

 [FirstCongregationalUCCIndy](#)

 [Forward](#)



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Epistle for the Week of August 13, 2020

Through the end of August, the building of First Congregational UCC is closed. Masks are required for limited gatherings occurring outside. (See additional details below.)

Dear First Congregational,

As a WISE church for mental health, we seek to support the mental health of members of the congregation. During these challenging times, many of us are feeling additional stress, anxiety, disorientation, uncertainty, and hopelessness. Before the pandemic, one out of five people lived with a mental health challenge. Now numbers are closer to two out of five people are experiencing chronic levels of anxiety and depression. The good news is that we are equipped and prepared to meet these growing needs from a position of spiritual support.

The key to being WISE for mental health is to be open to giving and getting support. I pray for our hearts to be open to allow God's Spirit to bring us together in a deeper way. Even though

we are physically apart, we can still find ways to grow closer together. This will be key to our spiritual health and flourishing.

I encourage you to reach out with a phone call this week to the person who shared a pew with you at church, or sat in the pew in front of you or the pew behind you. A simple phone call can really brighten a person's day, lifting our moods and our spirits. Reaching out to one another makes us all stronger.

Peace,
Pastor Sarah

FC Emergency Fund - The FC Emergency Fund is available to support housing, food, and medical needs for any of our church family who find themselves unemployed or underemployed due to Covid-19 impacts. To request funds for you or your family, please contact Pastor Sarah by email pastorsarah@fcindy.org or cell (386) 478-9012. To make a donation, send a check to the church with "emergency fund" on the memo or make a donation on the church website.

Soul Care with Pastor Sarah - Join us on **Tuesdays from 5:00-6:00 p.m.** for a time to check-in and to pray together.

Here is the Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/494018938?pwd=a3BrdnNyWXEza0tFMUgwek1CVFpYQT09>

Worship

Sunday Adult Education, 9:30 a.m.

Class will meet via

Zoom: <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/9264494206?pwd=dmtWbWE5UXRBtk5pcHZlYlB0aEFVUT09>

August 16: Wendy Baldwin presents "**Devoted to Generosity**"

Sunday Worship, 11:00 a.m.

Pastor Sarah is preaching on "Take Heart."

Scripture: Matthew 14:22-33

3 Ways to Connect for Worship

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.
- Use this option for live interacting and messaging. You must have or create a user account and be logged in to message live.
- If using a laptop, you will need to refresh your browser after 11am to click to watch live.

FACE BOOK

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

- The video will be posted at 11am.
- This is for viewing only. For live interacting and commenting, please use the YouTube option.

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.

Coffee Hour, 11:45 a.m. (or immediately after worship)

Zoom

link: <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/9264494206?pwd=dmtWbWE5UXRBTK5pcHZlYlB0aEFVUT09>

To dial in by phone: +1 312 626 6799, Meeting ID 926 449 4206, Password 7171.

What's Happening at FC

Mental Health Helpline

Anyone feeling anxiety from the pandemic should be encouraged to call the **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Disaster Distress Helpline at 800-985-5990**, or **text "TalkWithUs" to 66746**. Users will be connected with trained crisis counselors.

TODAY! Spiritual Support Group, Thursdays from 5:00 - 6:00 PM

Our weekly SPIRITUAL SUPPORT GROUP FOR MENTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS gathers on the church's ZOOM from 5:00 to 6:00 pm EVERY Thursday. Pastor Sarah and Pat Larracey will be leading this wonderful WISE program and is OPEN to all with mental illness and those living with mentally ill loved ones. We look forward to greeting each of you with

love.

Zoom

Link: <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/9264494206?pwd=dmtWbWE5UXRBTK5pcHZlYlB0aEFVUT09>

To dial in by phone: +1 312 626 6799, Meeting ID 926 449 4206, Password 7171.

Family Promise: Apartment Furnishings & Housewares Needed

As part of our Just Peace Ministries, FCC is participating in a drive to help furnish 1 of 10 apts for the homeless. These are leased by Family Promise through a new grant they received. A list of needed items will be shared via a link to signup genius, where you can sign up online for what you can donate. You can also email or call me, and I will sign you up on the webpage. We do not have the link yet, but will have it by next week. Used items in good condition from your home or from Goodwill are welcome, as well as new items. More info will be available in next week's Epistle.

The first in-person date to deliver donations at church is Sat., Aug. 15th, 9:30 to noon. Wendy Baldwin will be onsite. More info to come. Please contact Janet Selby with any questions (317 873-9539; janet.selby@gmail.com). Thank you so much!

