



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

THE PILGRIM COLONY

January 2021

Pastor's Reflections

May the doors of 2021 fling open wide, inviting us to enter into a new season of HOPE for wholeness, health, and healing. As a spiritual community, First Congregational is embracing new ways to Be The Church as we bring to life our mission and ministries in ways that are transformative and restorative. We are taking our historic values of justice, equality, dignity, and love for neighbor and finding meaningful ways to apply our values to issues of our day: environmental justice, racial justice, LGBTQ justice, mental health justice, hunger justice, and economic justice.

This new year our congregation will be invited to engage more deeply in the ministries that matter most to us, partnering with community leaders and organizations, and discovering just how big our impact can be when we focus our resources of time, talent and treasure. We will continue to live out our Just Peace commitment through our partnership with Butler University's Center for Faith and Vocations as we welcome our 2021 Just Peace Intern, David Cark, who will be joining us this month for the spring semester. You will find his welcome letter below; please join me in offering David a warm welcome. We also look forward to our fourth (and final) semester with Student Pastor Cassidy Hall who has served with us as part of her educational field placement in partnership with Christian Theological Seminary. I give God thanks for the ways First Congregational provides support, guidance, and rich soil for learning and growth with our student interns.

One of the greatest joys of being the pastor of First Congregational is working with such caring, hardworking, generous, and gifted lay leaders. I offer my deepest appreciation to our 2020 church council and board members for all of their extra efforts through such a challenging time. Special thanks to our moderator, Alice Rutherford, for her above and beyond leadership that helped guide us through rough and stormy seas of 2020 because of the global pandemic. As we prepare to nominate and elect our church leadership for 2021, please prayerfully discern how God is calling you to use your gifts to help us fulfill our mission and ministries. Thank you all for your faithful financial support of our beloved church and for the ways you live out the Gospel's call to LOVE one another.

I am grateful to God that as I enter into this new year with each one of you and that together as a church family, we know we are loved and we are not alone. God is with us and God loves us.

Blessings,
Pastor Sarah

NEW TIME for Soul Care with Pastor Sarah (Zoom) - Join us on Tuesdays from 7:30-8:30pm immediately following Vepsers for a time to check-in and to pray together.

Pastoral Care and Support:
Contact Pastor Sarah at pastorsarah@fcindy.org and (386)478-9012.

Intern Reflections

Meet Our Just Peace Intern

I'm in my third year at Butler University! Sports media is my area of focus with a double-minor in journalism & religion. Faith and religious tradition have always been an important part of my life, and I hope to bring out these passions during my internship at First Congregational!



I grew up ELCA Lutheran, but I have gotten the opportunity to interact with lots of different faith traditions in the last several years. To me, learning how these traditions interact with each other and how we, as the body of Christ, can better foster a sense of community is critical. Too often in the world at-large, people are unwilling to listen to others' ways of thinking, and that is a crucial flaw that needs to be addressed. It is my hope that my time as intern for the congregation can focus on some of these points and thus better spread God's mission to all the earth. It is a bold undertaking, but one desperately needed during the disconnection COVID-19 has brought.

In my downtime, I also keep up to date with Major League Baseball. I am originally from the St. Louis area, and I'm a die-hard St. Louis Cardinals fan. I write about MLB part-time for TheGameHaus.com. I live in Dayton, Ohio, with my two parents and our cat, Dulcinea.

