

 [FirstCongregationalUCCIndy](#)

 [Forward](#)



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Epistle for the Week of April 8, 2021

Dear First Congregational,

I am grateful to be in partnership with the Easter people of First Congregational as we seek to love God, love our neighbors, and love ourselves. I am blessed to serve the wider church on the national staff of the United Church of Christ as the Minister for Disabilities and Mental Health Justice, a ministry that began the same time I began serving here as pastor. In this role with the UCC, I support the ministries of the UCC Disabilities Ministries and the UCC Mental Health Network, dynamic ministries that seek to help congregations be Accessible-to-All (A2A) and WISE (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, and Engaged) for mental health. This Sunday our worship video comes from a celebration of the partnerships with the wider church, including leaders from across the nation providing music, reflections, and prayers. I am excited that our church has such deep connections to the denomination and is such a generous supporter of our shared mission and ministry in the UCC.

Here is part of a reflection I wrote this week for the UCC Mental Health Network Blog called "The Journey." I hope you enjoy:

Our world is hurting emotionally, psychologically, and spiritually. It is the Church's mission to respond to the world's profound pain with ministries of healing, wholeness, and love. The Spirit calls the Church to embody the resurrection power of God by creating communities of welcome, inclusion, support, and engagement for people with mental health challenges. Working together, we can dismantle the stigma and shame of mental illness.

I continue to give thanks to God for the UCC Mental Health Network's ministries, showing us all how to become WISE (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, and Engaged) for mental health, providing support and training for faith communities. Blessings to you, dear Easter people of God. Be the WISE people of God. Go live the resurrection.

To read more: <https://www.mhn-ucc.org/2021/04/05/go-live-the-resurrection-by-rev-dr-sarah-lund/>

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 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 11 - David Clark presents on his work with us as we seek to live into our Just Peace covenant.

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

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=QlRlVWpWVEdjUkRDIKd3pCZlYlYUd0aEFGVU09>

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!

- **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, or 386-478-9012.

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

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.

Faith In Indiana

Indiana is receiving more than \$5 billion in American Rescue Plan funds. First Congregational, with our partners Faith in Indiana, want those funds invested in

ways that **serve the values of human dignity, inclusion and opportunity, especially for the most vulnerable among us.**

As part of First Congregational's partnership with Faith in Indiana, they are asking all of us to sign a petition that calls for Governor Holcomb to use funds from the American Rescue Plan to help protect vulnerable Indianans. Read this petition and please consider signing this

at <https://faithindiana.salsalabs.org/fundourlives/index.html>

On Tuesday, leaders from across Indiana held a **press conference at the Statehouse and Pastor Sarah and others joined along on zoom. Here's the follow-up news story:** <https://www.wfyi.org/news/articles/indiana-faith-leaders-advocate-for-gun-violence-intervention-driving-cards>

Covenant Outreach

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 will single out Family Promise for our Covenant Outreach giving, so please make a special contribution this month. Online donations and/or checks to Covenant Outreach are equally welcome and greatly appreciated. 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

Monthly Walks – 3rd 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.

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

Looking for some in-person fun and community? We will gather outdoors at our

church building to play various games and have some pizza, while observing safety protocols of distancing and mask wearing. All ages welcome, and bring a friend! Questions, or have an idea for a game? Contact Wendy Baldwin.



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 25th 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 25th 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 16th- 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 (csilwood@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.org.

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)

Office Administrator: Shannon (shannon@fcindy.org)

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

(Senior Councilors: Steve Coomer, Larry Eckel, Alice Rutherford)

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.

- **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

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 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.

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

- 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

Saturday, April 10	10:00 a.m.	PCRC (Pastor Carol)
Sunday, April 11	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, April 11	11:00 a.m.	Sunday Worship (YouTube, FB, Dial In)
Sunday, April 11	12:00 p.m.	Zoom Coffee Hour
Monday, April 12	10:00 a.m.	Prayer Sit w/ Student Pastor Cassidy Hall
Tuesday, April 13	9:30 a.m.	Care & Connections
Tuesday, April 13	7:00 p.m.	Vespers (outside & Zoom)
Wednesday, April 14	7:00 p.m.	Church Council (Zoom)
Thursday, April 15	1:00 p.m.	Men's Lunch
Thursday, April 15	5:00 p.m.	Spiritual Support Group
Saturday, April 17	11:00 a.m.	Neighborhood Walk (at FC)
Sunday, April 18	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, April 18	11:00 a.m.	Sunday Worship (YouTube, FB, Dial In)
Sunday, April 18	12:00 p.m.	Zoom Coffee Hour

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