



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

THE PILGRIM COLONY

July 2020

Pastor's Reflections

The luckiest summer of my life was my junior year in college when I lived at the Grand Canyon National Park on the North Rim. My roommate was a park ranger and we shared a cabin nestled right along the gorgeous wooded landscape of the North Rim. My job that summer was to work at the front desk of the North Rim Lodge checking international tourists into their cabins and motel rooms. But that's not why I was there. I was there as a volunteer with A Christian Ministry in the National Parks. Every week I helped lead worship in the assembly hall of the historic North Rim Lodge and also out in the campgrounds. Worshipping outside surrounded by nature is a special experience and that summer I took full advantage of enjoying the beauty of Creation.

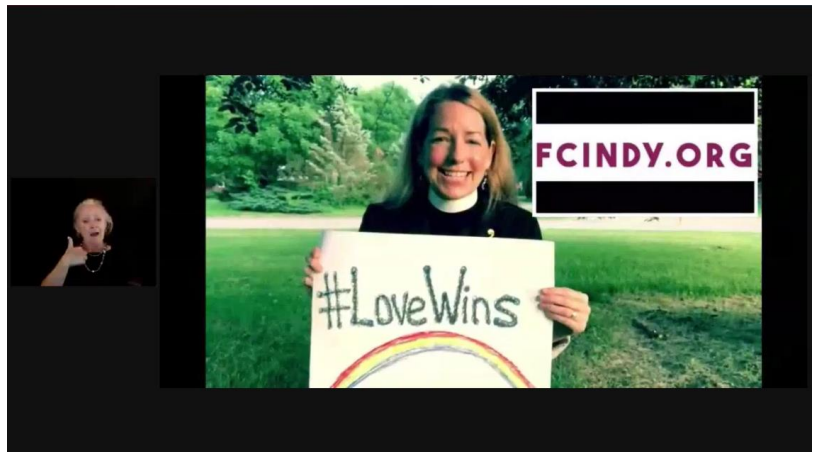
This month we will have our own experience at First Congregational of outdoor worship during the week. Imagine a 30 minute, simple outdoors vespers service. Following safety protocols, we will gather outside for 30 minutes of worship so that we can connect with each other in-person. **Our first outdoor vespers worship service will be Tuesday, July 14 from 7:00-7:30pm and also on Tuesday, July 28 from 7:00-7:30pm.**

Right now we are imagining this taking place around our Memorial Garden, yet final details will be provided in the weekly Epistles and in the Sunday bulletins. There's a lot to think about: safe physical distancing, sound system, bring your own chairs, and hoping for good weather. We will take it one day at a time and figure it out together. I know that some of our members will not be able to join us in-person and we will miss you. We will spend part of our time in prayer together, and we will be praying for each one of you.

I'm finding that during a global pandemic, the details of what it means to Be The Church changes, and that is okay. Yet, some key elements remain the same: to Be The Church means to keep an open mind, keep trying new things, keep experimenting, and most of all, keep our covenant of love for one another.

When we gather for our first Tuesday evening brief vesper worship service outside on July 14, I know I'll be thinking of my Grand Canyon days. I know that it will be good to be together at the church. I know that God is with us now, and will be with us tomorrow. No matter what, know that you are not alone and that God loves you.

Blessings,
Pastor Sarah



Soul Care with Pastor Sarah - Join us on **Tuesdays from 5:00-6:00 p.m.** for a time to check-in, reflect on Richard Rohr's weekly meditations, and to pray together. Here is the Zoom link:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/494018938?pwd=a3BrdnNyWXEza0tFMUgwek1CVFpYQT09>

Pastoral Care and Support: Contact Pastor Sarah at pastorsarah@fcindy.org and (386)478-9012. While Pastor Sarah is on vacation from July 3 – 13, Pastor Carol will be available for Pastoral Care at casowle@gmail.com and (317)496-9732. We are here for you.

