

Independent Presbyterian Church

BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA



Service for the Lord's Day

The First Sunday in Advent

NOVEMBER 30, 2025 | 10:00 A.M.

Welcome to IPC!



FOUNDED IN 1915, Independent Presbyterian Church has long held a commitment to glorifying the triune God through worship, the use of beauty and the arts, and serving our community in Jesus' name. From the beginning, our founders sought to establish a church reflecting God's love for humanity and humanity's love for God.

Today, we continue this legacy by cultivating meaningful worship, nurturing our congregation to grow as disciples of Jesus, and engaging in acts of service that reflect Christ's command to love God and love our neighbors. Whether you are a life-long follower of Jesus, a new believer, or still curious, know that all are welcome here.

If this is your first visit, you are invited to join us at the Welcome Table in the Parlor following the service. We look forward to meeting you and sharing more about the life of our church.

Children are always welcome to worship with us in the Sanctuary. Materials to build a Worship Bag are in the Parlor before each service. Please replace the items when the service ends. Children kindergarten age and younger may follow the acolyte down the center aisle to the Ground Floor for childcare at the time noted in the service.

We are so grateful that you are here. Please sign the friendship pad located in the pew racks, so we know you are worshiping with us today.

THE COVER features a 2018 acrylic painting of IPC's exterior by McKenzie Kirk Brannon (1960–2025), a beloved friend of IPC whose spirit and art touched the heart of Community Ministries for many years.

The Gathering for Worship

We gather as a Family of Faith and prepare our hearts to worship God.

PRAYER OF PREPARATION

O God, show me that the Kingdom of God is here, in this hour, on this spot. Let me reach out in faith and touch it. Help me to open the gates that it may come in. I walk over diamonds and am poor. I sit at banqueting tables and am hungry. Amen.

from "Beginning the Day" by Henry Edmonds

PRELUDE

"Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme"

J. S. Bach

The service of worship begins with the music of the organ. Through its power and brilliance may you feel the majesty and glory of God; in its quietness, His peace.

INTROIT

"In the beginning was the Word"

George Thalben-Ball

In the beginning was the Word: and the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us: and we behold his glory, full of grace and truth.

LIGHTING OF THE FIRST ADVENT CANDLE

Mr. and Mrs. Mell Gage Smith

Mr. and Mrs. Brad Chase and Miss Connors Chase

❖ HYMN 83

"Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"

STUTTGART

❖ PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Rev. Long

O God, we praise you this Advent for sending light into this world. We confess that we live as though the light had never defeated darkness. We confess that we ignore the Christ you sent to be among us, to be in us. We've kept the birth of your Son confined to the Christmas season and do not yearn for his coming each moment in our waiting hearts. Forgive us for not opening our eyes to Jesus. Prepare us for His return. Help us rejoice in the light, so that your grace can illuminate the darkened places of our hearts. Amen.

A period of silence for personal confession.

❖ KYRIE ELEISON

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

❖ DECLARATION OF PARDON

Minister: Friends, this is the good news of the gospel.

People: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

❖ THE PEACE

Minister: May the peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

People: And also with you.

Minister: Let us share the peace of Christ with one another.

Please exchange the peace with the words, "The peace of Christ be with you."

❖ GLORIA PATRI (HYMN 581)

"Glory Be to the Father"

GLORIA PATRI

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen, amen.**

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Seamon

❖ *Rise in body or spirit.*

The Word

*We listen for the word of God through confession, passing the peace,
Scripture, and preaching.*

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Matthew 24:36-44

Pew Bible, N.T. pg. 21

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

ANTHEM

“Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence”

arr. Gustav Holst

Let all mortal flesh keep silence, and with fear and trembling stand; Ponder nothing earthly minded for with blessing in his hand, Christ our Lord to earth descendeth our full homage to demand. King of Kings, yet born of Mary, as of old on earth He stood, Lord of Lords, in human vesture in the Body and the Blood He will give to all the faithful His own Self for heavenly food. Rank on rank the host of heaven spreads its vanguard on the way As the light of light descendeth from the realms of endless day That the pow’rs of hell may vanish as the darkness clears away. At His feet the six-winged seraph; Cherubim with sleepless eyes, Veil their faces to the Presence, as with ceaseless voice they cry, Alleluya, Lord most High. Amen.

from Greek by G. Moultrie Gustav

During the singing of this anthem, children kindergarten age and younger may follow the acolyte down the center aisle to the Ground Floor for childcare.

SERMON

“Have a Holly, Jolly Apocalypse”

Rev. Seamon

The Response to the Word

We respond to the hearing of God's word through reflection, prayer, and offering.

