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# FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

e-pistle for the week of November 29, 2018

## Minister's Message

**Dear First Congregational Family,**

Recently I attended a workshop about how to be a church that is intentionally welcoming to guests who visit us for worship on Sunday. We learned that a majority of church going people don't invite their co-workers, friends and family to join them for worship. It made me think about our church. Do you invite others to come to church with you? I know some of you have and I thank you!

I believe Advent is a special time of year where people are looking for comfort, meaning, and community. I'd like to invite and challenge each of us to bring a guest (or two or three!) to church with you during this sacred season. We know that rituals of lighting the advent wreath, sacred music, and being together are important ways to create health and wellness. Through

these spiritual activities, we remind ourselves that we are not alone, that we are loved.

Bring a friend this Advent season. As we prepare to welcome the Christ child, let us also welcome new guests among us. They are waiting to be invited by you. Many people won't just show up on their own. They need your invitation. Help someone find hope this Advent season. Invite someone to come with you to church.

Blessings,  
Pastor Sarah

### **Celebration of Life - Friday, November 30, 11:00a.m.**

The service for Marilyn Hennegan will be this Friday, November 30th, at 11:00 AM. She and her husband Jim (who died in 2013) were long time devoted members of our church who enjoyed winters in Florida through their active retirement years. The last several years Marilyn has struggled with dementia and has not been able to come to church. Their daughter Kathy is also a member.



Here is a link to her

obituary: <https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/indystar/obituary.aspx?page=lifestory&pid=190765684>

### **Worship for the First Sunday of Advent**

#### **Adult Class - 9:45 a.m.**

As we continue and conclude the study "Reclaiming Jesus: A Confession of Faith in a Time of

Crisis" during December, this Sunday we will discuss the topic: "Truth is Morally Central to Our Personal and Public Lives."

### **Traditional Service - 11:00 a.m.**

Pastor Sarah will preach on

Scripture: Luke 21:25-38

Advent Wreath to be lit by Paul and Beth Terheide

### **Prayground - Beginning THIS Sunday!**

Beginning December 2nd, the Christian body begins celebrating Advent--a time for us to prepare our hearts, our minds, and our spirits for the coming of the Christ child. At First Congregational Church UCC, one way that we are leaning into this concept of welcoming is by opening the Prayground. Located in the front right in the sanctuary, the Prayground offers children and families a space just for them and allows all to fully engage in meaningful worship. The Prayground will have soft foam mats along with liturgically and age appropriate worship materials. The Prayground will initially be installed as an experiment, and will be evaluated for permanency after an estimated six to twelve months. As time goes, we commit to asking for and listening to feedback from the congregation to best support everybody's faith development and worship experience, and to best welcome our children and families. With the full support of the Worship and Faith Board, the FCC Mental Health WISE Team, and the Church Council, the Prayground will be available for use beginning December 2nd. As we prepare our hearts to welcome the Christ child, let us prepare a dedicated space in our sanctuary that welcomes all children.

For feedback, questions, concerns, and/or comments, please talk to Lianna Campos ([lcampos33@gmail.com](mailto:lcampos33@gmail.com), W&F Board Representative to Council) or Nancy Dickinson ([dickinson.nls@gmail.com](mailto:dickinson.nls@gmail.com), Chair of W&F Board) or Pastor Sarah ([pastorsarah@fcindy.org](mailto:pastorsarah@fcindy.org)).

### **New Creation - 5:30 p.m.**

Join us for a special worship service as we celebrate, give thanks and close New Creation with its final service on Sunday, December 2. This service will invite us to reflect on the powerful impact of New Creation over the years, give God thanks for the ways our lives have been touched by this special alternative worship service, and help us end this season well. The Worship and Faith Board asks you to hold those impacted in prayer during this season of change, as well as prayers for what new ways of alternative worship God is calling us to explore for 2019. Please contact Pastor Sarah with any questions.


### **New Creation Worship's Sacred Pause**

After much thought, deliberation, and discussion by the New Creation Planning Team, the

Worship & Faith Board, and Church Council, New Creation Worship will take a “sacred pause” with its last weekly service of 2018 being held on December 2. This decision has not come easily, but with Pastor Sarah’s leadership we are experiencing the hand of God leading our church down new paths of spiritual renewal. Our last New Creation Worship service will focus on celebrating the many gifts that we have received through its spiritual nurturance, along with some time to grieve a loss many of us will keenly feel.

