

Independent Presbyterian Church

BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA



Service for the Lord's Day

The Twenty-Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

SEPTEMBER 21, 2025 | 8:45 A.M. AND 11:00 A.M.

Welcome to IPC!



FOUNDED IN 1915, Independent Presbyterian Church (IPC) has long held a commitment to glorifying God through the use of beauty in every form as well as community service. 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, and engaging in acts of service that reflect our call to love God and love our neighbors. All are welcome.

Thank you for joining us today. Please sign our friendship pad located in the pew racks so we know who is worshipping with us today.

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 telling you more about our church.

Children are 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 in kindergarten and younger may follow the acolyte down the center aisle to the Ground Floor for childcare during the service.

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

Lord, may we be like little children cherishing no malice. May we forgive as we expect forgiveness. Make us large enough to forget. Knit us together in Thee. Remind us of our unity in the Son of God. Amen.

from "Beginning the Day" by Henry Edmonds

PRELUDE

"Adagio"

Frank Bridge

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

"Thou, O Lord hast made us for thyself"

George Thalben-Ball

Thou, O Lord, has made us for thyself, and hearts are restless till they rest in thee.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Psalms 118

Rev. Clayton

Minister: The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.

People: **This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.**

Minister: This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

People: **The Lord is God, and he has given us light.**

All: **O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever.**

❖ HYMN 12

"Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise"

ST. DENIO

❖ PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart and mind and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. In your mercy forgive what we have been, help us amend what we are, and direct what we shall be, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Through Jesus Christ we pray. 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. Long

INVITATION TO FALL GRACE GROUPS

Steve Hunt

The Word

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

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Acts 15:36-41

Pew Bible, N.T. pg. 103

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM

"I Saw a Stranger Yestereen"

William Bradley Roberts

I saw a stranger yestereen; I put food in the eating place, drink in the drinking place,
music in the list'ning place. And with the sacred name of the triune God, he blessed us
and our house, our cattle and our dear ones. As the lark said in her song: often, often,
often, goes the Christ in the stranger's guise.

Ancient Gaelic Rune

*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

"Breaking Up Is Hard to Do"

Rev. Long

The Response to the Word

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

❖ **HYMN 300** *"We Are One in the Spirit"* THEY'LL KNOW WE ARE CHRISTIANS

❖ **APOSTLES' CREED** **Rev. Newton**

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.

RECOGNITION OF NEW MEMBERS (11:00 A.M.)

"Blest Be the Tie That Binds"

SCHUMANN

**Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love.
The fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.**

Tommy Bowen
Zach Crossman
John Fischer

Sierra Lawrence
Donna and Tim Mask
Giuli Williams

❖ **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

THE OFFERTORY ANTHEM

“Greater Love Hath No Man”

John Ireland

Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it. Love is strong as death. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness. Ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus. Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. I beseech you brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies, a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

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 463	<i>“How Firm a Foundation”</i>	FOUNDATION
❖ BENEDICTION		
❖ POSTLUDE	<i>“Voluntary in G”</i>	Henry Heron

Flowers

The flowers in the chancel today are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of
Charles Swift Northen, III.

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The flowers on the War Memorial are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of
Thomas Pankey, U.S. Army; and in honor of **Thomas Pankey, Junior**, U.S. Navy;
Maggie Adams Jones, U.S. Marines; **Bradley Jones**, U.S. Marines; **William Pankey**, U.S.
Navy; and **John Pankey**, U.S. Navy; family of Valerie Pankey and Valerie Watson.

Announcements

Fall Grace Groups

TODAY | *Registration is now open*

Grow in faith and fellowship this fall by joining a Grace Group at IPC. Groups will meet Oct. 12–Nov. 16 to study *Matthew: The Gospel of Promised*

Blessings by Matthew L. Skinner. Each small group is led by IPC members and meets at different times and locations, so you can find a group that works for you. Sign up at ipc-usa.org on the Sign Up Links page or in the Parlor this morning

❖ *Rise in body or spirit.*

Announcements

Camera Crew

TODAY | 11:00 a.m. | *Sanctuary*

This morning, a camera crew is capturing video footage for the IPC Now & Forever Endowment Campaign. They will work discreetly to minimize disruption. Thank you for understanding. Learn more about the campaign at ipcforever.org.

Provide & Serve Dinner at First Light

Sept. 22-30 | First Light Shelter

Volunteer with your family or a group to provide evening meals Sept. 22-30 for the women and children staying at First Light. Sign up at ipc-usa.org on the Sign Up Links page.

