

October 2026 Newsletter of Southport United Methodist Church

When the Strange Gets Our Attention

There is something about October that invites us to notice things differently. The air gets cooler, the leaves begin to change, pumpkins appear on porches, and our routines start to shift. There is something about the season that makes room for curiosity, wonder, and even a little mystery.

That is part of what we will explore at Southport United Methodist Church this month through our new sermon series, *Sacredly Strange*. Scripture is filled with stories that are surprising, unusual, confusing, and sometimes even humorous. There are talking animals, mysterious visions, unexpected encounters, and stories that make us stop and ask, "Wait...what just happened?"

Why spend time with stories like these? Because sometimes the stories that surprise us are the ones that get our attention. They interrupt our assumptions and invite us to look again. They remind us that God does not always work in the ways we expect—and that faith has room for mystery, questions, and wonder.

As we enjoy the pumpkins, changing leaves, Fall Festival, and other things that make October special, I hope we will also bring a spirit of curiosity to worship. Rather than assuming we already know what God is going to do, perhaps we can approach Scripture with the question, "What happens next?"

Sometimes the strange is exactly what helps us see God in a new way.

Blessings,

Rev. William G. Nickrand

Challenge for the Month:

This October, practice being curious. Each week, intentionally notice one thing that surprises you, seems unusual, or makes you stop and wonder. Then pause and ask, "What might God be showing me here?" At the end of the month, reflect on what happened when you made a little more room for curiosity and wonder.



SACREDLY -STRANGE-

Sacredly Strange

OCT 1 & 4

Beware the Talking Donkey

Numbers 22:21-39

OCT 8 & 11

The Curse of the Bears

2 Kings 2: 23-25

OCT 15 & 18

The Walking Bones

Ezekiel 37: 1-14

OCT 22 & 25

The Witch of Endor

1 Samuel 28: 3-25

This series invites us to encounter the wonderfully strange and mysterious moments in Scripture that challenge our expectations. Through peculiar, thought-provoking, and even humorous biblical stories, we will learn to recognize God's presence and purpose in ways that stretch our faith and spark imagination.



Communion Schedule
October 1st, 4th
November 5th, 8th



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, October 1st

Thursday, November 5th



Thank you so much to all the volunteers who help make SUMC Work Days a success in completing projects around the church! Save the date for our next **SUMC Work Day** which is **November 28th!**



Make the Mayor KISS a Critter

CHILI, CHARITY & ONE VERY BRAVE MAYOR!

Each year, Southport United Methodist Church's Fall Festival brings our community together over a deliciously competitive event: **the Chili Competition!**

You get to taste the chili, pick your favorites, and help determine which three teams earn the honor of making donations to the **non-profits and charities of their choice**. But there's an important ingredient we can't put in the chili pot: **YOU!**

These charitable gifts are made possible by the incredible generosity of our community. Last year, YOU helped us raise an amazing **\$8,500**, allowing us to support three outstanding organizations: **Ronald McDonald House, The Suicide Prevention Coalition of Johnson County, and Mt. Zion Cemetery Association.**

And this year, we're turning up the fun—and possibly turning up the Mayor's anxiety. To encourage even more generosity, **Mayor Jim Cooney has bravely agreed to kiss a critter!**

Now, you may be wondering, *what critter?* Excellent question. **We have absolutely no idea.** But here's what we do know, **the more money YOU donate, the crazier the critter Mayor Jim will have to kiss!**

So whether you're giving a little, a lot, or just want to see how far we can push our Mayor's definition of "community service," **every dollar makes a difference.** Your generosity means bigger gifts for local charities, more support for organizations doing important work, and, let's be honest, a much more entertaining day for everyone watching Mayor Jim pucker up.



Oct. 17th 11am—2pm

Trunk or Treat-Kids Zone
Vendor Fair-Chili Competition

Text **Southport** to **73256** to give and see what kind of crazy critter we can make Mayor Jim pucker up for!

(Giving is facilitated through Southport United Methodist Church)

SUMC & the City of Southport Partner for a Community Fall Festival!

Southport United Methodist Church is excited to once again reach beyond our walls and into our community! This fall, SUMC is partnering with the City of Southport to help create a fun, welcoming Fall Festival and Trunk or Treat on Saturday, October 17, from 11:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.

This partnership is a wonderful opportunity for our church to connect with children, families, and neighbors throughout the Southport community. Together with the City, we are planning an afternoon filled with fall fun, including Trunk or Treat, games and activities, food, a chili cook-off, and plenty of opportunities for families to enjoy time together.

As we begin preparing, we need the help of our SUMC family!

We have created an Amazon Wish List with supplies that will help us provide candy, prizes, refreshments, games, and other items needed for the festival. If you would like to help, simply choose an item from the list and purchase it for the event.

View our Fall Festival Amazon Wish List here:

https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/273VYPQUC94J3?ref_=wl_share

There will be other ways to get involved, too! In the coming weeks, we will be sharing opportunities to decorate a trunk, volunteer during the festival, help with games and activities, participate in the chili cook-off, assist with setup and cleanup, and more.

