

 [FirstCongregationalUCCIndy](#)

 [Forward](#)



# FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Epistle for the Week of April 15, 2021

## Dear First Congregational,

As I walk around my neighborhood, I enjoy observing the changes spring brings. The redbuds popping, the tulips standing tall, and then I see the magnolia buds and my heart sinks. You also may have noticed the withered and brown blossoms of the magnolias. The cold snap a week or so ago struck right at the heart of these buds, taking away their potential to bloom in their full glory. For me, this dynamic in nature helps me understand the cycles of life, loss, and grief.

So many of us have lost loved ones this past year, including my own family loss of my grandmother and niece. Whether age 99 or 16, both were in a season of blooming, a season of beauty, and potential in their own unique ways. My grandmother enjoyed oil painting in her 90s and my niece enjoyed playing the guitar. Death has a way of changing all of us, both the dead and the living. For some reason, the magnolias this year remind me of the fragile nature of our lives.

I am grateful for the memories I cherish of my grandmother and my niece. Like the memories of last year's spring magnolia blossoms, I can see them in my mind. Their beauty warms my heart. May all of us in this season with so many unexpected losses, so much grief, be comforted by memories of life in full bloom, and know that God's love is with us always.

Blessings,  
Pastor Sarah



**Are you ready to get back to  
the people and activities you love?**

Your vaccination brings us one day closer  
to controlling the pandemic and  
reopening Church.

**Get your vaccine ASAP!**

Register at [ourshot.in.gov](https://ourshot.in.gov) or call 211.

## **THIS SUNDAY**

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

In April we will celebrate resurrection, new directions for building a beloved community and new beginnings. Join in!

**April 18** - Wendy Baldwin presents on "Beloved, Love."

### **Sunday Worship, 11AM (YouTube, FaceBook, Dial In)**

**Scripture:** Psalm 4

**Sermon:** "A Word of Grace"

**Coffee hour via Zoom, immediately after worship**

### **Thank You for Your Support of First Congregational UCC**

Please continue supporting the mission and ministries of your local church by mailing a check to the church or through online donations at <http://www.fcindy.org/online-giving/>

## **THIS WEEK AT FC**

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

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/9264494206?pwd=dmtWbWE5UXRBTk5pcHZlYlB0aEFVUT09>

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.

### **TODAY!**

- **Men's Lunch at 1:00 p.m. (private Zoom)** - For more information, please contact Dick Clough at (317) 872-3910.
- **Spiritual Support Group at 5:00 p.m. (Zoom)** - This group openly invites anyone seeking spiritual care concerning well being. Contact Pastor Sarah at [pastorsarah@fcindy.org](mailto:pastorsarah@fcindy.org), or 386-478-9012.

### **Monthly Walks – 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month, April 17, 11 am**

Join us each month for a half hour walk in the beautiful neighborhood around the church. We'll meet at 11 am in the church parking lot, 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.

### **Wanting to learn to pray in brand new ways?**

Join us for "silent prayer" on the Church Zoom, **Mondays in April at 10:00 AM EST** for only 20 minutes. Student Pastor, Cassidy Hall will open our time with a brief reading and a reminder that there's no wrong way to pray! Then we will simply be together (cameras on or off, eyes open or closed) while a candle rests lit on Cassidy's screen. Our time is based off of the four-steps of Centering Prayer (1.

as the symbol of your intention to consent to God's presence and action within. 2. "Sitting comfortably...settle briefly and silently introduce the sacred word as the symbol of your consent to God's presence and action within." 3. When thoughts arise, "return ever-so gently to the sacred word." 4. "At the end of the prayer period, remain in silence" and Cassidy will close us in prayer. Any questions or concerns? Email Student Pastor Cassidy Hall at [studentpastor@fcindy.org](mailto:studentpastor@fcindy.org)

**Women's Book Circle - Tuesday, April 20 at 1:30 p.m. (Zoom)** - For more information please contact Karen Walker at 317-319-8950 or [karen.e.d.walker@gmail.com](mailto:karen.e.d.walker@gmail.com)

