



# FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

THE PILGRIM COLONY

May 2021

## Pastor's Reflections

First Congregational is rooted in God's radical love and justice. Our mission and ministry grows out of our rootedness in a love that flows in and through us from God. I'd like to highlight a few of the upcoming events in May where we are all invited to grow in our radical love.

- We will celebrate the ways our Student Pastor Cassidy Hall has grown more rooted in God's love throughout her four semesters serving with us as part of her field education requirement at Christian Theological Seminary. May 2<sup>nd</sup> Cassidy will preach and we will celebrate her ministry with us during coffee hour. See the note below about a special invitation to give a financial gift for Cassidy as a sign of our ongoing support and love.
- May invites us to show this love by advocating for food justice with our partners, Bread for the World. We will welcome special guest, Rev. Dr. Dick Hamm to join us for adult education on the first Sunday of May, then celebrate Bread for the World Sunday on May 9. Together we can use our voices to advocate for justice for the hungry.
- We will celebrate Mental Health Month with a virtual Mental Health First-aid training on Saturday, May 15<sup>th</sup> and then on Sunday on May 16<sup>th</sup> with a special guest, author and chaplain David Finnegan-Hosey. I encourage you to read his book, *Christ on the Psych Ward* and come ready May 16<sup>th</sup> to engage in conversation about what it means to discover God in the midst of mental health challenges. David will be our preacher and our Buzz conversation partner.

May God bless First Congregational as we continue to seek out ways to live our faith "out loud," sharing God's love with the world.

Blessings,  
Pastor Sarah

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

## A Gift for Cassidy Hall

A gift for Cassidy Hall who has been a gift for us at First Congregational as our student pastor from Christian Theological Seminary.

Cassidy's last Sunday is May 2. She will be sharing the sermon during this Communion service. Following worship, you are invited via Zoom to coffee conversations with her as we say, goodbye and well done, faithful servant, well done.

We are inviting you to make a donation toward this scholarship gift for Cassidy to support her last semester of study at CTS. This final study involves counseling training and does not allow time for a job or internship, therefore, no income for her last semester. We hope to present this gift towards the end of May to allow you time to share your donation marked, "A gift for Cassidy". Thank you very much. If you have any questions, please direct them to Rev. Dr. Patrick Larracey, chair of Cassidy's Support Team. We have been alongside Cassidy since she arrived at First Congregational and plan to "stick with her" as she finishes her studies at CTS and prepares for ordination into the United Church of Christ.

My wife Judy and I comprise her Support Team. We meet monthly beyond phone calls, emails, letters written for her such as her application for Member-in-Discernment with the IN-KY Conference, reading her blogs, watching her in worship services, observing her creations for worship especially the Blue Christmas service, and adult study, covering the Thursday Spiritual Support group when I was in the hospital and rehab, writing evaluations for CTS about her, then going into stress-mode over the recent Pastoral Letter sent to all of you because of a death threat on her life — she is like another daughter — so we naturally worried about her and made immediate contact for her safety after Pastor Sarah called us — so happy everything is okay to date.

I share with you a part of one of her blogs about death and grieving:

*"Things are Different: Stay Soft. Be Tender.  
Let Yourself Rest (and eat a little chocolate)*

*That is enough. You are enough. However  
you're doing this, you're doing it right.  
You're doing a good job.*

*Things are different: Grieve. Slow down.  
Pay Attention. Stay Tender. Repeat.*

*And, don't forget to eat a little chocolate."*

Thank you,  
Rev. Dr. Patrick Larracey

## Intern Reflections

### From Your Student Pastor



Dear Church,  
As we enter into my final few weeks serving as your student pastor, I remain so grateful to have been on this journey with you. Time and time again, this church has shown me what it means to be the church *to* and *for* each other — showing up amid grief, demonstrating persistence during a pandemic, offering love during life changes, and continuing to say “Yes” to the mystery of

faith which binds us.

Nearly two years ago I joined you as a member, and to this day I cannot fathom this journey of being a member of discernment with any other church. You’ve shown me what it looks like to be a church family which offers space for each of us to be ourselves. You’ve modeled how to give each other love during uncertain times. You’ve given me love and kindness as I’ve stumbled my own way into learning what pastoral leadership might look like for me. You — each of you, have been the church for me, and I am forever grateful. Thank you for your accompaniment. Thank you for your love. Thank you for showing me the love of God.