Pastoral Congregation Relations Committee

The pastoral office and other positions of staff leadership exist to build up the congregation as part of the Body of Christ and to equip the saints for the mission of the church. The particular relationship between a pastor and congregants should be tended deliberately, so that the ministries of both pastor and congregation complement each other and further God's grace in the world. As with any relationship, it must be respected and nurtured to grow in healthy and projective ways. For this reason, a Pastoral Congregation Relations Committee (PCRC) exists in a congregation to advise, assist, and promote the growth of this vital relationship. PCRC meet quarterly and are available throughout the year for support and conversation. We are blessed to have both Pastor Sarah and Pastor Carol serve our congregation. Currently, Pastor Carol's focus is on the following areas: pulpit supply, pastoral care visits, Adult Education and Worship Leader coordination.

PCRC for Pastor Sarah: Randy Walker, Lianna Campos, Nancy Dickinson, Chuck Kiphart

PCRC for Pastor Carol: Bob Cook, Gloria Boedeker, Clark Collier, susana-judith rae

- Next meeting: Sunday, July 19th at 1:00 p.m. (Zoom)

Moderator's Reflections

I awoke this morning feeling somewhat depressed. It seems that I awaken that way too often these days. As I think about the future in the midst of coronavirus – not hugging my kids, grocery shopping in a state of anxiety, remaining home-bound indefinitely – I am brought to tears. And so I must remember the mantra “one day at a time.” Today I’m still healthy, the sun is shining, my fridge and pantry are full, and there’s nowhere that I need to go. I’m blessed to have a home that is a safe and comfortable refuge, a spouse who is healthy and attentive, a supportive church family, and a loving God who watches over me. What more might I truly need?

Especially when we now have some opportunities (however brief) to be in company with one another on FC's grounds! A few days ago I greatly enjoyed the socially-distanced gathering at FC to resume our important food pantry ministry, and I look forward to future opportunities for similar experiences. A huge “Thank you!” goes to the folks who made the time and space for gathering possible! A week earlier we demonstrated our commitment to moving forward by receiving new members virtually. These small steps toward expanding our faith community and pursuing our ministries show that we can and will continue to “Be The Church”, regardless of coronavirus adaptations.

I've learned that the best antidotes to discouragement and depression are gratitude and service. So I try to recognize my blessings and look for ways to be of help to others worse off than I. In the midst of this pandemic we are presented with opportunities to join our voices with those pleading for equality – specifically at this time, our siblings of color. Might we consider taking some beginning steps toward an intentional racial justice ministry? Faith In Indiana is seeking our partnership; perhaps now is the time to answer that call? I invite conversation around these questions. Coronavirus or not, the world needs us to “Be The Church”, perhaps now more than ever. With God's help, we will continue to figure it out.

- Alice Rutherford, Moderator

From the Comeback Team

First Congregational UCC has been closed to in-person gatherings since 3/12/20, and it is currently closed through the end of July. Worship services have been held virtually, with many positive steps made to widen the ability of our congregation to participate. We have been using Zoom for church meetings and gatherings, but not everyone can use it. Even for those using Zoom, we are missing an integral element of “being church” – the ability to personally see and interact with one another, if even briefly. This is especially missed as other elements of our society are participating in “re-opening”.

Up to now, the Comeback Team has primarily been focusing on protocols for future in-person worship. We are hearing more and more how people have enjoyed brief, often by chance, in-person ‘contacts’, while maintaining physical distancing. Recognizing the benefit of these occasions, the Comeback Team proposed to the Church Council to change our agreement of being closed to ALL in-person church activities through the end of July; the Council approved the change on June 10th to be:

As of June 20 through the end of July, First Congregational UCC is closed to all in-person gatherings of more than 10 people at one time. However, gatherings of 10 or less may occur outside, and not in the building. Protocols for these gatherings include:

1. Must be scheduled with Pastor Sarah, Shannon Abbott (Admin), and Wendy Baldwin (Bldg Mgr); groups may use any area of the church grounds (such as the patio, parking lot, Memorial Garden) where surface contact is minimized (not the playground for now)
2. Before the gathering, the group leader will receive the protocols to be observed, and make sure attendees are aware of these; the group leader is responsible that the protocols are followed
3. After the gathering, the group leader must send info about who attended to Pastor Sarah and Wendy Baldwin, for contact tracking purposes
4. Limit of 10 people at a time
5. A distance of 6 feet shall be observed between people of different households; no physical contact shall occur
6. Face masks are encouraged
7. People who do not feel well should not attend
8. People should bring their own beverage/water bottle (do not use the church drinking fountains, water, ice, etc)
9. People should bring their own chair
10. Church restrooms should only be used for emergencies, and one will be required to sanitize after its use
11. If entering the building, people are required to sanitize their hands, and disinfect any surfaces where there is contact of more than 3 minutes; use of face masks are highly encouraged.

Sunday worship will continue to be held virtually through the end of July. The Comeback Team will continue to evaluate and make future recommendations.



This Month at FC*

SUNDAYS	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
SUNDAYS	11:00 a.m.	Worship
SUNDAYS	12:00 p.m.	Coffee Hour (immediately after worship)
TUESDAYS	5:00 p.m.	Soul Care with Pastor Sarah (except on July 7)
THURSDAYS	5:00 p.m.	Spiritual Support Group for Mental Health
TUESDAYS/FRIDAYS	1:00 p.m.	Worship & Design Team
Wednesday, July 1	6:30 p.m.	Calling Circle
Saturday, July 4	10:00 a.m.	Food Drive (outside FC – 10 person limit)
Sunday, July 5	11:00 a.m.	Worship w/ guest preacher, Rev. Chad Abbott
Wednesday, July 8	7:00 p.m.	Trustees
Thursday, July 9	1:00 p.m.	Men's Lunch
Sunday, July 12	11:00 a.m.	Worship w/ Pastor Carol preaching
Tuesday, July 14	7:00 p.m.	Outdoor Vespers Service
Saturday, July 18	10:00 a.m.	Food Drive (outside FC – 10 person limit)
Sunday, July 19	1:00 p.m.	PCRC (Pastor Carol)
Wednesday, July 22	7:00 p.m.	Church Council
Thursday, July 23	11:45 a.m.	Women's Lunch
Thursday, July 23	1:00 p.m.	Men's Lunch
Tuesday, July 28	7:00 p.m.	Outdoor Vespers Service

**All activities are through the use of Zoom, Facebook, YouTube, or phone call-in unless otherwise stated.*

WORSHIP & FAITH

Elizabeth Price, Chair

Sunday Adult Class, 9:30-10:30 am

Adult Education will continue to meet via Zoom during the month of July.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/9264494206>

Meeting ID: 926 449 4206

Phone call only: 1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago), you will be prompted for the meeting ID 926 449 4206, followed by the # sign. If you don't have a device with visual display, you can simply call in and participant as a 'conference call'.

July 5: Focus on Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30; "When and how do you take rest in God? (from the Lectionary resource made available by the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA).

Some reflection questions are:

1. No matter what the situation, the people criticize and reject. What do people want?
2. How can people praise God when they are discouraged?
3. Is it fair to hold people accountable when God has not been fully revealed?
4. What kind of burdens is Jesus able to carry for us?
5. How might dealing with people make a person weary?
6. What does it mean for you to give your burdens to Jesus?

July 12: Wendy Baldwin presents "Devoted to Generosity"

July 19 and 26: For the next two Sundays we will read together this article from The Christian Century, December 27, 2018 titled "Ten Myths White People Believe About Racism" by Caroline B. Helsel. The article can be found at the link below, or by goggling the title:

<https://www.christiancentury.org/article/critical-essay/ten-myths-white-people-believe-about-racism>

Caroline B. Helsel wrote the book Anxious to Talk About It; Helping White Christians Talk Faithfully About Racism, which we used in Adult Ed last May-Sept.

