

# December Newsletter



...In case you hadn't noticed, it's been decidedly colder the past couple of mornings. There's been frost on the grass and I've had to defrost the car windows. This morning I went on a search for a coat. There are signs of winter approaching. Also, in case you hadn't noticed, Christmas songs are playing in the stores and on some radio stations. Christmas tree lots have sprung up and some houses already are decorated inside and out. We've gone through Black Friday and Cyber Monday. There are signs that Christmas is approaching. As for the church, last Sunday was the hanging of the greens. The liturgical colors (our flags and other symbols of the liturgical calendar) are changing from green to purple and blue. Advent has, quietly, arrived.

The truth is we get so overwhelmed by seasonal events and activities that it's easy to forget the significance of Advent, the time in which we prepare both for Jesus' birth and Christ's return. In the shadow of commercialism, we lose sight of the holy. Advent is a time of hope and anticipation, of prayers and reflections, in which we are invited to see the divine at work all around and within us. It is a time to slow down rather than speed up and a time to ponder instead of purchase.

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We feel the weather changing and see signs of winter in the “death” of flowers, plants, grass, and trees. We can’t avoid the signs of Christmas on the streets, in homes, in stores, and in restaurants. But where are our reminders of Advent? This Sunday, the first Sunday of Advent, we are beginning a new sermon series called “Reimagining Advent.” The sermons will invite you to see Advent in the everyday, mundane things that surround us. They are a reminder that God often comes to us through the ordinary and unnoteworthy. God appeared to Moses in a bush. Balaam’s donkey delivered a message from God. Scripture says that the rocks declare the glory of God. A star guided the magi and angels appeared to shepherds.

Each Advent sermon will invite you to look at a particular object and allow that item to point to the work of God in our lives and in our world. Noticing the everyday things that we encounter as we go about our day and connecting them to Scripture and to God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – helps us become aware of “Emmanuel,” God with us, past, present, and future.

Each Sunday will also include in the bulletin a recap of the Scripture from the sermon and some daily reflection questions for you. I encourage you to set aside some time each day of Advent – individually, as a family, or in a small group – to reflect, to pray, and to feel surrounded by the love of the One who came to save the world. (If you would like to form an Advent small group and meet at the church, we can certainly make that happen!).

Have a blessed Advent!

Pastor Denise



**10:30 AM**



**9:00 PM**



### **Breakthrough Prayer: Where Do We Go from Here?**

You've been praying the prayer ... we've been praying the prayer as a church when we meet in small groups and in the worship service:

“God, we lift our church to you in prayer. We don't know what to do ... Reveal to us where your Spirit is leading us as a church ... Give us faith to listen and courage to step through the doors you open that will lead us beyond all that we could think, ask, or imagine. Lead and we will follow. May your will be done.”

Now what? We believe God answers prayer but accept that answers come in God's time and not our own. When will God answer? How will God answer? God's answer to our breakthrough prayer is not limited to the pastor and, in fact, may not come to the pastor. God's answer may come in a whisper, a thought, or a nudge to you.

If you have been praying and have felt something on your heart or in your mind, don't ignore it. Share it! In the hallway by the prayer wall, a small area has been set aside for breakthrough prayer. There are index cards and a suggestion box along with several reminders of the power of prayer. Write your thought on an index card and put it in the box. You can write your name on it or choose to remain anonymous. Either way, your idea can be shared and we can pray over it to see if that may be where God is leading us. Help us listen for God's answer to our prayer.

## **The Angel Tree is Returning!**



Last year, because of your generosity, we collected coats, warm clothing, socks, blankets, underwear, food, cash gifts and gift cards ... all of which enabled our church and ICAN to share with those in need.

This year we will be hanging angels on the tree once again (although moving it a little further down the hallway since last year when the south doors opened the angels blew off!) and are seeking similar donations.

