



INDEPENDENT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Christ our Cornerstone

The Lamb of God



December 2011
Vol. 64, Issue 12

VIEWS FROM INDEPENDENT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Prepare the Way
your Christ is drawing near!
O blest is Christ that came in God's most holy name.

Advent Season at IPC

Sunday, December 4 Advent Celebration

10:00 a.m. Great Hall. 5th grade Christmas Pageant; Carol Sing; Birthday Party for Jesus; All Ages Welcome.

Sunday, December 4 IPC Choir Christmas Concert 4:00 p.m. Sanctuary. Directed by Dr. Jeff R. McLelland, the choir and orchestra will present three settings of the Magnificat by Johann Sebastian Bach, Franz Schubert and Charles Stanford. Soloists include Beth Middleton, Gloria Parvin, Melanie Williams, Roderick George, and Chris O'Rear.

Saturday & Sunday, December 10, 11 62nd Annual Holiday House Tour "For 62 years a Moveable Feast with a Mission"

The Annual Holiday House Tour is a long-standing tradition of Christmas joy and support of IPC missions. Christmas Tea is served in the Great Hall both days. See the website for details of the houses: www.ipc-usa.org/HolidayHouseTour

Sunday, December 18 Special Christmas Presentation by Storyteller Dolores Hydock Great Hall 10:00 a.m. "Witness to the Light: Voices from Bethlehem," based on stories from *The Magnificent Defeat* by Frederick Buechner.

Thursday, December 22 The Westminster Choir

will be singing their Christmas Tour for retirement homes throughout the day on Thursday, December 22. Check the church website for the schedule.

Saturday, December 24 Nativity Service Noon IPC Te Deum Choir and IPC Junior Choir will sing.

Saturday, December 24 Annual Christmas Eve Worship Service and Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols at 4:00 and 6:00 p.m. with IPC Choir and Westminster Choir, candlelighting and homily. Dr. Sharps' Homily this year is entitled "Deep Peace." The annual Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols will also be presented by the Independent Presbyterian Church Choir.

This special service is a long-standing tradition that brings hundreds to our church in celebration of the Nativity of our Savior. Please note that doors will open at 3:00 for the 4:00 service. We ask your cooperation by not reserving large portions of pews and by not holding any seat past 15 minutes prior to service time. Child care will be available for both services.

December 25 Celebration of the Nativity of Jesus Christ/ Christmas Day

Worship service at 11:00 only, in the sanctuary; church school classes will not meet.





The Rev. Dr. Conrad Sharps

"Remember: Jesus Christ is the Word of God and the Light of Life. On him we can depend."

LIVING IN SERVICE TO OTHERS...

SUGGESTED FOOD PANTRY ITEMS

December 4

Flour/Sugar/Corn Meal

December 11

Juices

December 18

Oatmeal/Grits

December 25

Breakfast Bars

First Light Women's Shelter Items for December

Women's Hats, Socks, Gloves & Scarves

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it." (John 1:1-5)

I don't know about you, but I pretty much live by a calendar. In fact, I've said many times "If it's not on my calendar, it doesn't happen." Perhaps like me, you can't possibly remember every event, appointment and meeting without the use of a calendar or iPhone or BlackBerry.

This brings to mind an expression you hardly hear anymore, but I remember my grandmother instructing me, "Tie a string around your finger so you won't forget." The idea here is that if you have a string around your finger eventually you will wonder, "What in the world is that string doing on my finger — Oh, yes, now I remember!"



Of course Christmas is a celebration that we never forget no matter the season. **But what aspect of Christmas is most important in your remembrance and celebration?**

In the very opening of his gospel, John the apostle declares the identity of Jesus. Jesus is the incarnation of God. He is both fully human and fully divine. He is God. In him exists creation, redemption and salvation.



The world in which we live can sometimes be a dark place. Evil, sin, pain and death are realities with which we must deal. But "tie a string around your finger" and remember: Jesus Christ is the light of life and salvation. He came to us as a humble child born in a stable. Despite the truth he shared and the healing he brought, we denied him, his word, and the reality that he is the son of the living God in whom only we can find salvation.

Yet, he loves us still.

