



May Newsletter

What If?



As I shared in my sermon focused on the road to Emmaus, it's one of my favorite Bible stories. In contrast to many of the interactions Jesus has with family, friends, and followers, this one gives us more detail, allowing us to insert ourselves more fully into the story. There is one aspect of the story I've been dwelling on for the past few days. Luke tells us that before the travelers recognized Jesus, they invited him to stay and have dinner with them. They thought they were simply inviting another poor traveler on life's road, one who perhaps had nowhere else to go that evening, to eat with them. It was an act of hospitality ... but I wonder if their invitation would have been different if they knew it was Jesus. There are several stories in the Bible that center around dinner. It's surprising to me how often Jesus invites himself to dinner – Matthew, Martha, and Zaccheus immediately come to mind. We don't know how Matthew and Zaccheus reacted, but Martha went into a cleaning and cooking frenzy. A Pharisee invited Jesus to dinner and made a big deal out of inviting the “right” people as guests and was preoccupied with the “proper” seating arrangements. This brings me to my questions

Would you want Jesus coming to your house for dinner? How would you prepare? What would you serve? These questions ask us to consider the nature of our response to Jesus' presence as he sits with us at our dining table. But on a deeper level, they invite us to think about our true relationship with Christ. If we believe Christ is always with us, then in some sense he has dinner with us every day. I suspect, though, most of us would be reluctant to invite him into our homes and, if he was coming, we would prepare like Martha and get preoccupied with the insignificant like the Pharisee.

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I don't know about you, but the first thing I would have to do is clean my house! There's vacuuming and dusting to be done, of course, but then there are other intangibles. Are there certain books, DVDs, pictures, or whatever that I might not want Jesus to see? Perhaps I should clear away all the clutter and put a Bible (and perhaps a UM hymnal) on every end table. Should I put away the wine or serve the wine? Then, there's the dinner table itself. I would probably want to dig out my best dining dishes, the fine China dishes my mother left me, along with the crystal goblets and the real silver. Of course, they're going to have to be washed because I haven't used them in years. No paper plates and plasticware for this occasion; it's the real stuff, linen napkins, and all.

Then, who should I invite? I might ask my family, but I would want them to promise to be on their best behavior. This is no time to tell "interesting" family stories! Perhaps, instead, I should invite "upstanding" people from the church: the pastor, church council, or well-known prayer warriors. Jesus would probably prefer that I invite people who need him the most, that is, the least, the lost, and the broken, which sounds good, but wouldn't make for a comfortable dinner party ... for me anyway. Finally, the question of what to serve must be answered. For me, it's obvious – have it catered. Your menu might include your best family recipes, the good old tried and true. But is meatloaf, green bean casserole, and grandma's jello salad good enough for Jesus?

The truth is, of course, that Jesus isn't near as concerned with all of this as we would be. Jesus simply wants to be invited so that he can spend time with us, talk with us, and in the process change our lives forever. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the pastor-theologian, wrote that most people have exiled Jesus from their lives: "Of course, we build him (God/Jesus) a temple, but we live in our own houses." He notes that faith has been exiled to the church, to a place "into which one gladly withdraws for a couple of hours, but only to get back to one's place of work – or life – immediately afterward." Bonhoeffer reminds us that Jesus calls us to give him all ... or nothing.

Imagine if our Lord Jesus were coming to your door ... how would you respond?

**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?



The Chosen Bible Study Returns!

Mark your calendars! On Thursdays at 6:00 pm, we restarted our Bible study based on “The Chosen.” Last fall we looked at season 1; now we begin season 2. Each week we will watch part or all of an episode, and then discuss the episode as it relates to Scripture.

If you didn’t make it to season 1, you are still welcome for season 2. You can go back and watch season 1 on your own through The Chosen app or on YouTube, or we will begin with an overview of season 1 before jumping into the next season – so, either way you will be prepared!

Where: The parlor

When: Starting April 20 at 6 pm

Cost: None – there will be free handouts available.

Missed the first one, see you April 27!



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 is Back!

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!



Would You Be Willing to “Adopt” a Room?

An announcement was made in church a couple months ago that we hired new custodians for our church and pre-school. The problem is that our two new hires, combined, are part-time and, as you know, our church is BIG! There is simply no way to adequately clean the entire church in the time allotted ... and we simply can't afford to pay for more hours.

Would you be willing to adopt a room in the church and clean it once a week? We have identified some smaller areas of the church that could be cleaned well in an hour or less each week. We can assist you in getting access that will work with your schedule and will provide cleaning supplies (of course, if you have a preference, you can bring your own).

Here are the rooms/areas we have identified: (that remain on the list).

The music director's office

The youth room

Fellowship Hall (this is large and could be divided, but the cleaning needed is minimal – and would not include the restrooms or stage)

Fellowship Hall Kitchen

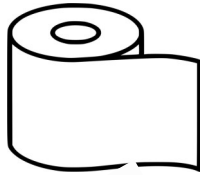
The preschool custodian will take care of the preschool classrooms and restrooms. The church custodian will take care of restrooms, the main sanctuary, hallways, the parlor, church offices, entryways, the south narthex, some downstairs cleaning, windows, etc.

If you are willing to take “adopt a room” either let Pastor Denise know or contact the church office. Also, if there is any area of the church you think needs TLC and you want to volunteer for that, no reasonable offer will be refused!!! If we work together, we can keep our church looking beautiful!

ICAN FOOD PANTRY NEEDS

Downey Avenue Food Pantry
immediate donations needed are:

- Toothpaste
- Shampoo
- Conditioner
- Deodorant
- Toilet paper



Place donations in the gray plastic
container in the main hallway.

2023 IUMC PATRIOTIC CONCERT

Rehearsals begin for the 2023 Patriotic
Concert on Thursday, May 25th @
7 pm in the Sanctuary.

Everyone is invited to join in on the
fun, even if you can't be at all the
rehearsals. Talk to Pastor Denise or
Gregory for more information.

The concert will
be performed on
Sunday, July 2nd.



DONATIONS, what we need and what we don't

ICAN

Food for the ICAN food pantry (Hallway basket)
Underwear-all sizes for men, women, children
Socks-all sizes for men, women, children
Full size deodorant
Full size body wash
Baby diapers, baby wipes
Toilet paper

CHURCH

Canned chili, stew, meat pasta
Regular crackers, jelly
Coffee, cups, plates for Sunday AM
Travel size toiletries
Water, sport drinks (smaller size
bottles)
Snack cookies, granola bars

With no retail store in the building, we no longer take donations of household items.
If you have donations for the preschool, please take them to the preschool office.

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

Our email address and telephone number are:

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 Exodus. 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 the Book of Exodus before or struggle finding it in your Bible. All are welcome! Meeting ID: 813 7695 8874 Passcode: 216949