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# FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Epistle for the Week of October 29, 2020

**Dear First Congregational,**

This week I celebrate the 18<sup>th</sup> anniversary of my ordination into Christian ministry. What a journey of God's grace, mercy, and love. I feel deep gratitude for the communities of faith that nurtured me since my birth. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of America through my baptism at Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church in Whittier, California. The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) through my elementary, middle school, and high school years attending Broadway Christian Church in Columbia, Missouri. At Broadway I was confirmed, ordained, and married. For me the church has always been a place of God's love.

In my training at Princeton Theological Seminary I learned about the United Church of Christ (UCC) and the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). My student ministry took place at All Souls, a house church in Brooklyn that combined three congregations: Disciples, UCC, and UUA. I was ordained on October 27, 2002, at Broadway. I answered my first call as Minister for Outreach at Plymouth Congregational Church in Minneapolis, MN. Plymouth stood as one of the

congregations that voted to not join the UCC in 1957, but chose to remain part of the independent congregational tradition. It was then that I became more familiar with the UCC, taking the UCC History and Polity course at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities. From Plymouth, I was called as pastor in 2005 to the United Church of Christ of New Smyrna Beach, a congregation that was jointly affiliated with both UCC and Disciples because of a merger in the 1970s of the two local congregations.

Since 2013, I've served on the Conference staff as Regional Minister for the UCC in Florida, on the President's leadership team at Christian Theological Seminary as Vice President for Advancement, and now happily as senior pastor of First Congregational UCC. I also serve the national setting of the UCC as Minister for Disabilities and Mental Health Justice and I serve as the President of the Southeast Association of the Indiana-Kentucky Conference. As you can see, the goodness of God's people and the grace of God have carried me this far in the journey. Now, 18 years after my ordination my daily prayer is for me to continue to lean into God's grace and purpose for my life.

Thank you all for your prayers, partnership, and support. This Pastor's Appreciation month has been special and it brings me joy to hear from you all in the letters, cards, and small gifts that are tangible reminders to me of your love and God's love that holds us together. Now, more than ever, we need to be held in God's love. I thank God for this calling. Thank you all for the gift of serving as your pastor.

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 and to pray together.

Here is the Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/494018938?pwd=a3BrdnNyWXEza0tFMUqwek1CVFpYQT09>

*\* Please note that this Zoom link is different from the Zoom links used for other FC events.*



## Pastor Sarah's Sabbath Days: Mondays and Saturdays

The congregation covenants with Pastor Sarah to provide two days a week for personal rest and family renewal.

On Mondays and Saturdays, Pastor Sarah is not available unless it is a pastoral care emergency.

Thank you for honoring this sacred gift of Sabbath time for our Pastor and her family.

### Worship

#### Sunday Adult Education, 9:30 a.m. (Zoom)

**November 1:** This Sunday we will turn our attention to the Wampanoag Nation of native peoples, one of several native peoples who lived in what is now known as S. E. Massachusetts, where the Pilgrims and Puritans first settled. We will watch an 8 minute video titled “We Are Still Here: 400 years of Wampanoag History,” available on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/Yzmp383dwjo>. In addition, if time permits, we will reflect on the first 3 pages of this educational resource titled “American Indian Perspectives on Thanksgiving,” from the National Museum of the American Indian. Note that this resource resides on the UCC Here is the link: [https://www.uccfiles.com/pdf/Native\\_American\\_Perspectives\\_on\\_Thanksgiving.pdf](https://www.uccfiles.com/pdf/Native_American_Perspectives_on_Thanksgiving.pdf)

We will also watch a 15 minute Ted Talk titled "Climate Change is a Social Justice Issue," by Adriana Laurent from the University of British Columbia. Her focus is not just on Canada but globally, beginning with her hometown in Honduras. <https://youtu.be/NRmHp0VC4K4>.

To learn more about the intersection between racial and environmental justice, read about the "father of environmental justice" in "Robert Bullard: 'Environmental justice isn't just slang, it's real'" at <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/dec/20/robert-bullard-interview-environmental-justice-civil-rights-movement>.

### **Communion AND All Saints Sunday Worship**

We will worship outside at the church patio at **11am**. The service will be livestreamed onto our YouTube channel. Please bring your own communion elements.

