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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

e-pistle for the week of October 18, 2018

Minister's Message

Dear First Congregational Family,

As the crisp cooler air and changing colors of the leaves are marks of change in the natural world, our upcoming Annual Ministry Planning (AMP) session marks another type of change. I am looking forward to this Saturday's gathering that starts at 9:30am and hope you all will join with the leadership teams of the church as we discern where God is calling us to serve in the upcoming year. Last Sunday's sermon reflected on the power of partnering with God as we seek to live faithfully. When we are fully focused on what God calls us to do and who God calls us to be, then "for God, all things are possible" (Mark 10:31). Yet when we try to go off on our own various ways, we likely will find ourselves frustrated and failing. "All things are possible," does not mean that we do everything. In fact, it means the opposite. It means that we focus only on what it is God is calling us as a community of faith to do and to be, and that it most likely will be difficult. That's why we need to do so "for God." There will be moments where we question and struggle...that's

why we need one another and we need God. The key to church vitality is to be focused on our core mission, joined together in fulfilling what God has called us to do and who God calls us to be as the body of Christ. So this will be our great challenge and opportunity: to focus our mission in alignment with where God is calling us, so that partnered with each other and God as our guide, “all things are possible.” I’m anticipating a rich and lively session on Saturday. Keep the church in your prayers as we boldly and faithfully seek to answer God’s call.

With faith and hope for tomorrow,
Pastor Sarah

Worship for Sunday

Adult Class

Join us as we discuss “Reclaiming Jesus: A Confession of Faith in a Time of Crisis.”

Traditional Service - 11:00 a.m.

Pastor Sarah will preach on
Scripture: Mark 10:35-45

New Creation - 5:30 p.m.

This Sunday in New Creation Worship we will wrap up our focus on God’s Radiant Light in our lives. Our culmination will include designing and walking a labyrinth as we consider how God’s light can lead us down pathways toward enduring peace if we purposely follow that path. Please join us in our walk for peace.

From the Desk of the Admin



Pastors are special people, and they do more than any of us realize. They preach messages of hope and justice. They sit with us when we are sick and walk with us through grief. They celebrate with us through births, baptisms, and weddings. They provide counseling and prayers when we need them. They hold safe and sacred space for us as a

bridge between God and the world.

As leaders, teachers, mentors and God's chosen servants, pastors show extravagant love for the people of their congregation and all of God's people. Pastors are also human. They have their own struggles with balancing family, work, personal needs, and resources just as the rest of us. They need friends who will pray for them and encourage them. For their service and love they deserve our gratitude, support, and prayers all year long.

October is celebrated by many as Pastor Appreciation Month. Some ideas/suggestions for showing our appreciation to our pastor and increasing the fruitfulness of her ministry came across my desk this week in one of the publications we receive in the office, so I decided to share these ideas with you in the hopes that you may choose one of these ways (or your own special way) to show your appreciation to Pastor Sarah throughout the remainder of this month.

1. **Pray for your pastor daily.** Be specific. Pray for her health, her messages, her family, and try to put yourself in her place.
2. **Go out of your way to provide gracious words of encouragement.** Write her a note on a prayer card, send a card of appreciation to her home or to the office, call, or send an email. Ask her if she has had a Sabbath of her own this week. (Pastors need constant reminders of self-care.) Go beyond platitudes at the door after Sunday services. We can start by simply saying thank you to our pastor – creatively, tangibly, actively, sincerely.
3. **Consider making an online gift in your pastor's honor to one of the many ministries served through the UCC.** We all know Pastor Sarah has a special connection with Health and Wholeness Ministries, so you may consider making a donation to the UCC Mental Health Network in her honor.

Pastor Sarah, For all you do for this congregation, for the wider Church, for the broken and hurting world around us, for your family, and all of your loved ones, we thank you. May you know that you are loved, that you are appreciated, and may you take time to love and care for yourself and allow others to take care of you from time to time as Christ cares for the Church.

With Gratitude,
Shannon Abbott

What's Happening at FCC

Come help us plan next year at FCC!!

AMP - Annual Ministry Planning is this Saturday, October 20th at 9:30! All are welcome as we look at goals and ideas for next year and work together to discern God's call for us for 2019. There are so many possibilities and we value everyone's input! We will also have a guest - Peter Eckel (yes he is related to Larry) will be discussing the programs launching at IYG at their new location on Meridian, only 4 1/2 miles from us at 38th Street. We will also be talking about Family Promise and looking through all the other opportunities that have been raised through discussions this year - from home meetings through strategic planning. And yes there will be snacks! For more information, please contact Karen Walker

Crop Walk - Sunday, October 21st

CROP WALK is this Sunday October 21st. The WALK is to help stop hunger locally and worldwide. You can still donate on the church's website, give a donation to a walker (Katie, Wendy, Worth, Nancy or Sally and anyone else I forgot) or make a check payable to CWS/CROP to put in the Sunday offering. Gathering time starts at 12:30 on the grounds of CTS by the InterChurch Center at 42nd and Michigan . The WALK starts at 2:00 through the Butler University campus and Tarkington neighborhood. If you are walking, please wear a FCC shirt. Thank you, Sally Coombs.

