



February Newsletter

Be Strong and Courageous: Our Theme for 2026

As we celebrate the 100th anniversary of our church building this year, we find ourselves reflecting on a century of faithful witness in this community. Our walls have seen generations gather for worship, comfort one another in times of loss, and rejoice together in moments of triumph. Yet as we mark this milestone, we also face challenges that would have seemed unimaginable to those who laid our cornerstone in 1925.

Like Joshua standing at the edge of the Promised Land, we find ourselves at a threshold moment. God's command to Joshua in Joshua 1:9 speaks powerfully to our present circumstances: "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."

Joshua faced daunting obstacles—fortified cities, uncertain battles, and the enormous task of leading a people into unknown territory. We too face our own uncertainties: declining attendance, financial pressures, shifting cultural attitudes toward faith, and questions about what church looks like in the 21st century. These struggles are real, and acknowledging them honestly is part of our journey.

But God's promise to Joshua wasn't conditional on favorable circumstances. It was rooted in God's faithful presence. The same God who walked with Joshua, who sustained our founders through the Great Depression and World War II, who carried this congregation through a century of change—that God remains with us today.

"Be Strong and Courageous" is more than our theme for 2026; it's God's living word to us. Strength comes not from our numbers or resources, but from knowing whose we are. Courage doesn't mean the absence of fear, but moving forward in faith despite our uncertainties.

As we enter this anniversary year, let us claim this promise together, trusting that the God who has brought us this far will lead us forward into whatever promised land awaits.

Pastor Sunil

Small Groups

Dinner, Devotion and Discussion Something new is coming! 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 February 8th!

Cooking Class Thursday, February 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 or letting Kim know by phone or in person.**

Miss Linda's Sewing Class is Now 2 Classes a Month! *First and third Thursdays of each month*, next class is scheduled for Thursday, February 5th @ 5:30 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 February 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.

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.



WARM HEARTS, WARM CLOTHES

DONATE WINTER ITEMS TO HELP A NEIGHBOR IN NEED

Too many neighbors in our community are facing harsh weather without proper clothing & necessities. Your donation can provide warmth, comfort, and dignity to those in need.

WHAT ICAN NEEDS THIS SEASON:

- Adult sleeping bags
- Adult thermal clothing & underwear
- Adult warm socks & boots
- Adult hats, gloves, and scarves
- Hand & feet warmers
- Gently used blankets
- Gently used tents & tarps
- Towels & washcloths
- Slippers
- Flashlights with batteries

Please make sure all items are clean and in good condition.



DROP OFF LOCATION:

ICAN Assistance Center • 30 N Audubon Rd

LEARN MORE:

irvican.org



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!

Name

IndyGo Foundation Grant

Irvington United Methodist Church has received a \$2,000 grant from IndyGo Foundation to purchase bus tickets. The grant funding will help support the ICAN Office that regularly runs out of bus tickets. We will also keep a small supply of tickets to help in emergency cases when the ICAN Office is not open. (i.e. bus fare for doctor appointment, job interviews and court dates.)

“Through our 2025–26 grant program, we’re proud to support nonprofit organizations advancing equity, mobility, and opportunity. These grants help ensure community-led solutions continue to thrive and that individuals and families can access the transit resources they need.”

Emily Meaux, Executive Director of IndyGo Foundation



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.



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

Our email address and telephone number are:

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.

