



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 August 30th

[Calendar](#)

Minister's Message

Dear First Congregational Church Family,

Hosting overnight guests for a week at the church is both an honor and a responsibility. Our church makes this commitment twice a year and coming up the week of September 16 we are blessed to do it again. Last Sunday at our two Buzz session we heard from Mike Chapuran, the director of Family Promise of Greater Indianapolis and we learned how each one of us can participate in this critical ministry to families experiencing crisis. We can be kind, offer a safe environment, food, and our prayers as the families with children journey to a better future. I am grateful to our coordinators Katie Booth and Ann Leatherman for their leadership and dedication to this ministry.

Let's see if we can fill all the spots on the volunteer sign up board early!

Blessings,
Pastor Sarah

Worship for Sunday

Adult Class

No Adult Class this Week!

Traditional Service - 11:00 a.m.

Pastor Sarah will preach on "Pure Religion."

New Creation - 5:30 p.m.

Labor Day weekend is culturally considered the last hurrah of summer. As schools and other programming ramp up the following week, things tend to go back to normal. While we never think of New Creation as "normal" no matter the season, we will take one last shot this Sunday at something different and fun. The parable of the oil lamps may or may not be familiar to many of us, but we found it ripe for some... let's just call it "elaboration". Come and join us for a new and participatory look at this old story, and how it relates to growing God's beloved community.

Let us Pray...

Gracious and Loving God, We know O God, that this is Your world, a world that was created without walls and without borders. And yet we also know that there are thousands upon thousands of refugees waiting to be "let in"; waiting to hear a word of where they will be accepted and what place might become their new home. We don't really know their stories; we don't always know why they left their homes and families for an unknown and risky future. But we do know that they are your children just as we are your children.

We pray that the actions of our leaders in welcoming those seeking refuge will be a reflection of the love you have for all children. May we be a country that is anxious to share the many gifts we have rather than a country afraid of what we might lose. Please God, open our clenched hands and closed hearts.

And while so many wait for news of where they will call home, may we have the courage to speak for those whose voices are not yet heard as they are not yet here. This is our prayer. Amen.

(- prayer written by Dr. Edith Guffey, Conference Minister of the Kansas-Oklahoma Conference UCC)

Call to Action

Call your Member of Congress and tell them we want to welcome at least 75,000 refugee families in 2019. Find a short and simple script to help guide you through the conversation at: http://www.ucc.org/action_alert_for_refugee_community_advocacy_month

What's Happening at FCC

Choir Rehearsals Begin and Welcome New Members!

The first choir rehearsal after summer break is TODAY, August 30th from 7:00- 8:30 pm in the second floor choir room. We welcome new members to join us. Anyone who is interested in

learning more about the choir may email choir director Julie Houston at: juliehouston@comcast.net

The Music Support Team hopes you have enjoyed the variety of music and styles that have been offered in the Traditional service throughout the summer. If so, you're in for another treat on September 9 when the choir returns to the loft. Sean Baker has prepared another of his signature arrangements for choir, flute, viola, bells, percussion, piano, and organ to infuse the service with another level of spiritual energy. Please plan to be present for this opportunity to hear God speak to us through music.

Heard at the Buzz

On Sunday we heard a brief music update about the music program for the Traditional service. The music team is working with the Worship and Faith Board on a proposal that will be reviewed and discussed by the Council. We seek your prayers, support and input as we discern together ways to continue excellent traditional music to enhance our worship experience. Please talk to Pastor Sarah for further information.

Solar Panel Funding Campaign - THANK YOU!!!

We in the Green Team launched a campaign back on June 10th, the day of Pastor Sarah's Installation, to raise funds to install solar panels here at FCC. We set a goal of \$60,000 by September 1st, based on funds already in hand and the estimates from two reputable installers. The end date gave us plenty of time to raise money, and allows us to decide on an installer and get work begun and completed before bad weather rolls in. As the decision point loomed, I asked the bidders to update their estimates. One came in at a much lower price than his original bid, such that as of last week, we had sufficient funds in-hand to proceed. So,

THANK YOU, EVERYBODY! We're going to get solar panels this year, and I could not be more excited! Your generosity is a wonderful thing to experience. The Green Team and Planet Earth both thank you!!

