

# East Columbus United Methodist Church

*A Church for Everyone!*

JANUARY 2026

IN THE  
*beginning*  
WAS THE  
*word.*

John 1:1





## *May 2026 Be a Year That Shines Brightly Like a Candle*

May the peace of God always be with you.

As I looked at the empty Advent candles in front of the sanctuary, I found myself reflecting on our lives. Before a candle is lit, it is empty, hollow, lonely, and dark. But when the flame of Jesus Christ is placed upon that empty candle, it begins to shine brightly, burns fervently, and radiates joy through its light.

In the same way, without Jesus in our lives, we would all be empty. But Jesus has come to us and has become a bright and shining flame in our lives.

As we begin the new year of 2026, my hope and prayer is that the light of Jesus will fill our lives abundantly, so that we, as Christians, may shine His light brightly into the world.

The Bible says:

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make straight your paths.” (Proverbs 3:5-6)

As we begin 2026, we are being called to a place of deeper trust in God. In the new year, our church community desires to walk forward with the following commitments:

- (1) **A church grounded in God’s Word,**  
allowing Scripture to shape our faith, our decisions, and our daily lives.
- (2) **A church devoted to prayer,**  
seeking God’s guidance not only individually, but together as a community of faith.
- (3) **A church marked by love,**  
reflecting Christ’s compassion within our congregation and to the world around us.



In the lives of each and every one of us, the new year will bring both small and great challenges. Yet in all of these moments, I encourage you to trust that God is already at work, and to move forward with faith rather than fear, and with prayer rather than anxiety.

I earnestly pray that in 2026, God’s will for our church will be fulfilled, and that the Lord’s peace and grace will overflow in every family and in every place of life.

I love and bless you all in Christ!

In Christ’s love,  
Pastor Jongmin



This article will get a little technical. A little explanation is needed at first, so bear with me.

I have been working on databases off and on at home. A database is a program to store records on your PC (collections, business, personnel, or customer records, address books, recipes and many other things) and doing things such as retrieving, printing, manipulating, calculating with that information, with a lot more power and flexibility than making a simple list on paper. An old library card catalog might be considered a type of database before the ability to do electronically with options far beyond what the card catalog had.

I have used AI (artificial intelligence) to write Macros for my home database (this is automating certain repetitive tasks) for me. One was to duplicate an entry (say an LP) to add a CD I have of the same album, and have it duplicate the parts of the data that is the same in both (artist, album name, record label, tracks, year etc. rather than enter them all again, but leave blank the parts that were different such as the ID #, format (LP, tape, cassette, 8 track) . That way I only have to type the info that is different in the copy. Another macro has been trying to compare data sent from one database to another to make sure it is done correctly with no data loss. Perhaps another article will explain the need for that that which was to some extent foisted on me.

That brings me here. This has been really frustrating as AI has limitations and bad points, but I know nothing about writing macros, and it has also been helpful at times in how to do certain things, once I get past false information, and other annoyances first. I would ask it to write these macros and explain what I wanted them to do. Its results would often not work, and it would have to correct parts of how it wrote the macro to try to make it work. It often stated that the error was because the database program didn't behave the same way other programs in the suite did (I am using a free alternative to Microsoft Office programs). This office suite (collection of programs) has free alternatives to Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Publisher and Access. We have used their version of PowerPoint for the sing-a-long slides and VBS on laptops without Microsoft Office). Their database program hasn't been updated nearly as often or kept current with the other programs, so the same things that worked in those programs didn't always work with the database, or sometimes the newer version took out some previous feature, or changed how to do it.

These problems with AI went on several times. I did learn certain things during all of this hassle (though still not how to write macros). The AI kept making the same mistakes it had made before (going in circles with what it had already tried). I wasn't paying attention to its detailed explanations about why it failed other than seeing the initial sentence explaining how Base didn't have such feature or the procedure was different. After seeing some I had seen more than once before, I finally got frustrated and asked it why it kept making the same mistakes over and over again and never remembering how the database program differed.

- 1. Then it hit me in several ways. We don't often learn from our mistakes, sins etc. and find ourselves doing the same things over and over at times. They stop us or delays us from reaching God's purpose for us.**
- 2. History can be important. Knowing what works and doesn't work, and where we went wrong before can help us to do better.**
- 3. Carrying on to certain things from the past is good. If it isn't broke, don't fix it (unless there are benefits to changing). For instance, most of us wouldn't want to go back to using horse and buggies, outhouses and so forth even though those things worked fine at the time**

We recently celebrated our anniversary as a congregation. Looking at the great times in our history is fun. It can either motivate us to carry on, or maybe discourage us. We aren't exactly the same church we were back then. We have changed some, the times have changed some, the packaging the gospel is wrapped up in has changed, but the mission has not. Our role in the mission in the greater church isn't where what it was back then with a lot more members and resources, but we still have work to do. We are to still reach others for Christ and advance His kingdom regardless.