Our goal will be to read and reflect on myths 1-5 on July 19, and myths 6-10 on July 26. This will be a safe place to share our thoughts, concerns and stories. We will also think about what we can do work for racial justice.

3 Ways to Connect for Worship



FACE BOOK

https://www.facebook.com/pg/FirstCongregationalUCCIndy/posts/?ref=page_internal



YOUTUBE

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWV9wqAvPiUKSkEbjav6Zpw>

- YouTube Live Premiere will broadcast at 11am Sunday morning. There will be a countdown before. We highly recommend using the mobile app for more convenience as it will refresh.
- If using a laptop, you will need to refresh your browser after 11am to click to watch live.



DIAL-IN

- Dial 317-204-3862
- Landline is preferred for clarity.
- If calling with a smart phone, setting your cellular setting to Wi-Fi calling will be clearer.

OUTREACH & SERVICE

Ann Leatherman, Chair

July Mission of the Month: Underneath It All - Reconfigured for This Year

This mission provides underwear and school uniforms for children in IHN/Family Promise Aftercare. The Aftercare Program of Family Promise helps homeless families who get housing remain housed. Our donations to Underneath It All help ease their school budgets each fall by providing a uniform for each school aged child in the Aftercare Program. Because of the pandemic I won't be shopping this year so monetary gifts will need to be sent to the church or given online so the Aftercare coordinator, Lena Hill, can buy what is needed for the children. Make checks out to First Congregational United Church of Christ with Underneath It All in the memo line or donate online at <http://fcindy.org/online-giving/> (Please designate "MOM: Underneath It All" in your online giving). Thanks so much for your generosity with this ministry in the past and in this unprecedented year. For questions or help with this ministry, please contact me csjwood@att.net 317-863-8238 (home) or 317-225-6206 (cell). Thanks, Sandy Wood

WISE (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive and Engaged) Mental Health Team



The FC WISE Mental Health Team seeks new members interested in promoting mental health, removing stigma of mental illness and working for justice for those affected by mental illness. We meet monthly (currently via Zoom) the second Wednesday of each month except July from 5 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. Come join our active and caring team trying to live out God's call to love one another through our commitment to those experiencing mental health challenges, their families and friends. For more information contact co-chairs, Pat Larracey, 317-625-6801-plainandfancy1963@att.net and Sandy Wood, 317-225-6206- csjwood@att.net.

IKC Resolution support, June 27, 2020
whereas be it further resolved

I am Rev. Dr. Patrick Larracey, retired and a member at First Congregational UCC, Indianapolis, and on the conference's WISE Team.

I am speaking in FAVOR of this Resolution which ONLY paves the way, ONLY breaks the ice, ONLY begins to scratch the surface as we journey to become a WISE Conference: Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, and Engaged.

I celebrate with you that First Congregational voted at our annual meeting to become a WISE Congregation.

We have received recognition from the National UCC Mental Health Network.

We have a WISE Team that meets monthly.

We have a Spiritual Support Group for Mental Health and Wellness every week.

We have filled one section in our church library books about Mental Health and Brain disorders.

We have received a grant from the Center for Congregations to conduct a Mental Health First Aid Class which takes 8 hours and you become certified for 2 years.

Our pastor, Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund contributes and guides us well on our journey to always be WISE, to listen, to learn and find resources to help individuals and families, to subscribe to our National UCC Mental Health Network, visit mhn-ucc.org for blogs and news and resources.

LEARN about depression, anxiety, psychosis, substance abuse, eating disorders, suicide, panic attacks, traumatic events for adults and children, acute psychosis, aggressive behavior, and more!!

We have read from the UCC Mental Health Network recently:

“WHEN IGNORANCE ABOUT MENTAL ILLNESS COMBINES WITH RACISM
IT CREATES A DOUBLE INJUSTICE.”

