

# *The* Heart *Of the* Matter



**DECEMBER 2025** Newsletter of Southport United Methodist Church

## Rediscovering the Wonder

There's something about December that makes the soul lean in a little closer. Maybe it's the glow of lights in the early evening or the way familiar carols rise up from memories we didn't even know we were holding. Maybe it's the quiet moments—rare as they are—where the world slows down just enough for us to catch our breath. Whatever the reason, this month has a way of making wonder possible again.

Wonder is different from excitement or nostalgia. It's deeper, quieter, and often surprising. Wonder is what happens when we recognize that God is doing something far bigger than we expected—sometimes in places we never thought to look. Advent invites us back into that kind of wonder.

It doesn't ask us to rush toward Christmas or to prepare the "perfect" holiday. Advent simply asks us to pay attention. To notice the hope rising in unlikely places. To look for signs of peace in a restless world. To remember that joy often blooms in the cracks. To receive love in its most unexpected forms.

If we let it, wonder has a way of softening us. It slows our pace. It widens our hearts. It helps us see our everyday lives through a sacred lens—ordinary moments that suddenly shimmer with God's presence.

So this December, I invite you to reclaim the gift of wonder. Let yourself pause a little longer when you see the first Advent candle lit. Listen a little more closely to the voices around you. Look for God in the faces you pass, the conversations you share, and the places where you're tempted to believe nothing holy could possibly grow.

Because the story at the heart of this season—the story of God coming close—is filled with wonder from beginning to end. It's the kind of wonder that breaks through darkness, speaks peace into fear, and chooses love over distance every single time.

My prayer is that this month you'll experience moments that cause you to stop, breathe deeply, and whisper a quiet, "Thank you, God... you're here." May we all rediscover the wonder of it all.

Blessings,

Rev. William G. Nickrand

SOUTHPORT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

# Christmas Eve

SERVICES



*Family  
Service*

**5 PM**

*Contemporary  
Service*

**8 PM**

*Traditional  
Service*

**11 PM**

1947 E SOUTHPORT RD INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46239

**CELEBRATE THE MAGIC OF  
THE SEASON WITH A  
FESTIVE NIGHT OF CAROLS!**

**FRI | DEC 5 | 6:30PM**

FEATURING BILL HOLWAGER &  
HIS BRASS ENSEMBLE

ALL ARE WELCOME - COCOA, COOKIES & CRAFTS  
WILL BE AVAILABLE

**FREE ENTRY**



**JOIN US** for our December  
Family Fun Night as we kick off  
the wonderful Holiday season  
with music, crafts, and more.  
All ages are welcome.





## IT'S JUBILEE CHRISTMAS TIME!

On Saturday, December 6th we celebrate Jubilee Christmas 2025. We are hosting 19 families from Homecroft Elementary who have been selected by the school staff and would not have a Christmas without assistance. This includes fifty children, from ages 4 months through 16 years and a new baby coming soon. Each child will be surprised with 2 toys or gifts, and many will have new coats for winter, hats and gloves and personal clothing items. Every family receives additional home care needs and a gift card to buy food for the holidays or whenever needed. An incredibly special gift for each child has been prepared by the Book Pillows of Hope Ministry, and each book pillow is designed specifically for the child who receives it.



On Jubilee Day, Hosts, adult members of the Families and wonderful Helping Hands gather at church for a time of fellowship, refreshments, gift wrapping and surprises.

Thank you for every way you have supported Jubilee with purchases from the tag board, Amazon toy and gift shopping, baking cookies, organizing, sorting and last-minute shopping, monetary donations, supporting the Jubilee Team and praying for our Jubilee families.

The Jubilee Christmas Ministry is an annual event with the desire that a difference has been made for the families and that they have felt God's love because of their experience. Please continue to pray for them and for improvement in the challenges they face each day.

## Holiday Hours



**DECEMBER 24**

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES:  
5PM, 8PM, 11PM

**DECEMBER 25**

MERRY CHRISTMAS!  
NO THURSDAY SERVICE

**DECEMBER 25 - JAN 2**

OFFICE CLOSED

## OPERATION TRANSFORMATION

Every year we help with utility bills, make rent payments, provide gas cards, food, and much, much more. We can do this because of your support through our

Pastor

Benevolent and Pastor's Ministry Funds. Operation Transformation helps build these funds every year during Advent Season.

Please Purchase a Poinsettia picture in memory or in honor of a loved one, and know that in doing so, you will be showing God's love to someone else with your financial gift too. Envelopes are available in the Gathering Place.

