



Rev. Dr. Sarah Griffith Lund Begins her Ministry

Rev. Lund will begin her ministry with the congregation on March 1. "For our first year together," said Lund, "we will focus on building trusting and life-giving relationships with each other, the neighborhood and wider community!"

Ordained with standing in both the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ, Rev. Lund served since 2014 as vice president for seminary advancement at Christian Theological Seminary. Prior to that appointment she worked with nearly fifty congregations in Florida to strengthen their vitality, and as a congregational pastor responsible for preaching, teaching, presiding over the sacraments, providing pastoral care, and community ministry.

A proliferate speaker and writer about mental health, Rev. Lund is the author of the widely regarded book "Blessed are the Crazy: Breaking the Silence About Mental Illness, Family and Church." She blogs at www.sarahgriffithlund.com and is an active board member of the Martin Luther King Community Center in Indianapolis. This breadth of leadership experience should serve us well.

Rev. Lund's formal education includes a bachelor of arts in religion from Trinity University, a master of divinity from Princeton Theological Seminary, a master of social work from Rutgers University, and a doctor of ministry from McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago. She also completed the certificate in fundraising management from the Lilly Family School of Philanthropy at Indiana University.

When asked what she hopes will characterize the congregation's ministry during her tenure, Lund replied, "I hope we will be seen as a place of radical hospitality that welcomes all. I hope we flourish as a progressive, inclusive, and spiritually alive servant community of Jesus!" Lund received the prestigious Engle Award in Preaching from Princeton Theological Seminary. Lund's first Sunday in the pulpit will be **March 4**. All are invited to worship at 11:00 AM and 5:30 PM at First Congregational United Church of Christ, 7171 North Pennsylvania Street, in the Broad Ripple area.

Lund is married to Jonathan Lund, who is a medical massage therapist at Carmel Wellness. They are the very proud parents of second grader Carter.

Minister's Reflections

Hello First Congregational Church! I am excited to be joining you all March 1 as your new settled senior pastor. I am still cherishing our time together in the sanctuary on January 7 when following the congregational vote, I entered into the sanctuary to receive the good news and to celebrate we sang verses from my favorite hymn, the "Hymn of Joy." This hymn was part of my wedding ceremony and is very fitting when making life-changing promises, covenants and commitments.

It is with joy that I say "Yes" to this calling to First Congregational Church and it is with joy that I

anticipate all that God will do in and through us as we join together as the "joyful music leads us sunward in the triumph song of life." Thank you for this honor and privilege to be invited to serve and lead with you all as we grow together in God's love. I am holding you all in my prayers and trusting God with all that awaits us on this new journey. See you soon!

Blessings,

– Rev. Sarah Griffith Lund

Being the Beloved Community - Our Lenten Journey Continues

Our journey together this Lenten season will be different than in the recent past. For one thing, it is a time of heightened excitement and anticipation as we prepare to receive our new settled pastor, Rev. Sarah Lund. On the other hand, it is a time of sadness as we prepare to say goodbye to Rev. Michael. But isn't that how Lent has always been - a time of reflection on what to let go of in order to make room for what will be? Lent can be a solitary journey of self-reflection, but it can also be a journey embarked upon together by the community of faith.

Our theme for 2018 is "Being the Beloved Community" and our programming will explore this theme in various ways. In past years, we have scheduled our Lenten gatherings to be on Wednesday evenings, preceded by a soup supper. This year our gatherings will be at different times in order that more people will be able to participate in at least some of the gatherings. Please put the following dates and times on your calendar and plan to join in.

Sunday March 4 1:00-3:00 PM.

A workshop on communication presented by guest speaker Cynthia Drouin. Ms. Drouin graduated from Christian Theological Seminary in 2016 with a Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling. She is a Licensed Mental Health Counseling Associate, working towards full licensure. She is skilled at teaching groups of diverse people ways of communicating that help them set and meet their goals while at the same time affirming one another even when compromise is necessary. Ms. Drouin has a history with FCC; she grew up in our church and is the daughter of the beloved Rev. Waldo Savage and Priscilla Savage. Come join us for an afternoon of learning and practicing ways of communicating within the beloved community. If you wish, bring a sack lunch. Refreshments will be served during the break.

