

WESTWOOD

our voice in the public realm



Faithful Imagination

FALL/WINTER 2020 - CATALOG 10



WHAT IS WESTWOOD U?

Welcome to Westwood U!

Westwood U offers people of all ages the opportunity to gather for education, faith development, and mutual growth-

kids, parents, grandparents, friends...

Everyone is invited!

The purpose is to move beyond education to *formation* and *transformation*.

Westwood U is a way to nurture a whole culture — an ecosystem — of faith formation at Westwood.

We believe that *heart* and *hands* must accompany *head* in one's faith journey, so in addition to the classroom, Westwood U will create opportunities for faith mentoring, faith socializing, and even faith surfing by tapping into life *experience of multiple generations*. We operate under the conviction that the content of faith has no traction outside of faith-based relationships. Our faith flourishes in relationship.

What courses are offered?

There are 3 categories for the courses offered at Westwood U. Several courses from each category are offered throughout the year.

They are:

Know- hands on learning

Live- service to our neighbor and congregation

Grow- fellowship and faith nurturing experiences

This year will look different in the numbers of courses each student will be required to complete. We are asking in this covid year that each student complete 3 electives over the course of the 2020-2021 year. So for current 7, 8 and 9th graders, their total number of electives will add up to be 13 rather than the usual 15.

3 courses in each category are required, the other 4 courses are choose your own adventure!

Example:

Year 1: 3 courses

Year 2: 5 courses

Year 3: 5 courses, mentoring and a faith statement.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

An email will be sent to you during the open registration period and you will also find the registration link in the e-news and on the Westwood homepage.

Registration opens September 30 for confirmation students and will open to the congregation after the October 7.

Visit the registration page , when you are there you will:

- **Fill out the registration form (noting that it will auto fill, so be sure the correct “student” is being registered.**
- **Double check that we have an email address where the “professor” can reach you to let you know about any details, supplies, announcements and/or costs that may accompany your elective. Please make sure it is an email you will check regularly! (Parent email, probably the best for confirmation student registrations!)**
 - **Choose an elective for each month, and if you are opting out of a particular month, please choose “none” so that we know you have bypassed an elective for that period, (each question is required, so you’ll need to choose an “answer” for each month!)**
- **If you see “_____ is full, please choose another” that means that it has filled, and we will work to repeat the elective in a future course catalog.**
 - **Please choose an alternate option.**
- **When you are finished choosing an elective for each month, click submit and your registration will be cataloged with us.**
- **Be sure to check all the dates listed for your elective, some go outside the “month” they are listed under. To receive confirmation credit you must be present for 3/4 of the class’s time commitment.**

If you have any questions while you register, please email Dannica Olsen at d.olsen@westwood.church

FAITHFUL IMAGINATION

Over 6 years ago Westwood launched its focus on our confession that in baptism each of us has been claimed as a child of God and called to be God's hands and feet in all realms of our life. We use the word "Vocation" to describe this. One of the reasons this focus emerged was the concern that a real separation exists for many of us between our faith and our real lives. Over the last years, we have had specific foci on our callings in our work/school/retirement roles, in our role as a neighbor, and in our family and friend roles.

As we enter the fall of 2020 amidst an ongoing pandemic and following a summer of deep questions about racial equity, we approach an upcoming election which has dominated the news cycle. If we are to take seriously this call to discipleship in all the realms of our lives, then one of the things we need to acknowledge is that we also have a calling as citizens. Our theme for the coming year is "Faithful Imagination," and this fall, we will focus on "Faithful Imagination: Our Voice in the Public Realm".

What we ask of you:

- To pray for God's Spirit to lead us all in a faithful path in this season.
- To challenge yourself to articulate how your faith connects to our calling as a citizen.
- To be an active participant in the season. To that end, the assigned Sunday Gospel texts that we'll be preaching on are listed below. We invite you to read/study them in advance, pray about them, and wonder what they say to us in this context just as the preachers will each week.
- To create a culture of grace in which straight and honest talk is possible along with the presence of forgiveness as we discuss important and sensitive topics.



OCTOBER ELECTIVES

Westwood Reads: Stamped. (Know) At your own pace. The construct of race has always been used to gain and keep power, to create dynamics that separate and silence. This remarkable reimagining of Dr. Ibram X. Kendi's National Book Award-winning *Stamped from the Beginning* reveals the history of racist ideas in America and inspires hope for an antiracist future. It takes you on a race journey from then to now, shows you why we feel how we feel, and why the poison of racism lingers. It also proves that while racist ideas have always been easy to fabricate and distribute, they can also be discredited. To fulfill this elective, you'll need to read the book and submit your answers to the reflection questions, emailed after you register.