With the blessing of the Worship & Faith Board, a new planning team will begin work on the development of a new concept and avenue for alternative worship. New ideas and perspectives will contribute greatly to the process of discernment and development, so we hope others will participate in this endeavor. It’s our hope to have something new to offer during 2019 to both our church members and to those who have yet to find us, beginning with a Lenten series. We eagerly anticipate the opportunity to infuse a variety of new thoughts and creative ideas to shape the design and content of that series. Beyond Lent, let’s see where this new journey takes us.


New Creation has been a vital part of our church’s worship experience for the better part of 12 years, so we hope many will participate on December 2 in the parlor at 5:30 as we begin our sacred pause.



**THIS CHRISTMAS,  
WE REMEMBER  
THAT JESUS WAS  
A REFUGEE...**

MATTHEW 2:13-14

#WELCOMEREFUGEES  
#WELCOMEASYLUMSEEKERS  
#WELCOMECHRIST



UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST

What's Happening at FCC

### **Hanging of the Greens, December 1**



Come one, come all to help decorate the parlor, narthex and sanctuary for the Advent Season on Saturday December 1st from 10:00AM-12:00PM. Any questions, email Sally Coombs at [sallysews73@gmail.com](mailto:sallysews73@gmail.com) or call 317-446-2853.

### **Shining a Light Service, December 3**

## Shining a Light: an interfaith service for those impacted by sexual violence.

Monday, December 3 | 6:00 - 7:15PM



**Shining a Light:** an interfaith service for those impacted by sexual violence.

Liturgy of Lament, Protest and Blessing for survivors of sexual assault and harassment, and all impacted by sexual violence.

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2018 | 6:00 - 7:15 P.M.**

Trinity Episcopal Church  
3243 N Meridian St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46208

*Participants include:*

**The Rt. Reverend Jennifer Baskerville-Burrows**  
*Bishop, Episcopal Diocese of Indianapolis*

**Dr. Leah Gunning Francis**  
*Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty, and Associate Professor of Christian Education and Practical Theology, Christian Theological Seminary*

**The Reverend Dr. Sarah Lund**  
*Senior Minister, First Congregational United Church of Christ*

**Rabbi Sandy Eisenberg Sasso**  
*Senior Rabbi Emerita, Congregation Beth-El Zedeck*

**Rima Shahid**  
*Executive Director, Women 4 Change Indiana*

**The Reverend Julia E. Whitworth**  
*Rector, Trinity Episcopal Church*

**Indianapolis Women's Chorus & Members of Julian Center**

### What Shall We Bring?



As we wrap up our Annual Campaign for 2019 resources, thank you to those who have responded! You have pledged to provide for First Congregational's ministries in 2019 that touch so many lives.

For those who have not yet responded, please consider the following:

1. Your pledge of financial and service resources greatly benefits FCC's planning for 2019;

2. Your pledge is an intention to give, and can be changed, either to give more or give less, based on your circumstances;
3. Your pledge is a way to bring your whole self to God and be generous with your life.

Please try to turn in your pledge by early December in order to assist our boards with preliminary planning. Pledge and service cards are available in the Narthex, and can be deposited in the basket or the offering plate. Or you can contact Shannon Abbott in the Church Office to have cards sent to you.

***What shall we bring?*** Thank you to all who share your gifts and help First Congregational be dynamic and vital, energized to be a servant community of Jesus Christ!

### **Poinsettia Time**

It's Advent Season. Please order a poinsettia(s) to help celebrate this special Season. The cost per plant is \$10.00. Any questions see or email Sally Coombs at [sallysews73@gmail.com](mailto:sallysews73@gmail.com)

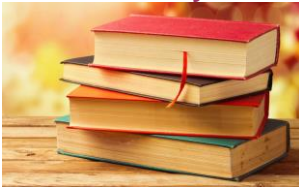


### **Flowers Needed**

Flowers have a way of bringing beauty into the worship service. There are several empty Sundays on the Flower Calendar located on the bulletin board by the garden doors. Will you sign up for a Sunday? The flowers can be for any occasion and come from the florist, store, or your garden. The cost is \$25 from our florist. If you have any questions, please email Sally Coombs at [sallysews73@gmail.com](mailto:sallysews73@gmail.com) or call 317-446-2853. You can also let Shannon know the occasion at [shannon@fcindy.org](mailto:shannon@fcindy.org) or call the church office at 317-257-5397.

The following dates are currently available in the Flower Calendar: December 9 & 16.

