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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

E-pistle for the Week of March 28, 2019

Dear First Congregational:

At last weekend's Whole Church Retreat, "Different, Equal, and Whole: Coming Together as One," we enjoyed fun and fellowship. We worshipped together throughout the retreat, including celebrating the sacraments of communion and remembering our baptism. Inspired by our scripture passage from 1 Corinthians 12, one of the highlights was the time of reflecting on our spiritual gifts as individuals and then sharing them with the group, as a way to celebrate the diversity among us. I want to share with you a list of the diverse spiritual gifts this group of 20 people celebrated:

Peace, Helps, Hospitality, Healing, Service, Faith, Teaching, Listening, Love, Justice, Visiting, Health, Wellness, Writing/Editing, Leadership, Presence, Persistence, Steadfast, Mercy, Knowledge, Administration, Gardening, Baking, Pastor, Prayer, Family, Discernment, Music, Connections, Unconventional, Creative, Organized, Planner, Meditation, Singing, Hugs, Evangelist, Content, Reading, Joyful, Play,

Exhortation, Wisdom, Reconciliation, Connectedness, Directed Love, Giving, Comfort, Learning, Grand-parenting.

What spiritual gifts do you bring to the Body of Christ? Whatever gifts God has given you, know that you are an important part of Christ's Body. As a church, we give thanks for all the different gifts each person brings, and glad that no one person is the same...we are different, we are equal and we are whole.

I want to thank the Whole Church Retreat planning team: Wendy Baldwin, Lianna Campos, Worth Hartman, and Pat Larracey. We are blessed by their faithfulness and leadership. Thank you to all who attended and participated. We hope to offer another Whole Church Retreat in the future so more people can experience a time of meaningful connection...and find a place to belong, a place to heal and a place to love.

Blessings,
Pastor Sarah

P.S. This photo is the altar from our Whole Church Retreat at Benedict Inn.



Worship

Adult Class - 9:45 a.m.

March 31st: Song of Songs (Solomon)

Explore this mysterious, beautiful, alluring collection of love poetry. Who are these lovers Dr. Wolfe names Rayati (woman) and Doti (man)? We will laugh, blush, and wonder how this racy material got in the bible and encounter Rayati, this assertive, articulate woman who affirms her own sexuality and selfhood.

Worship Service - 11:00 a.m.

Pastor Carol Sowle will preach on "Walking Humbly with God - and Feasting!"

Scripture: Luke 15: 1-3, 11b-32

What's Happening at FCC

Lenten Breakfast at First Congregational, Saturday, March 30th at 8 am

Every year during Lent, UCC churches in Indianapolis take turns hosting Saturday morning breakfasts, including a short devotional service. This year is different: it used to be open only to men, but is **now open to all UCC folks, regardless of gender**. This Saturday, March 30th, is First Congregational's first opportunity to host in a few years. We'll have plenty of food and fellowship. Our own Rev. Pat Larracey will officiate at the service. There will be a collection, and proceeds will be donated to the Merom Camp and Retreat Center. Please come!

First Congregational's Historic Roots in Indy



On Sunday, April 7, Marion Harcourt, our most tenured member, will give a presentation during the Adult Ed hour at 9:45. Following worship, we'll have a light lunch at church and then board a bus for Marion's tour of historic sites connected to FCC's 162 years in Indy. This will include a stop at Joy of All Who Sorrow, FCC's building prior to our current location. The bus leaves FCC at 1 pm, and it is a school bus, with seating for 44, so invite friends to join us! A sign-up sheet is available, and donations to cover the cost of the event are gratefully accepted!

Jesus Christ Superstar Karaoke



Kick off Holy Week a day early – on **Saturday, April 13**, from 2-4, we'll be showing Jesus Christ Superstar, and encouraging those who want to sing along. Also, you can learn about the Gospel scriptures which most of the songs are based on.

