

February 2024



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WWW.INDEPENDENCEHILL.ORG

DECLARATIONS

A PUBLICATION OF INDEPENDENCE HILL BAPTIST CHURCH - HUNTERSVILLE, NC

Visit our Website

IHBC Church Family,

This year has already presented a number of challenges for our church family; however, we believe that God is in control! We know that God's timing is perfect and His plan for our church will be revealed in the coming days. To that end, we trust that God has led us to the right interim pastor to lead us through this transition. Pastor Jon DeBell has agreed to become our interim pastor beginning right away.

Pastor Jon has been leading our services for several weeks already and has delivered challenging, biblically-based sermons. A few things you may want to know about him:

- He was born in NC but grew up in Columbus, Ohio and is a serious Buckeyes fan!*
- He and his wife Penny have a total of 8 children and 13 grandchildren.*
- He received his Master of Divinity from Southeastern.*
- His favorite hobbies are paddle boarding, hiking and tinkering in the yard.*
- He enjoys leading groups to Israel and sharing his knowledge of the region.*
- He served as pastor of East Baptist in Charlotte for 35 years. He still serves as a volunteer on the pastor team there.*
- He also serves on the board of Mercy and Grace in Honduras.*
- His favorite verse is Psalm 34:8.*

We welcome Jon and Penny to our church family and hope you will take some time to introduce yourself and get to know them over the coming weeks as Jon preaches, attends various meetings and visits with members.

Your Personnel Team

Thank you IHBC for the warm reception you have given to Penny and me. We are delighted to join you for a season together as we seek to become all that Jesus wants us to be. Growth is a constant process for a Christian. I'm excited to see how we grow together as God leads us into the future.

Our Father promises that in heaven, He will make all things new. Today Jesus is bringing new life to all who trust in Him. He changes lives--always for the better! He brought a clear revelation of heaven to earth when He lived among us as a man.

In the model prayer He prayed, "Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." As we echo that prayer, we open our own lives to God revealing heaven to others through us. He shows others His goodness and love through us and the testimonies that we live.

I see this as a huge part of our mission together as a church. Let's pray and work to make IHBC a fellowship where people can experience a little bit of heaven right here on earth. Thousands of people around this church are hungry, even yearning, for a taste of real life. Let's model lives that have been transformed by the presence of Jesus within. As we love, share, and serve our Savior with joy others will want to experience that blessing for themselves.

"O taste and see that the Lord is good!"
Pastor Jon



Join us for food & fellowship after worship on Sunday, February 11th as we celebrate our very own "Souper" Bowl, still leaving you plenty of time to get home to enjoy the real thing. Bring your favorite soup, stew, chili or crockpot of goulash or your best mac 'n cheese to share. Cornbread and drinks will be provided, but we could also use some cookies or brownies for dessert! Please sign up [here](#) to let us know you are coming!

For the month of February we are accepting winter items for the homeless such as sleeping bags, blankets, tents, hats, gloves, coats, etc. Donations can be placed in either of the two barrels in the Connect Center or FLC hallway.

David Cox Elementary School pizza night for parents and students is on Thursday, February 15th at 5:30pm. Pizza and cookies will be served, and the Missions Team would appreciate help with this effort. Serving is 5:30 – 6:00 with clean up after. Please let Tina Fortner, Karen Noegel, Kerry Lettrich or Phyllis Haines know if you are available to help.