Sunday March 11

The New Creation service this evening will focus on Jesus' model of non-violence, so the Lenten program following worship at 7:00-8:30 PM will be devoted to the same topic. Come and be prepared to be inspired! Better yet, come and experience New Creation worship service from 5:30 - 6:30; enjoy a light meal from 6:30 - 7:00, and stay for the Lenten program.

Southeast Association 2018 Lenten Breakfasts

Everyone in our Southeast Association is welcome to come. We ask that those planning to attend call the host church on the Tuesday before the Saturday breakfast with their reservations. Each breakfast is at 8:00 a.m.

March 3 - Immanuel UCC (corner of East and Prospect Streets) 317- 631-2427

March 10 – St. John's UCC (corner of US31 South and Southport Road) 317-881-2353

March 17 – First Congregational UCC

March 24 – Zion Evangelical UCC (corner of North and new Jersey Streets) 317-639-5411

New Creation Worship

First Congregational's New Creation Worship service at 5:30 p.m. on Sunday evenings will focus on the different ways we respond to Jesus through our discipleship. These services are interactive with music led by our New Creation Ensemble. Every Sunday is different! All are invited. In March our themes will be:

March 4 Caring for the Least of These

March 11 Nonviolence

March 18 Inclusive

March 25 Speaking Truth to Power

Time to say Good bye

Part of the job requirement for interim ministry is to leave. If possible, leave well: resolving issues that were difficult, leaving awareness of better issues that will advance the work of the church in the lives of its participants, community and world. But leave.

That we have all known this from my very first day (I have always been 'pre-fired'), but that never makes it any easier to pack up and leave. I feel better about leaving because of my excitement for the work that you do in your ministries, about the dedication of the members and the love and care that you have for one another. And I feel much better knowing that you will be working with the capable leadership of Rev. Sarah Lund. You have been blessed!

Know that while I will not be with you, you remain in my prayers. I take the 'not be with you' part seriously: ask me a question and I will not respond, or if do it will be to say, "Gee, have you talked with Rev. Sarah?" I won't be back for weddings or funerals, and must decline any invitation to officiate. The heart may be willing, but wisdom and ethics know that I must give a firm 'no' to such invitations.

Thank you for being you. Thank you for the work that you have done, the ways in which you worked with me, listened and adjusted, even when it was hard. Thank you for your dedication to God. It has been a privilege to be in ministry with you.

In Christ's Service,

- Rev. Michael H. Montgomery, Ph.D.

From the Moderator

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted. - Ecclesiastes 3:1-2

I start the year in gratitude for all the volunteers who have worked so hard to get us where we are, and for past moderators who have been such great role models for me to look up to – Bob Cook, Carol Sowle, Wendy Baldwin and those before. THANK YOU!

There are a lot of strong emotions grabbing our attention right now so I hope for kindness and gentleness for each other and for ourselves. We are celebrating our time and friendship with Rev. Michael even as we grieve for his leaving. We are thrilled to have our new pastor – Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund joining our journey – with the anticipation of integrating her gifts and talents and leadership into our community. There will be change, which can be unsettling as well as fresh and new. There is even some anxiety about the uncharted road ahead. But I believe we have done the foundational work needed to help minimize those concerns so we can focus on the excitement!

There is a transition team/PCRC (Pastor Congregation Relationship Committee) working with Pastor Sarah to help her introduction and integration be as smooth and positive as possible. Randy Walker, Lianna Campos, Nancy Dickinson, and Jim Rutherford make up that team (and many others are pitching in) to help with all the logistics, as well as introducing her and

acclimating her to our community and culture. THANK YOU!