### **The Book Party is Back!!**

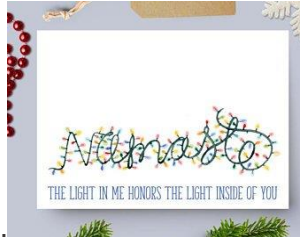


On Friday, December 14<sup>th</sup> we will read books and do activities with 2 kindergarten classes at

IPS 106, 5301 Roxbury, just east of Cathedral High School. The teachers, Ms. Kormos and Mrs. Anderson formerly taught at IPS 42 where several FCC members tutored. It is a terrific way to get into the holiday spirit! We will have 2 sessions, 11:15 a.m. to noon and noon to 12:45 p.m. If you'd like to help with either session, please tell Sandy Wood - her contact info is [csjlwood@att.net](mailto:csjlwood@att.net) or 317-225-6206.

### **Mental Health Team offers "Yoga for the Holidays"**

You are invited to participate in Yoga for the Holidays with Shannon Abbott in the church parlor



on Monday, December 17, 6:00 – 7:00p.m.

- This practice will be a gentle practice of mindfulness and movement, and will also offer the option of modifications using a chair, so all are welcome to participate.
- Please wear loose, comfortable clothing, and bring a yoga mat if you have one (If you have an extra mat, please bring one to share with someone who may not have one.)

Please email Shannon at [shannon@fcindy.org](mailto:shannon@fcindy.org) for more information and to register. A free-will, gratitude offering will be appreciated.

### **Foundation - 1857 Society**

The newly formed **1857 Society** is up and running. All of us who include First Congregational in our wills or estate plans are eligible to join. Doing so strengthens the church's long term financial base, allowing us to do more of God's work. Consider if this is something of enduring value in which you'd like to participate. Commitment forms are available in the narthex or from the office.

### **Guided Meditation at Hoosier Village - Saturdays at 7p.m.**

FCC members and friends are invited to attend guided meditation sessions at Hoosier Village. The Meditation Circle meets every Saturday (except Thanksgiving) at 7 p.m. in the Great Hall Conference Room. Use the Chapel parking lot and turn right after entering the hallway. We are listening to Guided Imagery Meditations to let go of stress and find peace and healing. No previous meditation experience necessary. Contact Anne or Daryl Greene for more information.

**Green Team Tip** 



Your dishwasher uses a lot of energy when you let it dry your dishes. Deselect the heated dry cycle. When the dishwasher has finished, open it up to let the hot humid air put warmth and humidity into the house.

### **November Mission of the Month is Merom Camp & Retreat Center**

Summer camps, Senior's Unlimited, oh my! Spring Connection, Nature's Classroom and more! And more? Confirmation Retreats, Bible 101, just to name of few. There's always some event going on at Merom over 300 days of the year! Support Merom by putting a donation in the Missions envelope or write a check to FCC with Merom in the memo line.

### **Pantry Items of the Month**

During November we are collecting the following items: fruit cocktail, spaghetti sauce, quick oats, and toothpaste.

### **Lost & Found**



Did you lose an earring at church? Do you know someone who did?

Did you leave your water bottle in the church office?

Contact Shannon in the church office at [shannon@fcindy.org](mailto:shannon@fcindy.org) or call at 317-257-5397 to reclaim your lost items.

### **Pastoral Care**

Pastor Sarah may be reached at (386) 478 - 9012 or at [pastorsarah@fcindy.org](mailto:pastorsarah@fcindy.org).

### **This Week at First Congregational**

<b>Saturday, December 1</b>	<b>10:00 a.m.</b>	<b>Hanging of the Greens</b>
<b>Sunday, December 2</b>	<b>5:30 p.m.</b>	<b>New Creation</b>
<b>Monday, December 3</b>	<b>9:30 a.m.</b>	<b>Church Women United Event</b>
<b>Monday, December 3</b>	<b>6:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Shine a Light Vigil</b>

<b>Tuesday, December 4</b>	<b>7:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Outreach &amp; Service</b>
<b>Wednesday, December 5</b>	<b>7:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Trustees Meeting</b>
<b>Thursday, December 6</b>	<b>9:00 a.m.</b>	<b>Center for Congregations Event</b>
<b>Thursday, December 6</b>	<b>7:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Choir Rehearsal</b>
<b>Saturday, December 8</b>	<b>11:00 a.m.</b>	<b>Bell Rehearsal</b>