❖ **HYMN 100** *"My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout"* STAR OF THE COUNTY DOWN

❖ **APOSTLES' CREED**

Rev. Clayton

I BELIEVE in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost; born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven; and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

❖ **PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS**

To give online, text OFFERING to (205) 927-3100 and follow the steps.

❖ **THE DOXOLOGY (HYMN 606)**

"Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow"

OLD HUNDREDTH

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heavenly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

❖ **THE PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

❖ *Rise in body or spirit.*

THE OFFERTORY ANTHEM

“E’en So Lord Jesus, Quickly Come”

Paul Manz

Peace be to you and grace from him who freed us from our sins, who loved us all and shed His blood that we might saved be. Sing holy, holy to our Lord, the Lord, Almighty God, who was and is and is to come; sing holy, holy, Lord! Rejoice in Heaven, all ye that dwell therein, rejoice on earth, ye saints below, for Christ is coming, is coming soon! E’en so, Lord Jesus, quickly come, and night shall be no more; they need no light nor lamp nor sun, for Christ will be their All!

from Revelation 22, adapt. Ruth Manz

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD’S PRAYER

OUR FATHER, who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done; On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts; As we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

The Sending

We are sent out into the world to love God and our neighbors.

❖ HYMN 97

“Watchman, Tell Us of the Night”

ABERYSTWYTH

❖ BENEDICTION

❖ POSTLUDE

“Wake, Awake, for Night is Flying”

Paul Manz

❖ *Rise in body or spirit.*

Flowers

The flowers in the chancel today are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of
Vann Goodner.

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The flowers on the War Memorial are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of
Robert Joseph Verdeyen, Corporal, U.S. Marine Corps; fathers of Jill Deer, grandfather
of Charlie and Will Deer, and great-grandfather of Henry, Grace, and Alice Deer.

Announcements

First Sunday of Advent

Sunday, Nov. 30 | 10:00 a.m. | Sanctuary

As we begin the Advent season together, we will observe our Holiday Worship schedule with one combined service at 10:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary. There will be no Sunday School or Table Service today.

“Light for the Day: Tiny Advent Reflections”

TODAY *Pick-up a copy to begin Advent!*

“Light for the Day: Tiny Advent Reflections” is a beautiful collection of reflections, stories, prayers, and artwork contributed by IPC members across generations. Together, these voices help prepare our hearts to journey through the Advent season with hope and expectation.

The booklets available in the Parlor and a digital version can be found on the Advent at IPC webpage.

November Organ Recital Series

TODAY *4:00 p.m. | Sanctuary*

The 61st Annual November Organ Recital Series concludes this afternoon, featuring Jeff McLelland with a brass quintet and percussion. Learn more at ipcmusic.org.

Christmas Citrus Fruit Orders

TODAY *Last chance to place an order*

Today is the last day to support the IPC Choir by purchasing fresh Christmas citrus fruit. Order forms are available around the church, from any choir member, or online at ipc-usa.org on the Sign Up Links page.

Announcements

Wednesday Chapel & Lunch

Wednesdays in Advent | Noon. | Chapel

Join us each Wednesday in Advent, beginning December 3, for a noonday Chapel service followed by a light lunch in the Great Hall. Please register for lunch (\$5) by noon on the Tuesday prior at ipc-usa.org on the Sign Up Links page.

Children's Advent Workshop

Saturday, Dec. 6 | 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. | Highland Hall

All children are invited to drop in for a morning of Advent fun with snacks, crafts, fellowship, and more. Christmas pajamas are encouraged. Volunteers are needed. Sign up online at ipc-usa.org on the Sign Up Links page.

IPC Choir Christmas Concert

Sunday, Dec. 7 | 6:00 p.m. | Sanctuary

Invite friends and family to this beautiful evening of music as the IPC Choir presents its annual Christmas Concert, a cherished tradition of the season. Accompanied by 10 members of the Alabama Symphony string section, the program will include congregational hymns, choral anthems, and orchestral music of the Christmas season by composers including Jonathan Dove,

Hugo Distler, Ola Gjeilo, William Bradley Roberts, and will end with the beautiful *Ave Maria* by Franz Biebl. Soloists will include Janet Ort, Jane Stump, and Willian Perira da Silva.

Advent Flowers

Deadline to contribute: Monday, Dec. 8.

Honor or remember loved ones by making an Advent flower donation, which provides fresh flowers and greenery throughout the church during the Advent and Christmas season. Envelopes are available at the receptionist desk, or find the online giving form at ipc-usa.org on the Sign Up Links page. Names of loved ones will be printed in the Christmas Eve bulletin.