Please join us for a BUZZ session on March 18 after traditional worship – a pitch in lunch and casual conversation with Pastor Sarah - a chance to get to know her and also answer some of her questions. If you have any questions about this event, please contact me. There will be more opportunities to connect with Pastor Sarah in the weeks ahead – watch for news! I am also excited about the elected officers and boards this year. We will publish full contact information soon, but here are the chairs, and I raise another loud THANK YOU!

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Board	Chair
Care & Connections	Wendy Baldwin
Outreach & Service	Sue Chapman
Trustees	Randy Walker
Witness & Welcome	Bob Cook
Worship & Faith	Nancy Dickinson

A particular focus for this year will be communication. Please feel free to approach me with any questions or concerns.

May our inner lights shine bright to banish these grey Indiana winter days - to show us the way, to keep each other warm, and to brighten our days!

- Karen Walker
317-319-8950
Karen.e.d.walker@gmail.com

Sunday Adult Class

All classes meet in the Library (room 212) at 9:45 a.m. All are welcome!

Specific class plans are as follows:

March 4 – Christians as Peacemakers

March 11 - Hope for Peace - Part I

March 18 – Hope for Peace - Part II

March 25 – What Good are Promises

Pantry Items of the Month

During March, we are collecting the following items: rice, juices, peanut butter and bar soap.

Our Monthly Food Donations

In January we donated 94 pounds of nutritious food to the Northside Food Pantry, and 4 pounds of nonfood items. Thanks so much for these donations which are important to, and valued by, our disadvantaged neighbors. Keep filling those baskets in the narthex!

-Bill Gillette for the Missions Board

Call to Service

"Here am I; send me!" Isaiah 6:8"

Mission of the Month, One Great Hour of Sharing

2017 was a year of unprecedented disasters—Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria; heavy rainfall in California followed by deadly landslides; extreme heat and wildfires; tornadoes in the South and Midwest; earthquakes in Mexico and on the Iran/Iraq border; flooding and monsoons in Bangladesh and India; drought and famine in the Horn of Africa. It went on and on. But if you contributed to One Great Hour of Sharing last year, you were there helping. OGHS provides funds to react quickly to disasters around the world. Working with local organizations world-wide, OGHS has infrastructure in place to respond rapidly whenever and wherever disaster strikes. We don't know where the need will come this year, but we can be sure there will be new disasters affecting communities that will need our help. OGHS is one of the UCC's "5 for 5" offerings, which FCC has committed to support. While small donations are always welcome, this is one offering that we urge you to support generously. Be there helping with the next crisis by donating now. Use the special envelopes or put OGHS in the notation line of your check. Thank you.

-Sue Chapman

A Prayer by Archbishop Oscar Romero

It helps, now and then, to step back and take a long view. The kingdom is not only beyond our efforts, it is even beyond our vision. We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work. Nothing we do is complete, which is a way of saying that the kingdom always lies beyond us.

No statement says all that could be said.

No prayer fully expresses our faith.

No confession brings perfection.

No pastoral visit brings wholeness.

No program accomplishes the church's mission.

No set of goals and objectives includes everything.

This is what we are about.

We plant the seeds that one day will grow.

We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise.

We lay foundations that will need further development.

We provide yeast that produces far beyond our capabilities.

We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that. This enables us to do something, and to do it very well. It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and to do the rest. We may never see the end results, but that is the difference.

Important Information Concerning the Gift of Stock

In the past giving the church your gift of stock was a bit confusing. However, the good news is that we have finalized an easy way to complete this transfer! In all situations where you would like to donate stock, you just need to tell your broker to use the following information to deposit those shares into the First Congregational Brokerage account.

Fidelity's Depository Trust Company

DTC No: 0226

Account No: Z50424340

In all situations, Fidelity (our broker) is instructed to sell the stock when transfer is complete and then to move the money to our cash portion of the account. We then move the money to the account that respects the donor's wishes (such as Pledge). If you still have questions, please contact Jim Lootens.