Your Student Pastor,  
Cassidy  
[studentpastor@fcindy.org](mailto:studentpastor@fcindy.org)

**Cassidy completes her field education placement with First Congregational and preachers her last sermon as our Student Pastor on Sunday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

### Senior Councilors Report

Larry Eckel, Lead Councilor

“Oh, how *wonderful* to see you, Nana and Papa – it’s been more than a year and a half!” Such was the heartfelt greeting Susan and I received from our four palpably excited grandchildren and their parents upon our recent visit to their home in Brunswick, Maine. During the entire trip north by car we had counted our blessings at being fully vaccinated and thus able, at long last, to express our love with hugs, laughter, and meals enjoyed together around the kitchen table. What an emotionally liberating feeling we experienced, and what a fabulous time we had! All the bleak days and sad news of people ill or lost because of the pandemic were replaced, at least temporarily, by the happiness achieved in our personal reunion with family.

It is my fervent hope and prayer that those who are reading this message have had – or will soon have – a similar opportunity to meet with loved ones or friends who have only been available virtually during the past many months. I also hope, as I know you do, that we will soon be spending time together in the church sanctuary and parlor (while still following necessary precautions), sharing the special bonds of close personal interaction. Please be assured that the FC Comeback Team remains hard at work monitoring national, state, and

local health and church data and guidelines, discerning how and when our collective goal of reopening can be brought to fruition. And when that day comes, it will surely be a reason for all of us to celebrate – *together!*

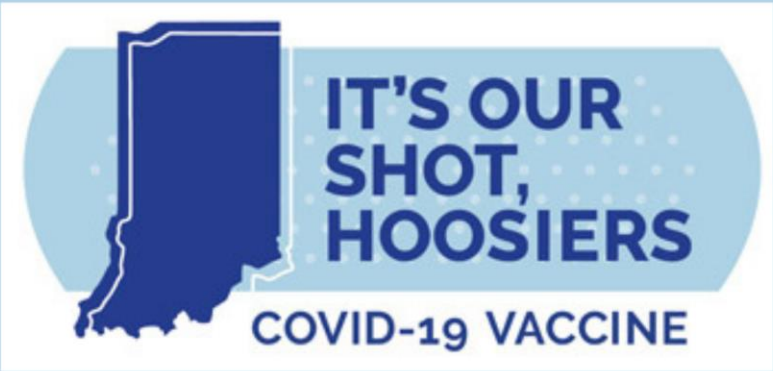
Yours in faith,  
Larry Eckel

**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.

PCRC for Pastor Sarah: Randy Walker, Lianna Campos, Nancy Dickinson, Chuck Kiphart

PCRC for Pastor Carol: Bob Cook, Gloria Boedeker, Clark Collier, susana-judith rae



**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 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.	Vespers (at FC & on Zoom)
THURSDAYS	5:00 p.m.	Spiritual Support Group (Zoom)
Saturday, May 1	10:00 a.m.	Food Drive (at FC)
Sunday, May 2	11:00 a.m.	Communion Sunday with Student Pastor Cassidy Hall preaching (YT, FB, Dial In)
Wednesday, May 5	7:00 p.m.	Trustees (Zoom)
Thursday, May 6	1:00 p.m.	Men's Lunch
Sunday, May 9	11:00 a.m.	Bread for the World Sunday (YT, FB, Dial In)
Tuesday, May 11	9:00 a.m.	Care & Connections (Zoom)
Wednesday, May 12	7:00 p.m.	Church Council (Zoom)
Saturday, May 15	9:00 a.m.	Virtual Adult Mental Health First Aid
Sunday, May 16	11:00 a.m.	Mental Health Sunday (YT, FB, Dial In)
Sunday, May 16	12:30 p.m.	Mental Health Buzz with guest speaker, David Finnegan-Hosey (Zoom)
Thursday, May 20	1:00 p.m.	Men's Lunch
Wednesday, May 26	5:00 p.m.	WISE Mental Health Team (Zoom)
Wednesday, May 26	6:30 p.m.	Calling Circle (IKC Zoom)
Thursday, May 27	11:30 a.m.	Women's Lunch Bunch (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](http://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!

## **WORSHIP & FAITH**

Aurelia Glennan-March, Chair

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

Adult Education will continue to meet [via Zoom](#). Join us for lively discussions and thoughtful reflections. In May we will talk about Bread for the body, Health for the mind, and Love for the community. We will have two opportunities to share slices of our own faith formation by sharing some vignettes of our own stories. Come, join us!