SO, LET'S PASS THIS RESOLUTION AND MOVE ON TO ENDORSE OUR IK CONFERENCE

WISE COVENANT, SO THAT, OUR WHEREAS'S AND RESOLVES MOVE TO “AFFIRM

CHRIST'S COMMANDMENT 'TO LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF' “ [Mark 12.31]

IN BECOMING A WISE COVENANTED CONFERENCE FOR MENTAL HEALTH.

Thank you.

Pat Larracey, co-chair of our WISE Mental Health Team

WITNESS & WELCOME

Aniseh Ebbini, Chair

The Witness & Welcome Board has chosen to support Trinity Haven with the funds remaining from our original PRIDE budget. As we mentioned last month, we participated in this year's virtual PRIDE parade, that video will soon be available on our church social media accounts.

Trinity Haven was started in the Fall of 2017 as part of a Faith in Action Project from Christian Theological Seminary and has partnered with IYG to address the issues of homeless youth ages 18-21 in our community. The purpose of this mission is to provide a safe, welcoming environment for up to 24 months so that its residents might become self-sufficient members of our community. The first residents will move in before the end of 2020.

The W & W Board also voted unanimously to place a “Black Lives Matter” sign at the church. As Pastor Sarah said, we affirm that all people are created in the image of God and that Black lives matter.

We will also be hanging a banner and placing yard signs that advertise our church's virtual service options. If you would like a yard sign for your home, please contact Aniseh.ebbini@gmail.com



CARE & CONNECTIONS
Wendy Baldwin, Chair

Food Drives & Fellowship!

Let's help fight poverty and hunger through our food donations to the Northside Pantry. You can also spend a few minutes at the Food Drive to share in fellowship with those there, while maintaining safe distance protocols.

- 1. When: Every other Saturday (7/4, 7/18, 8/1) from 10am – 2pm
- 2. Where: the outside church patio
- 3. Also bring your plastic bottle caps and paper for recycling

Preferred Donation items, from Northside Pantry:

Vegetables: Green Beans, corn, diced tomatoes, peas
Fruit: Pineapple chunks, Mandarin oranges, Applesauce
Macaroni & Cheese
Canned Tuna or chicken
Spaghetti, Elbow macaroni, Egg noodles, Rice
Peanut butter
Strawberry or grape jelly
Pancake mix
Oils
Toilet paper
Kleenex
Please note – regular size cans and jars are preferred.

The following Zoom gatherings are scheduled for July:



- **Sunday “Coffee Hour”:** Sundays immediately following worship
- **Spiritual Support Group for Mental Health:** Thursdays at 5:00 pm

To join these Zoom meetings, click this link:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9264494206?pwd=dmhWbWE5UXRBTk5pcHlZYiB0aEFVUT09>
Meeting ID: 926 449 4206 Password: 7171

To Join by Phone call only: 1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago), you will be prompted for the meeting ID 926 449 4206, followed by the # sign, and the Password 7171, followed by the # sign.
If you don't have a device with visual display, you can simply call in and participant as a 'conference call'.

TRUSTEES

Steve Coomer & Randy Walker, Co-Chairs

Financial Update

When We Give, We Reach Out With Helping Hands

Category	1/1/2020 Actual	- Budget	5/31/2020 Difference
△ INCOME	92,973	111,586	-18,613
△ M. Unrestricted Contributions	92,973	111,586	-18,613
▶ M.01 Pledged Offerings	72,661	77,884	-5,223
▶ M.02 UnPledged Offerings	4,985	8,375	-3,390
M.03 Rollover Prior Year Su...	15,327	15,327	0
M.04 Foundation - Endowme...	0	0	0
M.05 Foundation - Minister ...	0	10,000	-10,000
M.06 Foundation - Trad. Mus...	0	0	0
M.07. Transfer from Youth ...	0	0	0
M.08 Other Transfers from ...	0	0	0
△ EXPENSES	108,381	109,814	1,433
▶ A. Pastoral Leadership	50,139	51,353	1,215
▶ B. Worship & Faith	16,148	17,454	1,307
▶ C. Care & Connections	188	175	-13
▶ D. Witness & Welcome	0	432	432
▶ E. Outreach & Service	7,433	6,869	-564
▶ F. Trustees	138	36	-102
▶ G. Administration & Operations	9,011	8,746	-265
▶ H. House & Grounds	22,671	21,770	-901
▶ I. Miscellaneous	2,654	2,978	324
Net Difference:	-15,408	1,772	-17,180