The darkness of the world and the darkness of our own sin have not diminished his brilliance. His light shines in our darkest hours showing us his love, his mercy and his desire that we come and live in his light.

What do you face this season? Is it illness or death? Is it joblessness or financial ruin? Is it severe marital discord or problems that seem impossible within your family? Whatever the problem, tie a string around your finger – or a "virtual string" on your phone or computer -- and remember: Jesus is the Word of God and the Light of life. **On him we can depend.** ✝

Pledging Online

Making a stewardship pledge is easier than (making) pie.

Just go to www.ipc-usa.org/PledgeOnline and you will be directed to a simple form on the IPC website that you can complete securely and confidentially online.

Thank you!

The IPC Stewardship Committee



Upcoming Events at IPC

December 4 Fifth Grade Pageant & Carol Sing
 December 4 IPC Choir Christmas Concert
 December 6 Pres Women Holiday Luncheon
 December 7 Children's Ministries First Light Service Project
 December 10 & 11 Holiday House Tour
 December 18 Christmas Program Dolores Hydock
 December 18 Evening Prayer
 December 22 Westminster Choir Christmas Tour
 December 24 Nativity Service, noon
 December 24 Service of Nine lessons and Carols, 4 pm and 6 pm Sanctuary
 December 25 Worship service at 11:00 only, sanctuary, no church school classes

2012

January 1 Worship service at 11:00 only, sanctuary: no church school classes
 January 4 Epiphany Procession 6:30 p.m.
 January 5-13 IPC Day School Registration '12-'13
 January 7 Intro to Centering Prayer Workshop
 January 29 Foundation Sunday
 February 5-10 IPC Religious Arts Festival

The IPC Day School Did you know?

Day School Three-Year-Olds have their Christmas program on Friday, December 16 and the Four and Five-Year-Olds have their Christmas Chapel program on Tuesday,



Dec. 18. Both programs will be held in the Sanctuary. Four and Five-Year-Olds also sing for the IPC

noon-day Chapel service on Wednesday, December 14.

Day School Registration will be held January 5 through 13 for the 2012-2013 school year. Be sure to refer to the website to download and print Registration forms and to see pertinent information.

INDEPENDENT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IS BACK IN WORLDWIDE MINISTRY

"Go you therefore, and teach all nations..." takes on new meaning with the Internet.

In the 70s and 80s, Independent Presbyterian (IPC) produced radio broadcasts which aired internationally. The church is now continuing this ministry of communicating the Word of God and the Christian faith through the Internet with **Dr. Conrad Sharps' Pastor's Blog: Living In The Spirit Today.**

In just one year, since 11/15/10, the blog has recorded nearly 31,000 pageviews. While first directed to IPC members and friends, the blog statistics also show significant pageviews in countries such as Russia, the United Kingdom, Singapore, Germany, Canada, India, the Netherlands, Australia, Japan, Zimbabwe and Chile.

As with the previous worldwide *Worship Hour* on the radio, IPC now has a vehicle to reach people the world over. As described in our history, Independent Presbyterian has "a history of ministry both internal—the inreach of the church to its own—and external—its outreach to persons not only in the Birmingham area but also to others in the region, the nation, and the world."

Pastor's Blog:
LivingInTheSpiritToday.blogspot.com

The Window is a monthly publication of Independent Presbyterian Church 3100 Highland Avenue, Birmingham, AL 35205-1408. Phone: 205-933-1830
 The *Window* is published for church members and friends. Please send comments to **Mary Ann Morrow, editor, c/o IPC.**

Dear Church Family,

NOMINATIONS

The Representative Nominating Committee is beginning the discernment process of identifying qualified nominees for the Elder and Deacon classes of 2015, the vice president of the congregation (who will become president in 2014), trustees to serve on the IPC Foundation, and two congregants to serve as members at large on the Representative Nominating Committee.

The Nominating Committee needs your help obtaining names of church members whom you believe have the spiritual gifts and willingness to serve. **This year we are offering you an option of sending this information to the church online. The information is located at www.ipc-usa.org/nominees.** On the sheet for Suggestions, you will find descriptions concerning the offices of Elder and Deacon from the PCUSA Book of Order, as well as job descriptions for our vice president and president. We ask you to review this material and then prayerfully complete the nominating form.