Family Promise Fall Clothing Drive - ENDS THIS SUNDAY!!!

Check your closets! FCC is participating in Family Promise's clothing drive through this Sunday, October 21. Bring your gently used clothing for all ages to church in white plastic kitchen trash bags and deposit bags in the tall white hampers in the narthex. (No shoes, accessories, or household items please.) Clothing will be delivered by Outreach & Service to the Day Center from Oct. 22-27 where they will be picked up by Goodwill. Family Promise guests will receive vouchers for each bag donated so they can shop at Goodwill for themselves. Please support this additional way of helping homeless families.

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.

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 or call 317-446-2853. You can also let Shannon know the occasion at shannon@fcindy.org or call the church office at 317-257-5397.

The following dates are currently available in the Flower Calendar:

October 21

November 11 and 18

December 9, 16 and 30

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.

Rhythm Quest Event - November 18

Rhythm Quest is a unique percussion group from Sarasota, Florida. We are fortunate that two of them will be in Indianapolis on November 18, and they will present us with an opportunity at 3:00 PM that day to listen to, learn about, and experience the spiritual aspects of rhythm in our lives and in our world. The Music Support Team hopes you'll be in the Mayflower Room at that time to be a part of the action and enrichment. You can learn more about Rhythm Quest and their music at www.rhythmquest.net. In preparation for this concert/workshop it will be helpful to know how many of us have drums or other percussion instruments that we can bring to participate in a group drum circle as part of the event. A sign-up sheet will be available in the narthex to let us know what to expect for participation.

Pastoral Transition Team

As Pastor Sarah continues to serve the congregation in her first six months, the church has a Transition Team to offer guidance, support and to ensure open and transparent communication between the pastor and the congregation. The members of this team are Randy Walker, Liana Campos, Jim Rutherford and Nancy Dickinson. Please feel free to be in touch with the Transition Team with any feedback, concerns, or comments that you wish to be addressed during this important time of transition and new beginnings.

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.

Green Team Tip

Are the earth's resources ours to take and use just for fun and for profit? What responsibility do we have for future generations?

October Mission of the Month is the UCC Offering Neighbors In Need

A recent recipient in the Indiana-Kentucky Conference of Neighbors in Need was Plymouth Settlement House in Louisville, KY. It was founded around 1910 and was next door to Plymouth Congregational Church. The church has taken leadership in offering many programs to African-Americans at the House. The 2017 Neighbors in Need offering supported their Youth Homeless Shelter, helping young people in need of a place to stay. Thank you for supporting the Mission of the Month with your donation in the Missions or Neighbors in Need envelope.

Who is My Neighbor?

Understanding their mission is to witness for justice, Memphis, Tennessee's *Workers Interfaith Network (WIN)*, is a humble, yet powerful group of people who assists workers protect their rights as employees from exploitative employers. WIN has developed a reputation in TN as the organization that can assistance a worker recover monies when they have suffered "wage theft" by an unjust employer. Unfortunately, *wage theft* is becoming a common act of withholding an employee's wages by the employer. When employees these face economic hardships at the hands of their employers, it is their family's that suffers this unimaginable injustice as their basic needs are no longer met. This forces some to further struggle to move out of hunger or poverty.



As a 2009 Neighbors In Need grant recipient, WIN's goal is assist workers learn their rights, even that to organize and form unions. Currently, they are collecting hundreds of petition signatures to present to the County Sheriff, urging him to recognize wage theft as a criminal offense. Workers Interfaith Network's Executive Director, Rev. Rebekah Jordan Gienapp, reports good news. "WIN demonstrates to a vulnerable population that when workers and people of faith join together, we are a powerful force for justice. We enabled to eight workers to recover over \$113,000 in unpaid and workers' compensation payments."

Furthermore, Workers Interfaith Network was honored as one of ten grassroots organizations nationwide that received the *2009 Harry Chapin Self-Reliance Award*. The award provides a \$7,000 grant to groups who have been "judged outstanding for the innovative approaches to fighting domestic hunger and poverty". For more information about WIN visit www.workersinterfaithnetwork.org.

Pantry Items of the Month

During October we are collecting the following items: bread, baking mixes, canned vegetables, soup and deodorant.

Pastoral Care

Pastor Sarah may be contacted at (386) 478 - 9012 or at pastorsarah@fcindy.org.

This Week at First Congregational

Saturday, October 20	9:30 a.m.	Annual Ministry Planning
Sunday, October 21	9:45 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, October 21	11:00 a.m.	Traditional Service
Sunday, October 21	12:30 p.m.	Crop Walk
Sunday, October 21	5:30 p.m.	New Creation
Wednesday, October 24	7:30 p.m.	New Creation Planning Team
Thursday, October 25	11:45 a.m.	Women's Lunch
Thursday, October 25	1:00 p.m.	Mental Health Team Meeting
Thursday, October 25	7:00 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal
Sunday, October 28	9:45 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, October 28	11:00 a.m.	Traditional Service – New Member Sunday
Sunday, October 28	5:30 p.m.	New Creation