

■ December 2025

Christmas Eve Services

Family Service & Christmas Pageant
6:00 PM

Communion & Candlelight Service
11:00 PM



Come worship with us at 10:00 a.m. each Sunday!

ADVENT: FROM FEAR TO FAITH

In every Indiana Jones movie, there is at least one scene where Harrison Ford's character—who has been relatively unfazed by all the weapons, "bad guys," death-defying stunts, disasters of varying degrees both manmade and natural—encounters the one thing that nearly cripples him with fear. "Snakes. Why did it have to be snakes?!" Even Indiana Jones has a fear of something.

What do you fear? We all fear something. We all have experiences or thoughts that associate with a person, place, thing, situation, or concept—and most of us have several—that stirs within us a fight-or-flight reaction; that cranks our anxiety up from a low simmer to a hard boil instantly; that makes us queasy, causes us to freeze, or triggers reactionary responses that are grounded in irrational thinking.

Advent is the liturgical season of preparation for the arrival of the Messiah. The Messiah's arrival necessitates the existence of a world that needs a savior. The first verses of Luke's gospel succinctly sets the political stage that identifies the fear-filled situation of God's people when he writes, "In the days of King Herod of Judah..." God's people had been living under the ruthless oppression of the Roman Empire, where they lived in ruthless, unending, back-breaking, soul-crushing, inescapable poverty, oppression, depression, and fear. Fear of the authorities; fear of death; fear of despair; fear of brokenness...

The thing about living in such a state of fear is that the faintest glimmer of hope can shine so brightly amidst the darkness of fear.

As we meander through this Advent season—through these darkest days of the year and through the spaces of life where darkness feels most consuming and disorienting—we will be doing so asking, What do you fear? As we ask that question, we will confront it with the words of hope we find proclaimed by God's messengers over and over again.

Continued on Page 2

Background graphic by Sanctified Art | sanctifiedart.org

From the Archives...

Hanging of the Greens

What a lovely and meaningful tradition to begin the Advent season at Irvington Presbyterian!!!

As you may well know, each of the decorations is a special symbol of Christ's birth and God's love. (Yes, I'll get to the very old photo shortly!!!) Wreaths represent eternity and God's unending love, as they have no beginning nor end. Evergreens symbolize everlasting life because they remain alive in green in the winter. Lights on the tree and elsewhere are lit as a symbol of Christ "the LIGHT of the World". Star decorations recall the star of Bethlehem.

DECEMBER 2025 AND JANUARY 2026 OFFICE HOURS INFORMATION

The office is closed on the following days
in December and January.

December 24--Christmas Eve

½ day office is open 9-noon

December 25--Christmas Day

Office closed

December 26--Day after Christmas

Office closed

December 31--New Year's Eve

½ day office is open 9-noon

January 1, 2026--New Year's

Office Closed

January 19, 2026--Martin Luther King Day

Office closed

Continued from Page 1

The photo of our IPC Sanctuary shows two incredibly T-A-L-L pine trees sitting at the front of the Sanctuary. That framed photo has



hung in Lori's office forever. One day the brilliant Joyce Haibe asked us, "Do you know how those trees got into place?" Not a clue! The IPCers who were volunteering put large plywood down on top of the pews, then the trees were pulled down the sanctuary across the wood as they made their way to their places in front of the Chancel. Thank you, Joyce for your institutional memory!

Finally, in our last article we wrote about the sanctuary windows. Director of Music EMERITAS Grace Long shared her vast knowledge of our

building. If you look closely, the middle window of each enormous stained glass panel has a chain hanging beside them which allowed that single window to open inward by a small angle. When IPC renovated all sanctuary windows with safe exterior coverings, those windows no longer opened, however IPC already had air conditioning. Thanks Grace!!

Your IPC historic geeks.....
Frank Hurdis & Sheri Patterson

Stewards of Our Story:

Preserving the Past... ..Preparing for the Future

addition of including your "time and gifts" a positive experience. If you've not had a chance to turn in your pledge card, it's not too late. Also, if you have children or youth, we hope that you will encourage them to complete their pledge card as a member of the IPC family.

When we all work together, great things will happen. Looking forward to an exciting 2026!

Your Stewardship Committee would like to thank everyone who has turned in their pledge card for 2026. We hope that you found the

A NEW FACE: JOSHUA BARRETT

We are excited to welcome Joshua Barrett to IPC as our new Director of Youth & Children's Faith Formation. Josh is an author and personal coach whose background in chaplaincy and ministry has informed and inspired his passion for building up his community by investing in the lives of the youth within it. He and his wife, Alyssa, live in the Fountain Square neighborhood and have two young adult children.



