



# March Newsletter

Dear Friends in Christ,

As we journey through this sacred season of Lent, our congregation at IUMC is embracing the ancient spiritual disciplines that draw us closer to God. This is a time of intentional transformation—one that calls us to step beyond our comfort zones and discover the profound joy that comes through self-giving love.

## **The Path of Self-Denial**

Lent invites us into the spiritual practice of self-denial, a theme that resonates throughout these forty days. We are called to sacrifice, to release our grip on comfort and convenience, and to give from our own means. When we choose to have less for ourselves, we create space for something greater. This emptying is not about deprivation for its own sake, but about making room for divine presence.

## **Devotion and Divine Filling**

There is a beautiful paradox at the heart of Lent: when we deny ourselves, we do not become diminished. Rather, this emptying opens us to be filled by God. As we surrender our self-reliance, we discover that God's strength flows through us, endowing us with capabilities far beyond our own. This spiritual preparation energizes us not only for the celebration of Easter but for every season of ministry that follows.

## **Serving Together**

I am grateful to see so many of you participating in our Lenten services and serving at the soup supper. These shared acts of worship and service embody our commitment to love our neighbors in tangible ways.

## **A Century of Faithfulness**

This year holds a special significance as we look toward our 100-year celebration. We stand on the shoulders of faithful IUMC members whose sacrifices and devotion have built this community of faith. Their witness spurs us onward, reminding us that we too are called to be "strong and courageous"—our theme for this year—empowered by the Holy Spirit.

May this season unite our hearts in worship and service, preparing us for the glorious work God has prepared.

In Christ's love,

*Pastor Sunil*

## March Small Groups

**Dinner, Devotion and Discussion** Mark your calendars for the *2nd Sunday of each month for 3D* - Dinner, Devotion and Discussion. We'll gather in the parlor around 11:45am for an hour of fellowship and sharing. The entree and drinks will be provided - bring something to share if you like, but not required. All are invited, including children. Bring yourself, your family, and your friends. No reservations needed, just come. Hope to see you on March 8th!

**Cooking Class** Thursday, March 12th @ 5:30 PM in fellowship hall. Please bring a \$10 cash donation to each class to help offset the food cost. Class will meet the second Thursday of each month. **Reserve your spot so that Lois knows how much food to buy by emailing the church office @ [info@irvingtonumc.org](mailto:info@irvingtonumc.org) or letting Kim know by phone or Lois in person.** *Five people must sign up by Monday @ noon for the class to be held.*

**Constitution Discussion Class** Third Tuesday each month (March 17th) at 6pm, constitution education/discussion group. Karen Auble leads this group. We will meet in the parlor for this small group.

**Miss Linda's Sewing Class is Now 2 Classes a Month!** First and third Thursdays of each month, next class is scheduled for Thursday, March 5th @ 5:00 PM. We will meet in the Choir Room on the second floor.

**Breakfast Club** Every other Monday Morning at 8:00 am, the club meets at Blueberry Hill Pancake House on East Washington Street for breakfast and fellowship. Breakfast dates for March are the 2nd and 16th. All are welcome!

**Chair Exercise Class** Chair exercise class for age 50+ adults (although open to younger adults facing mobility problems). Wednesday evenings, from 5:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. ***Class will resume after Easter.***

### **Monday Bible Study**

Pastor Sunil is offering a Bible Study on **Mondays** at 1 PM. The study will be in the parlor and on Zoom. We will be starting the book of Daniel this month. All are welcome to join!

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/6088142449?pwd=hw0WI58kaC6LjVbbnuxq0zrXl4bCjU.1>

Meeting ID: 608 814 2449 Passcode: 922133

***If you have other ideas or would like to host a class meeting in your home, please contact pastor Sunil or the church office. We would like for people to gather during as many times they would like in the month in their own homes to build accountability and community.***

## Spiritual Shopping?

Most of us find grocery-shopping a challenge – the traffic, the parking lot, the crowded aisles, the long check-out lines. Even electronic shopping has its own version of stress. It is easy to come home from a shopping trip with a cart full of fatigue, impatience, and (sometimes) disappointment. But what if grocery shopping could be different? What if it could be a spiritual experience, a time of prayer, a moment of thanksgiving?