The more information you provide concerning the gifts and talents of a candidate as well as his or her previous service to the church, the more effectively we may identify future leadership for IPC. Please feel free to make additional copies of the nominating forms. Forms are also available on the second floor and in the narthex.

Nominations may be sent online to my assistant Tricia Walker or deposited in marked boxes on the second floor and in the narthex or mailed to the church. Please note, however that the **absolute deadline for nominations is February 4, 2012.** All nominations must be delivered to the church or have a postmark no later than February 4 to be considered. Every form will be considered, and the number of forms submitted will not bear significance in our deliberations. It is also acceptable for individuals to submit their own name for consideration.

The Nominating Committee hopes that you will join us in our efforts of prayerful consideration and discernment in seeking those called by God to serve IPC. If you have questions, please call Conrad Sharps or Libby Kidd at 933-1830 or Steve Graham (Chair of the Representative Nominating Committee) at 970-9030.

Thank you.

In Christ's Service,

Conrad C. Sharps



Holiday House 2011

The 62nd Annual House tour is just around the corner! Please help support the Presbyterian Women of our Church by attending this event. I promise that you will have a good time, and get your ideas started for your own Holiday decorating. Just to help lure you to the tour, we have included below a brief description of our featured homes. We have over 150 people helping with this event, but we still have a few slots to fill. Please call Betsy Middlebrooks at 933-3731 to Volunteer. **Parking personnel are especially needed!** The tour benefits the Children's Fresh Air Farm and other missions sponsored by the Presbyterian Women.

Thank you. **Beth Adams, IPC Holiday House Chairman**

Christmas Tea will be served in the Great Hall during tour hours. Tickets cost \$20 each; advance tickets are available at the church reception desk or purchase online on the IPC website at www.ipc-usa.org/HolidayHouseTour. Tickets may also be purchased at the homes and at the church during the hours of the tour.

Featured homes include:

- **IPC Sanctuary and Parlor**

Founded in 1915 and designed by Warren, Knight, and Davis, the sanctuary, parlor, and chapel are decorated by IPC members. The Great Hall is the setting for a traditional Christmas Tea.

- **Jennifer and Kevin Wagoner, 1033 32nd Street South**

A Craftsman style home built in 1918, the Wagoner residence is tucked away just behind IPC. A classic large bungalow, this home is decorated in a palette of earthy neutrals and beautiful pieces and fabrics to create a serene space that is both welcoming and warm.

- **Betsy Brown, 2647 Montevallo Road**

When the owner purchased this cottage on Montevallo Road, she was on a mission to distill her life into its essential elements and to live in a serene space filled with only what she thought to be necessary or beautiful. Built in 1933, it was designed by Helen Davis, the first female registered architect in the state of Alabama.

- **Doug Davis Home, 2644 Montevallo Road**

At only 530 square feet, this recently-renovated bungalow was built in 1942 as one of the original developments in Mountain Brook Village. It features three rooms and a bathroom in an L-shape with a neutral color scheme, generous use of built-ins, and beautiful finishes that infuse function and style into every inch of space.

- **Rebecca and Ben Fulmer, 3172 Overhill Road**

The Fulmer residence was commissioned in 1927 by Lewis E. Ford and Warren, Knight, and Davis, the prominent architectural firm that designed IPC. The Fulmers have four boys and wanted their home to have an atmosphere centered around food, music, and art. A collaboration of several local artists are working together to create a unique Christmas home for this tour.

Continued

- **Katharine and Bryson Edmonds, 3142 Old Leeds Lane**
The Edmonds home was designed by Jeff Bagwell for George and Margo Gaskin in 1967. This mansard-style home with French eclectic details features a monumental entry, simplistic detailing, and generous proportions.

- **Inspiration House, 3162 Overton Cove**

Bonus with your ticket purchase: During Holiday House weekend only, tour the Inspiration House, 3162 Overton Cove (with your IPC Holiday House ticket)

The Birmingham Home and Garden Inspiration home was designed by architect Chris Reebals of Christopher Architects. Part of the Cove at Overton neighborhood developed by Charles Kessler, the home exhibits an eclectic blend of French and European architectural styling.

