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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Epistle for the Week of October 31, 2019



Dear First Congregational,

On Sunday, October 27, I joined Pastor Chip Jahn at St. Peter UCC in Lamar, Indiana, for their Missionfest lifting up mental health ministry. It was a joyful time together celebrating the outreach ministries of the congregation and listening together to the ways that mental health ministry can be included in their efforts to care for each other and the community. I

met the young man (now a high school senior) who as a young boy on a mission trip to Chicago for the first time saw a person living on the streets and upon returning to church Sunday morning announced that the church needed to end homelessness. Today he plans to go to medical school and after my sermon he shared he wants to be a neuro scientist to help treat mental health challenges. The youth of the church are a small but mighty group of visionary leaders.

I bring you warm greetings from our sister church and celebrate the power of our collective witness to justice and peace in the world. As you know, Chip is a national leader in the UCC Just Peace movement. It's exciting to think about how mental health justice can be part of the Just Peace movement. I invite you to dream, to wonder, and to explore this with me.



This weekend several of us are traveling to the UCC Mental Health Network WISE (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, and Engaged) for mental health training at Church of the Beatitudes in Phoenix, Arizona. Thanks to a generous grant from the Indiana-Kentucky Conference, we will have a rich time of learning together including a Mental Health First-Aid training on Friday, and then the WISE workshops on Saturday. I will attend the UCC Mental Health Network Annual Board meeting on Friday, giving the keynote for the Saturday WISE Conference, and guest preaching at Sun City United Church of Christ on Sunday. This is such important and exciting work we are doing together. I remain deeply thankful to First Congregational for being partners with me on the journey.

I count it a great blessing of joy to serve as your pastor. I look forward to being with you all on Sunday, November 10th when we will be welcoming new members to the congregation.

Blessings,
Pastor Sarah

Worship

Daylight Savings Time Ends THIS SUNDAY! Set your clocks back 1 hour before you go to bed Saturday night!

Adult Class - 9:45 a.m.

Rich Gibson will lead a discussion on "Plymouth's Pilgrims: Their Church, Their World; and Ours." Copies of the discussion guide will be made available for attendees. Come with an open mind to learn more about our Congregational ancestors.

All Saints Sunday Worship Service - 11:00 a.m.

Rev. Worth Hartman will preach on "Called to Be Saints."

Scriptures: Philippians 1:1-11 & Matthew 5:1-16

In our worship service this Sunday we will celebrate All Saints/All Souls Day. These are occasions in the church year to honor and remember the saints of the church and loved ones who have died. We affirm models and examples of faith who have inspired us and we remember loved ones whose earthly life is over but who live on in God's eternal care and in our hearts and memories.

So to aide in our worship, we are asking worshipers to bring objects that symbolize your favorite saint or loved ones. This could be a photo, a favorite object, a personal item, a gift, a painting, anything that recalls this important person in your life. We will place some tables in the front of the sanctuary where you can place your items before worship. We look forward to your participation in Sunday's worship.

- Rev. Worth Hartman

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!



What's Happening at FC

(See [November Colony](#) for monthly announcements and further details.)

Out of Office TODAY & TOMORROW (10/31-11/1)

I will be away from the church office for the next two days, participating in Mental Health First Aid Training and the UCC WISE Mental Health Network Conference with Pastor Sarah over the weekend in Phoenix, AZ. - Shannon Abbott, FC Office Administrator

NO Choir Rehearsal TONIGHT!

This is no trick. Take the night off to enjoy the treats on this All Hallows Eve. Rehearsals will resume next Thursday 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!

Games, Pizza, and Fun

Friends, guests, members and all others are invited to a game and pizza night in the parlor beginning at **5:30 on Saturday, Nov. 9**. Come any time and join the fun. We will order pizza and plan to eat around 6:45 pm. Please bring your own beverage. All ages are included. We will have games on hand or bring your favorite.

BUZZ w/ Pitch-In: Faith in Indiana, Sunday, Nov. 10, 12:30 p.m.

We will hear a presentation from Faith In Indiana which acts as a catalyst for marginalized people and faith organizations to address and take action regarding racial and economic equity. How can First Congregational support this statewide initiative? When considering what food to take to Nov 10th Buzz's pitch-in, you might want to take something other than a dessert! susanna-judith rae is providing lots of birthday cake—chocolate sheet cake, white sheet cake, and a layered carrot cake—to celebrate the 80th birthday of her husband Earl Hoppert.

"We Are Not Alone" Breakfast

Date:

November 12, 2018
9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

Goal:

To raise money for and awareness of Circle City Clubhouse

Location:

St. Luke's United Methodist Church
100 W. 86th St.
Indianapolis, IN 46260

Reservations:

Eventbrite: [We Are Not Alone](#)
Email: meetme@centralindianaclubhouse.org

Hoosier Village Alternative Gift Event: Sunday, November 17 from 1:30-4:00 p.m. in

the Chapel

Do you struggle to find meaningful Christmas gifts for your family and friends? Do you dread receiving more “stuff” for Christmas? This event is an alternative to the commercialization of Christmas. You and your family members will have the opportunity to make donations in a loved one’s name to one or more not-for-profit agencies that provide a variety of needed services in Marion and Boone counties. If you are unable to attend, you may pick up order forms in our narthex for absentee participation. Questions? Contact Sue Chapman, chair of Outreach & Service Board.

Green Team Tip

Before you vote, look at the climate change viewpoint of your candidates. (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!

November Mission of the Month: Family Promise

This month our Mission of the Month is Family Promise of Greater Indianapolis, the organization that serves families in crisis by providing short term housing while helping them to find permanent housing and providing skills that will help clients keep jobs and manage finances. FCC has been affiliated with Family Promise, formerly known as Interfaith Hospitality Network, for over 25 years. As our congregation’s make-up and size have changed in recent years, the Council has approved a recommendation from Outreach & Service for us to discontinue hosting families at our church but to continue as a “supporting congregation.” This means providing monetary support, taking part in the clothing drives, providing school clothing for the children in the After Care program through our “Underneath It All” drives, and providing Christmas gifts from the gift cards on our “Giving Tree.” Our monetary support helps with maintaining the day center and services for clients, including providing bus passes and gas cards. Since we are no longer hosting, our monetary support is even more important now. Please give generously to support the important service Family Promise provides to homeless families in our city.

Pantry Items of the Month

During November we are collecting the following items: fruit cocktail, spaghetti sauce,

quick oats, and tooth paste.

Pastoral Care

While Pastor Sarah is serving the wider church at the UCC WISE Conference in Phoenix, AZ, November 1 - 3, Rev. Worth Hartman may be reached at whartman@westminstervillage.com or (317) 417-0806.

Pastor Sarah will be back in the office next week and may be reached at (386) 478-9012 or at pastorsarah@fcindy.org.

THIS WEEK AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL

Thursday, October 31	1:00 p.m.	Men's Lunch
Thursday, October 31		NO Choir Rehearsal Tonight!
Saturday, November 2	10:30 a.m.	Bell Choir
Sunday, November 3	9:45 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class w/ Rich Gibson
Sunday, November 3	11:00 a.m.	All Saints Sunday Worship w/ Rev. Worth Hartman
Wednesday, November 6	11:00 a.m.	Witness & Welcome
Wednesday, November 6	7:00 p.m.	Trustees
Thursday, November 7	6:30 p.m.	In Harmony
Thursday, November 7	7:00 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal
Saturday, November 9	5:30 p.m.	Game Night
Sunday, November 10	9:45 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class w/ Grace Langford
Sunday, November 10	11:00 a.m.	Worship