

THE GREATEST SPECTACLE

May 2026 Newsletter of Southport United Methodist Church

Start Your Engines... Then Find Your Rhythm

If you've spent any time in Indianapolis during the month of May, you can feel it in the air. There's a buzz, an energy, a sense that something big is happening. It all builds toward the Indianapolis 500—"The Greatest Spectacle in Racing." Since 1911, drivers have gathered at the historic Indianapolis Motor Speedway to push themselves to the limit, chasing victory across 500 miles of speed, strategy, and endurance. And if we're honest, May often feels like our own version of that race.

Between school programs, graduations, spring sports, and packed calendars, life goes full throttle. The pace picks up, and before we know it, we're just trying to keep up—moving from one thing to the next, hoping we don't fall behind. "Start your engines!" might as well be the theme of the season. But here's something every race car driver knows: you can't go full speed forever.

Even in the Indy 500, the best drivers don't just focus on acceleration—they plan for the pit stops. They have to. Tires wear down. Fuel runs low. Without intentional pauses, even the fastest car won't make it to the finish line.

That same truth shows up in our faith. Long before racing was ever imagined, God established a rhythm for life—work and rest. In Matthew 11, Jesus offers an invitation that still speaks into our hurried lives today: "Come to me... and I will give you rest." Not a quick break. Not a moment of collapse at the end of a long day. But real, sustaining rest for our souls.

The Sabbath is God's way of pulling us into the pit—not because we've failed, but because we're human. It's a reminder that we are not machines built for constant output. We are created beings, designed with limits, invited into trust. When we step away from the noise and the pace, we're not falling behind—we're being restored.

That's what makes this month such a perfect time to pause and reflect. While the world around us accelerates, we're going to spend May exploring a different kind of rhythm through our series, *The Greatest Spectacle*. Together, we'll wrestle with what it means to honor the Sabbath in real, practical ways. When do we push forward? When do we ease off the gas? And how do we keep our souls from running on empty?

So yes—lean into the excitement of the season. Celebrate the milestones. Enjoy the energy that makes this time of year so special. But don't forget to pull into the pit.

Because sometimes the most faithful, most countercultural thing you can do... is stop. And in that sacred pause, you may just discover that God isn't waiting for you at the finish line—he's already present in the stillness, ready to meet you, renew you, and remind you who you are.

Blessings,
Rev. William G. Nickrand

Challenge for the Month:

Choose one intentional "pit stop" each week—a dedicated time to rest, worship, and simply be with God. Protect it. Honor it. You might be surprised how much stronger, steadier, and more faithful the journey becomes.

SABBATH STEPS:

 <p>STOP Set aside intentional time</p>	 <p>REST Let your body & mind slow down</p>	 <p>DELIGHT Do something that brings you joy</p>	 <p>WORSHIP Recenter your life on God</p>
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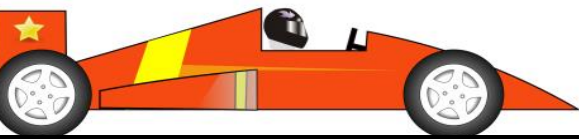


Communion Schedule
Due to special service in May the schedule will be slightly different.
May 3rd, 14th
June 4th, 7th

May 3rd	Matthew 11:28-29
May 10th	Exodus 31:12-17
May 17th	Luke 13:10-17
May 24th	Romans 14:5-6
May 31st	Isaiah 58:13-14



May is full throttle — school programs, graduations, spring sports, and the world-famous Indy 500 revving up right here in our city. Life moves fast, and sometimes it feels like we’re running laps with no pit stops in sight. But what if God’s invitation to “remember the Sabbath and keep it holy” isn’t about slowing down out of duty, but finding true rest in the One who designed us for it? In *The Greatest Spectacle*, we’ll look at the Sabbath through the lens of the race — learning when to accelerate, when to pull over, and how to keep our souls from burning out. It’s time to trade exhaustion for renewal and rediscover the sacred rhythm of rest.