Announcements from the Congregation

April Colony Submission Deadline

Please have your submissions sent to me by **Sunday, April 15.**

Plymouth Rockers

The Plymouth Rockers will meet at the church at noon on March 27. We'll have a brown bag lunch followed by a program. Save the date. All are welcome, not just retirees.

-Bill Gillette

Men's Lunch

This lunch and discussion gathering for men of First Congregational meets at various restaurants in the greater Indianapolis area. They meet every other Thursday at 1 p.m. This month they will meet on March 8 and 22. Please contact Randy Walker at (317) 796-2081 or aa28977rwalker@gmail.com for information.

Men's Lenten Breakfast

First Congregational will host the breakfast on March 17 at 8:00 AM. See Randy Walker or Bill Gillette for details.

Women's Lunch Bunch

All women of the church are invited to get together once a month for lunch, friendship, and fellowship. This month we will meet on Thursday, March 22 at 11:45 a.m. For any questions or for information please contact Sue Chapman at 317-259-1806 or at carolsuech@sbcglobal.net.

Family Promise Clothing Drive, March 2-18.

Looking forward to spring? Starting to get those spring clothes ready? Here's an opportunity to do an inventory of your clothes and do some good in the process. Pick out those gently used clothes you no longer wear, bring them to church in white kitchen trash bags or put them in bags provided in the cloak room, drop them in the white laundry baskets and help out Family Promise. **No shoes or accessories, please.** Thanks in advance, because every bag helps Family Promise receive a \$5 clothing voucher from Goodwill to help families with emergency clothing for children or even work apparel for adults. Below are important dates to keep in mind:

Friday, March 2 to Sunday, March 18: **Congregations collect clothing.**

Monday, March 19-Saturday, March 24: **Congregations deliver clothing** to the FPGI Day Center at 1850 N. Arsenal Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46218 between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

Flower Calendar

The Flower Calendar is on bulletin board by the garden doors. The cost for flowers is \$25.00. Sign up for any occasion and email Cheryl Dillenback and/or Sally Coombs. The flowers can come from the florist, store or your garden.

Easter Lilies

Easter is right around the corner. Please order a plant (Lily, tulip, hyacinth) to help celebrate Easter. The cost per plant is \$10.00. Any questions see or email Sally Coombs at sallysews73@gmail.com

Deadline: March 25, 2018

Display : April 1, 2018

Coming May 5TH: Annual Reduce-Reuse-Recycle (Rummage) Sale

STUFF: "The Story of Stuff" is the title of a book I'm currently reading. Many of us are being drowned in "stuff" in this country, and we do not need to be reminded that we consume far more than our share of resources. Look around to see what stuff you have and do not need. (No, not just updating by replacing.) Plan to participate on **May 5th** in our "Reduce, Reuse and Recycle" sale. As in previous years, you rent a table (\$10), price your items, sell them

and keep the proceeds, and clean up. Begin now to lay aside extraneous items that can be reused by someone else and that you would like to offer for sale to others. As in recent years, the sale will take place on the main level in the narthex and parlor.

- Nancy Dickinson

Sunday Morning Adult Class – Report 2017

(This report was not included in the annual report.)

This year we have enjoyed a variety of programs and discussions which are one of the aims of those gathered each Sunday at (approximately) 9:45 a.m.

We began the year with a session “Keeping the Faith in Trump’s America” which resulted in a good discussion. Mary Lou Rothe had brought in a number of challenging articles to consider.

The following Sunday we commenced the Kerygma series, “Good News for All: the Gospel of Luke,” which lasted through Easter, with the crucifixion and resurrection coming in Holy Week.

On Earth Day we visited the Memorial gardens on a tour led by Wendy Baldwin who pointed out especially the wild flowers just popping up.

On April 20th, we experimented with a lesson from “The Wired Word.” Early May we heard about the progress Bread for the World is making in helping people across the world in growing food for themselves, followed by a week of writing letters to our congressional representatives and senators, requesting continued support of basic nutrition and food programs.