- David Clark
daclark1@butler.edu

From Your Student Pastor



After tying up the first semester of my third year in Seminary, I've been lucky enough to focus on this year's Blue Christmas Service, honoring the fact that the holiday season is often full of grief and pain for many of us. I'll go on a brief break over the holidays (seeing a couple of my nephews) before embarking on my final semester as Student Pastor beginning in mid January. Being with you for my seminary journey has continued to be an empowering

and enlivening experience. My call to ministry has become more solidified and my love of the UCC even more clear. But, at the end of the day, no church will be this church, and FC Indy will forever be the place I took my first steps in this long journey of pursuing ordained ministry. I continue to be so blessed by each of you and look forward to my final semester with you. As always, if you ever have any questions or feedback, feel free to email me at studentpastor@fcindy.org
Love, Cassidy

Racial Justice Team - next steps and new book to read for January

As follow up from our book buzz discussions we are working in multiple directions. We are submitting a resolution to the council to partner with Faith In Indiana for advocacy action. We are also continuing our journey of education. Many people suggested another book study. We have chosen another story from an African American perspective. It is the Young Adult novel "The Hate You Give" by Angie Smith (I was not familiar with THUG as that acronym). Our process will be a little different this time - please obtain the book yourself - there are lots of copies, both hard back and electronic, available at the library. We will only have a single buzz discussion about this book - on February 7.

This New York Times best selling book, Inspired by the Black Lives Matter movement, involves the police shooting of an unarmed black teen. The book covers topics of race, interracial dating, political activism, grief, friendship, wealth disparity, police brutality, addiction, and the media's depiction of African Americans. According to the reviewer for The Guardian, this book "says more about the contemporary black experience in America than any book I have read for years, whether fiction or non-fiction". It is a fairly long book, but rather quick to read. There is some swearing, additional violence, sexual situations, and drug use in the book, but it's not gratuitous. Feel free to get a head start on the reading and watch for more information over the coming weeks!

Thank you,
the Racial Justice Team: Pastor Sarah, Carol, Cassidy, Alice, Karen

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.

Moderator's Reflections

As I read through my Colony reflections of the past year, I find that in February I wrote of the possible “crests and troughs” that we might encounter together as I served as FC’s moderator through 2020. Little did we know then that the troughs this year would feel like deep chasms between relentlessly steep wave crests, causing us to struggle to hold our course. Each spring month following the coronavirus shut-down in March, we had high hopes of returning to in-person worship at our home port of 7171 Pennsylvania St. But each month those hopes were dashed upon the covid-19 reefs as we were forced to remain offshore with virtual gatherings only, to lovingly protect our beloved community. Blessedly, the summer and fall provided a brief respite as we found ways to gather outside for short visits (masked and socially distanced), but that respite ended all too soon when colder weather and dramatically rising cases set in. The crests and troughs of this difficult and seemingly endless passage have often felt overwhelming, and I have feared for the safety of us all. I find myself wondering if this is how our faith ancestors on the Mayflower may have felt through their long, tortuous journey.

But as I also mentioned back in May, we have found ways to set our sails and make our way through this coronavirus tempest, following where God leads us. We have experienced remarkable, engaging weekly virtual worship, thanks in large part to the expertise of our resilient and creative pastors and musicians. Our council, boards, committees, and teams have managed the work and ministries of our church with diligence, creativity, and dedication. We have virtually welcomed new members into our faith community. During this most challenging time we have even begun a new ministry of racial justice in our community. We continue each month to live out what it means to “Be The Church”, including caring for each other’s mutual grief from the loss of physical connection, and I thank God for being a part of this most extraordinary community of faith.

Finally, we can see a safe harbor’s lighthouse beckoning far out on the horizon, as a vaccine that will one day end this misery has now become available. But we know our celebration of once again gathering in person is still months off, so for now we continue to hold our course, thanking God for how far we have come through these stormy seas. As difficult as this passage has been, I also thank God – and FC’s members – for the privilege of serving as your moderator through the mountainous crests and abyssal troughs of 2020. It’s certainly been an interesting and enriching ride.

