



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

*No matter who you are, or
where you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here!*

www.fcindy.org
317.257.5397

7171 N. Pennsylvania St.
Indianapolis, IN 46240

@FirstCongregationalUCCLndy

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Welcome home! We celebrate being a Just Peace making church with an Open and Affirming covenant supporting the LGBTQ community since 1994. We welcome first time guests and include **all ages** in our worship service. We believe we are called by Jesus to be a transforming presence for God in the world. We are a place to **belong**, a place to **heal** and a place to **love**. **At First Congregational we recognize God as a loving, creating, all-encompassing Spirit who is not limited by usual human boundaries. Therefore, we practice the use of inclusive, expansive, and non-gendered language when speaking of and to God.**

Pastor Sarah's Office Hours

Monday: Sabbath

Tuesday: 9am – 12pm

Wednesday: vacation

Thursday: vacation

Friday: working off site

Shannon's Office Hours

Monday: Sabbath

Tuesday: office closed

Wednesday: office closed

Thursday: 9am – 12pm

Friday: 9am – 12pm

Pastoral Care: While Pastor Sarah is visiting family for the holidays from Dec 25 – Jan 3, Pastor Carol may be reached at (317) 496-9732 or casowle@gmail.com. After Jan 3, Pastor Sarah may be reached at (386)478-9012 or pastorsarah@fcindy.org.

We celebrate our church staff:

Senior Pastor, Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund

Pastoral Care Associate, Pastor Carol Sowle

Office Administrator, Shannon Abbott

Music Designer/Organist, Sean Baker

Choir Director, Julie Houston

Student Pastor, Cassidy Hall

Olivia Beeman, Nursery Attendant

Jess Tyler, Nursery Attendant

We celebrate our church leadership:

Rich Gibson, Moderator

Lianna Campos, Vice Moderator

Rev. Dr. Pat Larracey, Clerk

Jim Lootens, Treasurer

George Meier, Financial Secretary

We celebrate our worship leaders today:

Sue Chapman, Worship Leader

To the parents of our young children

God put the wiggle in children, please don't feel you have to suppress it in God's house. Preschool age and younger may use the Nursery or children of all ages are invited toward the front using the Playground if you like. Keep children engaged by quietly explaining the parts of the service, actions of the pastor, worship leaders, and musicians. Sing, pray, and speak the responses; children learn worship behavior by copying you. The way we adults welcome children in church directly affects how they respond to the Church and to one another. Let all ages know that they are at home in this house of worship. As Jesus said, "Let the children come to me."

To the members of our congregation

The presence of children is a gift to our church and to our community. They remind us that we are to share and pass on our faith. It is a gift to have children among us. Please welcome our children and encourage their parents with a warm smile.

Thank you.

DECEMBER 29, 2019

11 A.M.

Please speak the **bold**-printed words in unison.

Asterisk (*) indicates those who choose to may stand.

WE GATHER

PRELUDE	Gesu Bambino	Martens, Yon
INTROIT	Sing We Now Of Christmas	Trad French Carol
WELCOME and PRAYER		Pastor Carol Sowle

*CALL to WORSHIP

Praise God! Let us worship God with thanksgiving

We recall all that God has done for us. We come singing praises!

Praise God! Who has gathered us from many places and called us to be people of God.

Praise God! Who has come to dwell among us, who has sent Christ to dwell within us.

In our Joy God walks with us. In our distress God lifts us up. God's Love overflows.

God's compassion never ends.

Praise God! Wherever we are on life's journey, come let us worship God with praise.

*OPENING HYMN #126	Angels from the Realms of Glory	<i>New Century Hymnal</i>
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UNISON PRAYER

Loving God, it is our intention to bring our whole self to worship today. even the parts off to the side of our daily awareness. We bring our hopes and fears, our joys and tears, our doubts and certainties, our dreams for the future and the barriers that hold us back. Loving God, you meet us where we are and invite us into joyful praise. Help us to open up ourselves to you in faith and trust as we experience your presence in worship today. All praise and glory to you! Amen

*THE PEACE

WE PROCLAIM

MESSAGE FOR ALL AGES

ANTHEM	Wexford Carol	Trad Irish Carol
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SCRIPTURE

Psalm 148
Matthew 2: 13-23

Sue Chapman

SERMON

Hear the Angels?