### **Bread for the World: Feeding the Hungry - opportunity for advocacy on April 20**

Senator Braun has agreed to meet with hunger experts and Bread For the World advocates to discuss food insecurity. Let's show him strength in numbers of people who feel strongly about this. This is a free zoom event, please see more info and register at the link here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/feeding-our-economy-tickets-141487076655>

### **Vespers (Outdoor/Zoom) on Tuesdays from 7:00 - 7:30 p.m.**

Join us for a time of togetherness, Scripture, and sharing of joys and concerns. When weather conditions allow, Vespers will be outdoors at the church at 7 pm. Please bring a lawn chair and wear a mask. We will also try to connect to Zoom for those unable to attend in person. We will NOT meet outdoors if the temperature is below 50 degrees, it's raining, or winds are greater than 20 mph; you can join us on Zoom.

### **Outreach & Service**

In our last month of our Just Peace Covenant Outreach, we are presented with an additional opportunity for support and advocacy for Family Promise. Throughout April, Family Promise is promoting a #NightWithoutABed campaign to provide sheltering apartments for homeless families. \$15,000 raised from Indianapolis congregations will provide one rented apartment for 12 months. Family Promise has found this new approach to housing homeless families to be exceedingly successful. Many families are able to rent on their own after a short time in an apartment provided by Family Promise. Through the rest of April we are requesting a special donation specifically to Family Promise, through either online giving or checks sent to the church. Let's see how much First Congregational can donate to this worthy project as a way of living out our Just Peace covenant! Learn more

at [Family Promise of Greater Indianapolis | Facebook](#) and [Family Promise](#).

## COMING UP

**Women's Lunch - Thursday, April 22 at 11:30 a.m.** - For questions or more information please contact Sue Chapman at (317) 259-1806 or [carolsuech59@gmail.com](mailto:carolsuech59@gmail.com).

### **Fourth Friday Fun at First! – April 23, 6-8 pm**

Looking for some in-person fun and community? We will gather outdoors at the church playground to have some pizza, play various games, and share community, while observing safety protocols of distancing and mask wearing. All ages welcome, and bring a friend! So we have an idea of expected attendance, please let Wendy Baldwin know if you plan to attend.



### **CTS Labyrinth Workshop, Saturday, April 24 from 11 AM – 1 PM.**

The Indiana Interchurch Center Labyrinth, 1100 W. 42nd St., Indianapolis.

*The labyrinth is located in the back of the center.*

For people who choose not to walk, but want to participate, please bring a lawn chair and follow with [this finger labyrinth sheet](#).

Registration and Masks Required. Register [HERE](#).

### **Buzz: April 25<sup>th</sup> at 12:30 PM (Zoom)**

This Buzz will cover two important areas of our church life. In the first half, we will engage in a celebration and “talk back” session with our Just Peace Intern, David Clark, on his last Sunday with us. During the second half, we will discuss when and how to safely begin to re-open the Church building for worship and gatherings.

### **SE Association Annual Meeting on Sunday, April 25<sup>th</sup> at 3:00pm (IKC Zoom)**

We will be electing officers and hear from the Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson

who is the Associate General Minister and Administrator of General Synod. We are currently seeking nominations for the position of President and Registrar for the Southeast Association. If you or someone you know is interested in serving in one of these positions, please let Pastor Sarah know.

**May 16<sup>th</sup> - Mental Health Sunday Buzz & Christ on the Psych Ward Books** - We are fortunate to have a guest preacher, David Finnegan-Hosey, at our virtual Mental Health Sunday this year who has also agreed to do a Buzz after Worship. During our Buzz he will be discussing his 2018 book "Christ on the Psych Ward" published by Church Publishing. Though you do not have to have read this book to attend and benefit from his talk, there is a cart containing the books and a sign-up for pick-up in the hallway by the garden door. If you wish to have a book delivered to you, and there are books available, please let Sandy Wood know ([csjlwood@att.net](mailto:csjlwood@att.net) or 317-225-6206).