The J.O.Y. Group games social originally planned for Thursday, February 1st has

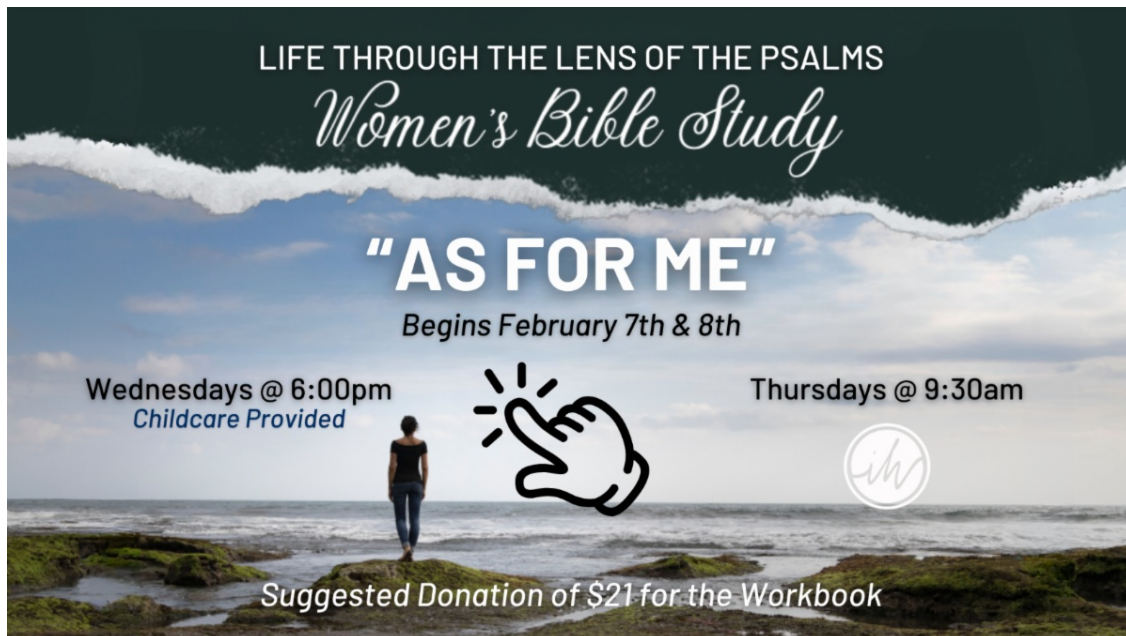
been changed to a Valentine's Day lunch out on Thursday the 14th at 11:30am. We will meet at Azteca Mexican Restaurant, 7340 Smith Corners Blvd., Unit 1200, Charlotte, NC 28269. Ask for Sofia.



MONDAY
**MEN'S
BIBLE STUDY**
YOU ARE INVITED
7:00pm Room 504
terrwrhusker@yahoo.com / wisebd15@gmail.com

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY SCHEDULE

February 5 - Bible Study in Room 504 at 7:00pm (Book of Nehemiah)
February 12 - Bible Study in Room 504 at 7:00pm (Book of Nehemiah)
February 19 - Bible Study in Room 504 at 7:00pm (Book of Nehemiah)
February 26 - Wing Night, East Coast Wings - Northlake at 6:00pm, for food & fellowship



LIFE THROUGH THE LENS OF THE PSALMS
Women's Bible Study
"AS FOR ME"
Begins February 7th & 8th
Wednesdays @ 6:00pm
Childcare Provided
Thursdays @ 9:30am
Suggested Donation of \$21 for the Workbook

You probably know the phrase "As for me" and immediately think of Joshua 24:15 and "serving the Lord". But did you know that same phrase appears repeatedly throughout the book of Psalms? "Why?", I wonder. We invite you to join us as we begin 2024 in a 7-week study of Psalms to find out!

Much is going on in our world, in our communities, churches, and in our homes. Life can be unsettling, and the enemy would love to distract, destroy, and confuse. Where do we go for answers? What do we do with our heavy hearts?

Like the psalmists, our challenge is to fix our eyes squarely and resolutely on the Lord, regardless of our circumstances or what's going on around us.

I can't think of a better way to begin 2024 then with a community of "sisters" as we learn to say "As for Me", my focus today, will be on the "Shelter of the Most High and in the Shadow of the Almighty." (Psalm 91:1)

Invite your friends and neighbors, to join us!
Visit the **church web site** for all the details and to reserve your seat!
Women's Ministry | independencehill.org



Be Encouraged Church

GOD IS ALWAYS AT WORK AMONG US

I think about the variety of impossible challenges that IHBC has faced and overcome throughout our 152 years as a Jesus-following church. We can't even imagine the insurmountable odds of launching a church, 152 years ago, that would outlast multiples of subsequent generations.

I bet there were moments when the people of IHBC thought, and even voiced, something like - ***“Well, this [issue, change, obstacle, loss, set-back, failure, decision, conflict...] might be the end of our church”***

I bet there were times when it seemed like love wouldn't win.

I bet there were misunderstandings and confusion.

I bet there were times when relationships were fractured.

Isn't there a place in the Bible that says, ***“Where two or three are gathered, there will be drama?”*** (hahahaha)

Certainly, there were times in our church history, when the problems seemed insurmountable. The only thing they could see were the problems. And yet season after season, the people of IHBC would eventually realize this truth: **what's actually insurmountable is the LOVE and POWER of our God.**

And 152 years later, here we are.

God is faithful.

Praise the Lord.

Praise God for the perseverance of multiple generations.

Praise God for the sacrifices of generation after generation.

Praise God for the wisdom of generation after generation.

Praise God for the vision and the service of generation after generation.

Praise God for the LOVE of generation after generation.

Praise God for you.