456 Bible Retreat

Saturday, Sept. 27 | 9:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m. | Children's Fresh Air Farm

All 4th, 5th, and 6th graders are invited to join us for our annual Bible Retreat, a day of learning, fellowship, and fun. Register at ipc-usa.org on the Sign Up Links page. *4th graders will receive their Bibles during the 11 a.m. worship service on Sunday, Sept. 28.*

September Lunch Bunch

Tuesday, Sept. 30 | 11:30 a.m. | Porch, 2 Dexter Avenue, Mountain Brook

Join the Lunch Bunch crew for a meal and

fellowship at Porch in Crestline. We'll meet at the restaurant at 11:30 a.m. This is a self-pay event, but please register at ipc-usa.org on the Sign Up Links page so we have an accurate headcount.

Save the Date: IPC Crop Drop 2025

Sunday, Oct. 19 | 2:00–4:00 p.m. | Large IPC Parking Lot

All ages 5 and up are invited to help sack sweet potatoes for our neighbors experiencing food insecurity. This is a family-friendly event! Childcare will be available for children up to age 4 with registration. Register at ipc-usa.org on the Sign Up Links page.

Now & Forever Fall Dinner

Sunday, Oct. 12 | 6:00 p.m. | The Home of Merrill Stewart

The congregation is warmly invited to the home of Merrill Stewart for an evening of food and fellowship as we share stories and learn how the IPC Now & Forever Endowment Campaign is ensuring our church thrives today and for generations to come. RSVP by Thursday, Oct. 9 at ipc-usa.org on the Sign Up Links page.

Questions? Margaret Lane Hollingsworth at mhollingsworth@ipc-usa.org or (205) 933-3731. Learn more at ipcforever.org.

Special Gifts Received

Kirkwood Funds: (*Activities - Skilled Nursing*) In memory of Mr. Uhland O. Redd, III. (*Employee Christmas Fund*) In memory of Mrs. Jane B. Dulin. (*Horizon Fund*) In memory of Mr. James C. Bobbitt, Mrs. Jane B. Dulin, Mr. William F. Edmonds, and Mr. Robert C. Lee. (*Trails & Garden Fund*) In memory of Mrs. Jane B. Dulin.

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.

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.

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 on *YouTube @IPCBirmingham*.

This Week At IPC

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

8:45 A.M. Traditional Worship, Sanctuary

10:00 A.M. Sunday School

11:00 A.M. Traditional Worship, Sanctuary

5:00 P.M. Table Worship, Highland Hall

5:00 P.M. Youth Group, Garage

SUNDAY SCHOOL AT 10:00 A.M.

- Bonhoeffer's Life Together: A Classic Exploration of Faith in Community (Reformed Class), RM 309
- Finding Resilience, Joy, and Our Identity in Jesus Christ (Presbyterian Women), RM 304
- The Biblical Prophetic Purpose (Wonder Years & Seekers Classes), RM 305 & 306
- Woven: Nurturing a Faith Your Kid Doesn't Have to Heal From (Bridges & Crossroads), Garage
- In the Trenches: Faithful Families (New Parent Class), RM 302
- Foundations (Young Adults Class), RM 303
- Youth Sunday School (7th-12th Grade), RM 101
- Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (2K-6th Grade), Ground and 1st Floors
- Nursery (6 weeks-18 months), RM G05

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

9:15 A.M. Home for Faith, Garage

5:30 P.M. Yoga, RM 301

6:00 P.M. Boy Scouts, Scout Hut

7:00 P.M. Lakeview AA, RM 307

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

11:00 A.M. Intercessory Prayer, Chapel

1:30 P.M. Centering Prayer, RM 304

3:00 P.M. Chair Yoga, RM 304

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

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

10:30 A.M. Zoom Bible Study

5:30 P.M. Lakeview Al Anon, RM 304

7:00 P.M. Lakeview AA, RM 307

WEDNESDAY NIGHT PROGRAMMING

5:00 P.M. The Upward Way, RM 305/306

5:00 P.M. Youth Grant Team, RM 101

5:30 P.M. Wednesday Night Dinner, Great Hall

5:30 P.M. Home for Faith, RM 105

5:30 P.M. Kids ROCK, Ground & 1st Floors

6:00 P.M. Bible Study with the Pastor, RM 218

6:00 P.M. Whimsy Wednesdays, RM 302

6:00 P.M. Traveling the Path of Labyrinth, RM 301

6:30 P.M. IPC Choir Rehearsal, Music Suite

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 25

11:00 A.M. Knitting Ministry, RM 105

12:00 P.M. Noon Bible Study with Rev. Clayton, RM 307

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

6:30 A.M. Bill Shank's Bible Study, GH2

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27

9:00 A.M. 456 Retreat, Children's Fresh Air Farm

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. D. Nicole Newton, *Associate Pastor, Discipleship*

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

Acolytes:

(8:45 a.m.) Layton Meriwether, Sam Meriwether, Gavin Vanlandingham

(11:00 a.m.) Andrew Grover, Walter Grover, Molly Wykle

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