Please click [HERE](#) to view the April Colony with more information and events happening this month!

## CONNECTION & SUPPORT

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

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

### **Pastoral Care**

Pastor Sarah may be reached at (386) 478-9012 or [pastorsarah@fcindy](mailto:pastorsarah@fcindy).

### **Pastor Sarah's Sabbath Days: Mondays & Saturdays**

The congregation covenant with Pastor Sarah to provide 2 days per week for personal rest and family renewal. On Mondays and Saturdays, Pastor Sarah is not available unless it is a pastoral emergency. Thank you for honoring this sacred gift of Sabbath time for our Pastor and her family.

### **Additional Church Support Contacts**

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

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

Lead Councilor: Larry Eckel ([lspeckel@comcast.net](mailto:lspeckel@comcast.net))

(Senior Councilors: Steve Coomer, Larry Ecker, Alice Ruthertord)

### **Mental Health Support:**

- **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Disaster Distress Helpline:** 1-800-985-5990, or text "TalkWithUs" to 66746.
- **National Suicide Prevention Hotline:** 1-800-273-TALK (8255) (press 1 for veterans, 2 for Spanish)
- **National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)** Information HelpLine provides information and referral services. 1-800-950-NAMI (6264) and [www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org).
- **The Trevor Project hotline** offers support for LGBTQIA+ youth and families struggling with mental health challenges at 1-866-4-U-TREVOR (488-7386) and [www.theTrevorProject.org](http://www.theTrevorProject.org)

**Members in Need Fund** - The Members in Need Fund is available to support financial needs for any of our church family who find themselves in need. To request funds for you or your family, please contact Pastor Sarah by email [pastorsarah@fcindy.org](mailto:pastorsarah@fcindy.org) or cell (386) 478-9012.

### **FC Covid Protocols:**

Effective immediately, 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](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 broadcasts at 11am..

- Use this option for live interacting and messaging. You must have or create a user account and be logged in to message 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=dmtWbWE5UXRBTK5pcHZlYlBoaEFVUT09>

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, April 15</b>	<b>1:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Men's Lunch (private Zoom)</b>
<b>Thursday, April 15</b>	<b>5:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Spiritual Support Group</b>
<b>Saturday, April 17</b>	<b>11:00 a.m.</b>	<b>Neighborhood Walk (at FC)</b>
<b>Sunday, April 18</b>	<b>9:30 a.m.</b>	<b>Sunday Adult Class</b>
<b>Sunday, April 18</b>	<b>11:00 a.m.</b>	<b>Sunday Worship (YouTube, FB, Dial In)</b>
<b>Sunday, April 18</b>	<b>12:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Zoom Coffee Hour</b>
<b>Monday, April 19</b>	<b>10:00 a.m.</b>	<b>Prayer Sit w/ Student Pastor Cassidy Hall</b>
<b>Tuesday, April 20</b>	<b>1:30 p.m.</b>	<b>Book Circle</b>
<b>Tuesday, April 20</b>	<b>7:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Vespers (outside &amp; Zoom)</b>
<b>Thursday, April 22</b>	<b>11:45 a.m.</b>	<b>Women's Lunch</b>
<b>Thursday, April 22</b>	<b>5:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Spiritual Support Group</b>

<b>Friday, April 23</b>	<b>6:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Fourth Friday Fun Night (FC outside)</b>
<b>Sunday, April 25</b>	<b>9:30 a.m.</b>	<b>Sunday Adult Class</b>
<b>Sunday, April 25</b>	<b>11:00 a.m.</b>	<b>Sunday Worship with David Clark preaching (YouTube, FB, Dial In)</b>
<b>Sunday, April 25</b>	<b>12:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Zoom Coffee Hour</b>
<b>Sunday, April 25</b>	<b>12:30 p.m.</b>	<b>Buzz (Part 1: Just Peace, Part 2: Re-opening)</b>
<b>Sunday, April 25</b>	<b>3:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Southeast Association Meeting (IKC Zoom)</b>

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