IPC Presbyterian Women Holiday Brunch Tuesday, December 6 11:00 am

Please join us for the Presbyterian Women Holiday Brunch on **Tuesday, December 6, at 11:00 in the Great Hall**. Robert Hill, owner of Robert Hill Antiques, will present a program of



“Holiday House Trends and Decorating”

and **IPC Day School children will perform special holiday songs.**

The Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley will offer for sale before and after the brunch handmade necklaces from the Necklace Project to support education of young women in Congo. **Deadline for reservations** of \$10.00 each for the brunch and for childcare (no charge) during the event is **Wednesday, November 30**. Reservations can be made by calling the church receptionist at 933-1830 or by visiting the church website www.ipc-usa.org. Seating is limited, so make your reservations as soon as possible!

Living in Community

Living in Service to Others IPC Youth & Children

CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES FIRST LIGHT SERVICE PROJECT WEDNESDAY, December 7

5K—6th Grade will visit FIRST LIGHT FOR AN EVENING OF SINGING and giving!

Schedule for the evening

5:15 P.M.— MEET IN PARLOR

6:30 p.m.— Return to IPC for pizza dinner

7:00 p.m.— PICK-UP IN THE GREAT HALL

IPC Youth will be focusing on a project close to their hearts during Advent: **children's books for a library in Piedras Negras, Mexico**. When members of the Youth Grant Team discovered that the Constructores Para Cristos library desperately needed more children's books, they realized that this was a great project for the whole youth group to get behind. Many of our youth have been to Piedras Negras with CPC, and are excited to help. The youth will be raising money over the next few weeks for library books and are hoping to get other local youth groups involved, as well.

Christmas Gift Ideas

• The IPC Choir currently has **2 CDs** available for purchase: A Christmas CD, *A Babe is Born*, was recorded in the sanctuary in 2010 and includes many of the carols and organ pieces sung and played over the past ten years as part of the annual Service of Nine Lessons and Carols. (\$20.00 each; \$3.00 shipping).

A second CD, *The Lord is My Light*, was recorded in 2007 and includes favorite anthems sung by the choir. (\$15.00 each; \$3.00 shipping)

• **NEW OPPORTUNITY THIS YEAR!** In celebration of the upcoming centennial celebration of IPC in 2015, the choir is selling **roundels** of the stained glass found throughout the church.



There will be 5 different roundels-- **all hand painted, one released each year until 2015**. The inaugural piece is of the Nativity Window in the sanctuary. These treasures cost \$45.00 each; additional \$5.00 shipping charge per item.

CDs and roundels are available for purchase at www.ipc-usa.org or from the music office at the church. Questions? Call the Music Office at 205-933-3700, or e-mail Barbara Fillmer at bfillmer@ipc-usa.org

Hand painted, full color Roundel

Looking for a gift for a special person?

The CE department has the following books for sale:

• **Beginning the Day**— Prayers by Henry Edmonds, \$10.00 each (or ten copies for \$75)

• **An Enduring Ministry: A Biography of Henry Morris Edmonds** by Marvin Whiting, \$25.00

• **The Sanctuary Stained Glass Windows of Independent Presbyterian Church** by Carol Lukens Hall, \$15.00

• **The Henry M. Edmonds Memorial Chapel** by John Lukens, \$12.00

Please contact Betsy Middlebrooks at 933-3731 or at bmiddlebrooks@ipc-usa.org for more information.

Honor someone special this Christmas with a gift to

THE GIVING TREE

The Giving Tree, a mission of Independent Presbyterian Church's Hunger Work Group, encourages gift-giving that reflects the true

spirit of the Christmas season. Make a donation to one of the following charities in honor of friends or loved ones:

- Bread for the World
- Habitat for Humanity
- Children's Fresh Air Farm
- Heifer Project
- First Light
- IPC Food Pantry
- Mwandi Mission Hospital HIV/AIDS Program
- STAIR

Times and locations to make purchases are:

- SUNDAYS, December 4, 11 & 18 ~ before and after Worship, in the Parlor
- WEDNESDAYS, December 7, 14 & 21 ~ 11:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m., in the Parlor

A perfect gift for any special person on your Christmas list! Please make checks payable to IPC. A donation of at least \$5 per card is requested. Your donation will be listed on your contribution statement from the church's financial office. **Please give generously!**

THE 41st ANNUAL RELIGIOUS ARTS FESTIVAL

February 5 - 10, 2012

The Religious Arts Festival will take place beginning Sunday, February 5, 2012 with a wonderful slate of events. An exhibit of book offerings from our church library will hang in the gallery for the week.

