

■ January 2024



CHRISTMAS EVE PICTURES

--PAGE 6



THE WAIT IS FINALLY OVER!

I am beyond excited to share that the Clowes grant funds have arrived and the months of work in 2023 to bring Irvington Arts Collective to reality will translate into arts making and doing in January of 2024!

We will be kicking off one of our pillars: Harmony Collected – the newest community chorus in Indianapolis! IAC's Harmony Collected is open to all! No audition or experience required. If you, or someone you know, loves to sing, to create community through music, and/or are passionate about issues of social, environmental, and restorative justice, Harmony Collected is for you! Our first rehearsal will be Monday, January 22 from 7p-9p. Please help us spread the word!

We will also begin a project in January 2024 related to our contemplative meditation and arts and wellness initiative. Irvington Arts Collective and Irvington Presbyterian Church are partnering with the Department of Occupational Therapy at University of Indianapolis (UIndy OT) to carry out a space assessment of our building and building resources. UIndy OT will perform a professional, empirically based assessment of how we currently use our space. These masters and doctoral students, under the supervision of UIndy OT faculty, will share with us how we are using our spaces well and how we might re-think other uses in the realms of community outreach, Christian Education, and congregational need. They will also help us develop a space sharing plan between IPC and IAC. As is stipulated in our grant, no space in the

HARMONY COLLECTED

Community Chorus

COME SING WITH US!

First Rehearsal:
Monday, January 22, 2024 @ 7:00p

Rehearsals hosted at Irvington Presbyterian
55 Johnson Ave.

No Experience Needed! No Audition Required!

ALL ARE WELCOME!

For more info or
to sign up :
www.irvarts.org
or scan the QR code



Continued on Page 3

NEW YEAR, NEW BETTER YOU

Maybe it's because Christmas has recently ended and the clichés that have been hijacked by consumerism are overly-abundant as early as mid-October, but the phrase "New Year, New You" bothers me. I'm sure there are plenty of well-meaning people who use this phrase as a mantra to try and initiate some new habits or kick some old ones, but I bristle a little when people say they'll change so drastically simply because the calendar got changed out for a new one. If I'm honest, it probably has more to do with my own failed attempts to change habits over the years (that is a good topic for my therapist!), but I like to think it's because I like seeing and celebrating successes instead of fretting over failures. So, in that sense, the desire to set new goals and habits isn't the problem, the problem, then is taking the time to set the right goals and working toward them that needs to be better. Instead of making 2024 the year we failed to become entirely "new," let's set goals so 2024 is about being more!

2024, A Year of More

What are you hoping to become in this chapter of life? More healthy? More engaged? Could this year be a year where you are more generous? More grateful? More present in conversations? More mindful in prayer or worship? And is this the year you are more daring? More careful? More thoughtful?

I'm looking forward to becoming even more engaged with you, friends. I hope to learn more about Irvington and IPC's role in the community. I plan to meet—and I mean truly meet with and spend time with—more of you, especially if I haven't gotten a chance to do so yet. I plan to be more health-conscious, and I plan to become "more independent from gravity" this year (AKA, the doctor tells me I need to lose a little weight!).

What are your plans for 2024? How will you become more—more like the person God is calling you to be?

Happy New Year!



2024 ANNUAL RETREAT: SACRED SYMBOLISM IN WATER, WINE, AND WHEAT

...where Pastor Jon asks, "can we get to heaven with some Wonder bread, Welch's, and a splash of water?"

Are you looking for the opportunity to engage with church friends, learn a little about our faith tradition, expand your faith practices a little, and relax for a bit? Join us at the Geneva Center on January 26-28, 2024 for the annual retreat!



This year's theme is rooted in the sacraments we practice—Baptism and the Lord's Supper—and see what makes them special, meaningful, important, and yet... mundane. And just like the sacraments themselves, it will be interactive, interpersonal, and possibly a little messy. Bring your questions. Bring your board games and group activities. Bring your favorite pillow. Bring a friend! It's a great way to spend a Friday night to Sunday morning!

Get registered for the IPC Adult Retreat Jan 26th – 28th at beautiful Geneva Center. More information and registration forms can be found at the IPC office or online at the IPC website.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Thank you for your support during the stewardship campaign. If you set up an automatic deduction through our online giving portal, it's time to update your deduction to match your new 2024 pledged amount. If your deduction was previously set up by the Church Treasurer, he has already updated your information. If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact Bruce Stroud at ipc_treasurer@irvpresby.org.