A common thread in at least two of the videos from the alumni was our that we reached out to the hurting and needy. Although we don't have the resources to continue on with Christmas Circus, or to offer the same level of help we did then, we are still helping the needy with things like Love Chapel, Samaritan's purse, Grace's Table and the blessing box. Like the parable of the talents, we aren't held responsible to do as much as those given more "talents" should do, but we are still held responsible to do with the talents we do have. And if you look at the parable, the person with five talents made five more, and the person with two talents made two more. So, although the person with two didn't make five like the person with five, he did double his which is what the person with five did. The person with two could have been discouraged that he didn't have five like the other had, didn't have the ability to make five even if he did his best, and just not tried at all. But then, those two he made that added to the five would not have happened.

In keeping with history, I will end this with a Bruce Buckley quote: "Be encouraged, my friends."

# HOOSIER TRAILS COUNCIL

## Troop 549



December 12, 13 and 14<sup>th</sup>

We had a great time at our annual campout at Camp Louis Ernst at the Winter cabin. This is the boy's favorite campout of the year. The weather was finally cold and snowy for the campout for a change. We have the cabin reserved for next year.

December 18<sup>th</sup>

We had a great time at our Christmas party for the troop. We played bingo and gave away scouting prizes. We had a lot of good snacks. We had a gift exchange for the boys.

January

We have yet planned our outings for the year. I know we have a camporee in the spring at Connersville with a railroad theme. We may be going to Canoeopia outdoors event in Madison Wisconsin again this year. I think we may be going to Minnesota to the Boundary Waters Canoe Wilderness Area this year. Summer camp this year is the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of June. I am sure Ray's Indoor Bike park will be on the schedule again this year.

January 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, and 18<sup>th</sup>

This is the weekend of the Winter Rendezvous. Our troop is running the obstacle course again this year. We have a wild game feast on Saturday night. We are hoping for snow again this year.

If you know any boys that are interested in scouting the door is always open for their visit on our scout nights. Please feel free to pass my contact information to anyone interested in visiting or joining our troop. Boys ages need to be 11 years old to join and less than 18. Meeting time Thursday is at 6:30 – 8:00 at the Youth Center.

Bruce McIntosh, Scoutmaster  
812-374-9009  
brucemcintoshbsa@yahoo.com



## **EVERYYHING**

Last year Pastor had a sermon series on Elijah ... he's one of my favorite Bible characters ... we can all learn a lot from him!

Remember in 1 Kings 17:8 – 17 how the flour and oil never ran out? The widow gave her all and God blessed her with not only food for her body but food for her soul.

And, remember before the miracle of the never ending food supply that it was Elijah who approached her. Pretty cheeky, don't you think? Asking a perfect stranger to give her all even after she'd said how little she had ... but Elijah knew that God would use her in a mighty way

Lots of life lessons from that story and miracle ... here are a few thoughts ...

Be Thankful for God's DAILY Provision ... I think of our usual practice of tithing ... sometimes it's hard to give to God first but I can guarantee that God will provide for your needs. He will not fail you!

God will give us everything we need but first we have to give our everything to God.

Be Willing to Allow God to Use You ... the widow could have said no to Elijah ... it was well within her right to refuse ... but she didn't ... she trusted and God had a plan. Though she was just a poor widow, she allowed God to use her and yet today we reflect on her willingness to trust even when life seems to be bleak.

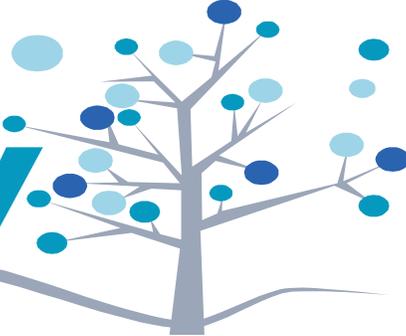
Just as the flour and oil continued to flow, God's promises will not stop flowing ... you can break your promise to God but He will never break His promise to you. And do you know what that promise is ... to love you and provide for your needs.