Josh is eager to join the youth as Mandy & Steve Holzhausen ease him into leading their activities, and the Christian Education Committee is looking forward to helping Josh coordinate and support the Sunday School activities.

Welcome, Josh!

Continued from Page 1

In the fear-filled life of Zechariah, a religious leader, an angel declares, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah..."

In the fear-filled life of Mary, a vulnerable young woman, an angel reassuringly says, "Do not be afraid, Mary..."

In the fear-filled lives of some quiet sheep farmers, an angel excitedly shares, "Do not be afraid!"

Join us on this Advent journey as we aim to find and follow the path from living life in reaction to fear, to living life with confidence driven by faith.

Grateful to have you as part of this journey of faith,

Living In Fellowship Together

LIFT Christmas Party & Cookie Exchange | December 8th

Do you need to take a breath from the hectic pace of holiday preparations? Are you looking for some fellowship, fun and relaxation? You're invited to the LIFT Christmas gathering. Due to Thanksgiving and Christmas, we will be having a combined gathering on Monday, December 8th at 6:30 pm in the Parlor.

We will gather for our annual Christmas party and cookie exchange. It is perfectly fine not to participate in the cookie exchange. This is not to add one more thing to your to-do-list. For those who wish to exchange cookies, please bring a large batch of your favorite cookie. 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. Contact Kathy Moorhead (317-430-3402) if you have any questions.



Tie One On for the Christmas Joy Offering
On Sunday, December 21st, we will have the opportunity to dedicate gifts to the churchwide Christmas Joy Offering as we “tie one on” to the Christmas Tree that we bring in for the time of offering during our morning worship.

The Christmas Joy Offering is the oldest of the churchwide Special Offerings, starting as a collection in the 1930s that supported retired ministers who were experiencing financial difficulties. Today, the offering continues to do the work of supporting leaders of the Church who are in financial need: 50% of the offering provides scholarships and financial aid to future leaders of the Church, specifically those in communities of color where local leadership needs are highest; and 50% is directed to support current and retired ministers and church workers who are in financial need through the Board of Pensions' assistance programs.

On behalf of my colleagues and peers across the denomination who have received from the Christmas Joy Offering over the last 85 years, thank you for your generous and faithful support!

May we give out of the gratitude that comes from knowing how great a gift God gave to us in the birth of Christ!

Irvington Neighborhood Luminaria

Sunday, December 21st
6:00 - 8:00 PM

Find a few moments
of peace this holiday
season.

We invite you to join us at Irvington Presbyterian Church on the evening of December 21st as the neighborhood celebrates the annual Luminaria.

Our sanctuary will be open from 6:00 to 8:00 pm, offering a peaceful and warm place for all. You are welcome to pause, reflect, or simply warm up while enjoying gentle music, a warm beverage, and holiday refreshments.

Please come and share the warmth and light of the season with our community.



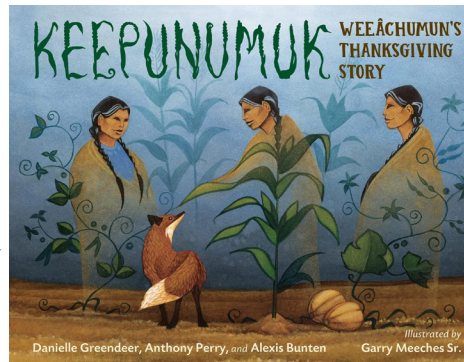
55 Johnson Ave.
Indianapolis, IN 46219
www.irvpresby.org

The Three Sisters of the First Thanksgiving

The IPC Justice Advocacy Team and the Irvington Branch of the Indianapolis Public Library partnered to host our fifth Community Read event on November 10th. The book shared was *Keepunumuk: WeeAchumun's Thanksgiving Story* by Danielle Greendeer (Mashpee Wampanoag), Anthony Perry (Chickasaw), Alexis Bunten (Unangan/Yup'ik) and beautifully illustrated by Garry Meeches Sr. (Anishinaabe).

Aeriel Lewis along with other members of the JAT invited the children to create “squash, corn and beans” to complement their understanding of the book. Each child was given a copy of the book to share with their families this Thanksgiving season. Aeriel shared that “This book is about

the first Thanksgiving from the perspective of three Wampanoag sisters. It tells the story of newcomers coming to the land of the first people. It speaks of the language of the land, shared between first people, animals and plants. It speaks of helping the newcomers learn to care for the land they now share. It speaks of the very different stories we hear in schools. A great look at the holiday through a unique lens.”



