

MEET DJ SMITH,  
IPC'S NEW  
ORGANIST!



## ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS WORSHIP

### Second Sunday of Advent – December 5

- Lighting the Candle of Peace
- Scripture: Luke 1:68-79
- Sermon title “The Song of Zechariah”

### Third Sunday of Advent – December 12

- Lighting the Candle of Joy
- Scripture: Luke 3:1-9
- Sermon title “The Axe Is at the Roots”

### Fourth Sunday of Advent – December 19

- Lighting the Candle of Love
- Scripture: Luke 1:39-55
- Sermon title “The Song of Mary”
- Collecting for the Christmas Joy Offering
- Luminaries – Sanctuary open from 6-8 p.m.

### Christmas Eve – December 24

6 p.m. – Family Worship

11 p.m. – Traditional  
Worship

- Scripture:  
Luke 2:1-20
- Sermon title  
“Invited Home”



### 1st Sunday of Christmas – December 26

- Lighting the Christ Candle

## IRVINGTON INTERIM WORK

“Prepare the way of the Lord. Make straight a  
highway for our God.”

This is the Advent plea. First spoken in Isaiah and repeated by John the Baptist in the wilderness. Advent is a time of preparation and for Interim Ministers, there is no better analogy.

Interim Pastors are most often called into church under two circumstances. The first situation is when a church has had a troubled pastorate. Second is when churches have had a long pastorate. Now, it is probably easy to imagine why you would invite an Interim into a church following a troubled pastorate. The question some ask is, “Why invite an Interim into a church following a long-pastorate, especially a long-pastorate which seemed to have been successful?”

By all accounts Bob Heimach’s 18-year tenure here at Irvington Presbyterian Church was a successful one. No doubt he had his share of human foibles, but so will your next pastor. Bob did a good job. Which is wonderful. However, there are reasons you call in an Interim following a long and successful pastorate.

Pastors are called to shepherd their congregations and congregations are asked to follow where they lead. In the best situations, a relationship of trust develops and in the mutual respect between the pastor and members, there is comfort, ease, challenge, and growth. Over time, the congregation will naturally reflect the value system and character of the pastor. This imaging of the pastor is a good thing.

However, when a pastor leaves, some of these “good things” no longer make sense. The congregation may realize that certain mission initiatives were the pet projects of the former pastor and now that he/she is gone, the interest left with the pastor. A congregation may find that certain programs were led so much by the former pastor, that no one wants to continue them. A congregation might even discover there are rituals in worship so connected to the former pastor that to continue them would seem out of place. Overall, the congregation is left to wonder, “Now what do we do and who are we without Pastor X?”

The calling of the Interim is to help the congregation claim the church for itself. You may find there are certain ministries,

## ADVENT DEVOTIONALS

Advent devotionals can be picked up in the office or in Worship the first Sunday in Advent, November 28th. The devotionals come from Sanctified Art and can be used for personal or group use.



CLOSE to HOME

## ADULT RETREAT

Spots are still available for the adult retreat, January 28-30th at Geneva Center. Call the office to reserve your place at this year's retreat. The IPC retreat is for any adult ready to skip town for a weekend and enjoy some great conversation, laughter, and a bit of personal introspection in a peaceful, wooded setting. The cost is \$80, which includes overnight lodging on Friday and Saturday, and four meals. We arrive on Friday evening and are usually home by noon on Sunday.



## USHERS NEEDED

Looking to serve or need a refresher to serve as an Usher? As life and how we do Worship has changed in the last year and a half Usher training/refreshers training will be in the Sanctuary Sunday, November 28th.

### DR. JOHN GRAHAM

I visited Dr. John Graham on his 94th birthday. We took a picture of him in his traditional birthday hat!

Many Blessings,  
Pastor Steve



## FROM THE DESIGNATED ASSOCIATE PASTOR

In the book "Accidentally Saints," Lutheran Pastor Nadia Bolz-Weber discusses the images and ideas that we like to put into the Christmas story, things that really aren't in the scriptures, ones that could stand to maybe be removed from our theological mind's eye so we can truly focus on the mystery and meaning of the season. One being a little boy with a drum, and she makes a good point; what woman wants a little kid playing a drum while in the process of or right after giving birth? It doesn't matter even if they are playing their very best. Or the idea the Magi were some kind of kings. Nope, that's not in scripture either. Is it that we are trying to cute up the story of Christ's birth or legitimize a group of wandering Zoroastrians? Maybe it just makes for better Christmas songs (I don't know anything that rhymes with Zoroastrians). But as we continue in Advent and step into Christmas this December, I pray that we all can center our attention on the message and meaning of the birth of Christ: a light brought into the world to shine in the darkness.

