Walk Thru Bethlehem. Plan to spend the day at this 36-year Woodmont community outreach tradition! Watch The Spire, Sunday bulletins, and your email for upcoming volunteer sign up! Remember, it takes a village to create "the village"!



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# The Spire

FROM 1943

# INTRO TO WOODMONT

LUNCHEON

**SUNDAY, NOV. 17, 12:15 PM**