





F I R S T
CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST

*We are a
progressive,
inclusive,
spiritually alive
servant community.*

e-pistle for the week of July 5, 2018

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Minister's Message

Dear First Congregational Church Family,

Summertime blessings! As we enter more fully into the summer, July greets us with bright sunshine and summer rains. It's time for many to be more intentional about making time for relaxation, play and wonderment.

It's also a time for us as a faith community to pause and reflect. We have a new settled, installed pastor. Now what? We are pausing to review and update the strategic plan that was developed by the congregation a couple of years ago with the guidance of the church council and all the boards. This strategic plan is the result of many months, even years, of prayer, conversation and discernment about where God is calling the church and who God is calling the church to be.

It's an exciting time for us as a church. We sense that God is with us, guiding us, even

calling each of us to be part of co-creating the beloved community of peace, love and justice. We know that now, more than ever, the world needs disciples of Jesus who are focused on things of God.

So this is a summer of intentional discernment which fits nicely with intentional rest. I find that sometimes my best thoughts come right after I open my eyes, having closed them for awhile as I basked in the summer sun.

Join me in this spiritual practice of reflection, rest, and rumination. I look forward to discovering with you all where our God-guided thoughts leads us.

With hope for growth,
Pastor Sarah

Worship for Sunday

Adult Class - 9:45 a.m. Just Peace

Ezekiel 37:26; Look at St. Peter & Trinity UCC; review our list of what we are already doing; what are the 10 Just Peace Making practices? See further description below.

Traditional Service - 11:00 a.m.

The message from Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund will be "Living Among Scorpions ". Our music will be provided by pianist Sean Baker and violist Aurelia Hoft-March.

New Creation - 5:30 p.m.

Throughout July New Creation worship will focus on the variety of faith traditions that make us all one church.

Adult Ed - Just Peace

Is FCC a Just Peace Church?

Becoming a Just Peace Church will be the focus of the Adult Education classes for the five Sundays in July. Truth is, FCC has in the past and is already now doing many things that promote peace and justice. But we have not yet taken the formal step of writing a Just Peace Church covenant and declaring ourselves to be a Just Peace Church via a congregational vote. FCC - which often takes a lead in UCC initiatives - is a little behind. According to a list from http://www.ucc.org/just_peace_churches, there are at least 162 UCC churches that have declared themselves to be a Just Peace Church. Four of those churches are in the Indiana-Kentucky conference:

1. First United, Rising Sun, IN
2. Zion UCC, Henderson, KY
3. Shalom UCC, Lafayette, IN
4. Zion UCC, South Bend, IN

Isn't it time that we joined them? Not so fast - there is a process and a time of discernment (though I'm liking your enthusiasm!). For the past several months the Adult Education class has been exploring the interrelated topics of peace, nonviolence, Shalom, and justice. All of that study and discussion has been good preparation for beginning to look in earnest about becoming a Just Peace Church. For five Sundays in July, we will look at the process and what other churches have done. Come join us!

July 8: Ezekiel 37:26; Look at St. Peter & Trinity UCC; review our list of what we are already doing; what are the 10 Just Peace Making practices?

July 15: John 10:10; how has the history of the Just Peace movement in the UCC changed from 1985 to today?; read about Clackamas UCC; begin a list of what FCC might want to do in the future to support Peace and Justice

July 22: Ephesians 2:14; read about Union Congregational UCC and note their covenant; take a look at direct action as a peace making strategy.

July 29: 1 Peter 3:15; present the 9 step process for becoming a Just Peace Church; review our lists of things FCC already is doing and our list of what we might want to do; review suggested actions for ongoing Peace Making from the "Just Peace Church Handbook"

For more information and lots of suggested resources, begin at http://www.ucc.org/justice_just-peace. Also, we are in the process of forming a Just Peace Committee to lead this effort. Please let Nancy Dickinson or Pastor Sarah know if you have an interest in being on the committee.

What's Happening at FCC

Pastor Sarah Vacation: Monday, July 9 through Sunday, July 15

For pastoral care during that time please contact Carol Sowle at (317) 496-9732

or casowle@gmail.com

Sunday, July 29, 12:00 - Spiritual Explorers invite you to a labyrinth experience

Last August, FCC's Board of Worship & Faith began a new group, called "Spiritual Explorers." It meets in the library one Sunday a month, soon after the 11 AM service, to explore different spiritual practices, such as lectio divina, journaling, music, and poetry. During each meeting, members report briefly on what they've experienced on their own during the previous weeks, and the group decides on which spiritual discipline to focus during the following month.