***Advent devotionals are still available in the office.***

Rev. Maureen Wilson  
Designated Associate Pastor

### IN MEMORIAM

**Brad Shockney—November 3, 2021**

**The Christian sympathy of the congregation is extended to the family and friends of Brad Shockney who died on November 3, 2021.**

## OCTOBER FINANCIALS

Finance Committee update on member contributions needed to support the work and ministry of IPC:

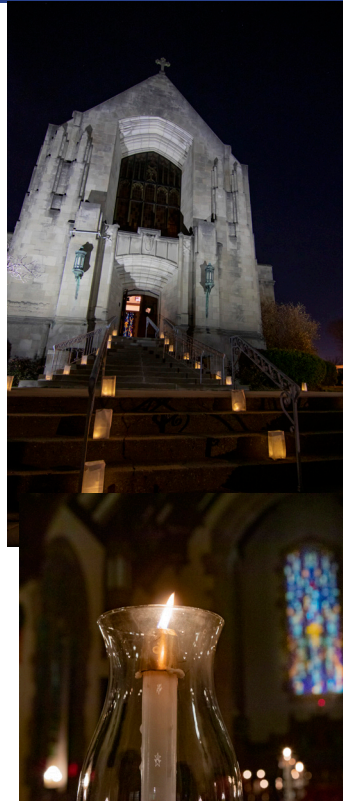
Budgeted through October: \$304,167  
Received through October: \$249,831  
Current YTD gap: \$54,336

Please prayerfully consider what you are able to do to help us close the gap. Thank you for all you do for IPC!



## IPC CHRISTMAS RADIO SHOW

Call the office to reserve your tickets for the IPC Christmas Radio show on December 17th and 18th at 6 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. Suggested donation is \$10 a person. This will be a 1940s style radio show, set in Irvington, sharing Charles Dickens, Christmas classic "A Christmas Carol." The show will include music and audience participation with all proceeds going to support IPC mission partner in Reynosa, Mexico, Faith Ministries'. Seating is limited!



## IRVINGTON LUMINARIA

The Annual Irvington neighborhood Luminaria is December 19th beginning at 6 p.m. The IPC sanctuary will be open from 6-8 p.m. We will open our sanctuary for anyone wishing to come and listen to quiet Christmas music, an optional guided prayer, meditate, or to light a candle in memory or honor of someone. This annual tradition offers peace and good feelings

and reminds us of the purpose of the season. Bring a friend and stop by our beautiful sanctuary for a few minutes or longer.



*Continued from Page 1*

missions, and rituals you really want to continue. They have become who you are. You will also find that it is ok to let go of some good things. They served you well for a season, but now it is time to do something else.

Advent is the season of the church year which is all about "preparing the way." We are getting ready to celebrate the birth of Jesus. We are also looking forward to the return of Christ. Integral to Advent is John the Baptist who cried out in the wilderness, "Prepare the way for the Lord! Make straight a highway for our God!"

Interims are a bit like John the Baptist. We are clearing a path so the person who comes after us will have a way to initiate their own ministry. Interims do not force change, but we do encourage it to happen. We want the new pastor to feel like they are walking into a situation not haunted by the practices, policies, and agreements of the former pastor.

Over the next year or so, we will develop a "mission study" which will allow the congregation to describe who they are without the former pastor. What do you value? What do you want to continue? Where does your interest lie? Where will you invest your time, your energy, your money? Who do you want your next pastor to be?

Once we have completed that step, we will move onto to elect at Pastor Nominating Committee who will go about the task of seeking the next pastor called to lead your church. This is all part of preparing the way we will do as a congregation.