- Alice Rutherford, Moderator

This Month at FC*

SUNDAYS	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class (Zoom)
SUNDAYS	11:00 a.m.	Worship (YouTube, Facebook, Dial In)
SUNDAYS	12:00 p.m.	Coffee Hour (Zoom - immediately after worship)
TUESDAYS	7:00 p.m.	Winter Vespers (Zoom)
TUESDAYS	7:30 p.m.	Soul Care with Pastor Sarah (Zoom)
WEDNESDAYS	10:30 a.m.	Wellness Wednesdays (Zoom)
THURSDAYS	5:00 p.m.	Spiritual Support Group (Zoom)
Saturday, Jan 2	10:00 a.m.	Food Drive (at FC)
Sunday, Jan 3	11:00 a.m.	Communion Sunday (YouTube, Facebook, Dial In)
Wednesday, Jan 6	7:00 p.m.	Trustees (Zoom)
Thursday, Jan 7	1:00 p.m.	Men's Lunch
Sunday, Jan 10	11:00 a.m.	New Member Sunday (YouTube, FB, Dial In)
Sunday, Jan 10	12:30 p.m.	Outreach & Service Buzz (Zoom)
Wednesday, Jan 13	5:00 p.m.	WISE Mental Health Team (Zoom)
Wednesday, Jan 13	7:00 p.m.	Church Council (Zoom)
Saturday, Jan 16	11:00 a.m.	Neighborhood Walk (at FC)
Thursday, Jan 21	1:00 p.m.	Men's Lunch
Thursday, Jan 28	11:30 a.m.	Women's Lunch Bunch (Zoom)
Sunday, Jan 31	12:30 p.m.	Virtual Pitch-In (Zoom)
Sunday, Jan 31	1:00 p.m.	Annual Meeting (Zoom)

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

To join Zoom meetings, click this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9264494206?pwd=dmtWbWE5UXRBTk5pcHZlYlB0aEFVUT09> 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. You can call in and participant as a 'conference call'.

Church Council

Comeback Team: Current Building Policy

The church building is closed to in-person church gatherings **until the following parameters are reached, based on guidance from Dr Virginia Caine, 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.

If you need to be in the building, please wash your hands in the kitchenette or use the sanitizer at the cleaning cart, sign in, and wear a face mask. We value the opportunity to be together, but are equally desirous to keep one another healthy by limiting ways to inadvertently shed virus!

Annual Meeting 2021 – January 31, 1:00 PM

Each year January brings us cold temps, some snow, and our church's Annual Meeting. This is when our church does its "business" in looking back at the ups and downs of the previous year (and boy, have we had them!), approving a budget for the coming year (important), and setting goals for our ministries (very important, especially during the pandemic). Our Constitution & Bylaws indicate that these important tasks are the work of the whole congregation, so this is a very important time for us all to come together as our church's governing body. (Did I mention that this is an **important** meeting?)

This year January has five Sundays, so our Annual Meeting will occur on January 31 – the last Sunday of the month, as stated in our C & BL. In other years we have gathered for a pitch-in lunch after worship with the meeting immediately following lunch. But, as we are all aware, next month's meeting must happen differently. This time we'll share a virtual "pitch-in" lunch at 12:30 PM on Zoom (so be prepared to talk about what you're eating!), along with some time to catch up with one another. The meeting will begin at 1:00, so we hope folks will have most of their lunch finished up by then.

I look forward to seeing many (most?) of our church members at this IMPORTANT virtual meeting on January 31 at 1:00 PM. Leading this **important** meeting will be my last official act as moderator. See you then!

- Alice Rutherford



WORSHIP & FAITH

Elizabeth Price, Chair

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

Adult Education will continue to meet [via Zoom](#).

This month we will feature the film "If It Weren't for the Women: Women's Leadership in Social Justice." The film is described this way on the YouTube page <https://youtu.be/QLjWw2cjvbg>:

"Hope, grace, and justice. These three words wound throughout an historic panel discussion by four UCC women leaders in justice advocacy March 4, 2020 at the Council for Health and Human Service Ministries' Annual Gathering in Memphis, TN. Moderated by the Rev. Traci Blackmon, the UCC's Associate General Minister of Justice & Local Church Ministries and senior pastor of Christ the King UCC in Florissant, Mo., the panel included the Rev. Dr. Bernice Powell Jackson, founding executive minister of Justice and Witness Ministries and currently the pastor of First United Church of Tampa (Fla.); the Rev. M. Linda

Jaramillo, former executive minister of Justice and Witness Ministries; and the Rev. Loey Powell, former executive director of the UCC's Coordinating Center for Women."