Our church has joined in the mission of feeding our neighbors through the Big Red Box Project and the ICAN Food Pantry. It is a humble and at times overwhelming task, for there are so many who go hungry. Yet, God calls us to feed His sheep. He also calls us to draw nearer to Him, grow in His spirit. The act of grocery shopping can help with both.

- As you make your shopping list, pray to open your heart to those in need.
- In the parking lot, offer thanksgiving for the opportunity to share what you have.
- As you walk the aisles, pray without ceasing and let God guide you in finding just the right thing.
- When your eye is drawn to an item like a can of soup, a package of cheese crackers, a box of protein bars, pause: is it nourishing? Is it easy to open? Will it offer hope?
- Bless the item as you place it in your cart.
- At home, place your items in a special place so they are ready for the next trip to the church.

It takes practice to hardwire the act of spiritual shopping. It may help to create prompts: a key word at the bottom of your shopping list, a string around your finger, a special bag to take to the store. Ask God to help you become a spiritual shopper.

Your tangible gifts, like your spiritual gifts, are meant to be shared. Both the Big Red Box and the ICAN Food Pantry will share resources with those in need. It is up to us to help them with this great effort. Pick up at least one item every time you shop. It doesn't have to be expensive or extravagant; every piece donated makes a difference.

Need ideas about what to buy? Look for the list of helpful items on the Welcome Center.



IUMC will be hosting the Lenten Soup Supper and Service on March 11th. We will need volunteers to bring meat soups, non-meat soups, cookies, brownies, cupcakes or other hand held desserts, along with set up and clean up for the supper.

We will also need ushers/greeters for directing people to where the supper is located, to hand out bulletins and help with the offertory.

There will be a sign-up sheet on the welcome desk Sunday mornings or you can call or email the office to sign up. ([info@irvingtonumc.org](mailto:info@irvingtonumc.org), 317-356-7231).

## EASTER LILIES - 2026



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

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

or

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

Pick up your flower on Easter Sunday after worship service.

**Cost: \$10.00 per plant**

Please return your order forms with payment to the church office or put them in the offering plate.

Orders must be received in the church office by Monday, March 30th.



### **Honest Conversations About God, Jesus, and the Church**

For some time, we have been thinking about launching some kind of non-traditional service on Thursday evenings here at IUMC. Part of the process has been wondering what might work best in Irvington and how to begin. Beginning is the hardest step!

Would you be willing to be part of a launch team with Pastor Sunil? This is new for him also, by the way!

This would mean being part of a discussion group, letting the pastor practice on you (that should be interesting!), and then committing to being at some of the evening services for a minimum of six months (while not giving up on Sunday mornings, FYI). You wouldn't be expected to commit to every Thursday night but we need a group of people to greet and sit with those who come from the community and perhaps offer a cup of coffee.

This is a work in progress, but the pastor can't do this alone. This service is going to require the assistance and commitment of around 10 people from the service for there to be a launch. Can you be a part? Will be a part? Pray about it and if so, hand in this form to Pastor Sunil or let him know. This could be exciting and fun ... and faith enriching!

Yes, count me in!

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Name

**DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS  
SUNDAY, MARCH 8th**



**IUMC OFFICE FOOD PANTRY NEEDS**

**We are in need of canned soups, pasta, chili and stews for the emergency food bags that we hand out. Please leave your donations in the office hallway.**



**Our Prayer Ministry: Prayer Wall**

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:

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.

# IUMC Easter Egg Hunt

**Saturday, March 28th at 10:00 a.m.**

The event is open to the youth in the community, ages toddler thru 5<sup>th</sup> grade.



*We are collecting candy to fill the eggs. (Wrapped small candy)  
Please leave your donations in the east transept or the office hallway.*



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. Daily Meditation 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. 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 the IUMC Daily Meditation 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 Daily Meditation a daily habit ... whether you join us at 8 am, noon, or 8 pm.

**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**

Sunil Kotian, **Senior Pastor**

Albrecht von Gaudecker, **Organist-Choir Director**

Kim Fulton, **Office Manager**

Lori Steuer, **Preschool Director**

Micki Gowdy, **Church Financer Manager**

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**

**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.**