Highlights – year to date:

- **Income of \$93,000** compares with budget of \$111,600 - but \$10,000 of the shortfall is timing - we budgeted a \$10,000 draw from the FCC Foundation that we didn't need thanks to our Payroll Protection Program (PPP) loan from the Small Business Administration. **So our real shortfall is \$8,600.** Pledge income is \$5,200 below budget and non-pledge income is \$3,400 below budget.
- **Expenses of \$108,400 were \$1,400 below budget**, with most of the savings coming from Pastoral Leadership and Worship and Faith.
- **Cash:** our cash position was strong at May 31 (over \$52,000) thanks to the \$34,450 PPP loan we received in May.
- **PPP Loan:** Our Payroll Protection Plan loan of \$34,450 is allowing us to maintain our employees on full pay through June, despite our income shortfall and despite reduced activity at the church, without being required to draw funds from the Foundation. After June we will be able to submit paperwork allowing us to convert the loan to a grant.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Jim Lootens, Treasurer

lootens.jb@gmail.com

COMMUNITY

As a Bird Sings

"Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another" (Hebrews 10:24-25 KJV).

On May 6, 2020, i typed these sentences into Indianapolis Public Library's online Ask-a-Librarian feature: "As a grateful user of your Wayne branch library until it closed for remodeling last December, i await, with bated breath, to find out if its construction has continued after the coronavirus closed all of your branches. Do you have an update? Thank you. Also, i want to express gratitude to the very friendly and helpful Eagle Branch staff and

patrons who treated us regular Wayne branch frequenters ever-so-kindly from December on until all the libraries had to close in February.

"P.S. This morning, when i picked up my library card to type in its Card Number above, it told me it is sad, lonely, and disappointed because it misses how i often used to convey it to the Wayne Branch and then to the Eagle Branch, when i could no longer take it to Wayne. My card said it's eager for me to return to my frequently using it again for the purpose of borrowing library items rather than its just sitting around in its gloomy state. Thank you, kind Librarian."

Within an hour and a half, a librarian replied: "Hello, renovations have continued there and at other branches and we have not heard of any delays on our end. But we have no exact date for the reopening. Hopefully soon."

Both my library card and i were much encouraged by the reply. Moreover, as of June 22, all Indy Public Library branches, including Wayne, have re-opened, with appropriate safety measures, including curb-side pickup of library materials if patrons desire. Both my library card and i are smiling and cheering!

Surely my hearing my library card speak shows how important libraries have been to me—including during a global pandemic. By clicking [here](http://journals.iupui.edu/index.php/IndianaLibraries/article/view/16305/pdf_108) (http://journals.iupui.edu/index.php/IndianaLibraries/article/view/16305/pdf_108), readers can see what i wrote about the significance of Indiana libraries 14 years ago. My priorities have not changed since then.

My outlook is reinforced by a suggestion i made to my sons about some information about myself—perhaps for their future use: "Rob and Mike, in case you want a quote for my memorial service, you might consider this, from Susan Orlean's *The Library Book*. As you well know, her description is the way i have lived much of my life:

"A librarian's single greatest responsibility, according to Althea Warren, 'was to read voraciously. [...] She wanted librarians to simply adore the act of reading for its own sake.... As she said in a speech, librarians should read [...] as a cat sleeps or as a bird sings or a dog responds to an invitation to go walk. Not from conscious training but from they'd rather do it more than anything else in the whole world (The Library Book, 2018).'"