We will divide the 45 minute film into three parts of about 15 minutes each, to give us plenty of time to reflect on the stories and wisdom each woman shares.

January 3: Part 1 of "If It Weren't for the Women: Women's Leadership in Social Justice."

January 10: We will have the pleasure of Cassidy Hall leading us on another exploration of some facet of Black Theology. More info to follow.

January 17: Part 2 of "If It Weren't for the Women: Women's Leadership in Social Justice."

January 24: Led by Wendy Baldwin, join us to discern and discuss a selected Bible passage, and how it speaks to us about generosity and stewardship. As 2021 dawns with hopes for a new beginning, Generosity remains a key spiritual practice.

January 31: Part 3 of "If It Weren't for the Women: Women's Leadership in Social Justice."

Epiphany Sunday, January 3rd



The IKC, in collaboration with the Illinois South and Heartland Conferences, has recorded an epiphany worship service for our use on January 3.

Preparing for Epiphany Worship: Star Words

Here's a brief explanation of "star words" from Illinois South Conference Minister Rev. Shana Johnson:

"In our Epiphany worship service, we will incorporate 'star words.' The idea is simple, but its meaning and impact can be profound. As part of our Epiphany celebration, we remember the star the magi saw and followed. The magi trusted the star would guide them on a Spirit filled journey to the Christ child. In this Epiphany season and throughout this next year we would like to invite you on a Spirit filled journey to draw you closer to the Divine guide by your star word. You could think of your star word like an intention, an invitation or even a challenge."

Star Words: Your star words have been selected based on your birthday month. However, if another word speaks to your spirit, feel free to choose your own star word as the Spirit leads.

- January: **wonder**
- February: **rest**
- March: **vision**
- April: **grow**
- May: **story**



June: **discernment**
July: **wholeness**
August: **play**
September: **release**
October: **voice**
November: **remember**
December: **weave**

New Member Sunday – January 10th

On Sunday, January 10th, we welcome new members into our congregational life. Please let Pastor Sarah know if you would like to make First Congregational your church home.



3 Ways to Connect for Worship



FACE BOOK

[https://www.facebook.com/pg/FirstCongregationalUCCIndy/posts/?ref=page i
nternal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/FirstCongregationalUCCIndy/posts/?ref=page_internal)



YOUTUBE

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

- YouTube Live broadcasts at 10:45am with 15 minutes of gathering music. The service begins at 11am.



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

Buzz January 10 – Outreach & Service has a new vision!

While financial giving has long been a generous and beloved aspect of First Congregational's ministry, the Outreach & Service Board has recognized the need to adapt to our present financial and human resources. Our goal is greater impact on local ministries reflecting our UCC covenants, so the board has been diligently working to streamline our mission activities as we move into 2021. We've developed some plans for our outreach ministry to take on a new look to include advocacy, along with financial support, for some of the ministries and organizations that we have traditionally supported, as well as a few new ones. As we move these plans forward, we'd like to get congregational input before setting anything in stone, so we invite everyone to attend a Buzz session (via Zoom) **following worship on January 10**. At that time we'll present more specifics of this new vision for advocacy outreach, which will be included in O & S's annual report. We want to incorporate ideas and thoughts from the congregation into this new way of approaching our church's outreach to our community, so we hope for good attendance at the January 10 Buzz.

Update from Bread for the World: Global Nutrition Resolution Passed!

Sometimes when we have an Offering of Letters at FCC, people ask, "Do these letters really make a difference?" Here's the answer regarding the 2019 BFW campaign from Rev. Eugene Cho, President of Bread for the World.

