

DECEMBER 2023 at Ingomar Church

A quick look at what's new and exciting this month for church friends and family

Come for our Advent / Christmas Message Series

Please join us each Sunday in Advent for our message series "Born to Deliver." As we prepare ourselves through scripture and song, our series will consider Isaiah's prophecy of comfort for God's people (Isaiah 40:1-5), the assurance of Psalm 24 that the King of Glory comes to "those who seek the face of God," Isaiah's prophecy of the joy of redemption (Isaiah 35), and the promise to those who walk in the ways of the Lord (Isaiah 2:2-5).

On Christmas Eve, we celebrate the birth of "Jesus, the Light of the World" (Luke 2:1-20) and on December 31, we respond by proclaiming the Good News (Luke 2:8). Please join us throughout this Advent journey and as we celebrate this wondrous Christmas season!

Blue Christmas – A Service of Hope and Comfort

Our Blue Christmas Service is offered especially for those who are hurting or burdened with worry during the holidays.

Some people come because they are mourning the death of a loved one. Some are far from home. Some suffer from illness, addiction, or estrangement. Some are lonely, struggling financially, or in conflict with others. Some hurt because of the great pain, need, and violence in our nation and world. The reasons for coming are many.

We gather in the midst of this suffering to remember that God is good. God is strong. God is near. We are not alone, and we have every reason to hold onto hope.

Our service is on **Wednesday, December 13 at 7 pm** in the Ingomar Church sanctuary (Entrance #1).

December Worship Schedule

December 3 - Come Thou Long Expected Jesus
8:30 & 10 Traditional & 11 Contemporary
Pastor Greg

December 10 - Lift Up Your Heads You Mighty Gates
8:30 & 10 Traditional & 11 Contemporary
Pastor Greg

December 13 - Blue Christmas
7pm in the Sanctuary

December 17 - O Come O Come Emmanuel
8:30 & 10 Traditional & 11 Contemporary
Pastor Greg

December 24 - It Came Upon the Midnight Clear
10am Traditional in the Sanctuary
Pastor Cyndi

December 24 - Christmas Eve
Jesus the Light of the World - Pastor Greg
4pm Family Service in the Sanctuary
7pm Contemporary Worship in Fellowship Hall
9pm Traditional Service in the Sanctuary
11pm Traditional with Communion in the Sanctuary

December 31 - Go Tell It On the Mountain
10am Traditional in the Sanctuary
Pastor Cyndi

This service provides a space of solace and reflection with a gentle ambiance, reflective music, and the message is centered around God's promise of hope and healing.

Whether you are seeking comfort for yourself or accompanying someone in their journey through the holiday season, Blue Christmas is a place where you can find the supportive community you need.

Feel free to invite friends, family, or anyone you know who might benefit from this sacred space for thought, prayer, compassion, and grace.

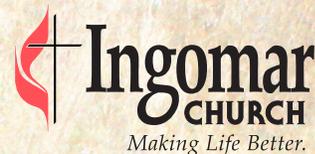
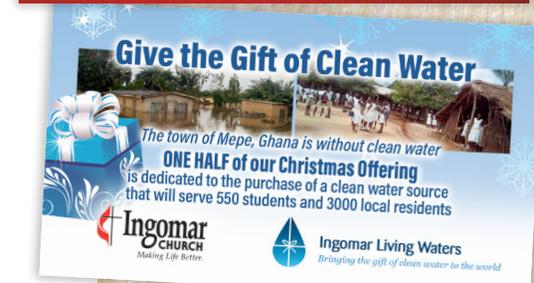
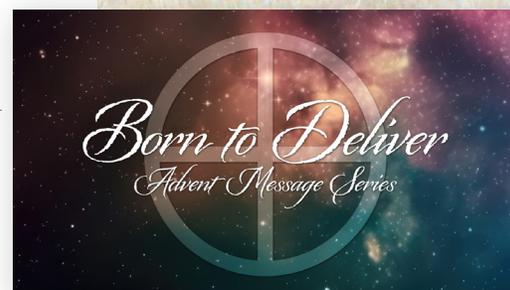
Following worship, there will be time for to expand on that sense of community through a time of fellowship with light refreshments in our Gathering Space.

Serve on Christmas Eve

Offering a warm welcome, and caring for every person who attends is an important calling ... especially on Christmas Eve! Please consider *attending one service* and *serving at another*.

To volunteer to serve, please make a note on your Connect Card in worship, or contact Erin Toohey: etoohy@ingomarchurch.org.

at a glance



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Advent Study: An Unlikely Advent

Extraordinary people of the Christmas Story by Rachel Billups

The study guides us through the stories of Elizabeth and Zechariah, Herod, the Magi, and the Shepherds. Each set of unexpected characters has something to teach about living faithfully on the journey to Christmas.