Faithful Imagination, Wednesday night education (Know) All panels will take place 6:00-7:15 PM Live online and will be recorded.

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The Black Community and Public Voice, October 7

The Jewish Community and Public Voice, October 14

Rural Communities and Public Voice, October 21

Family Dinner Project. (Grow) 10 meals over 2 weeks, you choose the dates/times.

Our belief in the "magic" of family dinners is grounded in research on the physical, mental and emotional benefits of regular family meals. Some of the specific benefits of family dinners are but are not limited to: Better academic performance, Higher self-esteem, Greater sense of resilience, Lower risk of substance abuse, Lower risk of depression. So for this elective, as a family, plan a menu for the week and make a grocery list. Let everyone be involved. Help prepare food or set the table and work as a family to clean up afterwards. Turn off the TV and put down the devices. It's worth a try. More family mealtime could mean large rewards for your family. Try to do 10 meals together in a 2 week period and record what you notice.

Racial Equity Movie Night: "13th", (Live) October 19th 7-8pm discussion

Join the Racial Equity Team for a discussion about the movie "13th". *Because of the length of the movie, please watch it on your own prior to October 19th. Then watch e-news to sign up to join the Zoom discussion link.*

Women/girl's Retreat Zoom: Paint Your Heart Out Saturday, (Grow) October 24 10am-12:30pm

Women and girls (workshop most appropriate for ages 12 and up) of Westwood are invited to a fall Saturday morning painting retreat! Sister Michelle Walka, director of Beloved Art and Practice (<https://www.belovedartandpractice.com/about.html>), will walk us through a painting retreat focused on spiritual grounding, imagination, and creativity. Cost: \$30. Once you sign up, Pastor Miriam will facilitate curbside pickup of your painting kit at Westwood.

NOVEMBER ELECTIVES

Westwood Reads: This Book is Anti-Racist. (Know) At your own pace.

Who are you? What is racism? Where does it come from? Why does it exist? What can you do to disrupt it? Learn about social identities, the history of racism and resistance against it, and how you can use your anti-racist lens and voice to move the world toward equity and liberation. Each chapter builds on the previous one as you learn more about yourself and racial oppression. 20 activities get you thinking and help you grow with the knowledge. All you need is a pen and paper.

Gratitude Changes Everything (Grow) 3 week practice of keeping a gratitude log.

Gratitude is a gift — and gratitude changes everything. When we allow ourselves to look critically at our lives through the lens of gratitude, and to focus on the many reasons we have to be grateful, life gets better. ... A focus on gratitude reduces stress and increases levels of contentment. It truly is life-changing. For 3 weeks in November, keep a log of at least 3-5 things per day that you are grateful for and reflect on what you learned/noticed at the end of the 3 weeks.

Sing Your Faith (Know) Wednesday evenings.

Do you enjoy singing or playing an instrument? Join Westwood's growing youth music ensemble called Cantemus for a month of weekly rehearsals leading up to special music in worship. Rehearsals will take place on zoom under the direction of Elsa Lee and Phillip Schultz.

Connected Community (Live) Before November 15th

We have several members at Westwood who are isolated and who remain in long term care or in their homes who have been challenged by isolation in 2020. Lets flood them with notes to remind them they are not alone, and they are cared for by their congregation, including you. If you sign up for this elective you will receive a list of 5 names and addresses to mail a card to in the early part of November! Each note should be at least 10 sentences in length.

Gratitude Walk (Grow) November 22nd

Join us at Westwood for an interactive, movement based gratitude walk. It will include elements of worship/music, discussion, movement and ritual. Watch enews for timeslot registration and more details.

DECEMBER ELECTIVES

Racial Equity Movie Night (Live) December 7th, time and movie TBD!

Join the Racial Equity Team for movies and discussions about racial equity, inclusion, and justice this fall and winter. Watch e-news for dates and times, and sign up to join the Zoom showing and discussion.

Reverse Advent Calendar (Live) December 1-24.

Each day in the month of December, add an item to a box or bag and donate the contents to STEP or your community's food bank on Christmas Eve. The Advent Calendar will be sent to you in late November. To complete this elective, send a photo of you/your family with your donations being dropped off!