NEXT Thursday! Men's Lunch - August 20th, 1:00 p.m.

This lunch and discussion gathering for men of First Congregational meets every other Thursday at **1 p.m.** Please contact Randy Walker at (317) 796-2081 or aa28977rwalker@gmail.com for more information.

Book Circle - August 18th, 1:30 p.m.

We will be finishing the book, "Searching for Sundays," and deciding on our next book. Contact Karen Walker at (317) 319-8950 or karen.e.d.walker@gmail.com for more information.

Outdoor Vespers Worship - August 25, 7:00 – 7:30 p.m., Memorial Garden

Join us for an outdoor evening vesper service. Our current plans are to have these every 2 weeks. Our outdoor protocols will apply, so bring your own chair and beverage, and keep 6 feet distant from others. Face masks are required per City of Indianapolis ordinance. It's a time to be in community, while being safe and loving with one another.

Book Buzz! - Mark your calendars!

Starting on Sunday **September 13th at 12:30** - we will be launching a virtual lunch / discussion group, led by Pastor Sarah, focused on antiracism. We will be using the first part of the book, ***I'm Still Here***, by **Austin Channing Brown** to frame our discussion (with additional discussions planned for the 2nd and 4th Sundays through November). See the epistle next week for more information on picking up a copy of the book (on temporary loan) at no charge -

or let us know if you would like us to deliver it to you. For more information - please contact Karen Walker. Looking forward to meaningful conversations! - Pastor Sarah, Cassidy, Alice, Carol, and Karen.

From the Comeback Team

We have been enjoying the small outdoor in-person events at church – so great to visit and see people! There are various protocols to follow, and to make it easier to remember, we are using the mantra of “Bring your own germs, keep them to yourself, and take them home with you”. Hence the recommendations to bring your own chairs, bring your own beverage and/or food, wear face masks, limit going inside the building, and definitely maintain 6 ft distances. To be on the safe side, we also want to keep track of who attended each event.

During this pandemic, each one of us has personal thoughts about what is, and isn't, safe. However, when the event is a “church event”, we need to be in covenant with one another - We are now REQUIRING face masks to be worn at church events. If you are not wearing one, and someone asks you to put one on, please hear this request with love. But better yet, please don't let others feel uncomfortable by not wearing a mask in their presence.

The Southeast Association Eviction Ministry

The Southeast Association Eviction Ministry started last year as a number of our churches came together to support a family that was about to be taken to eviction court. Many of us had been touched by the keynote address at General Synod last summer by Matthew Desmond, author of *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City*, in which he explained the complicated and unjust housing practices that force so many families out of their homes. Many of our congregations receive requests for assistance for housing, but the requests exceed what resources we have available as individual congregations. The idea behind the Eviction Ministry is that together we have enough to assist families who are facing eviction.

Eviction Crisis

Throughout this pandemic, with stay-at-home orders enacted, for many of us, our homes have been those places where we have sought shelter and safety. As the economic devastation of this pandemic became evident, eviction moratoriums were put in place to protect families who were not able to keep up with their rent. The eviction moratorium for Indiana is set to expire Friday, August 14. A \$15+ million rental assistance program set up by the city of Indianapolis had to close their application process after receiving over 10,000 applications in just three days. Thousands of our neighbors could soon find themselves without a home as COVID cases rise and our economy continues to be under strain.

Let's Work Together

When people turn to our churches for assistance, they have often exhausted all other

options. Though our funds are limited, there are resources available that you can turn to when you receive rental assistance requests. We would welcome any financial support your congregation could offer to this ministry so that together we can make a greater impact on the well-being of our neighbors. We would also welcome new members who want to join our team so that we can continue to grow and expand this ministry. If there are folks in your congregation who have legal experience with the eviction process, we would love to talk with them to gain better insight into the legal process of eviction in Indiana. Included in this email is more information about the process our team has put in place. If you have any questions or would be interested in joining our team, please, do not hesitate to reach out.

- Rev. Shannon Abbott, Pastor Sarah Frische-Mouri Hannigan, Walter Ziebell

This article includes information about other organizations that are providing rental assistance and legal assistance to tenants facing eviction: <https://www.wrtv.com/news/coronavirus/protections-for-renters-ending-next-week>. Rental Assistance Program Overwhelmed: <https://www.indystar.com/story/news/local/marion-county/2020/07/16/indianapolis-rental-assistance-program-flooded-applications/5451691002/>

Indiana-Kentucky Conference of the UCC: Justice and Witness Ministry Task Force

At our Annual Gathering in June, we passed an Anti-Racism resolution that calls us to address systemic and structural racism within the Indiana-Kentucky Conference through a newly formed Justice and Witness Ministry Task Force. As such, we are sending you an introductory letter providing you with all the necessary information to begin energizing folks in your church and association regarding the work ahead.