Amen. Thank God for books and for libraries.
-susanna-judith rae

Meridian Hills School:

First off--My lovely friend, Linda, has been writing for the school allowing me to rest and finish chemo while managing home learning, a pandemic, and a school that suddenly switched to virtual learning. I am so thankful for her voice and expertise and her sharing that with all of you. I am so glad she is the wonderful person she is.

I am still amazed at how on a day in March my "normal" life came to a screeching halt. No more drop off or pick up from school. No extracurricular activities. All outings and plans were canceled. And now my two children were going to be home all day, every day.

I'm not complaining. The amount of time I've gotten to spend with my kids (since I already work from home) has been great. Trying? Absolutely at times--I have a tween and an older adolescent. The best part is being there for all of their funny comments and observations

A blog I follow posted some "Funny Things Kids Say" and I thought a few of these were worth sharing:

- I have so many... I think my favorite was "Mommy, I love you, but we seem to have our differences." from my 4 year old at bedtime.
- As we were walking through the store, my 4.5 yr old daughter looks at me and asks, "Why do I always have to match my clothes and you don't?"
- "Who needs a warm bed when you have a warm mommy"
- I was doing dishes one day and my very busy/strong willed 3 year old comes up to me and says..."Mama.... when I open my mouth. I talk." I had to do everything to keep from just dying laughing!

- “Why does it tell you there is a hidden drive? Not much of a secret if they tell you.” LOL
- “Mom, were you ever even remotely cool?” Said my 12-year-old son while I did a song and dance about a duck with my 9-year-old son.
- “Because chickens are harder to catch than cows.” Then-5 year old Katie, when her sister asked why we had to pay extra to substitute chicken for beef on our tacos at Taco Bell. The cashier even laughed and told her that she might be right.
- My 4-year-old daughter – “Is that makeup so you don't look old? Cause you don't look old... your face is still straight.”

I hope these made you smile and remind you to always stop and listen when children speak.

Chris Wise
MHCNS

Indiana-Kentucky Conference of the United Church of Christ (IKC UCC)

MID (Member In Discernment) Spotlight: Cassidy Hall



Hey everyone, I'm Cassidy Hall, a documentary filmmaker (In Pursuit of Silence and Day of a Stranger), podcaster (Encountering Silence), student, and trained counselor with a MA in Counseling. Currently I work as a Teaching Assistant at Christian Theological Seminary where I'm studying for my MDiv and MTS degrees. Since 2017, I've worked with the International Thomas Merton Society as their Board Secretary. Most recently, this year I was added to the board of Enfleshed, a justice and liberation based organization which seeks to create inclusive liturgy and other resources. I also serve as Student Pastor of

First Congregational United Church of Christ in Indianapolis where, alongside a fantastic supportive community (including Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund), I've officially become a Member in Discernment in the IKC!

When I ask myself the question of why I want to pursue ordination, five key points come to mind: To have greater comfort and clarity in performing and leading the sacraments, to gain more tools in human accompaniment, to continue increasing visibility in being a queer female pastoral leader, to heed the truth that the wholeness of contemplative life must include outward action, and to lead in justice and liberation oriented spirituality. I could not imagine nor envision a better space to do this in than the UCC. My ministry orient is a combination of three movements: movements towards individual wholeness (inner work to utter action), movement towards inclusivity (constantly and consistently expanding the table), and movement towards unity. However, one of the most important reasons why I'm pursuing ordination is that I am the proud auntie of four wonderful guys who each and every day teach me the power of wonder, the importance of awe, and that we really can create a better world.