THE PER CAPITA ENVELOPE IN YOUR ENVELOPE PACKET IS INCORRECT. The envelope company printed the wrong per capita amount for 2024 on your January packets. Please note that the per capita amount is \$44.

JANUARY YOUTH NEWS

The youth group is for ALL 6th-12th graders and we meet every Sunday from 5:30-7:30. Dinner is usually included in our activities. December was full of fun activities focused around finding joy and peace in a weary world. We created art that represented our joy and attended a musical that was full of silliness and dumb jokes. Participating in Luminaria gave us a moment of peace and reflection. Finally, we ended the year off with our New Year's Eve Eve Party. We are looking forward to lots more faith, food and fellowship in 2024.

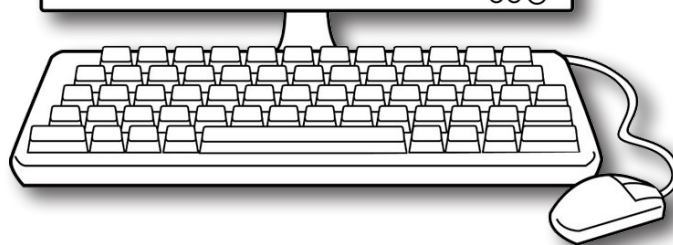
Below are some save the dates for upcoming events. For up-to-date information and pictures follow us on Instagram @irvpresbyouth.

January 7	5:30-7:30 p.m.
January 14	5:30-7:30 p.m.
January 21	5:30-7:30 p.m.
January 28	5:30-7:30 p.m.



Young Adults Pizza Church will meet Tuesday, January 9th at 6:00 p.m. at Jockamo's. Contact Rev. Wilson if you have any questions.

ANNUAL REPORTS
For Committee Chairs and other church leaders, please email your 2023 Annual Reports to Lori Chapman (lchapman@irvpresby.org) by January 15.



Irvington Arts Collective--Continued from Page 1

building will be used for the sole purpose of the Irvington Arts Collective. The spirit of the agreement between IPC and IAC was formed through the idea of space sharing and community outreach. In that vein, we look forward to UIndy OT's assessment of our spaces and our needs as a community of faith as we seek to be more involved in our community outside the walls of our beautiful building.

Below is an image you'll begin seeing more frequently on our social media platforms. Please share it far and wide! Visit irvarts.org for more information about the Collective. Also, please help us get the word out about this fantastic opportunity in the life of our collective work together!

Aside from exciting opportunities with IAC, music at IPC is thriving! We are always welcoming new members to our Chancel Choir! We are also looking forward to restarting our children's music program in early 2024 as well! If you'd like more info about either, please contact Director of Music, Webb Parker (wparker@irvpresby.org).

All are welcome!



Dear Irvington Presbyterian Church,
We truly appreciate your thoughtful gift. Thanks to your generosity, more neighbors than ever can continue to receive food and hygiene items from our food pantry. You are helping the students in our program get help with their homework, have a safe place to play, and eat a warm dinner every night. Because of you, we are able to send our students home with the extra food and hygiene supplies that their families need.

With your gift, you are empowering a neighborhood that faces so many barriers. With 42% of families living below the federal poverty line on Indy's Near Eastside, the services you support can be life-changing. None of this would be possible without your generosity. You are offering hope, opportunity, and a pathway out of poverty.

Sincerely,



CREATING WITH MANDY

Monday, January 15th

Living
In
Fellowship
Together

Our very own, Mandy Holzhausen, will lead us in creating cards for Valentines Day. Please bring \$5 to cover supply costs. We will be making 3-5 Valentines to take home. We will gather on Monday, January 15th at 6:30 p.m. in the parlor.



Women of all ages are welcome and please feel free to invite a friend to join us. Mark this date on your calendar for a fun evening of fellowship together. Please bring a snack or beverage to share. We will be collecting feminine hygiene products for Westminster. Please contact Kathy Moorhead (317-430-

3402) if you have any questions and please RSVP so Mandy has a count for supplies needed.



L.I.F.T. Cookie Exchange 2023



*Thank you
for your 2024 pledge!*

Your ongoing financial support helps us do truly incredible things in Christ's name around the corner and around the world!