Sunday: The IPC Choir and friends will sing the Service of Choral Evensong, presenting music from the Baroque Period.

Monday: John Paul Huguley from the College of Building Arts in Charleston will lecture on "Putting 'Art' Back Into Structure"

Tuesday: John Panning of the Dobson Pipe Organ Builders will demonstrate "The Art of Voicing a Pipe: a discussion on the new pipe organ."

Wednesday: John Panning of the Dobson Pipe Organ Builders will present a "child-friendly" demonstration of the pipe organ.

Thursday: Annual Religious Arts Festival Banquet. The program will feature Dr. Michael Bauer of the Kansas University to lecture on "Tales of Transformation: Beauty and Discipleship in an Age of Anxiety"

Friday: Early Music Concert featuring the baroque ensemble New York Polyphony to sing their program "Secret Love and Private Devotion"

Invite your friends and family!

A New Board Member Reflects on the IPC Foundation

As a new board member of the IPC Foundation, I was amazed at the scope of the Foundation's grants. The Foundation's grants literally touch lives around the world, beginning at 3100 Highland Avenue (Community Ministries, Boy Scout Troop 28, etc.) and stretching all the way around the world to places like Turkey, Africa, and Afghanistan, where the Foundation's reach has helped with health care by funding an Afghan physician's residency training in family practice.

I was equally amazed at the giving opportunities this provides IPC members since there are so many different funds designated for specific missions (see the list in the IPC Foundation Annual Report in the IPC Lukens Library or available online at www.ipc-usa.org/Foundation.)

The Foundation has received endowments through the years both from members and non-members. One of IPC's primary and oldest missions is the Children's Fresh Air Farm. This ministry and the physical camp itself have been made possible through generous donations over 85 years. Recent donors built on this early legacy by providing support for the new Summer Learning Program that benefits elementary-aged children in need.

Those who have gone before us have generously shared their resources, allowing IPC to make a difference in so many lives - - locally and abroad. The reach is wide and the needs are many. I hope you and your family will consider joining those who have given us this wonderful legacy of giving by considering gifts to the Foundation through either your estate planning or through your year-end directed giving. Thank you.

Stan Cash,

IPC Foundation Board of Directors and Development Committee Member

A Response to Alabama's Immigration Legislation

The Immigration Work Group of Independent Presbyterian Church submitted a statement they had adopted opposing the Beason-Hammond Alabama Taxpayer and Citizen Protection Act (HB56), more commonly referred to as "the immigration legislation," to the Session of IPC at its September stated meeting, asking the Session to adopt the statement. After discussion in Session, the Session of IPC adopted this statement as well. We present it here for your information. A statement of Session is not binding on any individual member of IPC. A copy of this statement was sent to the Alabama Legislature in September. Since its adoption, some of the portions of the legislation most directly affecting the ability of churches to minister to the immigrant population in Alabama were rescinded. **Here is the text of the statement:**

"The Beason-Hammond Alabama Taxpayer and Citizen Protection Act, recently passed by the Alabama State Legislature and signed by Governor Robert Bentley, becomes effective September 1, 2011. (This date was later changed as the courts considered the legality of the legislation)

"The Immigration Work Group and the Session of Independent Presbyterian Church find many of the provision in the bill inconsistent with the Biblical call for justice and for loving one's neighbor as oneself, as the Act requires that only those of legal status be served by the religious or charitable community, whatever the need might be.

"Such restrictions not only violate human rights of individuals, but also deprive Alabama citizens of the right to exercise their religious freedom. This idea was also expressed by The Rev. W. Harvey Jenkins, Interim Executive Presbyter of the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley (consisting of 87 Presbyterian Church (USA) congregations in Central Alabama), in his Letter to the Editor, Birmingham News, July 10, 2011.

"The Immigration Work Group and the Session find the Act in its present state repressive, and asks for support in calling for its repeal."

IPC had an IPO - an Initial Philanthropic Opportunity.