This study follows a DVD format (the book is optional), and is led by Tom Kendig at the following meeting times:

Sunday Morning at 9:45-10:45am in Room 225, Worship and Education Center

Wednesday Morning at 10am-11:45am in the Gracious Space, Room 109, Community Life Center

Wednesday Evening at 6:30-8:00pm in Room 211, Worship and Education Center

Coming Soon!

Christianity 101: Journey into Christianity 101 to discover and discuss the beliefs, history, and traditions that define Christianity. Whether you come to this class with a strong faith background, a curiosity about Christianity, or a desire to engage in thoughtful discussions about matters of spirituality, all are warmly welcomed. Watch your weekly e-News for more info or contact Pastor Cyndi: cbloise@ingomarchurch.org

Saving Grace: A Guide to Financial Well-Being

In January, Pastor Greg is leading a small group with two meeting time options: Monday afternoons or Tuesday evenings. This study addresses the topics of saving, earning, giving, spending, and debt, along with helpful strategies for achieving a sustainable financial life. Watch for more details coming soon.

Electronic Giving is Easy!

Choose from online giving through our website: ingomarchurch.org/give or our mobile "myVanco" giving app, or simply text an amount (preceded by a dollar sign) to 412-504-7798 and enter a giving code. Thank you for your generosity!

Next Generation Ministry – Highlights from November!

Fall Youth Retreat Recap

Whether it's a friend, teammate, or someone you just met at a weekend retreat, the first step in getting to know someone is usually learning their name. But when that person becomes more than just a name, a real relationship can begin. In the same way, we can build a relationship with God!

The idea of building a personal relationship with God was at the center of our retreat theme: "By Name." We explored passages from Genesis all the way through the New Testament, trying to understand what it means to know, and be known, by the God who made us.



A total of 22 Students and 11 adults attended the Fall Retreat. Big thanks to all who supported our ministry in any way, shape, or form!

Ingomar Kids First Choir Rehearsal

We are so excited about the turnout at our first kids choir practice on November 30.

We can't wait for you to hear these sweet kids at the 4pm family Christmas Eve service. What a blessing! Special thanks to the parents!



Next Generation Ministry NEWS

Ingomar Youth Grinch Night, December 3

The Grinch has stolen Christmas at Ingomar Youth! Help us save Christmas by returning all the presents, decorations, and of course the roast beast! Middle School from 5pm to 6:30pm and High School from 6:30pm to 8:30pm.

Ingomar Kids & ICEC - Parents' Night Out

Ingomar Kids and Ingomar Child Enrichment Center are hosting Parents' Night Out, Friday, December 8. All children – 3 years old through 2nd grade – are invited to a holiday-themed event from 5:30-8pm in Fellowship Hall, while parents have an evening to themselves! We'll have activities, pizza, cookies, hot chocolate & a movie!

Ingomar Youth Christmas Party

Our Ingomar Youth Christmas Party is December 17, 5pm to 6:30pm for Middle School and 6:30pm to 8:30pm for High School. Enjoy appetizers and a gingerbread house building contest, followed by "white elephant" gift exchanges. Please bring a MAX \$10 "white elephant" gift

and two bags of candy for gingerbread house decorating (one bag for your group / one bag to share!).

Nerf Night

Nerf Night is January 7 from 5pm to 6:30pm for Middle School and 6:30pm to 8:30pm for High Schoolers. More info to come.

New Teaching Series

Our favorite Christmas memories might involve snowball fights, presents, or time with people we love. The end of the year is a great time to reflect and think about all that we can be thankful for — even if things didn't work exactly how we planned. God gives us so much, and the birth of Jesus is a great way to focus on all of the gifts we've received this year. Retelling classic Christmas stories teaches us about gratitude and thankfulness. Learning about the prophecies and stories of Jesus' birth, students are reminded to be thankful for each other, what God has done, and God's promises, and to be thankful even when it's not easy.

Ingomar Child Enrichment Center Early Registration

Members of Ingomar Church may register early for the Ingomar Child Enrichment Center 2024-2025 school year. If you are not currently a member of Ingomar Church, you can register with the public on January 10, 2024. Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis.

Please contact Liz Pultorak with any questions or concerns: lpultorak@ingomarchurch.org or 412-364-4089



Ingomar Child Enrichment Center

**EARLY REGISTRATION
for 2024-2025**

Ingomar Church & ICEC Families can register NOW
Registration opens to the Public on January 10

Ingomar Living Waters Christmas Offering Project

Ingomar Living Waters (ILW) is a ministry of Ingomar Church. Since its founding in 2011 when Ingomar Church decided to devote its Christmas Eve offering to bringing the gift of clean water by funding a water project, ILW has grown to bring the gift of clean water to over 700,000 people across 32 countries.

Half of this year's Christmas Eve offering at Ingomar Church will go towards a clean water project in Mepe, Ghana.