**May 2: “A Christian Response to Hunger.”** This Sunday, guest speaker Rev. Dr. Dick Hamm will lead us in a discussion about Bread for the World and its mission to respond to hunger in the world. Among Dick’s many activities, Dick serves on the Bread for the World Indiana Leadership Team.

**May 9:** Mother’s Day – How has being a mother shaped your own faith? Or for those of us who have not been mothers, how has your own mother shaped your faith?

**May 16: Christ on the Psych Ward.** The WISE mental health team will lead us in a discussion on David Finnegan-Hosey’s book, Christ on the Psych Ward. This will get us all warmed up for the Buzz following worship this Sunday, where David will be our guest presenter.

**May 23: Beloved, Love!** Led by Wendy Baldwin, we reflect on a selected scripture and how it speaks to us about becoming and sustaining the beloved community.

**May 30: Personal Stories Remembering Our Loved Ones.** Memorial Day and weekend is a time when many of us turn our thoughts to departed loved ones. Worth Hartman will facilitate our time together as we share remembrances.

Hope to see you there!  
Pastor Carol

### **3 Ways to Connect for Worship- Sundays at 11AM**



**FACE BOOK**

[https://www.facebook.com/pg/FirstCongregationalUCCIndy/posts/?ref=page\\_internal](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

Alice Rutherford, Chair

For the next four months – May through August – our Covenant Outreach will be dedicated to our W.I.S.E. for Mental Health covenant. Organizations highlighted during this time will be the UCC Mental Health Network, the Julian Center, and the Trevor Project. Watch for specific information about these excellent ministries that support and advocate for mental health.

Our **May 16** worship service will be dedicated to our W.I.S.E. for Mental Health covenant with guest preacher Daniel Finnegan-Hosey and a “talk-back” Buzz on Zoom following worship. More information about this event is offered by our Mental Health Team.

Our Faith In Indiana Team is continuing communications with State Senator Rodric Bray’s deputy chief of staff, Skip Brown, and more will be shared about coming interactions with Mr. Brown and/or Senator Bray. A Zoom meeting on **May 6** at 7:00 PM is scheduled for a legislative debrief of what worked and what needs improvement in future FII interactions with lawmakers. Contact Worth Hartman for more information.

**May 9** is Bread for the World Sunday. Please plan to share in this annual event when we contact our legislators in support of eliminating hunger locally, nationally, and globally. Our Bread for the World Team will prepare and present this special worship service.



**STRENGTHEN  
THE CHURCH  
OFFERING**



Materials available at <http://www.ucc.org/stc>

Through May we’ll be supporting the UCC 5-for-5 offering of Strengthen the Church.

The Strengthen the Church offering supports the expansion of ministry and growth of UCC local congregations. Your support of this offering will help the UCC fulfill its commitment to creating a

just world for all by investing in new ministries and practices that meet the emerging needs of local communities.

- Alice Rutherford, Outreach & Service Board Chair

## Bread for the World Offering of Letters, 2020

Again, this year our Offering of Letters will be virtual due to the pandemic. We will be writing and mailing our letters to our Senators and Representatives in Congress from home or emailing them. Members will be contacted by and receive information and sample letters in early May from our Bread for the World team members. We



ask that after writing or emailing you report to the team or the church office ([shannon@fcindy.org](mailto:shannon@fcindy.org)) with the names of those to whom you wrote or emailed and the method. We then report our total to the Indiana Bread chapter. We hope to do even better than last year. **On May 2, Rev. Dick Hamm will be our guest at Adult Ed. speaking about BFW. Our Bread for the World worship service will be on May 9.**

First Congregational has been a covenant member of Bread for the World since 1984, only two years after BFW was founded. It is an ecumenical, bi-partisan Christian advocacy organization urging our nation's decision makers to end hunger at home and abroad.

The theme of this year's Offering of Letters is "End Child Hunger," and deals with the impact of the pandemic here and abroad. Now more than 270 million people are facing extreme hunger, up from 135 million before the pandemic. In the U.S. 1 in 4 children are at risk of hunger, and 40% of black and Latino families struggle to feed their children. The first focus is to expand the Child Tax Credit by

- Increasing the benefit from \$2,000 to \$3,600 for children up to 6 (the most vulnerable) and to \$3,000 for those 6-17.
- Paying this in monthly installments of \$300 for younger children and \$250 for older ones.
- Making it equally available to all families at \$0 income through middle-income.

This expansion would do more to reduce hunger and poverty among the nation's children than any other single program has in decades. Poverty would be reduced among Black children by 52%, Latino children by 45%, Native American by 62%, AAPI children by 37%, and white children by 39%.