## Operation Christmas Transformation

☐ I would like to make a donation of \_\_\_\_\_ for Operation Christmas Transformation.

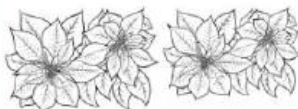
☐ I would like to recognize the following person (people) with a poinsettia picture.

In Honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

From: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

(Please print clearly)



## UPCOMING YOUTH EVENTS

DEC 5TH

JOURNEY TO BETHLEHEM  
St. Mark United Methodist Church

ICE SKATING

Perry Park Ice Rink

JAN 18TH

FEB 6TH

WINTER JAM  
Gainbridge Arena

Contact Kelley Lego for more information

KELLEY@SUMC.ORG



The Youth made  
Operations Christmas  
Child boxes! This year  
they made 6 boxes to  
send around the world.





## Main Entry Canopy/Awning

Back in 2023, an IndyGo bus hit our main entry awning and damaged the fabric. The awning was able to be repaired and was re-covered with new fabric. Earlier this year, we had another incident where a U-haul truck hit our main entry awning. In this incident, the damage was structurally significant and it required us to remove the awning to allow for safe entry and exit through the main and the education entry doors.

We have been working with our insurance carrier to cover the costs associated with this incident. The Leadership Team (LT) is also taking a broader look at the situation to provide a replacement solution that is less likely to be damaged by vehicles going forward. This likely means a taller "canopy" that is more permanent and architecturally appealing as compared to a replacement awning.

We have applied for and been granted some funding to complete an architectural design package for a new canopy. That design process is in progress now. Once a design is complete, we will solicit quotes for the construction. This will obviously cost more than the insurance proceeds from the awning, so we will need to find additional funding to complete it. Similarly, we would also need to find additional funding to construct a replacement awning due to the insurance deductible.

This is a time consuming process. Generally the steps are as follows. 1 - Apply for the grant; 2 - Receive grant approval; 3 - Complete architectural design; 4 - Obtain competitive quotes for construction; 5 - Choose a construction vendor; 6 - Obtain construction permits; 7 - Schedule and complete the construction. We have just started step 3 of this process.

So please be patient with us as we work through the process. This means that we will likely not have an awning/canopy this winter, but we hope to be in a position to build a more permanent canopy in the spring. So while this does cause some inconvenience now, it would provide a much improved solution for the long term.

If you have any questions about this project, please contact any member of the LT or Doug Lewis directly.



# TRAINING

## CROSS

Food, Games, Hands  
on project &  
Devotional

**Open to 1<sup>st</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grade.**  
Parent or Guardian must attend  
with them.  
Childcare provided for younger kids

**Next: Sunday, December 14, 2025**  
11:45 AM – 1:45 PM  
In the **Gathering Place**

**Thursday, December 4**

## FIRST THURSDAY CAFÉ

**Every first Thursday • 6:30–7:30 PM**

Join us for a relaxed evening of acoustic worship, light snacks, and communion around the table.

### PHIL WHISNER RETIREMENT

Sunday, December 21

Join Us to celebrate Phil Whisner as he retires as our Building and Grounds Assistant!



### WOMEN'S NEWS

The **Rebekah Circle** meets on **Tuesday, December 9th at 1 p.m.** in the Gathering Area for their Christmas Pitch-In Luncheon. Come join in this relaxing and fun celebration with friends for this Christmas.

Our November collection ended November 30. These baby items will be going to Fletcher Place for their Christmas give-away.

Starting in December, the same tote will be in the coat closet hallway as we collect items for the Indiana Children's Home in Lebanon. These items are listed on the paperwork on the tote lid. The children are in need of these items listed to Celebrate Christmas. This collection will end on **Dec. 18th at 12 noon to be ready for pickup. Merry Christmas to all.**

### FEED A NEED (FAN)

The bagging of the 50 meals for the downtown unhoused communities will be done at church on **Thursday, December 11th at 1 p.m.** in the gathering area. This ministry is an activity where we bag the 50 meals in about 30 minutes to be taken to the "Tear Down The Walls" ministry for distribution where needed. The recipients are always very happy to enjoy the food in these bags. We gave out hats in the bags last month as well and just in time to help with the cold weather. You are welcome to join us to bag

### FOOD PANTRY

Again you have blessed the Hunger, Inc Food Pantry with your donations in the grocery cart at church. The hungry are coming in with great need. We are very thankful to be able to serve the communities by all the donations and all the new volunteers from Southport. If you are interested in serving at the food pantry, just give your name to the church and you will be welcomed and trained. You are the hands and feet of Jesus as you help this ministry.