If you had pledged to donate funds, thank you too! While we have more money than we need for the installation, we're pretty sure that we'll have to spend the excess on maintenance costs, perhaps as early as five years from now. If you still want to donate funds for solar panels, we'll certainly accept them—but if you'd rather spend your money on a more urgent need, we certainly understand. We are happy to release you from your obligation.

Again, THANK YOU! EVERYBODY!

Green Team Tip

Fall is a good time to plant trees. Does your yard need one or two?

Church Picnic & Sing-Along

Saturday, September 8th, 4-7 p.m.

Kick off the fall at FCC with fun, faith, food, friends, and even a singalong! Weather-permitting, we will be outdoors. Think of a song that you would like us to sing, and let us know in advance so we can be prepared. The church will provide fried & baked chicken, supplemented by your pitch-in contributions. For our planning, please sign-up in the Narthex by Wed 9/5 or contact Wendy Baldwin.

Chautauqua Update

Have you seen the bulletin board or previous announcements about the Chautauqua Grant? If you're eligible, you should be filling out an application now and giving it to Shannon. We're accepting applications through September 30th! Please contact Rich Gibson, Nancy Dickinson, Worth Hartman, Chuck Kiphart, or Pastor Sarah if you have any questions.

New Member Sunday!

Make First Congregational UCC your new church home and join with others on Sunday, October 28th during the 11am worship service. Pastor Sarah is looking forward to hearing about your faith journey and welcoming you into this church family. Contact Pastor Sarah to schedule a conversation about membership pastorsarah@fcindy.org.

Church Social Media/Website/Design Team Update

We are blessed by a talented team of volunteers who help with church social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter), Website and design. Team members include Sean Baker, Angela Edwards, Josh Cody, and Pastor Sarah. Pastor Sarah leads this team and is the primary contact for members wishing to share church information on social media and the website. Thank you for helping to spread the good news about the mission and ministry of the church through the website and social media. These are popular platforms for people to first learn about our church and where most of our visitors find information about us. We want to hear from you, so please contact Pastor Sarah with your social media and website updates.

September Mission of the Month is the UCC Mental Health Network.

The United Church of Christ Mental Health Network works to reduce stigma and promote the inclusion of people with mental illnesses/brain disorders and their families in the life, leadership and work of congregations. Its stated values are

- Jesus has shown us the way to embrace those who are marginalized by society and advocate with and for them.
- Every person has value and worth and deserves love, dignity and respect.

- All people, regardless of mental health or disability status, have something to contribute to the life, leadership and work of their congregations.
- Community matters. A sense of belonging is important to us all, whether we face mental health challenges ourselves or not.
- True compassion in ministry and relationships is based on equality.

The Network also helps churches such as FCC that are considering becoming a W.I.S.E. Church (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, Engaged) by providing resources and support to reach that goal and to do so by embodying the love of Jesus in the process. During the month of September your loose dollar bills in the offering plate or larger amounts in the Mission Offering envelopes marked “Mental Health Network” or checks with that notation will go to support its work.

Pantry Items of the Month

During September we are collecting the following items: soups, beans, rice, mac'n'cheese, paper towels, and body wash.

Pastoral Care

Please contact Pastor Sarah at (386) 478 - 9012 or at pastorsarah@fcindy.org.

This Week at First Congregational

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| Thursday, August 30 | 7:00 p.m. | Choir Rehearsal |
| Sunday, September 2 | 11:00 a.m. | Traditional Service |
| Sunday, September 2 | 5:30 p.m. | New Creation |
| Wednesday, September 5 | 7:00 p.m. | Trustees Meeting |
| Wednesday, September 5 | 7:30 p.m. | New Creation Planning Team |
| Thursday, September 6 | 1:00 p.m. | Men’s Lunch |
| Thursday, September 6 | 7:00 p.m. | Choir Rehearsal |
| Saturday, September 8 | 4:00 p.m. | Church Picnic |