Events like this are about much more than candy and games. They give SUMC an opportunity to be present in our community, build relationships with our neighbors, and show families that Southport UMC is a church that cares about and is invested in the community around us.

Whether you donate an item, decorate a trunk, volunteer for an hour, or simply come out and welcome our neighbors, there is a place for everyone to be part of this special day.

Email the office at office@sumc.org if you have any questions!

Thank you for helping SUMC continue to Love God. Love People. Serve the World. right here in Southport!



Habitat for Humanity

Work Day

November 14th, 2026

8:15 a.m.– 2:30 p.m.

Look out for sign ups to participate in this wonderful organization!




CONNECT | GROW | SERVE | GIVE | GO

PUMPKIN CARVING

OCTOBER 3RD

FREE ENTRY

12 P.M. – 3 P.M.

JOIN US FOR PUMPKIN CARVING AT SOUTHPORT UMC!
ALL AGES WELCOME, TREATS PROVIDED!

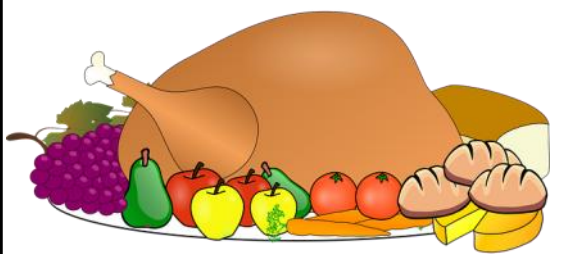
1947 E. Southport Road
Indianapolis, IN, 46227
www.sumc.org

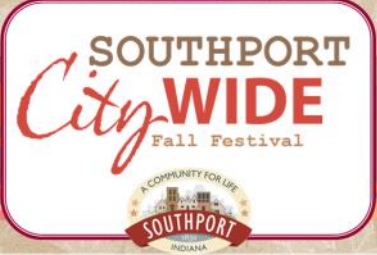
An illustration of four pumpkins with carved faces, surrounded by autumn leaves.

Movie Night: Free Bird
November 6th, 2026
6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

A black silhouette of a movie camera on a tripod, with a film strip running through it.

Free Community Turkey Dinner
November 21st, 2026
4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

An illustration of a roasted turkey on a platter, surrounded by various fruits and vegetables.


A COMMUNITY FOR LIFE
SOUTHPORT INDIANA

Saturday, October 17th

11a.m. – 2 p.m. at Southport UMC

LIVE Music | Free Food | Chili Competition

Trunk or Treat | Kid's Zone

11a.m. – 4 p.m. at Perry Township Academic Center

Vendor & Craft Fair



Scan for more information and to sign up for trunk or treat, chili completion, or vendor information



We are still looking for Chili competition competitors as trunk or treat sign ups! Scan the QR code to sign up!

JUBILEE CHRISTMAS UPDATES

As we draw closer to the holidays, planning for Jubilee Christmas increases. Several families from Homecroft Elementary have been identified with more to be added to make a total of twenty. Our families have many needs for daily living and have very little to add for a Christmas celebration. When hosts contact their assigned family, we discuss needs for the whole family as well as gifts and wishes for the children. Contacts begin in October to gather information and most importantly to establish a relationship with the family.

LOOKING AHEAD NOVEMBER 12/15, 19/22, 29, DECEMBER 3/6

The Jubilee team members will be available in the Gathering Place at our Next Steps table and tag board. There are opportunities to choose tags and shop for a variety of items, to shop for toys and surprises on the Amazon link, and to offer financial donations. You can add your name to a form for being a Helping Hand before or on Jubilee Christmas Day, December 12. And of course, we always welcome more cookie bakers. Cookies and refreshments are available on Jubilee Christmas Day and cookie boxes are filled for the parents to take home to the children.

CURRENT REQUESTS

Host or Co-Host a Family - to serve twenty families this year, two additional Hosts are needed

Spanish Translators - we often have several Hispanic families. Homecroft provides one or two translators to assist; having more makes a difference.

Your Prayers - we value your prayers for the Jubilee Christmas Ministry, our Hosts and especially each Jubilee Family.

C R O S S T R A I N I N G

Cross Training

This opportunity is for interaction between the various cultures represented at SUMC 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 Sunday, October 11th from 11:45-1:45 in the Gathering Place.

Southport UMC Annual Tea Update

Saturday, October 10 from 11 to 1

If you are attending or serving at the tea or just wanting to support Isaiah House we are collecting gifts for the children and toddlers. For the children dolls, squishies, wireless earbuds, sketchpads and for the toddlers puffs or yogurt melts.

If you are interested in serving contact the church office and let them know if you are interested in preparing or serving food, set-up or clean-up.

Joe Howell will be with the servers

Paul Lucas will be in the kitchen



WOMENS NEWS

The Lucille Raines event called Raines Fest that is happening on October 19th- Wednesday --October 21. We would have our items to them after our October 15th donations deadline.