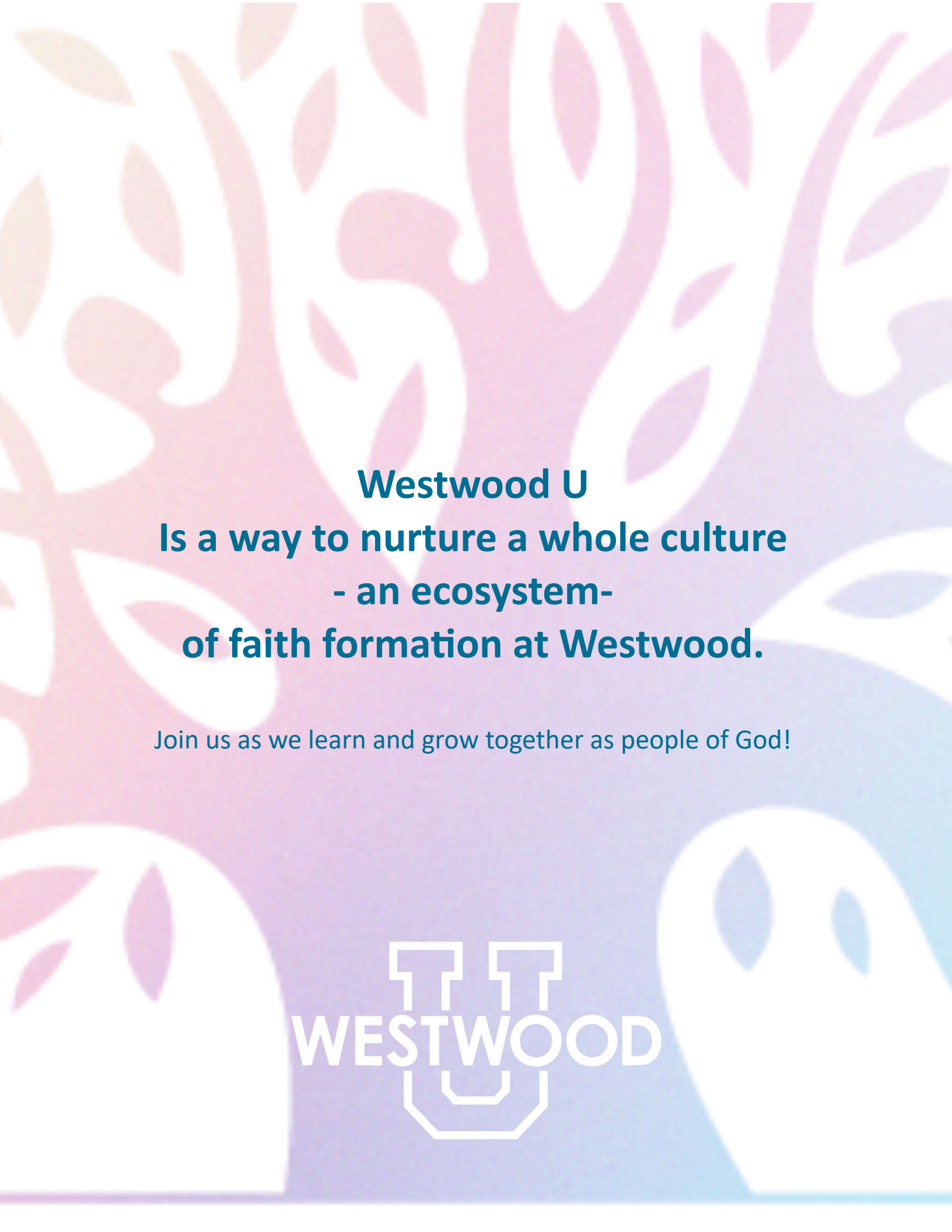
Advent Worship (Grow)

Sundays, November 29, December 6, 13, 20 online, potentially in person

As we explore faithful imagination this year, we focus our Advent season on God's imagination for our world. The Isaiah lectionary texts envision that a different world is possible --one where a lion and a lamb can lay down together, one where swords are transformed into ploughshares. We'll draw on Isaiah texts as we look at God's imagination for what God's kingdom here on earth might look like.

*A few more electives are in the works, but dates and details have not been worked out yet for covid friendly experiences. You'll be emailed of additional opportunities for Westwood U credit as they come available.





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Is a way to nurture a whole culture
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of faith formation at Westwood.

Join us as we learn and grow together as people of God!