**Scripture:** Matthew 5:1-12

**Sermon:** "Blessed Are You"

### **Coffee Hour, 12:00 p.m. (via Zoom, immediately after worship)**

**All Sunday Zoom Gatherings use the following link unless otherwise specified:**

**Zoom**

**Link:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9264494206?pwd=dmtWbWE5UXRBTk5pcHZlYlB0aEFVUT09>

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

### **NEW! TWO Weekly Vespers Services**

**Outdoor Vespers on Sundays from 4:30 - 5:00 p.m. Zoom Vespers on Tuesdays from 7:00 - 7:30 p.m.**

Join us for a time of togetherness, Scripture, and sharing of joys and concerns. For Sunday Outdoor Vespers, bring a chair and face mask. We practice our love by keeping distant and wearing face coverings. *Note: If the weather is threatening, the event will be cancelled, since we cannot run into the building to take cover.*

## What's Happening at FC

**All Zoom Gatherings use the following link unless otherwise specified:**

### Zoom

**Link:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9264494206?pwd=dmtWbWE5UXRBTk5pcHZlYlB0aEFVUT09>

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

### TODAY! Lunch Gatherings

- **Women's Lunch Bunch** will meet today by Zoom at 11:30 a.m.
- **Men's Lunch** will meet today at 1:00 p.m.

### 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 (Zoom) -

This group openly invites anyone seeking spiritual care concerning their well being. We have covenanted with:

- care givers of loved ones who have mental illness, i.e. dementia and Alzheimer's
- chaplains seeking to renew their wellness
- burned out and overwhelmed medical folk
- fears of parents, grandparents, and teachers about school and college
- those with trauma, grief, up and down moods, disorders, stigma, emotional issues

All sessions are confidential and are led by Pastor Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund and Rev. Dr. Patrick Larracey, co-chair of the church's WISE Team. Please feel free to call or email either of us if you have questions: Pastor Sarah: [pastorsarah@fcindy.org](mailto:pastorsarah@fcindy.org), or 386-478-9012. Dr. Pat: [plainandfancy1963@att.net](mailto:plainandfancy1963@att.net), or 317-625-6801. You do not have to be alone with your struggles or journey.

## **Our Faith, Our Vote**

We are counting down, praying, and sharing steps you can take to get to Election Day. What can you do today?

### **Join us in Prayer:**

Loving God, we go with your love to exercise the responsibility each of us carries in this democracy to vote. We pray for all people who join with us to cast their ballots even as we pray for hope, equality, wholeness, and health for all people created in your image and for your glorious creation: earth. May your love sustain us. Amen.

### **Protect the Election:**

Share [election protection](#) resources in your community and know your rights at the polls. [Check out these tools](#) in advance.

Save the Election Protection Hotline in your phone, so that if you encounter problems with voting, you are ready.

- 866-OUR-VOTE ((866) 687-8683)
- State by State Election Protection Contacts:  
<https://866ourvote.org/states/>

**Remember to Vote** on or before November 3rd! And while you're at it, remind others to do the same!

For more resources go to: <https://www.ucc.org/ourfaithourvote>

## **Wellness Wednesdays: 10:30AM (Zoom)**

**Wednesday, November 4th** there will be no live Zoom. On the first Wednesday of the month, a short, pre-recorded mindfulness practice is posted to the FC website and Facebook page. You are encouraged to take time out of your day to pause.

## **Book Buzz - next Sunday on November 8 - (yes November!)**

We had another impactful discussion this Sunday - about our history and productive anger - and including more information on voting support opportunities shared by Maddy. There is no book buzz this Sunday - the next one is November 8, following the remaining **chapters 12-14** of *I'm Still Here* by Austin Channing Brown. These chapters focus on her perception that not enough has really changed, and how she continues the fight for progress, with a 'shadow of

nope . There are 2 sessions left, the last one on November 22 - focusing on what we do next - what action can we take from here. Working towards that, she challenges us to consider what true reconciliation would look like, beyond just 'getting along':

**"RECONCILIATION ...IT'S ABOUT DIVERTING POWER AND ATTENTION TO THE OPPRESSED, TOWARD THE POWERLESS. IT'S NOT ENOUGH TO DABBLE AT DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION WHILE LEAVING THE EXISTING AUTHORITY STRUCTURE IN PLACE. RECONCILIATION DEMANDS MORE. "RECONCILIATION IS THE PURSUIT OF THE IMPOSSIBLE - AN UPSIDE DOWN WORLD WHERE THOSE WHO ARE POWERFUL HAVE RELINQUISHED THAT POWER TO THE MARGINS. IT'S REIMAGINING AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT WAY OF BEING WITH ONE ANOTHER. ....  
"RECONCILIATION IS WHAT JESUS DOES. WHEN SIN AND BROKENNESS AND EVIL TORE US FROM GOD, IT WAS JESUS WHO RECONCILED US, WHOSE BODY IMAGINED A DIFFERENT RELATIONSHIP, WHO TOOK UPON HIMSELF THE CROSS AND BECAME PEACE."**