There is a tote labeled in the coat hallway for this collection. There is also a list of the items they sent us on the board above the grocery cart by the bathroom door. Please help collect these items.

Last month, 8 United Women in Faith, Rebekah Circle, traveled to the United Methodist Children's Home in Lebanon for a tour of the facility. It was a very engaging opportunity for all to learn how this Methodist facility works for the benefit of youth in need.

On September 19th, the UWF Circle hosted the Local East Central Heights District Annual Meeting at Southport And On October 13th, Our Rebekah Circle will have the State Social Action Officer Lori Chamber for UWF speak at the meeting. This speaker will identify all UWF is doing to help with Social Actions in need of support in our State. It will be a very informative meeting!!

So Plan to attend: October 13th at 1 pm in the Gathering Area. All are welcome to attend...Not just women!!!

CREATION CARE EVENT

The next free shredding event in Beech Grove is November 7th. It is done at City Hall located at 806 Main Street from 9 AM-12 PM. Arrive early and get in line and it will be a quick event. You do not need to get out of your car. They will unload it all for you.

Items to take are : papers for shredding, metal appliances drop off, Hearing aid recycle, unused syringes, and unused meds,

At church we recycle eyeglasses, pill bottles and other items in bins on the East wall of the Gathering Area. We love the grocery bags for the Harvest Table and Hunger, Inc. food pantry. Thank you for caring for Our EARTH.

FEED A NEED (FAN)

Our October bagging event is on Thursday October 8th at 1 PM in the Gathering Area by the kitchen. The team is very efficient and usually accomplishes this activity in less than an hour. Our host for handing out the meals is "Tear Down the Walls" ministry. Thanks to all for supporting this ministry.

HUNGER, Inc. FOOD PANTRY

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR DONATIONS THRU THE MEIJER SIMPLY GIVE CAMPAIGN. The total amount of \$600 was taken to the Double Match Day on September 12th. Your \$600 became \$1800. With the need for more people coming, the pantry is very thankful for your help. On the 12th of September the pantry had 67 clients (more than several hundred people to feed) come for food. That number grows every month.

Many volunteers are needed to open the pantry each of the 3 days a week it is open. Watch for a Next Steps Table later on to sign up to help serve. The pantry is open on Tuesday 10-1 Thursday 4-7 and Saturday 10-1.

The local schools are signing up to gather food for the pantry from now until Christmas. Food for the following months will be welcome in the grocery basket by the coat hallway.

Also, we have many SUMC members willing to help. Even help paint the front of the building. Thank you to all who help support the pantry in what every way you can. If interested in serving let the church know on a sign up sheet in the Grocery store cart.

Finance

Church	Aug-26	2026 YTD
Income		
Offerings	\$35,114	\$397,280
Other	\$0	\$4,987
Imagination Station "Tithe/offering"	\$7,300	\$48,785
Church Expenses		
Conf. & Dist. Support	(\$5,664)	(\$46,505)
Administration	(\$12,557)	(\$106,880)
Maintenance & Utilities	(\$11,650)	(\$121,693)
Connect, Grow, Serve	(\$22,098)	(\$177,546)
Youth & Child Ministry	(\$1,945)	(\$18,899)
Net	(\$11,500)	(\$20,471)
Imagination Station		
Income	\$52,146	\$357,607
Expense	(\$35,950)	(\$288,212)
"Tithe/offering" to Church	(\$7,300)	(\$48,785)
Net	\$8,897	\$20,610
All Together		
Total Incomes	\$87,260	\$759,874
Total Expenses	(\$89,864)	(\$759,735)
Net	(\$2,603)	\$139

Finance: Giving for a Thriving Future

As we look at the financial life of Southport United Methodist Church, there is much for which to be thankful. Your faithful giving continues to provide the foundation for the ministries that happen here every week from worship and children's and youth ministries to caring for our congregation and serving our community. Our recent financial updates have shown that we have been able to meet our needs and remain on solid footing, even while facing the normal surprises that come with maintaining a church and its ministries.

But a healthy church is about more than simply paying the bills. Our resources allow us to live out our mission of sharing God's grace and hope and making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of our community and the world. Through ministries such as Hunger, Inc., Feed-A-Need, HOPE, Jubilee Christmas, and other outreach efforts, your generosity becomes something tangible: meals, care, encouragement, worship, and hope for our neighbors.

Regular, undesignated giving remains especially important because it supports the church's general budget and the day-to-day ministries that keep SUMC moving forward. Designated gifts to funds such as Faith Promise, Pastor's Ministry, and Pastor's Benevolence provide important support for specific ministries and unexpected opportunities. For example, the Fall Festival is almost entirely funded through designated giving to Faith Promise and Pastor's Ministry. As we look toward the future, our hope is not simply to maintain what we have, but to continue growing in our ability to serve God and our community. Thank you for giving your time, talents, prayers, and financial resources. Every gift matters and together our generosity helps create a strong foundation for a thriving future at Southport UMC.

Thank you for being the church.

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