Together in Christ,  
Pastor Steve

*P.S.*

*One of the most confusing parts of all this is when people ask, "Why can't Pastor Bob or Pastor Galen visit us or officiate at funerals and weddings? They have known us for so long." There is no question the former pastors know you well. However, you want to start to make room in your heart for the new pastor. If the former pastor keeps officiating at services and visiting members at the nursing homes, then you will naturally hold onto that relationship. The new pastor may feel "outside" of his or her own church. We don't want that to happen. Former pastors are asked to make it easy for the incoming pastor by refusing requests to "pastor," and by restraining themselves from visiting their former congregants. They were grateful when the pastor who was here before them stopped visiting parishioners when they arrived on the scene. Now it is the polite thing to do for them to stop too. Time for them to step away. We give thanks for the former pastors, as we find ways to respect and welcome the new ones.*

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION UPDATES

As the weather turns cold, the Ramblers (ages 2 or 3 years up through kindergarten) will be meeting indoors more frequently. While we strongly encourage mask wearing, children that young are not always able to do so, or to do so correctly. Snacks will not be served when the Ramblers meet inside, so if your child needs mid-morning sustenance, please provide that before worship. Parents are always welcome to keep their children with them in the sanctuary if they are not comfortable having them go to the Rambler Room. Email Carolyn at [clesmeister@irvpresby.org](mailto:clesmeister@irvpresby.org) with any questions or concerns.

We are working on a regular e-newsletter that will equip parents/caregivers to nurture children's faith formation at home! It will include simple prayers and practices you can incorporate into activities you probably already do, as well as "playlists" with links to songs, videos clips, and other resources to help you explore particular themes. Information will be coming soon about how to sign up!

## YOUTH GROUP

New Year's Eve Eve

We're not quite ready to bring back lock-ins, but join us at church on Thursday, December 30, from 5:30-9 p.m. for an extended youth group party!



We'll have dinner, play games (Grog, anyone?), maybe do some Karaoke... recent youth group alums are welcome to join us as well!

Youth will also be providing sound effects for the IPC radio show, lighting the Advent wreath, and probably having at least one more gathering in December. Parents, check your email and listen for announcements to stay up-to-date on the latest information.

## COLLEGE AND GRAD STUDENT CARE PACKAGES

The Christian Education committee will be packing care packages for college and graduate students after worship on Sunday, December 5. We'd love for extra hands to help it go quickly!

## GET MORE INVOLVED AT IPC

Interested in getting more involved at IPC? Consider being an usher for Worship! Ushers provide an important ministry at IPC, helping people feel welcome and included in the service. It's the ushers who often make the first impression for visitors and help foster new connections within our congregation. We will be holding a training session for those interested in becoming ushers, or for those who are looking for a refresher after worship on December 5th. Come join us and bring a friend or two.

## 13TH MONTH GIVING

To help the church budget end the year on a positive note, please consider contributing an "extra" month's pledge gift. This gift will help us balance the church budget and provide a tidy charitable tax deduction for you for 2021. Thank you for all your gifts!

## PIZZA CHURCH

Young Adult Pizza Church will meet at Jockamo at 6 p.m. on December 14th. Contact Rev. Wilson before December 7th if you would like to reserve childcare.



## MESSY CHURCH

If you'd like some time to slow down and explore the story of Christmas with your head, heart and hands, then join us for Messy Church! Although Messy Church is perfect for families with children, it's also intentionally designed to be meaningful for people of all ages. This is a perfect time to try it out if you've been curious! A simple dinner will be provided with dine-in and carry-out options.



Masks required for ages 5 & up  
Parents' discretion for younger children

55 Johnson Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46219  
(317) 356-7225 [www.irvpresby.org](http://www.irvpresby.org)

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 7<sup>TH</sup>

5:30-7:00 PM

IPC FELLOWSHIP HALL

Deepen your understanding of the season by exploring the Christmas story through interactive & reflective stations.

Sing all of your favorite Christmas hymns.

Dinner provided with dine in & carryout options.

For people of all ages!

Please contact Carolyn at [clesmeister@irvpresby.org](mailto:clesmeister@irvpresby.org) if you have any questions.

## WELCOME TO OUR NEW ORGANIST

DJ Smith has served on the piano faculty of Butler University since 2008. DJ maintains his own private studio of students of all ages and performance levels through the Butler Community Arts School. He is also the Artistic Director of the BCAS summer piano camps. DJ performs regularly as soloist, collaborates with fellow artists, and frequently lectures at conferences and festivals throughout the region. DJ holds a bachelor's degree in piano performance from Indiana Wesleyan University and a master's in piano pedagogy from Butler University.



He is a nationally certified teacher in music (NCTM). DJ has been involved in church music programs since he was in middle school. DJ is a resident of Irvington. He and his husband are the proud humans to their German Shorthaired Pointer.