For the first time ever, the **IPC Youth Ministries Program and the IPC Foundation** collaborated to allow the youth to recommend the distribution of \$10,000 in Beeson grants from the Foundation. The process also was designed to educate the youth on the IPC Foundation history and purpose, to train them in Christian philanthropy, to teach them about group decision-making and to give them the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of individuals, families, and communities in need.

Over the past two and a half months, 10 IPC youth met regularly to consider how to allocate the funds. They reviewed grant proposals, researched organizations, conducted site visits, discussed the strengths and weaknesses of the grant applications, and in the end made thoughtful decisions which they presented as a panel to the foundation's grantsmaking committee. As you see these youth, please acknowledge and thank the team and their advisors for an extraordinarily impressive process, one we hope will continue. Team members included Martha Abbott, Madeline Brawley, Leah Burton, Liza Butts, Cammie Coulter, Win Cowden, Patrick Darby, Will Deer, David DeLozier, and Liz Moore. Advisors were Aly Butts and Nate Sell along with Jim Wooten and Rev. Bobbie Epting from the IPC Foundation.

LIBRARY NOTES

The 25 Days of Christmas: an Advent celebration for the entire family, by Rebecca Hayford Bauer, contains devotionals, hymns and carols, hints, and check lists for each day leading up to Christmas. Her aim is to help us concentrate on what is most important for our families and not get too caught up in the frenzied activities all around us during this important time of the year.

Advent and Christmas Wisdom, from Henri J. M. Nouwen, and *A Winter Name for God*, by R. Scott Colquhoun, are devotional books meant to help us quiet our hearts and minds and open us to the blessings of the season.

The Christmas Story uses the Gospels of Matthew and Luke from the King James Bible as text for his magical illustrations of this wonderful story. *The Nativity*, illustrated by Ruth Sanderson in the traditional style of an illuminated manuscript, also uses selected from Matthew and Luke as its text.

The Greatest Christmas Stories of all Time is a collection of familiar - *The Gift of the Magi* and *A Christmas Carol* - as well as many unfamiliar tales. They are stories of compassion, courage, hope, sacrifice, and love, and will be treasured by all ages. In *The Christmas Carol Sampler* Margaret Cusack's applique collages and fabric sculpture beautifully illustrate this collection of favorite carol and hymns.

Mary's Story, written by Walter Wangerin Jr. and illustrated by Timothy Ladwig, is the story Mary tells her son Jesus of how he was born. *Joseph's Story*, written by Patricia A. Pingry with paintings by George Hinke, is Joseph's telling of the miracle of the birth of Jesus. *The Story of the Three Wise Kings* is the retelling of this familiar story by beloved children's author/illustrator Tomie dePaola.

The Library Committee

4th Quarter Lunch Bunch

Next Event Is January 24

The 4th Quarter Lunch Bunch is taking a break for the holidays! Since everyone is always so busy in December, our group will not have a December lunch outing. So don't forget to mark your calendars for our next Lunch Bunch adventure, which will take place on Tues, Jan.24. Details in the January Window!

For reservations, call Jeannine Usher at 933-3694.

Living in Community



Bridge Classes Start in January

David Higgins has graciously offered yet again to teach Bridge classes for our IPC members and friends on Monday afternoons beginning in January 2012. There will be an **orientation session on Monday, January 9, at 1:00 p.m.** The classes will last 10-12 weeks and will start on Monday, January 23. Space for these special classes will be limited, so make your reservations now by contacting Jeannine Usher in Congregational Care (933-3694 or jusher@ipc-usa.org). There will be a \$10.00 charge for the classes to cover the cost of materials. Please note: for those whose schedules don't permit a 2-3 month commitment for weekly classes, there will also be a separate room available each week for Bridge lovers to play!

BIRMINGHAM MEN'S CLUB DEC. 19

The Birmingham Men's Club is delighted to once again welcome the ever-popular **Junior League Chorus for the club's Ladies Day and Christmas Program....and wives are of course invited for this special occasion!** The event will take place Monday, December 19, beginning at 10:30 a.m. in the Parlor. The speech and luncheon will be in the Great Hall starting at 11:00 a.m. If you would like more information or want to make a reservation, call Jeannine Usher at 933-3694. **Reminder: advance registration is required for this December event, and your payment is your reservation** Cost: \$8.00/person. Simply mail your check to IPC or drop it by the church no later than December 14.