In 2023, the worst flooding in decades devastated large swaths of central Africa ranging from Somalia and Kenya in the east to Niger and Ghana in the west.

One of the hardest hit areas is along the Volta River delta in southeast Ghana, affecting towns downstream including the town of Mepe. In Mepe, about 200 homes were washed away and thousands of homes were flooded.

Approximately 95% of the people in Mepe get their water from the Volta River. Since the flooding, the

Volta River has been so contaminated by receding floodwaters that it is very dangerous to drink. While Mepe needed a public clean water source prior to the flooding, **access to clean water has now become critical.**

For this year's Christmas Offering project, ILW has partnered with a Pittsburgh-based charity called **Hope for Ghana** to help those in Mepe.

They are working to put a borehole well with an electric pump and storage tanks next to the junior high school in Mepe. This will not only provide public access to clean water for the first time ever in Mepe, it will provide easily accessible water to the 550 students at the school in addition to another 3,000 in the local area.

This project will cost \$15,000. Please be generous in helping us bring the Christmas gift of clean water to the people of Mepe, Ghana.

To give now, scan the QR code, specify an amount and choose "Christmas Offering" as the designated account.

For more information about Ingomar Living Waters, visit ingomarlivingwaters.org.



The town of Mepe, Ghana is without clean water due to devastating flooding.



A new clean water source near the school will serve 550 students and 3000 local residents.



Scan QR to give the gift of clean water!



Scan QR to order today

Your Help is Needed!

Ingomar Church Volunteers are providing a Christmas meal & fellowship for homeless/food-insecure folks at Daily Bread on Dec. 24

WAYS YOU CAN HELP:

Purchase items for Gift Bags

Visit our Amazon registry, Northside Christmas Gift Bags 2023

ALL GIFT ITEMS

must be received by December 13 ... to allow time to assemble the gift bags for 150 people.

Bake and Donate Cookies

Please put them in a plastic container marked for Daily Bread with the quantity included. Cookies can be placed in the freezers in the Fellowship Hall Kitchen or dropped off at the church office.

Donate Christmas Cards

Sign them 'Merry Christmas! Your friends at Ingomar Church'

Volunteer on December 24

Although this is a busy day, we would like to take 15-20 volunteers to help serve, visit with people, and help us to make this a festive occasion. We would love for someone to join us with a keyboard to play Christmas music! Volunteers must be at least 13 years old. We will be back in time to attend Christmas Eve worship.

If you have any questions or would like to volunteer, please email Paula Dahm at pmdahm@gmail.com or call 412-999-4242.

Thank you, Earl Marsh, for 20 years of Service at Global Links

For 20 years, Earl Marsh has been a monthly volunteer with Global Links, and has served as liaison between Global Links and our volunteers for the past 16 years.



Global Links is a Pittsburgh-based non-profit dedicated to improving health in communities with need. They share surplus rescued from the US healthcare system to support health programs globally and locally. Our volunteers help to repack these supplies for shipping.

This month, at the age of 96½, Earl is stepping down as liaison. Through his service, Earl has helped countless people get the supplies they need and

cannot otherwise afford. Thank you, Earl, for faithfully representing Ingomar Church in this mission!

While Earl intends to continue participating as he is able, this creates an opportunity for someone who is passionate about health in communities in need, who is willing to serve as liaison to coordinate our volunteers. There is also always a need for more volunteers on the third Thursday of each month.

To see what is involved, consider working on a Family Volunteer Day: Saturdays December 2 and 9, from 10am-12pm and 1-3 pm. Register at: globallinks.org/events/family-volunteer-day-2.

Contact Pastor Cyndi: cbloise@ingomarchurch.org or Earl Marsh if you would like to know more or would consider being our new liaison for Global Links.

Follow us on Social Media

facebook.com/ingomarchurch
instagram.com/ingomarchurch
twitter.com/ingomarchurch

Consider Legacy Giving

Please add this line to your will: "After my bills are paid, I want 10 percent of my estate (a tithe) to go to Ingomar United Methodist Church." Ask your legal advisor about this.

Serving at Ingomar Church

When we look around, we see a world in need. We serve to make an impact. We serve because we love people. We love people because God first loved us. We serve because Jesus showed us how to serve, and serving him brings people to know him. We serve because life is better with Jesus at the center.

Learn more about specific serving opportunities at Ingomar Church at <https://ingomarchurch.org/serve/>



Hospitality Hub
Getting to know you ...

Social Time Sunday is December 17. Enjoy light refreshments and fellowship with your friends and family. Please consider bringing your own travel mug with lid to help us reduce our overhead costs.