Pastor Carol Sowle

HYMN #153

Who Would Think that What Was Needed

New Century Hymnal

WE RESPOND

SHARING of JOYS and CONCERNS

*We invite those who desire to share a joy or concern. Please share your name so that people might get better acquainted. Loving God **hear our prayer.***

PASTORAL PRAYER & THE PRAYER OF JESUS

Our God in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kin-dom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, as we also have forgiven those who sin against us. Do not let us enter into temptation, but rescue us from the evil one. For yours is the kin-dom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

INTERLUDE

A Child Is Born

T. Jones

CALL TO OFFERING and SERVICE

*We invite those who desire to share a service opportunity to do so briefly if the announcement is not in the bulletin. Please see the "Calls to Serve" for volunteer opportunities. Guests, please fill out a **Connect Card** found in the pew holders so that we might learn more about you. The cards may also be used to for prayer requests that will be shared through our weekly prayer chain. Please place Connect Cards in the offering plate.*

*DOXOLOGY

UNISON OFFERING PRAYER

Loving God, we recall the gracious deeds you have done for us. You have sent Jesus, our Emmanuel, to live among us and share our common life. In gratitude and praise we offer these gifts of time, money and acts of service. Multiply and bless these offerings. Use them and us to proclaim the Good News of your healing love to this troubled world. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

PCRC – Pastor Carol’s PCRC will meet on **Sunday, January 5th at 12:30 p.m.**

Inclusive Language Buzz, January 12th, 12:30 p.m. - Worship and Faith is hosting a Buzz on the use of Inclusive Language in our worship services. We will have a panel discussion with members of our congregation on January 12 after worship. You are invited to bring a dish and voice your experience of the recent changes we have made in our use of scripture, doxology, and prayer.

Green Team Tip – If you are fortunate to gather with friends and family this Christmas, what can we share with them about “living green?” What will we learn from them? (If you want to share a green habit, please send it to hoot.gibson.tds@gmail.com.)

December Mission of the Month: The Christmas Fund – *Today is the final offering this month for The Christmas Fund*, one of the “5 for 5” offerings of the United Church of Christ that FC has committed to support. The Christmas Fund, formerly known as the “Veterans of the Cross Offering,” gives congregations and members an opportunity to reach out in loving compassion, providing assistance to those who have so faithfully served our churches and now find themselves facing unexpected financial needs. These funds enable the Pension Board’s Ministerial Assistance program to provide, on behalf of the whole Church, pension supplements, health premium supplements, emergency grants for health or unexpected travel expenses, and Christmas “Thank You” gift checks to individuals and families in need. This year’s theme is “A Light Shines in the Darkness.” Your gifts this December will bring light into the darkness of financial need of deserving retired church workers and keep needed funds coming in the year ahead.



THIS WEEK AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL

Thursday, January 2	7:00 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal
Sunday, January 5	9:45 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, January 5	11:00 a.m.	Worship
Sunday, January 5	12:30 p.m.	PCRC (w/Pastor Carol)

Today's Scripture

Psalm 148

¹ Alleluia! Praise YHWH from the heavens;
praise God in the heights!

² Praise God, all you angels;
praise God, all you hosts!

³ Praise God, sun and moon;
praise God, all you shining stars!

⁴ Praise God, you highest heavens;
and you waters above the heavens!

⁵ Let them praise the Name of YHWH,
by whose command they were created.

⁶ God established them forever and ever
and gave a decree which won't pass away.

⁷ Praise YHWH from the earth,
you sea creatures and ocean depths,

⁸ lightning and hail, snow and mist,
and storm winds that fulfill God's word,

⁹ mountains and all hills,
fruit trees and all cedars,

¹⁰ wild animals and all cattle,
small animals and flying birds,

¹¹ rulers of the earth, leaders of all nations,
all the judges in the world,

¹² young men and young women,
old people and children—

¹³ let them all praise the Name of YHWH
whose Name alone is exalted,

¹⁴ whose majesty transcends
heaven and earth,

and who has raised up a Horn
for God's people

to the praise of the faithful,
the children of Israel,

the people dear to God! Alleluia!

Matthew 2:13-23

¹³ After the astrologers had left, the angel of God suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph with the command, “Get up, take the child and his mother and flee to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you otherwise. Herod is searching for the child to destroy him.” ¹⁴ Joseph got up, awakened Jesus and Mary, and they left that night for Egypt. ¹⁵ They stayed there until the death of Herod, to fulfill what God had said through the prophet: “Out of Egypt I have called my Own.” ¹⁶ Herod became furious when he realized that the astrologers had outwitted him. He gave orders to kill all male children that were two years old and younger living in and around Bethlehem. The age of the children was based on the date Herod had learned from the astrologers. ¹⁷ Then what was spoken through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled: ¹⁸ “A voice was heard in Ramah sobbing and lamenting loudly: it was Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, for they were no more.” ¹⁹ After Herod’s death, the angel of God appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt ²⁰ with the command, “Get up, take the child and his mother, and set out for the land of Israel. Those who had designs on the life of the child are dead.” ²¹ Joseph got up, awakened Jesus and Mary, and they returned to the land of Israel. ²² Joseph heard, however, that Archelaus had succeeded Herod as ruler of Judea, and Joseph was afraid to go back there. Instead, because of a warning received by Joseph in a dream, the family went to the region of Galilee. ²³ There they settled in a town called Nazareth. In this way, what was said through the prophets was fulfilled: “He will be called a Nazarene.”



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