"The Global Nutrition Resolution (H.Res.189) was passed on Dec. 7, 2020. And it's a BIG DEAL. In early 2019, Bread for the World conceived of and drafted this resolution with Congressional leaders. The Global Nutrition Resolution recognizes the importance of sustained U.S. leadership to accelerate global progress against maternal and child malnutrition and supports USAID's commitment to global nutrition through its multi-sectoral nutrition strategy.

Then, you and other Bread for the World members went to work. Through your prayers, actions, financial support, and grassroots efforts, Bread members helped secure 154 cosponsors in the House and 41 cosponsors in the Senate. It is one of the most bipartisan pieces of legislation Congress passed in 2020. Bread members also helped ensure unanimous approval out of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, as well as the House Agriculture and Foreign Affairs Committee. (83,384 letters were sent to legislators.)

Let me say this again: vulnerable women and children WIN through this resolution.

Our collective voice will be needed to urge Congress to make good on these resolutions and to increase funding for global maternal and child malnutrition, but for now, let's take a moment to celebrate this win together."

A special "thank-you" to all the FC members who participated in this Offering of Letters.

- Sue Chapman, Bread for the World Team

WISE Mental Health Team (Next Zoom meeting: January 13 at 5:00PM)



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 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](tel:317-625-6801)-plainandfancy1963@att.net and Sandy Wood, 317-225-6206- csjlwood@att.net.

Spiritual Support Group for Mental Health Conditions or Challenges, and Wellness: Thursdays from 5:00-6:00PM [on 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

We are an open group with confidentiality guidelines. Sessions are on Zoom 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, or 386-478-9012. Dr. Pat: plainandfancy1963@att.net, or 317-625-6801.

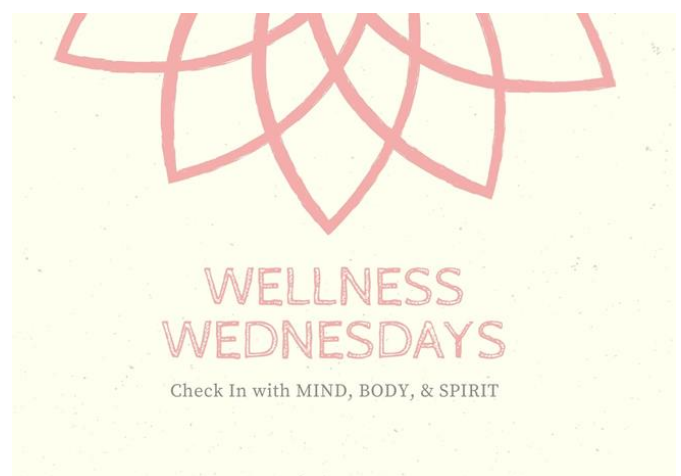
Thank you,

Rev. Dr. Patrick Larracey

Wellness Wednesdays in January

Through the month of January, we enter into the season of winter in body, mind, and spirit through meditation, ritual, movement, and prayer based on excerpts from *The Circle of Life: The Heart's Journey through the Seasons*, by Joyce Rupp & Macrina Wiederkehr.

- ❖ **January 6:** Nurturing Wellness through a Star Shining Ritual (pre-recorded)
- ❖ **January 13:** Nurturing Wellness through Praying with the Gospel of Winter (introduction to Body Prayer)
- ❖ **January 20:** Nurturing Wellness through Entering the Heart of Winter
- ❖ **January 27:** Nurturing Wellness through Clothing Yourself with Divinity



Because we know your time is precious and Zoom fatigue is real, Wellness Wednesday practices are no longer than 30 minutes. We invite you to take a

short break in the middle of your week to renew and re-center your mind, body, and spirit.

For those still unable to attend via Zoom, recordings of each practice will be recorded and posted on the church website and facebook page.

Contact Shannon at shannon@fcindy.org with any questions.