Angels on the tree will include requests for:

- Aldi's and Walmart gift cards
- Fast food gift cards
- Cash donations
- Canned soups, pasta, and stews (pop-up tabs preferred)
- Cookies (small individual bags or sleeves)
- Any other food items that would go into a small bag to handout (pop-tarts, granola bars, pudding, etc.)
- New or gently-used coats (adults and children)
- Men's, women's, and children's underwear (all sizes)
- Backpacks (adults and children)
- Full size and smaller size shampoo, toothpaste, deodorant, and soap

Any cash received will go to the purchase of hygiene products and bus passes.

In the niche area, we will also have set up a designated glove/mitten and hat giving area. We are collecting for adults and children.

Thank you for your generosity!

## CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA ORDER FORM

**Order your poinsettia today!!!**

**DONOR:** \_\_\_\_\_

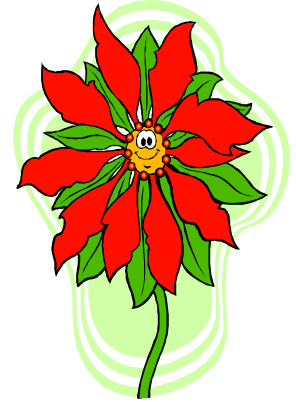
**IN HONOR OF:** \_\_\_\_\_

or

**IN MEMORY OF:** \_\_\_\_\_

or

**WORDING** \_\_\_\_\_



**Cost: \$10.00 per plant**

**Please return your order form to the church office or put them in the offering basket.**

**Payment is due at time of order. Orders must be in the office by Sunday, December 17th.**

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### **REUSABLE GROCERY BAGS**

To prevent further harm from plastics, the ICAN Food Pantry will begin using only reusable bags beginning January 1st. The pantry will issue each person two bags at their first visit to bring back with them each time they visit.

**The pantry is asking for donations of reusable grocery bags to give to their clients. Please leave any donations in the ICAN Pantry tub in the main hallway.**

*Thank you for your donations!*







## Getting started with **Church Volunteering**

### **Looking for Something to Do that Will Help Others?**

Thursdays are church volunteer days and WE NEED YOU!

Come any Thursday between the hours of 11 am and 1 pm or 5 pm and 7 pm and volunteer your time.

What is there to do?

- Sort through donated clothing and organize it for us to give to others.

- Inventory items on hand.

- Make up hygiene kits.

- Take food items, hygiene kits, or other items to the blessing box.

- Help us keep the downstairs kitchen clean.

There are jobs for anyone – sit down, stand up, move about, and so on. Let us know what you can and can't do and we will find a task for you!

No need to call ahead, just show up at the church. Stay as long as you can, leave when you need to leave. The more people we have, the more fun we have. This is a weekly ongoing opportunity!



# BAD BOYS of the Bible

## A New Monday Evening Bible Study

Mondays at 6 pm you are invited to a small group study in the parlor focusing on the “bad girls and bad boys” of the Bible. These are stories you may have never read or heard in a sermon or, if you did read them, you didn’t know what to make of them. But they are in the Bible for a reason!

Bad girl, bad boy, “Whatcha gonna do?” Join us and find out what they did and why it matters to us today.

This is a study that is open to questions and often gets side-tracked or even derailed, but that’s okay. Can’t come every week? That’s ok. These are “stand-alone” lessons (probably taking about 2 weeks per Bible character) so if you miss a week or two or more you can pick right up where you left off.

Where: The parlor

When: Starting November 6 at 6 pm

Cost: None – there will be free handouts available.

Hope to see you November 6, 13, or whenever you’re available!

Not sure if you will like it? Come and sit in on one or two and then decide.