Grateful to be on this journey with you,


Pastor Jon



JACK'S O R N E R

RAPID-FIRE QUESTIONS WITH PASTOR JON

Where did Adam and Eve live: Heaven or Earth?

Adam and Eve lived in the Garden of Eden which was a perfect oasis on Earth. Scholars believe that such a perfect place, lush with all kinds of plants and animals could have been somewhere between the Euphrates and Tigris rivers. Given the history of human development, it is quite likely that human life developed in this area, even... or, at the very least, the

lineage of humanity that is shared in the Bible. After they sinned, Genesis says they were sent out of the garden and never were to return. Who knows? The Garden of Eden may still exist...

Did they still go to Heaven when they died?

Good question – did anyone go to heaven before Jesus came to save all of humanity from their innate sinfulness? Some suggest that after death, they were in limbo until Jesus; others say they “sleep” until the second coming of Christ. You’ll have to ask them when you see them!



Do you believe that ALIENS came in the early years to help build the ancient monuments and castles?

In short, no. But if you watch the terrible television show, Ancient Aliens, they make a mediocre case for it. Ultimately, if aliens do exist, then the better question would be: did Jesus die for their sins too?

What happened to all the people Jesus raised from the dead?

I’m not sure! Matthew 27 says that “several saints” were raised from the dead when Jesus died and after the resurrection, they went and appeared to people. They likely shared the Good News a little, said some hellos, and then went back from whence they came. The way the text says they “appeared” to people makes me wonder how physical their presence was, or if it was more ghost-like... I’m sure there’s a terrible TV show for this too.

Do we know about Mary and Joseph after Jesus’ death?

Joseph, much less than Mary... which still isn’t a lot. The most common theory is that Joseph married Mary when she was quite young, but he was in his early 30s. Jesus is almost always referred to in reference to Mary, when encountering people from Nazareth, which most likely means that Joseph had already died. Jesus’ ministry began around age 30, meaning Joseph likely died before reaching his mid-60s. Remember, life expectancy wasn’t much more than 30 in those days! Mary accompanied Jesus and is lumped in with his disciples, often, which would make sense since he would have been “in charge” of her care. While on the cross, we also see Jesus passing his duties as her son to Peter, who would care for her thereafter. Mary would have been quite old (contextually speaking) at this time, but we aren’t sure when she eventually died.

When Jesus came into the room when Doubting Thomas was there, it says he gave “several signs” – what were those signs?

Who knows? If Jesus gave several signs as a way to prove whom he was, it may have been to show the scars and wounds that they knew he would have, but it also may have been the secrets they told or the experiences they had together that no one else would know. Or he could have made glitter appear out of thin air. Who knows?

SEAL

SEAL

Irvington Presbyterian Church

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After Jesus was dead but still on the cross, a soldier stabbed Jesus in the side and out came blood and water and no bones were broken. Like the others?

So, crucifixion was a torturous and slow way to die. Crucifixion usually took many, many hours as it would slowly deprive the body of air but keep the person conscious from the excruciating pain. To speed up the process, soldiers would often break the leg bones so the person couldn't push themselves up to breathe anymore. Jesus had been through such an intense, drawn out ordeal and was so weak, that he was likely the first to die and did so before the soldiers considered breaking bones. To make sure Jesus was dead and not unconscious, the soldier pierced his side causing water and blood to flow out. Jesus likely had hypovolemia shock from blood loss and injuries which causes fluid to pool around the heart and lungs. When he was pierced, this fluid poured out with any blood, giving the soldiers the proof that Jesus was, indeed, dead.

Do you believe in Noah's Ark?

I don't believe that it is literally true in its entirety. I believe that it could be true in part or in its general gestures. I grew up learning that it was certainly true – including videos by Dr. Hovind... But it intrigues me that there is a flood narrative in most world religion, even though they often started in different places around the world. So perhaps there is more true than I believe!

How about Jonah and the whale?

Just a couple weeks ago, I heard a story about some kayakers who were caught in the mouth of a hungry whale. Of course, it wasn't for long... Jonah was in the whale for quite some time, but who can really know how long? Jonah was in there and his concept of time could very likely be skewed! So I think the story has truth to it, and the part about the whale may be true, but elements of the story do seem a little extreme. (But God has done crazier things, right?)