

University of Indianapolis
Office of Ecumenical and Interfaith Programs

The mission of the Office of Ecumenical and Interfaith Programs at the University of Indianapolis is to nourish opportunities on our campus for spiritual and religious growth and formation for students, faculty and staff. Recognizing the plurality of voices (religious and non-religious) on the campus, the EIP Office seeks to create space(s) for individuals and groups to give and receive hospitality to one another. This is accomplished through pastoral encounters with the Chaplains, on-campus devotional time/worship available for all Christians and for those of other religious traditions, the [Lantz Center for Christian Vocation](#), as well as other programmatic initiatives.

Threshold Freshman Retreat – With direct and immediate attention to Christian formation and community building, Threshold is a weekend retreat experience that happens in August before the start of the first semester, and is designed to help incoming university students know the ways on our campus that they can grow in their Christian faith and get connected to a Christian community at UINDY. Now, over a decade running, the Threshold retreat has proven its value in orienting Christian students to university life, and reinforcing commitments to personal faith and community involvement throughout the participants' years at UIndy.

Pastoral Care and Counseling – Our two UIndy University Chaplains (Rev. Lang Brownlee, UMC and Rev. Jeremiah Gibbs, Assemblies of God) spend time with students, faculty and staff in pastoral settings, both formal and informal, helping with matters involving the spiritual, emotional, and other needs of the persons who are involved.

Worship Opportunities – Our campus worship calendar centers around *Thursday Night*, with an alternating pattern of Taizé Worship and Contemporary Praise & Worship. We have a devotional offering we call Chapel 'Prayer Break,' a monthly Community Communion Service, and special services in the Christian calendar, such as *Advent Lessons and Carols* and *Ash Wednesday*. Throughout the academic year, our various worship opportunities are intended to facilitate a growing and transformative relationship with God in the context of the supportive community of fellow Christians. Occasional devotional practices we have employed this year has included *Walking Prayer with the Labyrinth* during midterm week, *Journeying with Jesus: Praying using Icons* during finals week, and *The Way of the Cross* during Holy Week.

UMYL Scholars' Programming – Covenant Discipleship Groups, special gatherings, Christian Vocation courses, and service opportunities are part of our UMYL Scholars' programming. The UMYL Scholars' programming aims to give these United Methodist scholarship recipients relationships with fellow UMC students, develop patterns of spiritual discipline that upholds them in their lives while at UINDY, allows them to serve others and have fellowship with one another while deepening their UMC identity. The programming surrounding the UMYL Scholars occurs throughout the academic year.

Chapel Steward Mentoring – This mentoring includes supervision, support, and book study with key student leaders. The Chaplains work with students who have exhibited leadership potential and Christian commitment, in order to allow them to become more competent and confident as leaders, to gain skills in interpersonal relationships, and to gain proficiency in envisioning and implementing holistic Christian programming for our campus. Our student leaders help shape the contours of our campus ministry for 'enriched Christian discipleship' through their *vision casting*, *leadership with other student volunteers*, and *team involvement*. This is an on-going dimension of our campus ministry during the academic year.

The Christian Peer Mentoring Programs for Men and Women – Developing strong connections among Christian men and Christian women in a meaningful, positive and safe environment is the core purpose of this program. Upper class men and women serve as peer mentors to first year students permitting spiritual friendship, group fellowship, and reflective interactions that help nurture and support individual and community growth throughout the academic year.

The Service Pilgrimage to Sierra Leone – As part of our Spring Term Travel Course programming, a group of eight UIndy students and two faculty members teamed up with *Operation Classroom* to travel to Koidu, Sierra Leone, to help rebuild and prepare a vocational training building for the UMC Boys' Secondary School. Choosing the team last fall, they have met on a regular basis this winter in preparation for this pilgrimage in Christian service.

The University of Indianapolis:
Education for Service

The paragraphs above offer an overview of some of the dynamic Christian programming and opportunities that have been available to our students over the course of the 2009-10 academic year. But there is so much more to the story than those brief summaries. We hope and pray that your congregation will make the good work of our university known to the youth of your congregation and their families, and we always welcome you to come and visit your United Methodist-related university on the south side of Indianapolis.

When you do come and see us, you will see a university on the go and making a difference for our students, our community and our world. We strive for excellence in all facets of our work with our students – in the classroom and in the many co-curricular activities in which they are involved, as well. Please do check out our website, www.uindy.edu, to see the incredible ways that we engage students in their lives and in the preparation for their future.

As you read about our efforts to be in ministry with students, encouraging them to nurture their faith while at our university and to sharpen their awareness of God's call for their lives, we hope that you will look at our campus ministry's website, <http://eip.uindy.edu> in order to see the many ways that our Office of Ecumenical and Interfaith Programs seeks to be with students in their journey of integration and maturity in faith while at UIndy

The curricular and out-of-the-classroom experiences that our Lantz Center for Christian Vocations and Formation provide our students a place and a space for vocational exploration, growth in the understanding and practices that lead to a deepening spirituality, and chances to serve others in Christ's name. In the context of a community of fellow Christians, and mentored by our two university chaplains, these students are invited to envision and respond to way God is leading them into their future. Find more on our CVOC programming at <http://vocations.uindy.edu/courses.php> for more on this.

There are exciting happenings on campus that you cannot help but see when you come visit us. We are in the midst of a major improvement to the thoroughfare that runs across our campus, Hanna Avenue. Soon, when you come to see us, you will see an enhanced boulevard that will add beauty and safety for our students. We also prepare to develop and expand our recreational/sports facilities to benefit our athletes.

Our Office of Admissions stands ready to be of service to you as you help your students approach the important decisions regarding their college/university choice. Please contact the Office of Admissions if you have any questions or comments about the university, or to let us know about prospective students. You can reach us at 317-788-3216 or 800-232-8634, or email admissions@uindy.edu. At <http://www.uindy.edu> you can access an online application for admission to the University of Indianapolis.

We are grateful for our connection to, and involvement with, the Indiana Conference of the United Methodist Church. As the Indiana conference develops new working relationships in the context of clusters, districts, and affinity groups, we want you to know that your church-related university in Indianapolis is an active and vital partner in preparing young people for service in the churches and communities of Indiana and the world.



President Beverley Pitts
University of Indianapolis

