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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Epistle for the Week of October 24, 2019

Dear First Congregational,

“There is a language of all you’ve created. Hear me, please. I just want to be still enough to hear. Right here, Lord: I want to be.”

These words come from the closing lines of the poem “Prayer to be Still and Know” by Nickole Brown.

One of the gifts of my time at Princeton with the “Iron Sharpening Iron” project is the reflection that we are all created as “human becomings.” We are ever growing, ever changing, ever becoming. The gift of a life of faith is the spiritual practice to be-come. To be present to the moment. To be open for all that God wishes to create inside of us, through us, and with us. In this way, we are co-becomers, co-creators, with God.

I am grateful for First Congregational and the way we create space for each of us to become part of the Body of Christ, one family of God.

Blessings,
Pastor Sarah

Worship

Adult Class - 9:45 a.m.

Student Pastor Cassidy Hall will be leading and will continue to explore more on the topics of Black Theology and Womanist Theology, including some readings.

Sunday Worship Service - 11:00 a.m.

Pastor Sarah will be preaching and teaching this Sunday with St. Peter UCC in Lamar, IN. Last year we welcomed Rev. Chip to preach for our Just Peace Sunday, so now Pastor Sarah is with Rev. Chip's church for their Mission Festival about Mental Health.

This Sunday, we welcome Rev. Nathan Day Wilson as our guest preacher. He is an ordained minister in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Currently he is director of communications at Christian Theological Seminary, coordinator of the Faith & Values section of The Indianapolis Star, assistant coach of a high school basketball team, and personal trainer for body and brain fitness. You're invited to follow him on Twitter: @nathandaywilson

Rev. Nathan Day Wilson will preach on "When God Disappoints."
Scripture: Genesis 4:3-9



What's Happening at FC

(See October Colony for monthly announcements and further details.)

Technical Difficulties Resolved!

We are happy to report that our Office Administrator's email is back up and running! You may once again email her at shannon@fcindy.org.

Pardon Our Mess: An Update on Construction at FC

Over this past weekend we discovered water leaking from the second floor through the walls and ceilings by the north stairwell. We have fixed the problem of the leak and dried the wet areas. **The north stairwell is reopened for use.** Please pardon the hole in the ceiling, and expect additional upcoming renovations and repairs as we fix the damaged areas.

TONIGHT! Choir Rehearsals, 7:00 p.m.

Rehearsals are on Thursday nights from 7:00 to 8:30 PM. We welcome new members. If anyone is interested in joining the choir, please email Julie at juliehouston@comcast.net. We would love to have you join us!

Council Resolution on Inclusive Language in Worship

The Council recently passed the following resolution:

"First Congregational UCC shall encourage inclusive language in worship whenever appropriate."

We came to this decision with some measure of enthusiasm: God is Spirit, and those that worship God must do so in spirit and in faith...which means, as Spirit, God has no gender. To refer to God as He/Him/His inherently limits our conception of God. To remove gender from our conception of God is not "politically correct," but spiritually correct. This improvement to our conception of God cannot be complete in one fell swoop; old habits are deeply ingrained. We don't have the final word in stone as to how we will implement this, but we're going to start small and move forward in a deliberate and intelligent way. For now, you should start seeing and hearing the removal of gendered pronouns when referring to God in the spoken and printed scriptural readings during Sunday services. The Inclusive Bible shall be a primary reference as we work our way through this. To expand on this point: the UCC does not have an official or authorized translation of the Bible. We use the NRSV a lot, but not exclusively. Future readings are likely to be wholly NRSV sometimes, wholly King James occasionally, NRSV with changes inspired by the Inclusive Bible, wholly taken from the Inclusive Bible, or something else. Each week, Pastor Sarah and that week's worship leader will work together to develop a reading that meets the intent of the Council's resolution.

For example,

- "God" and "God's" will be used instead of "He," "Him," and "His."
- "Loving Parent," "Sacred Presence," or "Divine Creator" instead of "Father"
- "Lord" may just disappear

This is not an exhaustive list, but a place to start. If you have comments or suggestions, we'd love to hear from you!

Green Team Tip

Save gas by keeping your tires inflated to at least their recommended pressure. For even more mpg, fill your tires with nitrogen. (If you want to share a green habit, please send it to hoot.gibson.tds@gmail.com.)



Food Donations for the Northside Pantry

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

October Mission of the Month: Neighbors In Need

Neighbors in Need (NIN) is a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. One-third of NIN funds support the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM). Two-thirds of this offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries (JWM) to support a variety of justice initiatives. As we continue to hear about this administration's injustices at the southern border our JWM are giving special consideration to projects focusing on assisting our immigrant neighbors and communities. Grants are available to empower local churches to support these justice issues. Please give as generously as you can. Thank You. (source: www.ucc.org)

Pantry Items of the Month

During October we are collecting the following items: pudding and Jello mix, rice and beans, canned soup, paper towels.

Pastoral Care

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

THIS WEEK AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL

Thursday, October 24	11:45 a.m.	Women's Lunch
Thursday, October 24	7:00 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal
Saturday, October 26	10:30 a.m.	Bell Choir Rehearsal
Sunday, October 27	9:45 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class w/ Cassidy Hall
Sunday, October 27	11:00 a.m.	Worship w/ guest preacher, Rev. Nathan Day Wilson

Wednesday, October 30	10:00 a.m.	Care & Connections
Wednesday, October 30	5:00 p.m.	Completing the Circle Meeting
Wednesday, October 30	6:30 p.m.	Calling Circle
Thursday, October 31	1:00 p.m.	Men's Lunch
Thursday, October 31	7:00 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal
Saturday, November 2	10:30 a.m.	Bell Choir Rehearsal
Sunday, November 3	9:45 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class w/ Rich Gibson
Sunday, November 3	11:00 a.m.	Worship