Christmas Volunteers are Needed:

We have four Services on Christmas Eve: 4pm Family Service, 7pm Contemporary, 9pm Traditional and 11pm Traditional with Communion. All services are in the sanctuary (Entrance #1). This is a wonderful time to serve as a family. We have many opportunities to serve! Greet at the doors, serve as an usher, help with hospitality. Communion stewards are needed for the 11pm service. Please consider how you and your family can serve the Lord and Ingomar Church this Christmas Season. If you can help, please make a note on your connect card or email Erin at etoohy@ingomarchurch.org

Please Note – There is only ONE Service at 10am on Sunday, December 24 (Christmas Eve Morning) and Sunday, December 31 (New Years Eve morning). Volunteers are needed at these services as well. *Please consider serving at these services!*

2024 Altar Flower Dates Are Open

You can donate Altar Flowers electronically—a wonderful way to remember loved ones or to celebrate a special day or occasion. Find the form on the home page in IConnect, under Forms - 2024 Altar Flowers. You may also call the Church Office to request a date.

Save the Date: Undecorating Christmas

We will take down the Christmas decorations on Monday, January 8, 2024 from 3pm-7pm. Dinner will be provided. Please plan to join us — all helping hands are welcome.

Quick Notes

Launching a Legacy Campaign Update

We have received over \$1.9 million in donations towards the campaign.

Over \$641,000 has been allocated to the Capital Reserve Endowment, generating annual income for future capital projects.

Over the past year, the endowment has generated over \$17,000.

Over \$1,052,000 has been allocated to the Capital Reserve Fund.

Project updates:

- Replaced the exterior door at Entrance 5 of the Worship & Education Center building
- Building enclosure of air handler in the MAC Room

Estimate of Giving Cards

Commitment Sunday results — As of November 20, we received commitments from 76 families, for a total of \$599,610. If you have not yet submitted an Estimate of Giving card for 2024, you may place it in the offering during worship, turn it into the church office, or submit electronically using this QR code.



Launching a Legacy
generation to generation



Scan QR to submit your 2024 estimate of giving

Order Christmas Poinsettias - Help us beautify our

Church Sanctuary for Christmas Eve services by ordering Soergel's Poinsettias to honor or memorialize a loved one. This is also a great way to share your appreciation for church groups, ministries and staff. We will have a lovely variety of seasonal colors to choose from. Poinsettias are \$10 each. **Please place your order by December 11.**



Scan QR to order now

Thanksgiving on Every Table

Thank you to all who supported the Thanksgiving On Every Table food drive. This year Ingomar Church donated 40 bags of food, grocery store gift cards totaling \$300 and monetary donations of \$4680! Your generosity provides meals for many local families through North Hills Community Outreach.

Angel Tree Reminder

Every holiday season, North Hills Community Outreach (NHCO) holds a toy collection, allowing thousands of children in need to have a memorable holiday. To support this effort, our Mission Outreach Committee sponsors an Angel Tree project.

If you are participating in this year's Angel Tree project, **please remember to purchase your suggested gift and return it to the church (unwrapped) by December 6.** Your support is very much appreciated.

HEARTH Gift Card Donations

Mission Outreach Volunteers are asking for donations to be used toward gift cards for Christmas to help families that utilize HEARTH as their refuge. Look for them at the rear of the worship spaces, Dec. 3, 10 & 17.

HEARTH is a warm place to find support, community with others and a place to call home because a safe place matters. From its inception, HEARTH has been unapologetically committed to providing safe, affordable housing to every mom in need.

Welcome Josh Poindexter

Please join us in welcoming our new Multimedia Technician & Videographer, **Josh Poindexter** who joined our staff on Monday, November 27.



Josh has a degree in Media Ministry from Waynesburg University. He recently attended a program with the Contemporary Music Center in Nashville, where he studied under music industry professionals and put on 14 music shows while working in different tech positions. He also served on the tech team at the 2023 WPAUMC Annual Conference in Erie, PA.

Auction Heroes 2024

Save the Date for our 2024 Online Service Auction:

Friday, February 23 from 6pm-9pm

Start thinking about what service you might donate to be auctioned, and plan to bid at the auction! All proceeds benefit Ingomar Church Mission Outreach. More information coming soon!

MOPS Group for moms of young children

Our group meets the 1st and 3rd Thursday morning each month. Childcare is available. Learn more at ingomarchurch.org/mops-2023-2024



• Pastor Greg Cox • Pastor Cyndi Bloise

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Church Family

Sympathy to:

The family and friends of Ellen and Keith Colonna Sr. and of Rachel and Eddie Ord on the passing of Ellen's mom, Rachel's grandmother, **Barbara Bakken** on November 24

The family and friends of Harry Abbott on the passing of his wife, **Carole Abbott** on November 24



Given to the glory of God

December 3

Marilyn Helm in memory of Jack Helm

Earl Marsh in memory of his mother Earlene Marsh

December 17

Bob Taylor in honor of his daughter Heidi, Grandchildren (Tyler & Jenna) and son-in-law, Rob