CARE & CONNECTIONS

Wendy Baldwin, Chair

Emergency Contact Info –

The pandemic has helped us realize that we would like to have an Emergency Contact for each of our members, as part of our Care & Connecting ministry. You may have provided this information in the past, but with changes in office admin staff over the years, we would like to have a fresh list. Please send the following information to our Office Admin, Shannon Abbott, shannon@fcindy.org, or mail to the church:

- Emergency Contact Name
- Relationship to You
- Phone Number(s)
- Email Address
- Street Address

This information will only be used by us in cases of emergency, to be identified by our pastoral team.



Food Drive & Fellowship! Moving to the First Saturday of each month – January 2, 10-noon

Welcome in the New Year with our monthly food drive! Our food donations to the Northside Pantry are helping to fight hunger needs, and the Pantry is very grateful that we are doing this! And our greatest gift – the ability to spend a few minutes of in-person fellowship with those that are there, while maintaining safe distance protocols.

Vesper Gatherings – Tuesdays, 7-7:30 pm on Zoom

For now, we are cancelling in-person Sunday Vesper gatherings, due to winter weather. If we have a mild day, we will have a “pop up” Vespers service, and we’ll notify folks via email. On Tuesdays, we are meeting at 7 pm for a half hour on Zoom, to be together virtually to share some scripture and joys & concerns. For those who want, Pastor Sarah will be available for pastoral discussion following Vespers.



Monthly Walks – 3rd Saturday of the month, January 16, 11 am

Join us each month for a half hour walk in the beautiful neighborhood around the church. On Saturday, 1/16, we'll meet at 11 am and head off for a walk and a time to catch up with one another. Please wear a mask, and dress appropriately for the weather.

TRUSTEES

Steve Coomer & Randy Walker, Co-Chairs

Financial Update

When We Give, We Reach Out With Helping Hands

Here are the financial results through November 30, 2020.

1. Current Year Actual vs Budget Summary			
1/1/2020 through 11/30/2020 Using 2020 Budget 1			
Category	1/1/2020 Actual	- Budget	11/30/2020 Difference
INCOME	195,047	216,827	-21,780
M. Unrestricted Contributions	195,047	216,827	-21,780
M.01 Pledged Offerings	170,875	157,075	13,800
M.02 UnPledged Offerings	8,845	18,425	-9,580
M.03 Rollover Prior Year Surplus_D...	15,327	15,327	0
M.04 Foundation - Endowment Fund...	0	10,000	-10,000
M.05 Foundation - Minister Fund Draw	0	16,000	-16,000
M.06 Foundation - Trad. Music Fund...	0	0	0
M.07. Transfer from Youth Fund	0	0	0
M.08 Other Transfers from Restr Ac...	0	0	0
EXPENSES	224,343	237,061	12,718
A. Pastoral Leadership	109,207	112,679	3,472
B. Worship & Faith	32,258	38,399	6,141
C. Care & Connections	210	385	175
D. Witness & Welcome	350	1,005	655
E. Outreach & Service	16,169	16,410	241
F. Trustees	228	328	100
G. Administration & Operations	18,341	19,241	900
H. House & Grounds	41,792	42,546	754
I. Miscellaneous	5,789	6,070	281
Net Difference:	-29,296	-20,234	-9,061

Highlights:

- **Income** of \$195,000 was \$21,800 below budget because we expected to need a \$26,000 draw from the Foundation, which we have not needed. Adjusting for that, income was \$4,200 better than budget, thanks to strong pledge receipts.
- **Expenses** of \$223,500 were \$13,600 below budget. All areas were below budget; the primary savings came from Worship and Faith due to COVID - no choir director since June and savings in child care and Pastor Sarah's professional expenses.

- **Cash** was solid - net of \$27,300 in the bank accounts and \$23,400 in money market funds.

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

Jim Lootens, Treasurer

lootens.jb@gmail.com

Annual Campaign for 2021

Thank you to those who have responded with your pledge card and Time & Talent sheet to provide funding and resources for our ministries and programs in 2021. We are so thankful for your generosity in 2020, even in the midst of a pandemic! We pray for continued support in 2021 as we navigate how to Be the Church in new and different times.