Christmas Basket Food Collection

350 Cans
of Baked Beans

350 Packages
of Pasta

700 Cans
of Tuna

350		700		700	
300		600		600	
250		500		500	
200		400		400	
150		300		300	
100		200		200	
50		100		100	

WESTMINSTER CHRISTMAS BASKETS

Bring cans of tuna and baked beans and packages of pasta to the Mission Nook by the IPC Parlor until December 10th so that we can hit our goal!

Then join us at Westminster Neighborhood Services (2325 E. New York Street) on Friday, December 12th at 6 p.m. to assemble 350+ Christmas baskets.

Bring a friend or two to kick off this holiday season! It is a lot of fun!

GIVING THANKS OFFERING

The "Giving Thanks Offering", which used to be called "13th Month", inferred someone should give an "extra" month's pledge. The Giving Thanks Offering is whatever you consider contributing to help the church's budget end on a positive note. You can contribute anytime during the month of December. There will be Giving Thanks Offering envelopes in the pews and on tables throughout the church. The church wishes to "thank you" for all your gifts during 2025.

Alzheimer's Support Groups for Caregivers continue to take place here at Irvington monthly on the 2nd Tuesday in the parlor at 1 p.m.

alz.org | alzheimer's association

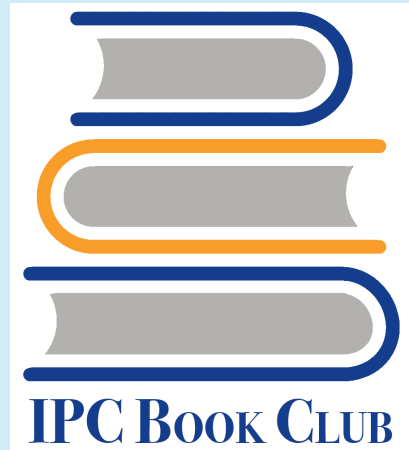
November 11, Veterans Day, paid tribute to the men and women who served in the U.S. military. During the Indianapolis Veterans Day Ceremony, veterans stood in salute as the National Anthem played.

Those sacrifices, courage, and resilience have made possible the freedoms, opportunities, and strength. IPC member Frank Alger was among those honored.



The IPC Book Club will be meeting on the 2nd Wednesday of these months in 2026:

- January 14
- March 11
- May 13
- July 8
- September 9
- November 11



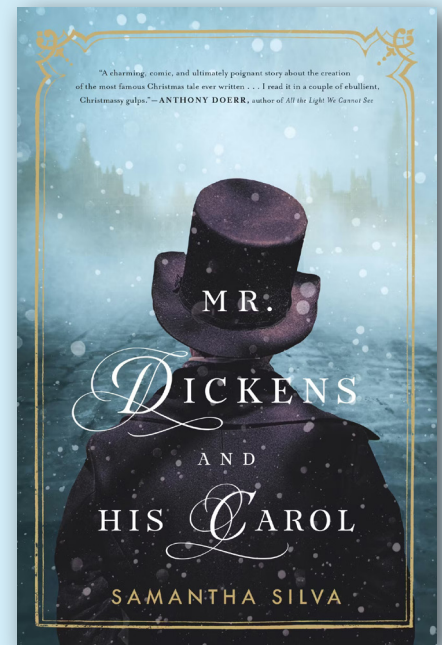
Our next book selection is historical fiction for the holiday season. Pick up a copy, download to an e-reader or listen to Mr. Dickens and His Carol by Samantha Silva. Described as "A beloved, irresistible novel that reimagines the story behind Charles Dickens' Christmas classic."

A brief description:

Charles Dickens is not feeling the Christmas spirit. His newest book is a flop, the critics have turned against him and relatives hound him for money. He has visions of the poor house. His publishers try to blackmail him into writing a Christmas book to save them all from financial ruin, he

refuses and a serious bout of writer's block sets in. Dickens seeks solace in the city of London. He meets a mysterious woman who takes him on a "Scrooge-like" journey testing everything he believes about generosity, friendship, ambition and love. The story he writes will change Christmas forever.

Meet you in the parlor on January 14th at 7pm for a spirited discussion about Mr. Dickens and His Carol. Please contact Ondrea Mcaulay (mcaulayondrea2gmail.com) with any questions.





COATS FOR THE WESTMINSTER KIDS: THIRD YEAR OF WARMTH AND CARE

This fall marked the third year our congregation has partnered with the Westminster program to provide brand-new winter coats for the children enrolled there.

Under the guidance of the Mission Committee, we were able to supply warm coats for 21 kids, ensuring they were ready for the colder weather that settles into Indiana each October.