A bit more about my work is that I've been published in the Convivium Journal, The Thomas Merton Seasonal, The Thomas Merton Annual (Vol. 32), The Huffington Post, Patheos, and the National Catholic Reporter. In 2012, while working as a counselor and reading Thomas Merton's New Seeds of Contemplation, I made a pilgrimage to all seventeen Trappist/Cistercian monasteries in the United States. While there, I wrote, interviewed monks and nuns, and photographed my entire experience within these sacred spaces. Then, in 2013, I moved to Los Angeles to work on the production team of the documentary feature film In Pursuit of Silence. The film's success on the festival circuit and beyond led to its worldwide theatrical release. My most recent project and directorial debut short-film, Day of a Stranger, paints an intimate portrait of Thomas Merton's hermitage years using audio he recorded there, and I hope to release it this summer. My podcast, Encountering Silence, co-hosted by Carl McColman, Kevin Johnson, and myself, features interviews with contemplatives, modern-day mystics, and explores the ambiguity of silence in our modern-day lives. Some guests have included Kathleen Norris, Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund (forthcoming

episode), Parker Palmer, Richard Rohr, Dr. Barbara Holmes, peace-activist Jim Forest, Jim Finley, Mirabai Starr, and many more.

When I consider the broad strokes of what I envision my ministry looking like I've thought of a number of ways that continue to host my ministry orients alongside the acceptance of our ever-changing and ever-moving world. Because of this, I hope my ministry always has room to be creative, evolving, and yet also true to the crux of love, our common humanity, and our innate belonging—to ourselves, to each other, and to our God. If any part of this led you to think of me in some small way, please know I would be blessed and honored to carry your prayers along with me in this journey of discernment. If I've learned anything in the realm of spirituality, it is that we need each other, we belong to each other, and we cannot do it alone. Thank you.


IKC UCC Annual Gathering Resolution Updates


IKC 2020

VIRTUAL ANNUAL GATHERING

LIVING GOD'S ECONOMY

June 26, 27 & 28





UCC Mental Health Network
Welcoming • Inclusive
Supportive • Engaged

This resolution, which moves the Indiana-Kentucky Conference to adopt this resolution in support of the WISE Covenant.


You can find both the resolution and the covenant on our web site here: <http://ikcucc.org/events/2020-annual-gathering/>

IKC 2020

VIRTUAL ANNUAL GATHERING

LIVING GOD'S ECONOMY

June 26, 27 & 28



RESOLUTION ON SYSTEMIC RACISM IN THE INDIANA-KENTUCKY CONFERENCE

PASSES

This resolution moves the Indiana-Kentucky Conference to adopt the content of the resolution and to form a task force that will move to actively address racism in our Conference.

The resolution as it appears on our web site was amended to include this addition: "THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Indiana-Kentucky Conference strongly urge that all IKC Associations adopt a requirement of anti-racism training for authorized ministers to hold and maintain standing."

You can find the UNAMENDED resolution on our web site here: <http://ikcucc.org/app/uploads/2020/05/Resolution-on-Systemic-Racism-in-the-Indiana-Kentucky-Conference-Final.pdf>

We'll upload the amended resolution to our site in the coming days.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

July Colony Submission Deadline: Please email your submissions to Shannon at shannon@fcindy.org by **Tuesday, July 21st**.

Women's Lunch Bunch: All women of the church are invited to get together once a month at **11:30 a.m.** via Zoom for lunch, friendship and fellowship. This month, they meet on **July 25th**. For questions or more information please contact Sue Chapman at (317) 259-1806 or carolsuech59@gmail.com.

Men's Lunch: This lunch and discussion gathering for men of First Congregational is meeting via Zoom. They meet every other Thursday at **1 p.m.** This month, they are meeting **July 9th & 23rd**. Please contact Randy Walker at (317) 796-2081 or aa28977rwalker@gmail.com for information.

Book Circle is meeting via Zoom on **Tuesday, July 23rd** from **1:30 – 3:30 p.m.** We are discussing Rachel Held Evans - Searching For Sunday, section 5 - Confirmation and section 6 - Anointing of the Sick. Contact Karen Walker at (317) 319-8950 or karen.e.d.walker@gmail.com for more information.

FC Emergency Fund - The FC Emergency Fund seeks to support your housing, food, and medical needs if you find yourselves unemployed or underemployed. You can send a check to the church with "emergency fund" on the memo or make a donation on the church website. To request funds for you or your family, please contact me by email pastorsarah@fcindy.org or cell (386) 478-9012.

