

The Heart Of the Matter



JANUARY 2026 Newsletter of Southport United Methodist Church

A NEW YEAR FULL OF WONDER, LIGHT, AND POSSIBILITY

January always feels a bit like opening a brand-new notebook—crisp pages, no coffee stains yet, and endless possibilities ahead. There's something sacred about that “fresh start” feeling. The church year understands this impulse, too. We turn the page from Advent's holy anticipation and Christmas's joyful celebration, and we step into a season that continues to whisper, *“Look—God is still doing something new.”*

As a church family, we spent December rediscovering the **Wonder** of God breaking into the world. From candlelit carols to the simple beauty of the Nativity, the season reminded us that God still surprises us, still delights us, and still invites us to marvel at grace made visible. And now—right on cue—the next chapter of the Christian calendar nudges us forward with fresh clarity.

First comes **Epiphany**, a fancy word that basically means *“Aha! God is revealing something!”* It's the moment when the Magi follow the star to Jesus, showing us that God's love was never meant for just a few, but for the whole world. Epiphany invites us to ask: *Where is God's light guiding us today? What new things might God be revealing in our life together?*

Right after that, we celebrate **Baptism of the Lord Sunday**, when Jesus steps into the Jordan River and hears those powerful words: *“You are my beloved.”* In remembering his baptism, we remember our own callings. God still speaks. God still claims us. God still sends us. It's a moment that reminds us that we are here not by accident but by calling—a community shaped and sent by the voice of God.

All of this sets the perfect stage for our first sermon series of the new year: **Forgiveness**.

If you've ever carried a grudge longer than you intended (or found yourself replaying a conversation while brushing your teeth), then you'll understand why this series matters—not just for the church, but especially for a new year. We'll explore what forgiveness really looks like, why it feels so hard, and how Scripture invites us to experience the freedom God wants for us. Forgiveness isn't about pretending the past didn't hurt. It's about loosening the grip those hurts have on our present.

This new year offers us a fresh canvas—not because everything magically resets at midnight, but because God continually calls us into a life of healing, reconciliation, and renewed purpose. My hope is that this January, as we bask in the lingering Wonder of Christmas and follow the light of Epiphany, we'll step more fully into the freedom God longs for each of us to know. Here's to a year of revelation, calling, and deep grace.

Blessings,

Rev. William G. Nickrand

UPCOMING YOUTH EVENTS

ICE SKATING

Perry Park Ice Rink

JAN 18TH

FEB 6TH

WINTER JAM

Gainbridge Arena

Contact Kelley Lego for more information

KELLEY@SUMC.ORG

First Family Fun Night

Friday, February 6

There will not be a January First Family Fun Night, but join us in February for a Movie Night!



TRAINING CROSS

January 11, 2026

11:45 AM – 1:45 PM

Second Sunday every month
In the Gathering Place

Open to 1st –
6th grade.

Parent or Guardian
must attend with
them.

Food, Games, Hands
on project &
Devotional



Join us for *The Way Cafe* the first Thursday every month for fellowship, refreshments, and message in a cafe setting! Service Begins at 6:30 p.m.

Join us for our next gathering on
Thursday, January 8.

DiscipleFit

Start the new year with a community that cheers you on! **DiscipleFit** is our faith-based fitness group where we encourage one another to grow stronger in body, mind, and spirit. Whether you're setting big fitness goals or simply want to feel a little healthier in 2026, you don't have to do it alone.

In DiscipleFit, you'll find friendly accountability, shared motivation, and a place to celebrate every step of progress. We also enjoy monthly group hikes and are open to other fun outings or wellness ideas—so there's always something to look forward to!

If you've been wanting to take a step toward better health, this is your moment. Join us, connect with others, and let's encourage one another on the journey.

Join the DiscipleFit Facebook Group:



<https://www.facebook.com/share/g/1C4k1aQ8Bw/>



We joyfully celebrate the gift of new church memberships and baptisms within our church family!



What an amazing year 2025 has been! We give thanks to God for His faithfulness, grace, and the countless blessings we've experienced together. Through every moment, He has been at work, guiding and sustaining us. *"The Lord has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy."* — Psalm 126:3



2025



Leadership Team Update

As we begin a new year, we pause with gratitude for the faithful leadership guiding our church forward. We offer heartfelt thanks to Doug Lewis and Karen Decatur, who have recently rotated off the Leadership Team after years of thoughtful and committed service. Their leadership has helped shape this congregation, and we are deeply grateful for the gifts they have shared.

We are also excited to welcome Connie Klipsch as Leadership Team Chair and Rebekah Hamm as a new member. We give thanks as well for those who continue to serve on the Leadership Team: Kathy Campbell, Sherry Davis, Jeff Horne, Pat Hulfachor, Travis Miller, Kathy Smith, and Margaret Trammell. I am grateful to serve alongside them, and we are especially thankful for Pastor Brandon Collins and Mindy Bennett, whose regular participation and insight add great value to our conversations and leadership.

As we move forward together, we do so with a shared sense of purpose—faithfully discerning how God is calling us to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. With gratitude for the past and excitement for the future, we step into this new season trusting God's leading and committed to the work ahead.