If you are a musician, artist, dancer, writer, or poet, please get in touch with me. There is an abundance of talent at IPC, and as the "Painter of Music and Arts" at IPC (self-imposed title, LOL!), I want to be able to use as many colors as possible. I believe ALL the arts are critical to the life of the church! If you sing, join us in choir! If you don't sing, you can still join us in choir – we'll teach you how! If you've ever sung in your car or in the shower when no one is listening, you have what it takes to be in choir at IPC! I pride myself on being able to teach anyone to sing. Now, I know some of you reading this are saying, "Yeah, right. He hasn't heard ME sing." Well, CHALLENGE ACCEPTED! See you Thursdays @ 7:30 p.m.!

Dr. Webb Parker  
Director of Music

## FROM OUR DIRECTOR OF MUSIC



*Photo credit: Bill Voiles*

I am beyond excited to begin my tenure here at IPC. It is encouraging to know that we are taking up the mantle of a well-cared for musical tradition that is both loved and has a storied history of being integral to the life of Irvington Presbyterian Church. From my first meeting with Amy, Maureen, and the search committee, it was plainly obvious that music at IPC is alive and well. And that the stewards of the music program were thoughtful, faithful, and talented folk who, just

like me, love music making in the church.

I offer much gratitude to former Director of Music Amy Studabaker. Her friendship, organization, and care have been the keys to making the transition between directors a seamless one. I am also thankful for the many hours of work Amy, Maureen, and the entire organ search committee diligently labored in finding and hiring our new organist. We are very excited to have DJ Smith on board as organist!

Several have asked about my journey to Indy and IPC – as many of you now know, I am a boy of the South. Born in Mississippi and raised in Alabama, I am about as southern as you get. I was raised in the Southern Baptist Church and became fascinated with church music in the 9th grade. My best friend's father was the Minister of Music at our church, and I thought what he got to do every day was so cool! That eventually parlayed itself into a degree in Church Music from Samford University. Church Music led to Music Education which led to Choral Conducting, all eventually leading to a tour of the country – Mississippi, Alabama, Oregon, back to Mississippi, Maine, and now to Indiana! Whew — needless to say, we never want to move again!

I am very much looking forward to continuing the storied tradition of music making here at IPC. Continuing old traditions, forming new traditions, creating spaces for all artistic talents to be displayed, the ideas I have are endless. And, with your help, we can continue to create something very special for years to come.



## Living In Fellowship Together



### LIFT Christmas Party & Cookie Exchange SAVE THE DATE December 6th

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 6th at 6:30 p.m. at Aeriell Lewis's home (415 N. Linwood Avenue. You may park in School #58's parking lot.)

We will gather for a 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.



Believe it or not it is time to start preparing for one of IPC's favorite Christmas traditions, the Westminster Christmas Baskets. With the current forecast of possible shortages, Westminster will need our help now more than ever this year! We have been asked to supply 300 cans of baked beans, 300 packages of pasta, and 600 cans of tuna for this year's event. We are also collecting hats, mittens, and gloves for the Mitten Tree. We will begin collecting all these items immediately. You may

drop your donations off in the Welcome Center. Please be sure to bring your beans, pasta, and tuna along with your Mitten Tree items by Sunday, December 5th.

To sponsor a family or a stocking for a child, please contact the Family and Adult Services Director at 317-245-6282 or email [Jennifer.harlow@westmin.org](mailto:Jennifer.harlow@westmin.org).

We will be gathering at Westminster Neighborhood Services (2325 E. New York Street, Indianapolis, IN 46201) for the annual Packing of the Christmas Baskets on Friday, December 10th at 6 p.m. Please feel free to bring a friend or two to kick off this holiday season.

So, in the next few weeks, please think of Westminster and pick up some beans, pasta, and tuna for the baskets, and gloves, mittens, and hats for the Mitten Tree. If you would prefer, you may donate, please designate in the memo section of your check for Christmas Baskets. Let's share the joy of Christmas with our neighbors.



### PWC LADIES!

On December 16, 2021, a program of Christmas music will be presented in the sanctuary at 1 p.m. All ladies are invited.

### JUSTICE ADVOCACY TEAM

On Sunday, November 14th people from IPC and Downey Avenue Christian Church met to learn how the affordable housing crisis affects our community and what we as individuals and congregations can do to support access to affordable housing in Indianapolis. Four local housing experts and advocates lead the discussion.