The international focus is to increase U.S. leadership and funding for global nutrition programs without which an entire generation may be denied of their God-given right to flourish.

Wherever you are on or around May 9, please write to your Senators and Representative at their **Indiana offices** (not the DC ones) or email them and then report your actions. Some addresses are

- Sen. Mike Braun, 115 N. Penn. St., Suite 100, Indianapolis, IN 46204
- Sen. Todd Young, 251 N. Illinois S., Suite 120, Indianapolis, IN 46204
- Rep. Andre Carson, 300 E. Fall Creek Pkwy., Suite 300, Indianapolis, IN 46205
- Rep. Jim Baird, 355 S. Washington St., Suite 210, Danville, IN 46122



- Rep. Victoria Spartz: Need to email at <http://spartz.house.gov>

A sample letter will be coming in a special Epistle early in May. Thank you for your participation, and please remember to report your letters or emails.

- Sue Chapman, Bread for the World team

## **Rev. Dr. Dick Hamm to speak on “A Christian Response to Hunger”**

As part of our Bread for the World Sunday, the Rev. Dr. Dick Hamm will speak on this topic during Adult Education on **May 2** at 9:30 AM via Zoom. Join us for this special presentation by a gifted theologian and teacher.



Dick served as a minister of Disciples congregations for 23 years, as Regional Minister of Tennessee, and as General Minister and President from 1993-2003 (during which time he cast “2020 Vision for the CC (DoC)”). He was the first Executive Director of Christian Churches Together in the USA, and has served as a Vice President of the National Council of Churches and a member of the World Council of Churches Central Committee. He worked for 12 years as a church consultant to mainline Protestant churches and organizations. His most recent book is “Recreating The

Church: Leadership For The Post-Modern Age” (Chalice, 2007). Now retired, he teaches at Christian Theological Seminary and is a member of the Board of Trustees. He is chair of the board of the Indianapolis Center For Congregations, vice chair of the National City Christian Church Foundation, and a board member of the Center for Interfaith Cooperation. Dick is a leader of the US-Pakistan Interreligious Coalition (UPIC), thus traveling to Pakistan regularly; and active locally on Bread For The World Indiana Leadership Team. Dick and Mindy live in Indianapolis and attend Central Christian Church. They have two adult children and six grandchildren. Dick also enjoys astronomy, camping, and gardening. ([dhamm@ddi.org](mailto:dhamm@ddi.org); 317-490-1968)

## **The Trevor Project**

One of our opportunities for Church giving that is focused on mental health is the Trevor Project. Trevor was the name of a film about a gay youth considering suicide. This film led to the creation of the Trevor Project, which was the first, and now most prominent, nationwide, 24-hour, crisis and suicide prevention helpline for LGBTQ youth.

This need was highlighted in Indiana when the columnist and podcaster Dan Savage learned about the 2010 death of a gay teenager from Greensburg, Indiana, and in reaction started the “It Gets Better” campaign. Savage wrote that “Billy Lucas was just 15 when he hanged himself in a barn on his grandmother’s property. He reportedly endured intense bullying at the hands of his classmates—classmates who called him a fag and told him to kill himself. His mother found his body. Nine out of ten gay teenagers experience bullying and harassment at school, and gay teens are four times likelier to attempt suicide. Many LGBT kids who do kill themselves live in rural areas, exurbs, and suburban areas, places with no gay organizations or services for queer kids.”

The Trevor Lifeline is supported by both the Indiana State Board of Health and our local Indiana Youth Group as an important and potential life saving resource for Indiana's LGBTQ youth. The link to their website is:

<https://www.thetrevorproject.org/>

### **Need a Lift in Your Spirit? Join us every Thursdays for Spiritual Support Group for Mental Health at 5:00-6:00PM [on Zoom](#)**

This gathering is open to everyone and is an informal time to check-in about how you are doing, get emotional support from church family, and offer prayer for one another as we navigate nurturing positive mental health in these difficult days.

We are an open group with confidentiality guidelines. Sessions are on Zoom and 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.

### **Mental Health First Aid Training – May 15<sup>th</sup>**

A year ago the WISE Mental Health Team received a grant to provide a one day workshop for lay persons on Adult Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) for members of our congregation but could not do the training due to the pandemic. What does this training include? It is a nationally recognized early intervention public education program. It teaches adults how to recognize signs/symptoms of potential mental health challenges, how to listen nonjudgmentally, to give reassurance to someone who may be experiencing a mental health challenge and to refer that person to appropriate professional services.