**Reading the Bible: Got Questions?  
Small Group Study Sundays at 9:15 am**

**The Bible is the best-selling book of all time  
and yet many people who own a Bible have never read it.**

**Many who start reading it soon stop.**

**They stopped when they felt it had no relevance to their lives.**

**They stopped when they didn't understand what it meant.**

**They stopped when they didn't like what it had to say.**

**The Bible is supposed to be hard and we are supposed to struggle with it.**

**Join us Sunday mornings at 9:15 am in the parlor as we look at the Bible.**

**Whether you've never read it or read it 100 times, you will learn something new. The Bible  
is like that.**

**Bring your questions. All are welcome.**



Why do we read the  
Bible?

How do we read the  
Bible?

Who wrote the Bible?

When was the Bible  
written?

Which translation of  
the Bible is the best?

Who decided what is  
in our Bible?





Now there are two ways to start your weekday off right with a short meditation including Scripture, reflections, a question to ponder, and/or a prayer for the day. It will take less than five minutes of your time but help you stay focused on your faith.

1. Meditate at Eight on our church Facebook page. Go on Facebook and look for Irvington United Methodist Church. Every weekday morning, Monday through Friday, a short meditation/devotional will post. The daily post takes just a few minutes to read. Too busy to read at 8 am? The post stays up on the Facebook page and can be read later in the day. Miss a day? The day before ... and the day before ... and the day before is still there.

Want to help us out? Share Meditate at Eight on your Facebook page. It's the Facebook way of telling your family and friends and inviting them to check it out. There's a share link to the bottom right of each daily mediation. Help us expand our reach!

2. Did you know our church also has a YouTube channel. Go to YouTube and look for "Shining the Light with IUMC." A picture of our rose window (see above) is with our name, so you'll know you're in the right place. In addition to sermons, you can listen to the daily meditation on your phone or computer. While you're there, hit the subscribe button ... it costs you nothing and will help us reach more people.

Make Meditate at Eight a daily habit ... whether you join us at 8 am, noon, or 8 pm.



## Chair Exercise Class!

Feel the need to get moving, but not sure  
where or how to start?

Want to get out of the house, see old friends,  
and hopefully meet new friends?

Chair exercise class for age 50+ adults (although open to younger adults facing mobility problems).

**When:** Wednesday evenings, from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

**Where:** IUMC Fellowship Hall (basement)

**What:** A 30-minute chair exercise class focusing on improving range of motion, core strength, and raising stamina! This class is tailored to those who struggle to get around or deal with life's daily aches and pains. It will be led by a personal trainer.

**Cost:** While donations are appreciated, they are not required or expected. We want ALL to be welcome!

**And...** Because we are Methodists, there will be music, laughter, a brief meditation, and food!

Our desire is also to offer food, clothing, and hygiene kits to anyone who comes who is in need. This is open to the church and to our Irvington community.

While this is a low-impact exercise program, if you have any question about your ability to participate, please consult with your physician. If you want more details about the program before joining, please see Pastor Denise.

***See you there!***

### **SUNDAYS**

9:15 A.M. SUNDAY SCHOOL

10:30 A.M. WORSHIP

Irvington United Methodist Church

30 N Audubon Road

Indianapolis IN 46219

### **Our Staff**

Denise Robinson, **Pastor**

Gregory Baranovsky, **Music Director/Organist**

Kim Fulton, **Office Manager/Financial Secretary**

Lori Steuer, **Preschool Director**

Greg Boyce, **Custodian**

We are on the Web at:

**[www.irvingtonumc.org](http://www.irvingtonumc.org)**

Our email address and telephone number are:

**[info@irvingtonumc.org](mailto:info@irvingtonumc.org)**

**(317) 356-7231**

**Visit us on Facebook**



### **Mondays at 1:00 pm in the Parlor & on Zoom**

We are studying the Book of Hebrews. Bring your Bible and join us. Handouts are available each week and you can join in any time. It doesn't matter if you've studied these books before or struggle finding them in your Bible. All are welcome!

Meeting ID: 813 7695 8874

Passcode: 216949

### ***Holiday Office Hours***

*The church office will be closed from December 25th through January 1st.*

*Regular office hours will resume on January 2nd.*