- Austin Channing Brown

Sunday, Nov 8 at 12:30PMBook

All are welcome to the discussions  
Thanks! From the racial justice task force:  
Pastor Sarah, Carol, Alice, Cassidy, Karen

### **Giving Back**

#### **"Mitten Tree" Combines with Food Drives**

This year our "Mitten Tree" collection will continue but will combine with the monthly Food Pantry Drives. We will collect winter hats, mittens, gloves, and scarves for both children and adults for Exodus Refugee. Bring your winter items to the Food Drives (Nov. 14 and Dec. 12) or drop them off at church during the

week and deposit them in the specially designated containers. Exodus has greatly appreciated our support in this way in the past and looks forward to our help this year. **The deadline will be December 13.**

### **The Mission of the Month for October: 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, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects through grants. Neighbors in Need grants are awarded to UCC churches and organizations doing justice work in their communities. These grants fund projects whose work ranges from direct service to community organizing and advocacy to address systemic injustice. This year, special consideration will be given to projects focusing on serving our immigrant neighbors and communities. Contributions can be mailed to the church or donated online. Please give generously to this important ministry.

### **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/>

### **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](mailto:pastorsarah@fcindy.org).

### **Additional Church Support Contacts**

Pastor Carol ([casowle@gmail.com](mailto:casowle@gmail.com))

Office Administrator, Shannon ([shannon@fcindy.org](mailto:shannon@fcindy.org))

Moderator, Alice Rutherford ([alice@caloosaspirt.net](mailto:alice@caloosaspirt.net))

Vice Moderator, Larry Eckel ([lspeckel@comcast.net](mailto:lspeckel@comcast.net))

**Effective immediately, the church building is closed to in-person church**

**gatherings until the following parameters are reached, based on guidance from Dr Virginia Cane, Marion County Public Health Director:**

**A 7-day average of 5% (or less) positivity among unique individuals tested for a two-week period, and new cases per day at 35 or under in Marion County, per the metrics shown on [www.coronavirus.in.gov](http://www.coronavirus.in.gov) .**

**At that time, the Council will decide reopening measures.**

## THIS WEEK AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL

### **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](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.

### **How to Access our Zoom Gatherings**

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/9264494206?pwd=dmtWbWE5UXRBTk5pcHZlYlBoaEFVUTo9>

Meeting ID: 926 449 4206

Password: 7171

If you click on the URL, you should not need to enter in the Meeting ID and Password.

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

### Weekly Calendar

<b>Thursday, Oct 29</b>	<b>11:30 a.m.</b>	<b>Women's Lunch Bunch</b>
<b>Thursday, Oct 29</b>	<b>1:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Men's Lunch</b>
<b>Thursday, Oct 29</b>	<b>5:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Spiritual Support Group</b>
<b>Sunday, Nov 1</b>	<b>9:30 a.m.</b>	<b>Sunday Adult Class</b>
<b>Sunday, Nov 1</b>	<b>11:00 a.m.</b>	<b>Communion Sunday - outside and in person at FC</b>
<b>Sunday, Nov 1</b>	<b>12:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Coffee Hour</b>
<b>Sunday, Nov 1</b>	<b>4:30 p.m.</b>	<b>Outdoor Vespers at FC</b>
<b>Tuesday, Nov 3</b>	<b>5:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Soul Care w/ Pastor Sarah</b>
<b>Tuesday, Nov 3</b>	<b>7:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Zoom Vespers</b>
<b>Wednesday, Nov 4</b>		<b>Wellness Wednesday</b>
<b>Wednesday, Nov 4</b>	<b>7:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Trustees</b>
<b>Wednesday, Nov 5</b>	<b>5:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Spiritual Support Group</b>
<b>Sunday, Nov 8</b>	<b>9:30 a.m.</b>	<b>Sunday Adult Ed</b>
<b>Sunday, Nov 8</b>	<b>11:00 a.m.</b>	<b>Sunday Worship (YouTube, Dial In, &amp; FB)</b>
<b>Sunday, Nov 8</b>	<b>12:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Zoom Coffee Hour</b>
<b>Sunday, Nov 8</b>	<b>12:30 p.m.</b>	<b>Book Buzz</b>
<b>Sunday, Nov 8</b>	<b>4:30 p.m.</b>	<b>Outdoor Vespers</b>

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