By the end of May we were ready for another Kerygma series: “Into the World: The Acts of the Apostles.” This lasted through the summer, broken by a session on charitable giving in June. On August 20th we participated in the Chautauqua all-church program.

Fall brought consideration of violence and possibilities for peace in our world. We spent two sessions on violence and peace in the three Abrahamic traditions, and considered different kinds of violence in between: violence of hoarding, of the tongue and of oppression.

On Thanksgiving Sunday, Carol Sowle presented an “accurate history” - i.e. what is known about the first Pilgrim Thanksgiving meal, based on the eye witness reports by William Bradford and Edward Winslow. Carol also presented a history of how the Thanksgiving celebration that we know today came about and has evolved over the years.

In December we began the Kerygma study of “Shalom: A Study of the Biblical Concept of Peace,” partly as a prelude to looking at becoming a UCC Just Peace Church. This study is extending into 2018.

Come join us for some stimulating discussions!

Leaders for these sessions have been Nancy Dickinson, Worth Hartman, Lianna Campos Saunders, Carol Sowle, and until November, Rich Gibson. New leaders encouraged.

Feeding Our Souls

“If of thy mortal goods thou art bereft,
And from thy slender store two loaves
Alone to thee are left,
Sell one; and with the dole’
Buy hyacinths to feed thy soul.”
— a Persian poet (1184-1291)

Do these lines, illustrated with a colorful-flowers image, bring to mind an FCC member? Perhaps your thoughts turn to Sally Coombs, who has, for over 30 years, faithfully made available flowers "to feed the souls" of FCC members during Sunday worship services.

How? Sally organizes, communicates, and takes practical steps to ensure that fresh flowers are almost always part of Sunday worship. Secondly, she makes it easy for us to do our part to provide either actual flowers or a plant, or a \$25 check for fragrant hyacinths, roses, carnations, daisies, spring lilies, baby's breath, ferns, or other components of a lovely bouquet from Tolen's, the Speedway florist from which Sally regularly transports flowers to FCC's altar.

Thus, when i saw a beautiful art print by my childhood friend and artist, Michael Hughey, i wanted Sally to have his graphic print of flowers, butterfly, and ladybug, along with the words of the 13th century poet.

- susanna-judith rae

Financial Update

When We Give, We Reach Out With Helping Hands

When we give to the ministries of First Congregational UCC, we are serving those inside and outside our church community. As 1st Peter 4:10 says: "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, with whatever gift each of you has received."

It is too early in the year to identify meaningful trends in income or expense. One item of note: the "underspending" in Pastoral Leadership is a matter of timing of benefit payments, not actual expense savings.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Jim Lootens, Treasurer
lootens.jb@gmail.com

1. Current Year Actual vs Budget Summary - Last month

1/1/2018 through 1/31/2018 Using 2018 Budget B

Category	Actual	January 2018 Budget	Difference
INCOME	23,185	27,145	-3,960
M. Unrestricted Contributions	23,185	27,145	-3,960
M.01 Pledged Offerings	20,361	25,111	-4,750
M.02 UnPledged Offerings	3,095	2,833	262
M.03 Rollover Prior Year Surplus_Deficit	-2,409	-2,409	0
M.04 Foundation - Endowment Fund Draw	0	0	0
M.05 Foundation - Minister Fund Draw	0	0	0
M.06. Transfer from Youth Fund	1,610	1,610	0
M.07 Other Transfers from Restr Accts	528	0	528
EXPENSES	19,844	23,149	3,306
A. Pastoral Leadership	7,195	9,047	1,852
B. Worship & Faith	2,794	3,459	665
C. Care & Connections	49	40	-9
D. Witness & Welcome	0	72	72
E. Outreach & Service	1,667	1,767	100
F. Trustees	0	8	8
G. Administration & Operations	1,082	1,858	775
H. House & Grounds	6,709	6,448	-261
I. Miscellaneous	348	451	102
Net Difference:	3,341	3,995	-654