Join us for "The Way Cafe" every month for fellowship, refreshments, and message in a cafe setting! Service Begins at 6:30 p.m.
Join us for our Upcoming Cafes:
Thursday, May 14th
Thursday, June 4th

**CAMP
IMAGINATION**
Summer Camp at Imagination Station

SOUTHPORT
UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH
CONNECT | GROW | SERVE | GIVE | GO

GET READY FOR A GREAT
ADVENTURE!

JUNE 1ST - JULY 24TH
1947 E. SOUTHPORT RD.

REGISTRATION IS OFFICIALLY OPEN!
TO ENROLL, CALL US AT:
(317) 780-4624

**Hands-on learning, outdoor and water play,
themed days, walking field trips, and so much
more!**

**LYNCH
SCHOLARSHIP**

Open to All High school seniors
Reach out to Kelley Lego
(Kelley@sumc.org) or The Church office
for more information.

Applications close May 10th.

Family Promise
of Greater Indianapolis

APRIL 4 - MAY 2

**Night
Without
a Bed**

2026

Join Southport United Methodist Church and Family Promise of Greater Indianapolis for
our annual **Night Without A Bed** campaign on **Friday, May 1**

Stop by The Next Step's Table on May 3rd!

HOPE
HELP OUR PEOPLE EAT

Stop by the Next Steps table to find out more about this new
opportunity to serve!

**HAPPY
GRADUATION!**

*We've reached that time of year where it feels like everyone we know is
graduating—preschool, kindergarten, high school, and college.
If you happen to know a proud graduate (tiny cap or full-on cap and gown), send
their info our way so we can celebrate them properly.
Let's give these grads the spotlight they deserve!
Send details to kelley@sumc.org*

SAVE	GRADUATION SUNDAY MAY 17TH 2026
BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS JULY 26TH 2026	THE
DATE	



PRAYER IN THE PARK

May 7th @ 6:30 pm
Southport Park

Join us for a special community prayer event dedicated to fostering unity, hope, and peace in our community and world. In a time when connection matters more than ever, this gathering offers a welcoming space for individuals and families from every culture, background, and walk of life to come together in reflection and shared purpose. Whether you pray regularly or are simply seeking comfort and community, you are warmly invited to participate. Let's stand side by side, lift one another up, and inspire a spirit of compassion and grace that extends to all.

This will be in place of in person Thursday service on May 7th, 2026.

Soup's On Taskforce
Roberts Park United Methodist Church
401 N Delaware St
Indianapolis, IN 46204



April 20, 2026

Dear Partners in Service,

This week is National Volunteer Appreciation Week, so what better time to express our gratitude for all the ways your congregation supports Soup's On. We've said it many times—this community ministry has flourished for more than 26 years because of our dedicated volunteers.

The compassion demonstrated by everyone who serves at Soup's On never ceases to amaze us. Each Sunday, when we gather for a meal, we're reminded of what we can achieve together. Thanks for sharing your time and kindness to uplift and nourish our neighbors experiencing difficult times.

Sincerely,

Julie Pineda

Soup's On Taskforce
Roberts Park United Methodist Church

James Butler

Janet Jean Chapman
Gregory

Carol Phipps

Michele Cook
Julie Cook
Liz Smith

Pastor Diane!

Pastor John
Christina Balfanz

SUMC Potluck Lunch

As a thank you for all you do throughout the year, you're invited to join us for a potluck lunch!
Bring a favorite dish to share and come enjoy good food, great company, and a time of fun and fellowship together.

MAY 31st, 2026
11:45 am

1947 E. Southport Rd
Indianapolis, IN 46239

Please visit the sign-up table next to the Guest Services desk to let us know what you'll be bringing.