Poems & Stories

The Mental Health Team is asking for people to share poems and stories on the topic of "LGBTQ and Mental Health." We are collecting these through May 19. Booklets will be assembled to give to visitors to our booth at the PRIDE Festival. Entries may be emailed to Brandi Pudlo: bpudlo@knox.edu. If you would like to send a draft for proof-reading before a final copy is printed, please send an email with the draft by May 1st.

1857 Society

The Society invites all who remember the church in their wills or estate plans, or plan to do so, to the Society's initial annual meeting, to be held at noon on Friday May 3 at Marquette Manor. The lunch meal is complimentary and there will be an outside speaker. Watch for reservation instructions. Commitment forms to join the Society are on the bulletin board inside the entrance to the parking lot. Questions? See Bill Gillette.

Update on "Days for Girls" Project



The IN-KY Conference and Outreach & Service project for putting together 100 menstrual hygiene kits for girls in developing countries is well under way. The response has been gratifying. Cutters are preparing fabric, sewers are sewing shields, pads and drawstring bags, and suppliers have been shopping or checking their own stashes. We would welcome more cutters and sewers. **We now have enough Ziploc freezer bags and travel-size soaps thanks to some generous donations!** 120 pairs of panties are on order with donated funds. We still need 22 more pairs or money to buy them. **We have**

received a few sets that are not 100% cotton which we cannot use. If you donated Felina or Calvin Klein brands of this type, please see if you can exchange them. We need 100% cotton, dark but pretty colors, and no bikinis or boy cuts. We expect to receive more fabric donations soon but still may need to purchase some more, likely flannel. So we are still accepting monetary donations designated for "Days for Girls." We also need 50 more wash cloths (good quality, regular size in dark, but pretty colors, also 100% cotton). Kohl's and Target are good sources for those. We'll keep you posted on the progress of the project, and thanks for your support. I will have cut fabric sets for shields to hand off to sewers each Sunday and also prepared flannel. Contact Sue Chapman for ways you can get involved!



Dress for Success

Spring Cleaning? Have gently used professional clothes you are no longer wearing? Dress for Success can give them to people who can't afford interview clothes to help them be better prepared when job hunting. Put donations in the cloakroom by the sign. Thanks!

Green Team Tip

Where do you set your thermostat? As we transition from cold weather to cool, test yourself every day. Try turning the heater off and opening windows on nice days. If it's cool outside, try setting the thermostat a degree or two cooler than normal, and put on a sweater if it helps. Make it a daily practice!

Food Donations for the Northside Pantry

Donations have been generous and are appreciated. Please keep them coming!



March Mission of the Month: One Great Hour of Sharing

Each year brings new disasters in the US and around the world. When you give to OGHS, you are there helping right away because OGHS has partnerships with local organizations ready for rapid response. OGHS also works with Church World Service to support refugee resettlement and to advocate for refugees and asylum seekers. This is the most important

Special Offering of the UCC and one of the "5 for 5" offerings we at FCC have long been committed to support. Please be generous in your support. Use the special pew envelopes or put the notation "OGHS" on your check.

Pantry Items of the Month



During March we are collecting the following items: spaghetti, rice, juices, peanut butter.

Pastoral Care

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

THIS WEEK AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL

Thursday, March 28	1:00 p.m.	Men's Lunch
Thursday, March 28	1:30 p.m.	Lenten Small Group
Thursday, March 28	7:00 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal
Saturday, March 30	8:00 a.m.	Lenten Breakfast @ FCC
Saturday, March 30	10:00 a.m.	Lenten Small Group in parlor
Sunday, March 31	9:45 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, March 31	11:00 a.m.	Worship w/Carol Sowle preaching
Tuesday, April 2	7:00 p.m.	Lenten Small Group
Wednesday, April 3	2:00 p.m.	Lenten Small Group
Wednesday, April 3	7:00 p.m.	Trustees Meeting
Thursday, April 4	1:00 p.m.	Men's Lunch
Thursday, April 4	1:30 p.m.	Lenten Small Group
Thursday, April 4	7:00 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal
Saturday, April 6	8:00 a.m.	Lenten Breakfast @ St. John's UCC, Southport
Saturday, April 6	10:00 a.m.	Lenten Small Group in parlor