Angel Tree

Return gifts by Wednesday, Dec. 10!

Thank you for helping us spread Christmas cheer for students in the Children's Fresh Air Farm Summer Learning Program! More than 130 angels have been taken this year. Please remember that all gifts are due by Dec. 10, unwrapped but accompanied by a roll of wrapping paper. For questions or to learn other ways to support our students, contact Marion Dukes at (205) 623-2187 or mdukes@ipc-usa.org.

Prayer List

Copies of IPC's current prayer list are available in the Parlor and Narthex. Our Intercessory Prayer Group meets each Tuesday at 11:00 a.m. in the Chapel to pray by name for those on the list. To submit a prayer request for a loved one, yourself, or any prayer need, please contact Connie Logan at clogan@ipc-usa.org.

Special Gifts Received

Kirkwood: (*Chapel Fund*) In memory of Nancy H. Carlisle. (*Horizon Fund*) In memory of Mrs. Nancy H. Carlisle, Mrs. Laura E. Dana, Mr. William F. Edmonds, Mr. Ezzie "Wayne" Fulmer, Mr. Kevin G. Getsinger, and Mr. John T. Guschke, Jr. (*Life Care Fund*) In memory of Mr. Winfield M. Baird.

Give To IPC

Mail a Check:

Independent Presbyterian Church
3100 Highland Avenue S.,
Birmingham, Alabama 35205

Give Online:

Scan to give in a secure,
convenient format online.



Text to Give:

To give online, text GIVE to
(205) 927-3100 and follow the steps.

2026 Pledge:

Make your annual pledge online by
texting PLEDGE to (205) 927-3100 and
following the steps.

Thank You for Your Gifts:

Questions on how to give can be directed
to Margaret Lane Hollingsworth at
mhollingsworth@ipc-usa.org.

Watch Online

We invite you to worship with us
from wherever you are.
Join the 11:00 a.m. livestream at
[YouTube.com/@IPCBirmingham](https://www.YouTube.com/@IPCBirmingham)

This Week At IPC

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 30

- 10:00 A.M.** Combined Traditional Worship
Service, Sanctuary
4:00 P.M. Organ Recital, Sanctuary
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MONDAY, DECEMBER 1

- 10:00 A.M.** Book Review Group, RM 307
1:00 P.M. Bridge, RM 308/309
5:30 P.M. Yoga, RM 301
6:00 P.M. Boy Scouts, Scout Hut
7:00 P.M. Lakeview AA, RM 307
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TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2

- 11:00 A.M.** Intercessory Prayer, Chapel
1:30 P.M. Centering Prayer, RM 304
3:00 P.M. Chair Yoga, RM 301
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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 3

- 9:00 A.M.** Yoga, RM 301
10:30 A.M. Women at the Well, Garage
10:30 A.M. Caregiver Connect Support Group,
RM 304
12:00 P.M. Advent Chapel & Lunch, Chapel
1:00 P.M. Bridge, RM 308
3:00 P.M. Grief Support Group, RM 304
5:30 P.M. Lakeview Al Anon, RM 304
6:30 P.M. IPC Choir Rehearsal, Music Suite
7:00 P.M. Lakeview AA, RM 307
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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4

- 11:00 A.M.** Knitting Ministry, RM 105
12:00 P.M. Noon Bible Study with Rev. Clayton,
RM 307
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FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5

- 6:30 A.M.** Bill Shanks Bible Study, GH2
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SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6

- 9:00 A.M.** Children's Advent Workshop,
Highland Hall
-

To learn more about our upcoming events and to sign up for classes, please visit *ipc-usa.org*.

PARTICIPANTS IN TODAY'S SERVICES:

The Rev. Kevin J. Long, *Pastor*

The Rev. Susan A. Clayton, *Associate Pastor, Congregational Care & Adult Education*

The Rev. David J. Seamon, *Associate Pastor, Mission & Outreach*

Dr. Jeff R. McLelland, *Director of Music and Fine Arts*

Advent Wreath Lighting:

Mr. and Mrs. Mell Gage Smith

Mr. and Mrs. Brad Chase and Miss Connors Chase

Acolytes:

Helen Ray, Shep Ray

The Independent Presbyterian Church Choir



I N D E P E N D E N T
P R E S B Y T E R I A N C H U R C H

3100 Highland Avenue, South
Birmingham, Alabama 35205

PHONE: (205) 933-1830

OFFICE HOURS: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. weekdays

This congregation is affiliated with The Presbyterian Church (USA)

ipc-usa.org