HARVEST TABLE

a ministry of
SOUTHPORT
United Methodist Church

The HARVEST TABLE

Harvest Table Hours:
Sunday:
10:00am - 12:00pm
Wednesday:
6:00pm - 7:00pm
Thursday:
6:00pm - 7:00pm



2026 Southport Park Beautification Day
When: Saturday, May 9th, 2026 @ 10:00 a.m.
Where: 6901 Derbyshire Rd, Southport, IN 46227
 Join us as we prepare the park for the year! Volunteers will focus on Weeding, clearing, and planting for Spring!



VBS

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New friends, amazing experiments, creative games, fun snacks, surprising adventures, incredible music!

Location: Southport United Methodist Church

Date: June 7-11, 2026

Time: 5:30 p.m.—8:30 p.m.

Call 317-780-4624 for more information or visit our website to register!

April Cross Training

This opportunity for interaction between the various cultures represented at Southport UMC is specifically designed for our 1st-6th grade students and their guardians. We participate monthly in an event providing Food – Faith – Fun to all attending. Our next training is May 10th from 11:45-1:45 in the Gathering Place.



WOMEN'S NEWS

The Rebekah Circle will be meeting on May 12th at 1 pm in the Gathering Area. We will be enjoying a Pitch-In lunch. Women, you are welcome to join us for this event. This is an event where we enjoy being together. We will not be meeting the months of June, July, and August. Our next meeting will be held on September 8th where we will be traveling up to the Indiana United Methodist Children's Home in Lebanon. We will be taking a tour of the home from 11-12 and then having lunch out near the home. If you are interested in attending this event, we will be leaving the Southport Parking lot at 10 to carpool up to the facility.

HUNGER Inc. FOOD PANTRY/ HELP OUR PEOPLE EAT

For the summer months, our food donations will be changed to help provide meals for the Helping Our People Eat or HOPE families. These are also our Jubilee Christmas families. The summer months are difficult for the families to get food on the weekends. We will be feeding them on the following Saturday mornings:

June 6th, 13th, 20th, and 27th. And July 11th and 18th. Serving time for these meals is 10:30-12 on each Saturday in the Gathering Area at church. Your help is needed to cook and serve the meals. Stop by the Next Steps Table in May to sign up to help. In order to help with the meals, we will be handing out meal bags in May. Watch for our Next Steps Table on May 3rd where you can pick up a bag with a menu attached. You will be asked to buy the items on the menu, place them in the bag, and return the bag on the date listed on the menu. We appreciate your Help each Saturday to get the meals ready for the families. You can sign up to help at the May 3rd Next Steps Table to be the hands and feet of Jesus.

FEED A NEED (FAN)

The FAN team will be changing their bagging meals date this month to Thursday, May 14th. We bag 50 meals for the unhoused individuals to be handed out by the TEAR DOWN THE WALLS MINISTRY. We have been helping this ministry for the last 6 years. The need is great and the individuals are very thankful. Our new cloth bags being made are really appreciated by the recipients. They like to be able to carry their phones or make pillows out of the bags. We meet in the Gathering Area at the church at 1 pm. and are done before 2 pm. We have a collection tote in the coat hallway for scrap material that you could donate to help get the bags made. Also if you have any old cotton T-Shirts, we can use them to make the strings for closing the bags. These can also be donated in the same tote.

Thank you church for your help in making this ministry thrive.

CREATION CARE INFO

HELP EARTH AND HER PEOPLE AND ALL OF GOD'S CREATION

HOW YOU ASK???

GREEN CYCLE--they use waste materials to create mulch and then sell and deliver it to you to use on your yard and gardens. M-F 8 am-5 pm and Saturday 8-12 pm. 1103 Troy Ave. Check them out online

Recycleforce--they take contributions of electronics and use them to train formerly incarcerated people to have jobs. 816 N. Sherman---check out their website for items they collect...some require a donation.

I=OUR CHURCH--we collect recycle items at the East wall of the Gathering Area--check it out. Love the plastic bags for the Hunger, Inc Food Pantry.