The Adult MHFA course is currently virtual. Participants will complete a 2 hour self-paced online exercise prior to May 15<sup>th</sup> through a link sent after online registration. On May 15<sup>th</sup> registrants will participate in a Zoom class from 9 a. m. to 4 p.m. with breaks in midmorning, midafternoon and lunch. After the class, participants will receive a link to an online quiz which, when successfully completed, will certify them in Mental Health First Aid.



Thanks to the grant, the cost of the training has been reduced from \$50 to \$25 per person. In addition, several scholarships are available to make your cost zero. When mailing your payment to the church, please put Mental Health First Aid in the memo line of your check. If you wish to pay online through the church website, you will need to send an email to Cheryl Dillenback, Financial Secretary, at [dillenback@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dillenback@sbcglobal.net) to tell her your online payment is for Mental Health First Aid training.

If you are interested in this training, use the following link to register for the class: [https://secure.lglforms.com/form\\_engine/s/bOAM\\_odBAx0wnS9ji7GU\\_w](https://secure.lglforms.com/form_engine/s/bOAM_odBAx0wnS9ji7GU_w)

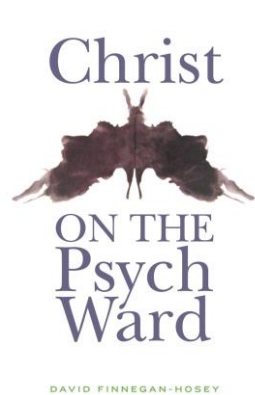
Also contact Sandy Wood and indicate if you wish to have a scholarship. **Ten participants are required for the workshop to be held, so please register as soon as possible if you are interested. The deadline for registration is May 7<sup>th</sup>.** The trainers- Linda Williams and Brook Haynes will contact you after you register with

necessary links to the course. This is an exciting learning opportunity for our congregation and I hope to “see” several of you at this virtual workshop.

- Sandy Wood ([csjlwood@att.net](mailto:csjlwood@att.net) or 317-225-6206 - call or text)

**May 16<sup>th</sup>- Mental Health Sunday Buzz**

We are fortunate to have a guest preacher at our virtual Mental Health Sunday this year who has also agreed to do a Buzz after Worship. David Finnegan-Hosey is a chaplain-in-residence at Georgetown University. He holds a Master's in Divinity from Wesley Theological Seminary and is certified in Mental Health First Aid to provide initial help to people experiencing challenges with depression and anxiety. He was diagnosed as dealing with bipolar disorder after a series of psychiatric hospitalizations. Currently he speaks and writes about the connections of mental illness, mental health and faith.



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, the WISE Mental Health Team have purchased a small number of books we will loan to the first few people requesting them. You can also order his book- a paperback costing \$14.95 from Amazon or Barnes and Noble. Unfortunately, I couldn't find it online in the library, though it may be possible to request that it be added to their collection.

For any questions please contact Sandy Wood [csjlwood@att.net](mailto:csjlwood@att.net)- 317-225-6206 or Pastor Sarah [pastorsarah@fcindy.org](mailto:pastorsarah@fcindy.org)

**CARE & CONNECTIONS**

Wendy Baldwin, Chair

**Happy Birthday in May!**

Sean Baker  
Wendy Baldwin  
Lauren Good  
Rita Hummel

Evelyn Johnson  
Nancy Sachs  
Donna Wenzel



If you're having a birthday in May, and you are not on this list, please contact Wendy Baldwin, so we can add you to our master list for the future!



**Food Drive & Fellowship! 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of the Month – May 1, 10-noon**

Our food donations to the Northside Pantry are helping to fight hunger needs, and the Pantry is very grateful that we are doing this – in 2021 we have already contributed over 1300 lbs of food and supplies! And our greatest gift – the ability to spend a few minutes of in-person fellowship with those that are there, while maintaining safe virus protocols.

## **Fun at First! May 30<sup>th</sup> from 3:00-5:00pm**

Looking for some in-person fun and community? Join us to hear and see Mark Booth of Take Flight! for his intriguing and interesting demonstration of various birds of prey! Meridian Hills Cooperative Nursery School will also be joining us for this extra special event. We'll be outdoors at our church building, while observing safety protocols of distancing and mask wearing. All ages welcome, and bring a friend! Questions? Contact Wendy Baldwin.



## **Vesper Gatherings – Tuesdays, 7-7:30 pm, outdoors & on Zoom**

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.