### "TIE ONE ON"

The Christmas Joy Offering is one of the four special offerings of the year. This offering supports retired church



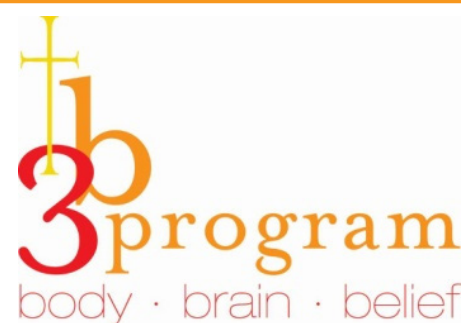
workers and other church workers with special needs. Please bring the enclosed offering envelope to church on Sunday, December 19th so during worship you can "Tie One On" to the Christmas Tree in the sanctuary. Thank you for your support of this offering.

**CONGRATULATIONS TO PAT AND KRISTEN STOUT ON THE BAPTISM OF THIER SON, DYLAN PATRICK, ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2021!**



## **MEN'S BIBLE STUDY**

Our Men's Bible Study will meet on December 1st and the 15th from 10-11 a.m. in the Parlor. All are welcome to attend. If you have questions about this group, please contact Steve Payne.



3B schedule for December 7, 14, and 21 at 11 a.m. in the IPC parlor. We will resume on January 4th at 11 a.m. If you would like more information, please contact Denise Harrington at [dharringtonipc@gmail.com](mailto:dharringtonipc@gmail.com).

3B (Body, Brain, and Beliefs) is an exercise class for ages fifty-five and older focusing on building flexibility, strength, and balance; challenges to increase memory and problem-solving skills as new brain cells grow; and time to recall beloved scriptures with devotionals and "scripture in motion."

## **TAKE TIME**

The holidays are a time of celebration. Take time to remember someone who may live alone. COVID has made isolation and loneliness top topics of discussion since the beginning of the pandemic. This is the season to reach out and bring joy to someone you know.

**Dennis Harrington**  
Senior Consultant

### **ALZHEIMER'S SUPPORT GROUP**

The next Alzheimer's Support Group is December 14th at 1 p.m. in the IPC parlor. If you would like more information about this group, please contact Denise Harrington at [dharringtonipc@gmail.com](mailto:dharringtonipc@gmail.com).

**alzheimer's association®**



Denise is here to answer questions, supply information, and referrals. If you have questions about Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, Caregiving, Rehabilitation Therapy, Estate Planning, Grief, Probate, and Guardianship or need a referral for Elder Law, please contact Denise at 317-509-7085 or [dharringtonipc@gmail.com](mailto:dharringtonipc@gmail.com).



SEAL

SEAL

# Irvington Presbyterian Church

*The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*

55 Johnson Ave.

Indianapolis, IN 46219-6498

Address Service Requested

Non-Profit Org.

U.S. Postage

**PAID**

Indianapolis, IN

PERMIT No. 2953

LABEL HERE

## JACK'S O R N E R

*I wrote this story in 2015 but believe it's one of the best Christmas stories ever.*

*A new Pastor and his wife were assigned to return to a church in Brooklyn, N.Y., and arrived in October very excited. When they first saw the church, it was run-down and in need of much work, so they set a goal to have the first service on Christmas Eve. Repairing pews, plastering*

*walls, painting etc., and on December 18th they were done. On December 19th, a large rainstorm hit the area for two days. On December 21st, the Pastor went to the church and found the roof had leaked on an area about 20' x 8' and plaster had fallen from the wall breaking the pulpit. The Pastor cleaned up the mess and decided to postpone the Christmas Eve service. On his way home, he passed a flea market sale for charity. He noticed a handmade ivory tablecloth with a cross embroidered right in the center. It was large enough to cover the hole in the Church wall.*

*On the way back, it started to snow. He noticed a woman running for the bus, which she missed. The Pastor had her wait in the warm church for the next bus. She sat in a pew while the Pastor hung the tablecloth. He could not believe how beautiful it looked. The woman walked down the aisle; her face looked as if she had seen a ghost. The woman asked if she could check to see if the initials "EBG" were in the corner. These were her initials. She explained that she made this cloth, thirty-five years before, in Austria. She and her husband were well-to-do before the war. When the Nazis came, she was forced to leave her husband, with him to follow later. He was captured, and she never saw him or her home again.*

*The Christmas Eve service was wonderful, and the church was full. After the service, when people were leaving, an old man continued to sit in the pew. The man asked the pastor where he got the tablecloth because it was identical to one his wife had made. He told the pastor the same story about the Nazis. The pastor asked the man to take a ride with him and went to a house on Staten Island. He knocked on the door and saw the greatest Christmas reunion he could imagine. God does His work in mysterious ways.*

Jack Simpson, IPC member, explores the archives for stories of the church, its past members and other bits of interesting information and lore.