May God bless us as we journey together.

– Wendy Baldwin



Avoiding Food Waste

Worldwide, millions of children and adults have insufficient food, suffering from malnutrition and starvation. In the US we waste an estimated 50% of all the food purchased. We can do our part in preventing this terrible waste by planning our purchases carefully and purchasing only what we really need. We can also pay attention to the dates marked on our food purchases, not throwing out perfectly good food thinking that it is outdated. The dates on the food packaging specify different things, from "Sell by," "Best by" (best flavor by), "Use by" and possibly others. A lot of perfectly good food is being thrown out because of the incorrect belief that all dates mean that the food is no longer safe to eat. Food donation is an option if we don't want to use canned food after the "Sell by" or "Best by" dates, as those foods may be good for as long two more years. Consumer Reports states that even some perishables such as milk and eggs may be fine for up to weeks after the date shown. We do need to throw out unsafe food but careful examination of dates on the food containers may show that the food is still quite safe. Yet, safety requires that when in doubt throw it out.

- Bill Gillette for the Green Team

COMMUNITY

Saying Good-Bye

"I trust in God's love forever and ever. I will praise you forever for what you have done; among your faithful I will put my trust in your Name, for it is good."
(Psalm 52:8-9 The Inclusive Bible).

On August 13, 2020, a friend sent me the following email: "I'm in home hospice but please don't visit. I'm so glad we've been best friends forever. I don't know what else to say but i love you. Jeanne."

How might you have replied to such an email?

After reading Jeanne's three sentences, praying, and pondering the words from my friend of 42 years, i responded this way, with a few changes for clarification:

"i love you" says it all, dear best friend forever. Thank you for saying "good-bye" before you departed. i so appreciate that throughout many years—even decades—we've told each other in words and actions, how grateful we've been to have each other in our lives. What adventures we have shared—both in person and in updating each other (lately through emails) about our lives, our families, and what mattered in our daily existence. Please know, dear Jeanne, that i will think of you often. You will always be in my heart. -- susanna-judith

i took Jeanne at her word and did not call or visit—though she lived only 12 minutes away. After over 40 years of respecting her idiosyncrasies, that some individuals found off-putting, i trusted that she knew how she wanted to spend her final days and hours. Moreover, i felt confident that if Jeanne changed her mind and decided to say "good-bye" face-to-face, or voice-to-voice, she would let me know. Mostly, i was thankful that Jeanne arranged for me to spend some quality final, electronic moments with her.

In addition to praying and pondering Jeanne's pluck as she moved closer to her time to return to God, i admired her courage. By October, i began to check *Indy Star* obituaries, sadly typing in Jeanne's full name, and having mixed feelings each time i realized my friend was still of this world. i felt relieved that the pain accompanying many of Jeanne's medical treatments—such as radiation, chemotherapy, and bone marrow tests—would soon be over.

In the last week of November, in *Indy Star's* obituaries, Jeanne's name jumped out at me from a long list of people who had recently died. Suddenly, some tears of relief, lots of tears of joy for our friendship, and a few tears of sadness in missing Jeanne already welled up in my eyes.

Next, i found Jeanne's obituary on Legacy.com. Here are my favorite sentences in the write-up: "She worked in the summer for her cousins, Leon and Jo Martin, at the Dairy Queen, where they were allowed to eat their mistakes." [...] "She cultivated her garden in the same way she cultivated her friendships, befriending the unique ones who might not be seen or heard by the masses, but were accepted unconditionally by her." That was indeed the Jeanne i knew.

Not long after i met Jeanne, a newly hired teacher in the educational institution where i was the librarian, i thought she had the makings of a true, empathetic, and compassionate friend. i thank God that we did become friends—long-lasting friends.

If you want to read an obituary with character, i recommend clicking [here](#). Dear God, thank You for Jeanne's life and for her adding meaning to the lives of many of us. May we all, like Jeanne, put unconditional love toward others on the top of our list of priorities as we relate to people of all walks of life. Amen.