What a wonderful promise!!

*I pray that we all adopt the widow's heart to be willing to be used by  
God for great things!!*

*Till next month .... Timothy*

# january



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				 New Year's Day	2	3
4 <b>Communion</b> 9am-Worship 10:10am-Sunday Sch.	5	6 10am -Prayer Hour	7 6pm-Choir	8 <b>5:30pm– Trus-tee Meeting</b> 6:30pm-Scouts	9	10
11 9am-Worship 10:10am-Sunday Sch. 5pm-Grace’s Table	12	13 10am -Prayer Hour	14 6pm- Choir	15 6:30pm-Scouts	16 <u><b>NO BCSC School</b></u>	17
18 9am-Worship 10:10am-Sunday Sch.	19 <b>Martin Luther King Jr. Day</b>  <u><b>NO BCSC School</b></u>	20 10am -Prayer Hour	21 6pm-Choir	22 6:30pm-Scouts	23	24
25 9am-Worship 10:10am-Sunday Sch.	26	27 10am -Prayer Hour	28 6pm-Choir	29 6:30pm-Scouts	30	31



Jan. 8...Mark Parks	Jan. 30..Stephanie Tetrick
“ 10..Terry Snyder	“ 31..Kim Wright
“ 13..Debbie Fox	
“ 29..Jonathan Lee	

# News



From the Mail Box...

Thank you Darla Bozell and Pastor Lee for your visit and sharing communion with us.

Sincerely, Kathy & Roger Warner

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## Love Chapel

Love Chapel thanks the church for the November donation of 62 lbs. of food. Each contribution helps Love Chapel's ministries assist thousands of individuals in our community in need. Some of the ways the money is used in Brighter Days, Food Pantry and Financial Assistance.

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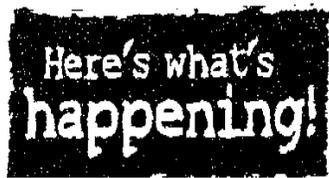
### Bible Facts

Did you know that:

- \*There are 66 books in the Bible?
- \*Micah and Nahum are the middle books of the Bible?
- \*3 John is the book with the fewest words?
- \*Psalms has the most chapters?
- \*There are 1,189 chapters in the Bible?
- \*Psalm 117 is the middle chapter of the entire Bible?
- \*Psalm 117 is also the shortest chapter in the Bible?
- \*Psalm 119 is the longest chapter in the Bible?
- \*There are 31,101 verses in the Bible?
- \*John 11:35 is the shortest verse in the Bible. It has two words: "Jesus wept."
- \*Esther 8:9 is the longest verse in the Bible.



Our sympathy to Ron & Dorothy Briner at the passing of their daughter-in-law, Debbie.



**Happy New Year** Office will be closed.

**Grace's Table Free Meal** Sunday, January 11 at 5pm in the Youth Center. All are welcome!

**Trustee Meeting** will be held Thursday, January 8, at 5:30pm.

**Weekly Prayer Hour**, every Tuesday a prayer time is held from 10am to 11am in the sanctuary. Come and pray for a few minutes or the entire hour. Please enter through the Elevator Door.

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### PRAYER FOR A NEW BEGINNING

Dear Lord, touch me with your Spirit of truth so I may be honest about my sins and failures. Forgive me for treating your covenant lightly and at times ignoring it completely. Help me truly seek and know forgiveness for all the hurts I've caused, for harboring ill will and for any hardness of heart I may have. Please renew a right spirit within me that I may become more Christ like and that my life may daily reveal your love and light in your name.  
Amen





**East Columbus United Methodist Church**  
**2439 Indiana Avenue, Columbus IN 47201**

**Return Service Requested**

**Jongmin Lee, Senior Minister**  
**Terry Snyder, Music Director**  
**Angie Sherfick, Adm. Assistant**

**Church Office: 812.376.7418**

**Church Office Email: [office@eastcolumbusumc.org](mailto:office@eastcolumbusumc.org)**

**Pastor Email: [jongmin.lee@inumc.org](mailto:jongmin.lee@inumc.org)**

**Worship Director Email: [music@eastcolumbusumc.org](mailto:music@eastcolumbusumc.org)**

**Church Website: [www.eastcolumbusumc.org](http://www.eastcolumbusumc.org)**

**9:00 am - Worship Service**

**10:10am - Sunday School**

**OUR CHURCH MISSION**

**Growing the Family of God by Making**

**Loving Disciples of Jesus Christ.**