Our office will be closed Monday, May 25th so that our staff may celebrate Memorial Day with their loved ones.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

**CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS!
WE NEED YOUR HELP!**

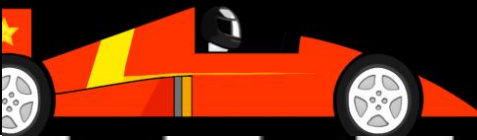
We are looking for more volunteers to help staff the guest service table. We need help starting May 31st. Help is needed from 10 a.m.- 10:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. -11:45 a.m.

Contact kelley@sumc.org to learn more about this volunteer opportunity.

Join us at SUMC for day of teamwork and making a difference around the church! There are a variety of projects so there is something for everyone. It's a great way to connect, grow, and serve!
Sign up now.

**MAY 30TH, 2026
9:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.**



Southport UMC has been blessed to be a longtime supporter of Ronald McDonald House, and we have been serving dinner in excess of 25 years. We have a wonderful core group of volunteers who prepare and serve the meal once a month, however, we are looking to add one or two people to the potential crew. If you are interested in serving on any of the following dates, please call the church office and they will let Paul Lucas know so he can reach out to you with more information.



- Wednesday, May 13
- Wednesday, June 24
- Wednesday, July 22
- Wednesday, August 26
- Wednesday, September 23
- Wednesday, October 28
- Tuesday, November 24
- Wednesday, December 23

The crew meets around 3pm at Southport UMC and travel together to Ronald McDonald House and then are almost always back to the church by 8pm.



Finance

Church	Mar-26	2026 YTD
Income		
Offerings	\$52,722	\$136,093
Other	\$471	\$2,671
Imagination Station "Tithe/offering"	\$5,871	\$17,985
Church Expenses		
Conf. & Dist. Support	(\$3,758)	(\$16,390)
Administration	(\$13,554)	(\$42,582)
Maintenance & Utilities	(\$12,757)	(\$48,661)
Connect, Grow, Serve	(\$23,633)	(\$68,690)
Youth & Child Ministry	(\$1,927)	(\$6,377)
Net	\$3,435	(\$25,951)
Imagination Station		
Income	\$49,686	\$136,211
Expense	(\$34,304)	(\$85,501)
"Tithe/offering" to Church	(\$5,871)	(\$17,985)
Net	\$9,511	\$32,724
All Together		
Total Incomes	\$102,879	\$274,975
Total Expenses	(\$89,933)	(\$268,201)
Net	\$12,946	\$6,773

Your generosity has not gone unnoticed, and more importantly, it has not gone unused. As a church family, your faithful giving has been overwhelming. You have demonstrated that your faith is not only something you profess, but something you practice.

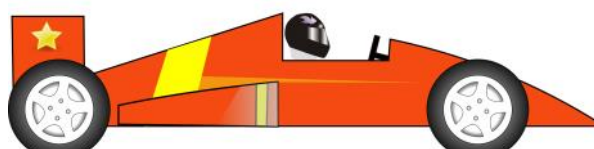
Scripture reminds us in 2 Corinthians 9:7 that "each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." This spirit of cheerful, willing generosity is clearly alive at SUMC. Your giving has enabled ministry to flourish, needs to be met, and the message of Christ to reach further into our community.

Because of your faithfulness, lives are being touched. The doors of the church remain open, outreach efforts continue, and those in need are cared for.

Continue to give with joy, continue to trust God as your provider, and continue to invest in what truly matters. The work being done through this church is meaningful, eternal, and deeply important, and each one of you plays a part in that story.

Thank you for your faithfulness, your generosity, and your heart for God's work. May you be encouraged to keep going, knowing that your gifts are being used by God to transform this community and world.

Pastor Brandon



LEADERSHIP TEAM

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



1947 E Southport Road
 Indianapolis, IN
 Phone: 317-784-9508
 Email: office@sumc.org
 Website: 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.*