On July 29, after a brown-bag lunch following traditional worship, Spiritual Explorers will meet at 12:45 at St. Luke's United Methodist Church (100 W. 86th St.) to walk its (outside) labyrinth. All FCC members and visitors who want to walk the labyrinth are welcome. Please inform either Pastor Sarah, PastorSarah@fcindy.org, or susanna-judith rae, at her new email address, sjrae@iu.edu, if you want to become a Spiritual Explorer, walk the labyrinth on July 29, or both. Betty Brandt, director of St. Luke's Spiritual Life Center, encourages labyrinth walkers to wear sunscreen and sunhats and to carry an umbrella.

FCC Solar Project!!!

The First Congregational Green Team has launched a fund drive to install solar panels. We're planning to raise \$60,000 by September 1st. To give this effort a boost, Rich Gibson has pledged to match all contributions, dollar for dollar, up to \$20,000. Simply write "solar panels" on your check. If you'd rather pledge, or even donate shares of stock or mutual funds, we can accommodate that, too. Please contact Rich Gibson, hooteagle@me.com, 770-548-5217 (cell) or 317-735-2895 (home) for details. Thanks!

Mission of the Month, Underneath it all

This mission provides underwear and school uniforms for children in IHN/Family Promise Aftercare. This helps families getting back on their feet stretch their budget through having fewer school clothes to purchase. You can help by doing any of the following:

1. **Buy underwear/socks/shirts/pants** in any size from **child size 4 to adult** - boys or girls. Put in the white laundry baskets in Narthex during July. Sports bras & small size boys & girls underpants are particularly desired.
2. **Donate new or gently used pants, shirts, skirts, or jumpers**-all sizes from child size 4 to adult. Shirts must be collared in any solid color, without decoration or logo. Pants, skirts, or jumpers must be a solid color (tan, navy or black) with no

decoration.

3. **Donate \$ in July to buy uniforms or underwear in-** change, dollar bills and checks designated **Underneath It All** in the memo line will help. We will buy clothes with the money donated.

I know it seems early, but school starts again Aug 1st for many schools, so new uniforms will be needed soon. The Aftercare Program of the Family Promise/IHN program helps those who get housing remain housed. Our past donations have provided each child in the Aftercare Program at least 1 full new uniform including underwear and socks. This is very much appreciated by the families and by Family Promise, so please continue to be generous.

If you have questions or want to help with this ministry, please contact Sandy Wood csjlwood@att.net 317-863-8238 (home) or 317-225-6206 (cell).

Pantry Items of the Month

During July we are collecting the following items: juice, pasta, canned meat, and shampoo.

UCC Keep Families Together Special Offering:

In light of the current situation at our southern border, the UCC has created a special fund to provide assistance to the families fleeing violence in Central America and seeking asylum in the United States. Those of us who ask “What can I do?” when faced with this humanitarian crisis can contribute through the United Church of Christ. You can go to http://www.ucc.org/keep_families_together (underline in the space between words) and donate online or write a check to First Congregational Church with “Keep Families Together” in the notation line. If you donate online please identify yourself as a member of our church. The above-listed Website is also an up-to-date source of information and answers many questions for those concerned about this situation.

Short term office expectations

Please keep in mind we did not create a July Colony, due to the staff shortage but hope to resume with the August edition with the help of our new admin! Thank you! Any questions, please call Karen Walker or Pastor Sarah.

Pastoral Care

Please contact Pastor Sarah at (386) - 478 - 9012

For Monday, July 9 through Sunday July 15, please contact Carol Sowle at (317) 496-9732 or casowle@gmail.com

This Week at First Congregational

Sunday, July 8	9:45 a.m.	Adult Class – Just Peace
Sunday, July 8	11:00 a.m.	Traditional Service
Sunday, July 8	12:30 p.m.	Chautauqua Team
Sunday, July 8	5:30 p.m.	New Creation
Wednesday, July 11	6:30 p.m.	Council
Wednesday, July 11	7:30 p.m.	New Creation Planning
Thursday, July 12	1:00 p.m.	Men’s lunch – at Arni’s
Thursday, July 12	7:00 p.m.	Music Support Team
Saturday, July 14	10:00 a.m.	Bell choir rehearsal
Sunday, July 15	9:45 a.m.	Adult Class – Just Peace
Sunday, July 15	11:00 a.m.	Traditional Service – Pat Larracey
Sunday, July 15	5:30 p.m.	New Creation