- susanna-judith rae

Preparing for the End of the Moratorium: IKC UCC Southeast Association Eviction Ministry

The eviction moratorium was only promised through the end of 2020. With the uncertainties of 2021, we need your support to prevent the cycle of eviction. The Southeast Association Eviction Ministry was designed to prevent eviction before it happens by providing assistance to those who are at risk of eviction and do not qualify for other forms of assistance. Many Hoosiers are just one paycheck away from eviction or homelessness, and due to circumstances beyond their control find themselves with an eviction notice at their door. They just need a little help and a little hope to get back on their feet.



Ways you can help:

- Join our Team - We welcome new members who want to join our team.
- Legal resources - If you have legal experience with the eviction process, we would love to talk with you to gain better insight into the legal process.
- 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

- Rev. Shannon Abbott (shannon@fcindy.org), Pastor Sarah Frische-Mouri Hannigan (pastorsarahzucc@gmail.com), Walter Ziebell (wziebell@gmail.com)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

February Colony Submission Deadline: Please email your submissions to Shannon at shannon@fcindy.org no later than **Thursday, January 21st**.

Women's Lunch Bunch: All women of the church are invited to get together once a month at **11:30am**. via Zoom for lunch, friendship and fellowship. This month, they meet on **January 28th**. 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 meets every other Thursday at **1:00pm**. This month, due to Thanksgiving, they are meeting only on **January 7th & 21st**. Please contact Randy Walker at (317) 796-2081 or aa28977rwalker@gmail.com for more information.

Women's Book Circle: Starting in January we will be reading the mystery "American By Day" by Derek Miller, about 75 pages for the January meeting please. By bringing a Norwegian detective to the United States, it provides a great setting for exploring differences in cultures. While the book is often humorous, especially in its references to cross-cultural differences and misunderstandings, it presents many serious issues in American society such as justice, police brutality, and race relations. We meet on the **third Tuesday** of each month at **1:30** on the church **zoom** account. Join us! For more

information please contact Karen Walker at 317-319-8950 or karen.e.d.walker@gmail.com

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.



ACTION CALENDAR: HAPPIER JANUARY 2021

MONDAY



"Happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony" - Gandhi

4

Write a list of things you feel grateful for in life and why

11

Switch off all your tech 2 hours before bedtime

18

Focus on what's good, even if today feels tough

25

Decide to lift people up rather than put them down

TUESDAY

5

Look for the good in others and notice their strengths

12

Connect with someone near you - share a smile or chat

19

Get back in contact with an old friend you miss

26

Say hello to a neighbour and get to know them better

WEDNESDAY

6

Take five minutes to sit still and just breathe

13

Be gentle with yourself when you make mistakes

20

Go to bed in good time and give yourself time to recharge

27

Challenge your negative thoughts and look for the upside

THURSDAY

7

Learn something new and share it with others

14

Take a different route today and see what you notice

21

Take a small step towards an important goal

28

Ask other people about things they've enjoyed recently

FRIDAY

1

Find three good things to look forward to this year

8

Say positive things to the people you meet today

15

Eat healthy food which really nourishes you today

22

Try out something new to get out of your comfort zone

29

Use one of your personal strengths in a new way

SATURDAY

2

Make time today to do something kind for yourself

9

Get moving. Do something physically active (ideally outdoors)

16

Get outside and notice five things that are beautiful

23

Plan something fun and invite others to join you

30

Count how many people you can smile at today

SUNDAY

3

Do a kind act for someone else to help to brighten their day

10

Thank someone you're grateful to and tell them why

17

Contribute positively to a good cause or your community

24

Put away digital devices and focus on being in the moment

31

Write down your hopes or plans for the future

ACTION FOR HAPPINESS



www.actionforhappiness.org

Happier · Kinder · Together

Learn more about this month's theme at www.actionforhappiness.org/happier-january

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