The coats were delivered early in the

season, just as the temperatures began to drop—so each child could head into winter with comfort, confidence, and protection from the cold.

We want to extend a heartfelt thank-you to everyone at IPC who donated and supported this effort. Your generosity makes a real and immediate difference.

This ministry has become a meaningful part of our mission work, and we are proud to continue ensuring that no child in the Westminster program faces an Indiana winter without warmth.

Thank you for helping us live out our call to care for our neighbors—one warm coat at a time.



--SAVE THE DATE--

Hygiene Kit Assembly / Sunday, December 14th

The ICAN Hygiene Kits – General, Feminine and Senior Kits Dream Project was recently approved by Session. The goal of this project is to provide hygiene kits for ICAN to distribute to our Irvington neighbors in need. The kits will be divided into three different types. The general hygiene kits will provide for basic needs for men, women and children. The feminine hygiene kits will provide essential care for women. The senior hygiene kits will provide care and dignity for senior men and women. The Dream Project team will purchase all the materials needed to assemble the kits.

How can you help? We need your hands, feet and a little of your time. As part of IPC's Advent preparation, the Dream Project team we will hosting a "Packing the Kits for ICAN" after worship on Sunday, December 14th. The plan is to have three different assembly lines set up. Everyone (adults and children) is invited to participate and join the fun in serving our community. If you have any questions, please contact Jenny Donaldson or Kathy Moorhead.

HORIZON HOUSE NEEDS

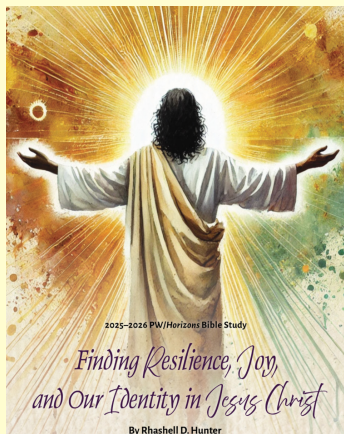
It is getting cold outside!

Horizon House needs boots, shoes, and socks for men and women. They also need coats, jackets, hats, and gloves. Horizon House is looking for socks, sweatshirts, sweaters, long johns, and jeans for men. Men and women also need new packages of underwear. If you have any items you'd like to donate to Horizon House, please place them in the bin next to the parlor. Be sure to label the items as Horizon House. Jackie Cox/Coxjackie3@gmail.com 317-726-9142



WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Finding Resilience, Joy, and Our Identity in Christ
Unable to come on the 3rd Thursday to Bible Study?



Interested in hearing what we're learning together?

You can join us! Contact the Office for the Zoom link to join us live, or watch the recordings at irvpc.link/pwbiblestudies.

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

The Men's Bible Study meets the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month in the parlor at 10 a.m. If you would like to know more about this group, please contact Steve Payne. All are welcome!

SHARING GOD'S LOVE, ONE PAW AT A TIME

Do you have a pet you'd like to share with everyone? H & E will be starting a new monthly article to highlight your beloved pet and you! Please let the H & E committee members know if you'd like to be interviewed for an article. We will begin publishing this feature in our newsletters! You can contact Jackie Cox at Coxjackie3@gmail.com or Pam Brozan at pbrozan@outlook.com.



Thanks to all:

Thanks to everyone who helped make the Thanksgiving pitch-in a success! A Thanksgiving potluck can focus on shared gratitude, hospitality, and giving back. Thanks to all for showing gratitude through actions, like volunteering to help host such a wonderful feast. Food is a way to gather and connect, so engaging in good conversation and fostering a sense of community around the tables is a form of gratitude itself. We look forward to gathering again in 2026.

--H & E Committee



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Happy Birthday, everyone! Starting in January 2026, the H & E committee will host a birthday celebration. We will have birthday cake and other treats during Fellowship Hour on the first Sunday of each month. We look forward to seeing all of you at the IPC Birthday Celebration at the beginning of the year!



SEAL

SEAL

Irvington Presbyterian Church

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

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JACK'S O R N E R

Pancakes! What kid doesn't like pancakes? Adults enjoy them too. Does anyone realize how old they are? 30,000-year-old grinding tools show that Stone Age cooks made flour to create a primitive form of flatbread, similar to a pancake. Records

indicate that ancient Greeks and Romans sweetened pancakes with honey; we also know that the British ate pancakes during the Elizabethan era. They often included rose water, sherry, ale, eggs, and butter, or any combination. Even Shakespeare mentioned pancakes in his play **As You Like It**. These pancakes were traditional pancakes eaten on Shrove Tuesday—the day before Ash Wednesday in the Christian calendar—which were made with beef and dipped in mustard.