### Drivers Needed!

Perry Senior Services are in dire need of drivers for their medical transport service. If you or someone you know are interested in more information on how you can help, Please talk with Maggie Lucas or Alice Langreck. Please call Tracy Brown at 317-783-9231 if you would like to sign up to help.





The Roof Replacement is underway! Thank you for such a great start.

Our Raise the Roof Booklet with Commitment Cards are still available in the gathering Area.

### Community Meal Success!

*"It is more blessed to give than to receive." — Acts 20:35*

Our Turkey Dinner was an incredible blessing to our community—WOW! Thank you to everyone who donated, cooked, greeted, set up, cleaned up, delivered meals, and served in countless ways. Your generosity truly reflected the heart of Jesus.

Because of your faithfulness, we were able to serve approximately **600+ meals** through delivery and walk-ins. What a beautiful picture of Christ's love in action!

May God continue to use your giving to shine His light in our community.



# Finance

Church	Oct-25	2025 YTD
<b>Income</b>		
Offerings	\$35,408	\$464,068
Other	\$120	\$2,267
Imagination Station "Tithe/offering"	\$5,799	\$61,274
<b>Church Expenses</b>		
Conf. & Dist. Support	(\$5,784)	(\$59,397)
Administration	(\$11,815)	(\$146,749)
Maintenance & Utilities	(\$14,089)	(\$133,328)
Connect, Grow, Serve	(\$22,872)	(\$231,679)
Youth & Child Ministry	(\$1,912)	(\$21,425)
<b>Net</b>	<b>(\$15,145)</b>	<b>(\$64,969)</b>
<b>Imagination Station</b>		
Income	\$41,422	\$423,207
Expense	(\$30,871)	(\$316,047)
"Tithe/offering" to Church	(\$5,799)	(\$61,274)
<b>Net</b>	<b>\$4,753</b>	<b>\$45,886</b>
<b>All Together</b>		
<b>Total Incomes</b>	<b>\$76,950</b>	<b>\$889,542</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>(\$87,343)</b>	<b>(\$908,625)</b>
<b>Net</b>	<b>(\$10,392)</b>	<b>(\$19,083)</b>

OK, story time! There was a man who wanted to take up farming to make a living. So, he went out and bought some land, gathered up all of the tools he needed to farm, bought a brand-new tractor, even a hat and a nice new pair of overalls. He said to himself, "Alright, I'm ready to go!" So, the next day he got up, had a nice breakfast, put his hat on, went outside, and sat on the porch and just stared at his land all day. The next day he did the same thing. Then the next day. And even the next day! This process continued for weeks, until the man was confused and went out checking the ground for even the smallest sign of growth, but there was nothing.

The obvious reason is that this man hadn't planted any seed! Nature dictates that if seeds are not planted, nothing will sprout. He can have all the tools, even look the part—but until seed is planted there will be no return.

I tell you this story because we, here at SUMC, have been planting seeds. We have been planting seeds at Fall Festivals and Fourth of July parades. We've been planting at community events and turkey dinners. And, of course, that seed cost money. Money that we hope and believe will return a harvest. Money that will help us grow.

But, the bottom line is we are currently sitting at about a 2% deficit for the year. Now, I would love to have a balanced budget this year! And, to do that we will need some help. We will need some of you to prayerfully consider giving a little extra. I know that is a BIG ask this time of year. I know we've been asking you to give to Raise the Roof. I know you have already been giving generously. But, I also know that you know those seeds are going to sprout and we want to be able to keep planting in the meantime! So, thank you for all that you give and trusting us to not just sit on the porch!

## LEADERSHIP TEAM

Pat Hulfachor  
William Nickrand  
Karen Decatur  
Sherry Davis  
Doug Lewis  
Travis Miller  
Margaret Trammell  
Kathy Smith  
Jeff Horne  
Kathy Campbell



1947 E Southport Road

Indianapolis, IN

Phone: 317-784-9508

Email: [office@sumc.org](mailto:office@sumc.org)

Website: [www.sumc.org](http://www.sumc.org)

## SERVICE TIMES

Online

Sunday @ 9:00 a.m.

Sunday

9:00 a.m.-Traditional

10:30 a.m.- Contemporary

Thursday

6:30 p.m.— Casual Service

*Everyone is sharing God's love and grace through Jesus Christ in their everyday, 24 x 7 lives.  
So that... we are making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of our community and the world.*