Our first task is to populate this new Task Force. According to the passed resolution, we need at least one member (lay or clergy) from each association. If you or someone you know is interested in being considered for the task force, we would welcome these submissions. This initial team will have a limited size, and some team members will be asked to lead smaller groups with a particular focus. If desiring to submit your name or another's, please have them contact:

Izzy Harbin

574-903-7099

pastorizzy@firstuccelkhart.org



Continue Your Support of First Congregational UCC

Please continue supporting the mission and ministries of your local church at <http://www.fcindy.org/online-giving/>

Support Your Local IN-KY Conference Through Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM)

The staff of the IKC continue to work tirelessly to support local churches as we all discern best practices and how to get through this time together. Please remember to support the work they do and the many ministries they support through your **OCWM**

Giving at: <https://ikcucc.org/connect/donate/>

Eviction Ministry Donations

The Eviction Ministry is a new ministry of the SouthEast Association of the Indiana-Kentucky Conference of the UCC. The purpose of this ministry is to offer assistance to those who do not qualify for other state or local assistance programs and without such assistance would be evicted from their homes. Please consider making a donation. **Checks can be made out to: Southeast Association of the IKC UCC.** Please include in the **memo line: "Eviction Ministry."**

Donations can be mailed to the treasurer at:

SE Association Eviction Ministry

Attn: Margie Potter

726 Coach Rd.

Indianapolis, IN 46227

Thank you for your generosity!

- Shannon Abbott, Eviction Ministry Team

Indiana Undocumented Youth Alliance

Undocumented people are facing challenges during this pandemic. There are groups trying to help them, specifically young people who have D.A.C.A. Four organizations are cooperating in this effort, but it is being administered by IYUA, the Indiana Undocumented Youth Alliance.

Email or call if you want to donate or volunteer. The email is undocuhoosierfund@gmail.com and the phone number is 317-205-6424.

Feeding Families

Gleaner's and Second Helpings are two of the food banks currently offering food to children who usually get their meals from school.

Donate to **Gleaner's** by clicking on the link [here](#).

Donate to **Second Helpings** by clicking on the link [here](#).

Staying Connected

FC Facebook page (click [here](#))

"**First Congregational Indy Fellowship**" group on Facebook (click [here](#)).

Pastoral Care

We are all still here for you and will stay connected. Pastor Sarah may be reached at (386)478-9012 or pastorsarah@fcindy.org.

Additional Church Support Contacts

Pastor Carol (casowle@gmail.com)

Office Administrator, Shannon (shannon@fcindy.org)

Moderator, Alice Rutherford (alice@caloosaspirt.net)

Vice Moderator, Larry Eckel (lspeckel@comcast.net)

THIS WEEK AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL

THREE Ways to Worship on Sunday morning at 11AM:

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.
- Use this option for live interacting and messaging. You must have or create a user account and be logged in to message live.
- If using a laptop, you will need to refresh your browser after 11am to click to watch live.

FACE BOOK

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

- The video will be posted at 11am.
- This is for viewing only. For live interacting and commenting, please use the YouTube option.

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.

Weekly Calendar

Thursday, August 13	5:00 p.m.	Spiritual Support Group for Mental Health
Friday, August 14	1:00 p.m.	Worship & Design Team
Sunday, August 16	12:00 p.m.	Coffee Hour (immediately after worship)
Sunday, August 16	12:45 p.m.	Worship & Faith
Tuesday, August 18	1:30 p.m.	Book Circle
Tuesday, August 18	5:00 p.m.	Soul Care with Pastor Sarah
Wednesday, August 19	7:00 p.m.	Witness & Welcome
Thursday, August 20	1:00 p.m.	Men's Lunch (Memorial Garden)
Thursday, August 20	5:00 p.m.	Spiritual Support Group for Mental Health
Sunday, August 23	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, August 23	11:00 a.m.	Worship (YouTube, FB, & Dial In)
Sunday, August 23	12:00 p.m.	Coffee Hour (immediately after worship)

***All events are on Zoom unless indicated otherwise.**