Yes, 2025 Caring after Christmas was successful, so in 2026 it's BACK!

The planning begins this week, and the turnaround time will be fast. **BUT you are invited to help.** The day of service for SUMC will take place on Saturday January 17th. (time to follow) If you'd like to be a part of our day of service please reach out to Margaret Trammell or Kathy Smith by January 9th so we'll know how to execute our day.

It's early in the year, so let's begin January as a church with sowing seeds. (it's never too cold to sow seeds)



As we plan, gather the ingredients, and distribute to our SUMC community, we will be sowing seeds.

Sowing seeds of serving
Sowing seeds of compassion
Sowing seeds of Christ love for us and our neighbors
Sowing seeds of reaching out
Sowing seeds of pointing people to Christ

We are the Church, so let's sow our seeds by reaching out to our neighbors and community, lifting them up, while lifting our own hearts in the process.

WOMEN'S NEWS

It's the start of the 2026 New Year!!! The Rebekah Circle will host their Tuesday, **January 13th meeting in the Gathering area at 1 p.m.** At this meeting we will be doing our Pledge Service in which we dedicate to be an active part for our community in service for our church. All women are welcome to attend and become a part of this chance to serve our church with prayer, fun, and food, too.

Some of the services we did last year were to **pray** for those serving in other countries, Learning about the **Lucille Raines** facility and collecting items for their Rainfest event, Helping **Fletcher Place** with their Christmas give away for the babies in need in Indy and collecting cereal each meeting for their food pantry, collecting items for the **Lebanon Children's Home** for their Christmas Gift collection, Hosting the directors for Fletcher Place and **Metro Ministries** to learn more about those services, Attending **Mission U** where we had lively discussions about "Practicing HOPE Together, and participating in the Reading Books from the **Reading Program** offered by United Women in Faith.

It was a busy year and we are all thankful for the joy of serving our LORD.

FOOD PANTRY

The **Hunger, Inc.** food pantry is so blessed by all the donations that are coming in from many sources. Southport is a major contributor to this small pantry that served thousands last year. The pantry is located at 1416 E. Epler Ave. behind Kim's Kakey and Bakery at the corner of Madison Ave and Epler Ave. We also welcome many of our Southport church members who have come to serve at the pantry. The need is great for food and the pantry is blessed to be able to help those in need. We were blessed with turkeys and hams from the Indiana Members Credit Union that were handed out to the clients for Thanksgiving and Christmas. We are in the process of accepting donations from many schools in Perry Township, as well as many individuals' donations. We feel very blessed and **THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THIS PANTRY ALL YEAR LONG.**

FEEDING A NEED (FAN)

The Feed A Need team will be bagging the 50 meals for the downtown distribution by the "Tear Down the Walls" ministry. These meals will be bagged on **Thursday, January 8th at 1 p.m. in the Gathering Area.** If you are interested in helping with this activity, it only takes 30 minutes from your day. So come join in the giving. We are also including hats and socks to fight the cold winter days for the many unhoused in Indy.

CREATION CARE

Back by the Kitchen, Southport Church has a **collection area** on the East wall of the Gathering area. We collect flags, glasses, egg cartons, plastic grocery bags (needed for the food pantry), and plastic water bottles to name a few. We are a GREEN Church with all the changes that the church has done with new lighting and more. Check out what else is in this corner. **Online there are some places where we can recycle items. Check out online places like:**

RECYCLEFORCE

816 N Sherman Dr

Second Saturday of each month,
9 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Perry Township Government Center
4925 S. Shelby St. Indianapolis, IN 4620

Let's Celebrate Maggie Lucas! Join us to celebrate Maggie as she retires as our Decipleship Path Coordinator during our January 22 & 25 services!

A note from her:

I am feeling incredibly blessed and joyful as I retire from Southport United Methodist Church on January 29, 2026. It's been an honor to serve with such a dedicated and loving community. Thank you for being my family in faith, for your partnership, and for the countless ways you've enriched my life. God has been so good!

Wishing you all continued joy, strength, and abundant blessings in Christ. We will continue to serve together in faith.

Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, be constant in prayer.





January 4 Ephesians 3:1-12 (Matthew 2:1-12 at start of service)
Revealed Mystery: God's Plan Made Known

Join us to Celebrate **Epiphany** as we uncover God's divine plan revealed through the story of Jesus' birth. This special service invites us to explore how God's purposes are made known to us today, drawing from Ephesians and the story of the Magi in Matthew. Join us as we marvel at the mystery and joy of God's plan unfolding in our lives.

January 11 Matthew 3:13-17 God's Voice, Our Calling

Join Us On **Baptism of the Lord Sunday**, we reflect on how God calls each of us personally. Through Jesus' baptism, we learn to recognize God's voice and discern our own calling in the world. This message encourages each of us to respond faithfully to God's invitation.



LEADERSHIP TEAM

Connie Klipsch
Kathy Smith
William Nickrand
Rebecca Hamm
Sherry Davis
Pat Hulfachor
Travis Miller
Margaret Trammell
Jeff Horne
Kathy Campbell



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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.*