I know these last few months have been, well, CHALLENGING. Like me, I'm sure you've experienced a wide range of emotional responses, like sadness, anger, fear, relief, disappointment, confusion, nervousness, and even worry.

Your feelings are valid.

Your feelings are normal.

It's ok to have feelings – to name them, own them and talk about them with trusted others.

After all, we are human.

But when we are under pressure, tired, anxious, or feeling threatened, our tendency is to depend on ourselves rather than God. I would encourage us to pay attention to this. God is ALWAYS at work cultivating our hearts, our character, to produce good fruit of **love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness and self-control.**

So be encouraged today.

God is WITH us.

All of us.

And God is GOOD.

And **God's power is made perfect in our weakness.**

Victor Frankl, the holocaust survivor and Australian psychiatrist said ***“Between STIMULUS and RESPONSE there is a space. In that space there is the power to CHOOSE our response. In our response lies our GROWTH and our FREEDOM.”***

In this season of IHBC's history, and in that space between Stimulus and Response, **let's choose to LOVE LIKE JESUS.**

I love you, church.

Grace + Peace
Chris



I know for me, in this season, I HAVE NEVER NEEDED GOD MORE.

- I've never gotten more confused and needs God's guidance
- Or had deeper regrets and needed God's grace
- Or gotten so sad and needed God's comfort
- Or gotten so angry and needed forgiveness
- Or gotten so anxious and needed more hope

And the primary way we experience and interact with God is actually through PRAYER, in our minds, our bodies, and in our voices as we speak to God.

Thomas Merton said ***“When it comes to prayer, WE ARE ALL BEGINNERS, and we will only be beginners for our whole lifetime.”***

I am inviting you to join me, and other IHBCers, to PRAY together.

Sunday, February 18th
5:00-6:00pm
In the Worship Center

Remember that some of the most powerful, and common, prayers are just one-word prayers like: Wow! Thanks! Help!

Chris

The Personnel Team extends a big **THANK YOU** to Tim and the Helms family for their service in our worship ministry. Tim wrapped up his time as our Director of Worship on Sunday 1/28, and he asks for prayer as he follows the Lord's calling to new adventures.



Adult Choir rehearsals will continue in the Worship Center on 2nd and 4th Wednesdays from 6:00 to 7:00pm and the Worship Team will practice from 7:00 to 8:30pm following choir. Candy Hayes, Nicki Hill and Laura Kendall have graciously agreed to co-lead at this time.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY PROGRAMS

Sunday Mornings

- Sunday School provided for children ages birth - 5th grade (9:00am-9:45 am)
- Nursery provided for children 3 years old and under during the 10:00 am Worship service

Wednesday Evenings

- Programs for children on Wednesday nights from 6:00pm-7:30pm

Interested in Volunteering in the Children's Ministry on Wednesday or Sunday? Please reach out to Rebekah@independencehill.org.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY INFORMATION FOR SUNDAYS

The Children's Wing front doors will be unlocked before/after Sunday School and Worship but will remain locked during. If you need access to the Children's Wing when the doors are locked, please see someone on the security team around campus.

Please check in all kids at the front desk in the lobby.



IHBC Youth is hosting a party - "faux snow"!

All ages are invited to bring a winter weather wear donation, and join us for games, food, and fun for everyone! There may be no snow on the ground but there is still "snow fun" to be found in the IHBC Activity Room on **Saturday, February 24th at 5pm**. Invite a friend and look for more details to come soon!

Volunteer with IHBC Student Ministries!

Our next volunteer meeting is Saturday morning, **February 10th at 9am**. Interested? Contact Niki Melton at nikimelton@live.com or 704-305-0104, or just show up at the meeting to learn more!

Join us for:

- Sunday School at 9:00am in the Youth building
- Wednesday nights from 6:00pm-7:30pm.



Independence Hill

WEEKDAY PRESCHOOL

NOW ENROLLING

(704) 596-2124



independencehill.org/weekday-preschool

Our Weekday Preschool is beginning registration for the 2024-25 school year on Monday, February 5th! You can enroll and pay online HERE:

<https://independencehillchurch.wufoo.com/forms/weekday-preschool-application-for-enrollment/> or call the Preschool at (704) 596-2124 or email the Directors rebekah@independencehill.org or jenny@independencehill.org

IHBC Prayer Chain

Sign up to get prayer requests and pray for our church and its members!

Join to receive Text or Voicemail notices.

Submit Your Prayer Requests and Praises:

- Call the church office
- Text the church office
- Email the church office
- Fill out a prayer card

Std. Msg & data rates may apply



Newsletter Financials

Prayer List

Birthdays and Anniversaries

Calendar

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