Parents' Night Out (PNO): Friday, December 2

6:30 - 9:30 p.m.

IPC's next Parents' Night Out, where we have experienced caregivers and fun activities for the kids, will be held on Friday, December 2, and the hours are: 6:30-9:30 p.m.

Cost is \$7.00 per child, and PNO is available for kids up to age 10. Register on the IPC website (www.ipc-usa.org/ParentsNightOut), fill out a card & put it in the PNO box near the reception desk or contact Jeannine Usher to make your reservation. Deadline to register is Friday, December 2, at 12:00 Noon... but *please do register early because the December PNO always fills up early!*

Living in Community

Getting Ready for the IPC Centennial in 2015

Cathy Adams and I are putting out a call to church families and all members for any photographs, anecdotes and memories related to their life at Independent Presbyterian Church. We thought it would be especially fun to collect wedding pictures through the years, as part of our intent to connect the family dots in this congregation. So many families here have been part of IPC since its beginning in 1915, and it's time to make those connections so that everybody now can see and appreciate them.

Our plans include interviewing long-time members as well as collecting and scanning photographs or other memorabilia from the old days. Our idea for the IPC Centennial history is to base much of it on Marvin Whiting's *The Bearing Day is Not Gone* of 1990, but to make this one more of a congregational and social history in addition to the institutional evolution of IPC.

Start rooting around in your scrapbooks and album drawers for church-related documents and photographs. You shouldn't have to root for your wedding photographs! You can reach me by email at futurepast44@gmail.com or by phone at 592-6610. Cathy can be reached at cathycadams@aol.com or by telephone at 918-0877. We'll both be happy to come to you to collect things, and you can be sure that they'll be carefully handled, scanned and returned safely to you.

Linda Nelson

Centering Prayer Workshop: A Great Way to Begin the New Year!

The Spiritual Formation Group will present a Centering Prayer Workshop, which is appropriate **for beginners and for people who practice this method or prayer.** The workshop will offer a unique Christian experience at IPC as the new year begins. Diana Tsasche of Contemplative Outreach, Birmingham will serve as Leader for the special day-long event.

Saturday, January 7, 2012

9:30 - 2:30 p.m.

Fee: \$25.00 (includes box lunch)

Centering Prayer facilitates a movement from more active modes of prayer into a receptive prayer of resting in God. Centering Prayer is meant to enrich and complement other forms of prayer, not to exclude or replace them. Centering Prayer is at the same time a relationship with God and a discipline to foster that relationship. It is Trinitarian in its source, Christ-centered in its focus, and ecclesial in its effects; that is, it builds communities of faith and bonds members together in charity. We hope you will prayerfully consider participating in this event. For more information about workshop content, contact Lucy Turner. To register, you may contact Jeannine Usher in Congregational Care (933-3694 or jusher@ipc-usa.org).

Living in the Spirit



Independent Presbyterian Church
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Birmingham, AL 35205
www.ipc-usa.org

the WINDOW

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Christmas Eve Offering



The Alms boxes on the inside of the IPC Front Doors will once again be in use on Saturday, December 24, at all three services - 12 noon, 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. Since Christmas Day is on a Sunday, and many families may be celebrating the arrival of the Christ Child at home instead of attending worship at IPC, the Session approved making provision for taking up an offering on Christmas Eve. Many members and guests make a special point to attend one of these services even if they haven't attended church in a while.

Special offering envelopes will be included in the noon *Nativity of our Lord* service program and the order of worship for the *Service of Nine Lessons and Carols*. Individuals may use the envelopes to complete their annual pledge or to make a designated year end gift. Undesignated contributions will be directed equally to the Community Ministries Fund and to the IPC General Fund.

We will not pass offering plates during these services, but special wooden boxes will be available beside the candle return containers at each exit to accept your gifts and contributions. And, as always, the Alms Boxes are available, too!

May this Advent and Christmas Season fill you with God's special blessings, and may we worship Christ alone in the humble sharing of our gifts.

Rev. Bobbie Epting
Associate Pastor, Stewardship & Development