## **Updated Address Directory**

The address directory has been updated for 2021. Printed copies are available at the church, as well as an electronic file. If you would like an electronic file, please contact Shannon Abbott; if you would like a printed version, please contact Wendy Baldwin.

## **TRUSTEES**

Steve Coomer, Chair

## **The GREEN TEAM Rides Again!**

The First Congregational Church Green Team has a proud history. For nearly two decades it promoted measures that helped the air, earth and water. More specifically, it sponsored an energy audit of our property, resulting in the improvement of our building and grounds. It increased awareness of actions that we could take as individuals. It conducted a campaign that resulted in the installation of solar panels, made our grounds more earth friendly, and more.

Because we could not meet in person, COVID-19 brought the activities of the Green Team to a halt and we need to get going again. We need people who know how to help the environment to bring their energy; and ideas to First Congregational. The world has changed due to the pandemic. We need fresh eyes and ideas to make to make a fresh start.

What do you see that the Green Team could be doing? The scope of environmental needs is broad. Your ideas may not be dramatic, but working together we can get back on track and start helping our environment again. Please send your thoughts to Green Team representative, Bill Gillette, at 317-255-4848, email [wmgillette@aol.com](mailto:wmgillette@aol.com), or text 317-501-3962. And watch the COLONY for updates.

- Bill Gillette



# Financial Update

## When We Give, We Reach Out With Helping Hands

Here are the financial results for the first quarter of 2021.

### 1. Current Year Actual vs Budget Summary - Last quarter

1/1/2021 through 3/31/2021 Using 2021 Budget

Category	Actual	Q1 2021 Budget	Difference
INCOME	55,642	66,374	-10,732
M. Unrestricted Contributions	55,642	66,374	-10,732
M.01 Pledged Offerings	40,602	50,679	-10,077
M.02 UnPledged Offerings	1,874	2,529	-655
M.03 Rollover Prior Year Surplus_D...	-21,284	-21,284	0
M.04 Foundation - Endowment Fund...	0	0	0
M.05 Foundation - Minister Fund Draw	0	0	0
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
M.09 PPP Loan Forgiveness	34,450	34,450	0
EXPENSES	61,869	63,451	1,582
A. Pastoral Leadership	30,866	31,033	167
B. Worship & Faith	8,201	8,056	-145
C. Care & Connections	-12	23	34
D. Witness & Welcome	0	122	122
E. Outreach & Service	4,375	4,343	-32
F. Trustees	0	26	26
G. Administration & Operations	5,455	5,247	-208
H. House & Grounds	11,385	12,750	1,366
I. Miscellaneous	1,600	1,851	251
Net Difference:	-6,227	2,923	-9,149

### Highlights:

- **Income** for the quarter was \$55,600. This was \$10,800 below our 2021 budget due to a \$10,000 shortfall in pledge receipts. Overall contributions were \$7,300 behind last year. However, April pledge receipts have been very strong, so I anticipate we will close some of that gap in April.
- **Expenses** of \$61,900 were \$1,600 below budget, with most of the savings coming from House & Grounds. This savings is likely just timing. All other areas are running essentially right on budget.
- **Cash** – despite the shortfall in contributions, cash was still solid at over \$40,000.
- **PPP Funding** – good news – our 2020 Payroll Protection Program loan of \$34,450 was forgiven in March (you can see it's reflected as income in the first quarter). Also, we received "second round" PPP loan funding of \$34,667 in April. These funds will allow us to continue to pay our employees and musicians throughout 2021 as if we were operating fully in person.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.  
 Jim Lootens, Treasurer (lootens.jb@gmail.com)

## **FC Foundation Report- First Quarter of 2021**

The FC Foundation met via Zoom on Tuesday April 13, 2021. Our financial advisor from Goelzer Investment, Dean Weseli, presented a portfolio of our investments to date in 2021. He commented the economy has seen some recovery and there is potential for further recovery in the coming months depending on what happens with interest rates, inflation and investment. His concern is the amount of debt the country is taking on, but that could be mitigated by job growth and if inflation and interest rates remain modest. As of March 31, 2021, the Endowment Fund contains \$845,268 and the Capital Improvement Fund contains \$75,828 for a total holding of \$921,095.

Though not considered in detail during our meeting, the FC holdings in United Church funds, separate from Goelzer, include the Minister's Fund; the Organ Fund; the Traditional Music Fund; and the Chatauqua Fund. These funds have been donated by church members currently and in the past with stipulations that the funds only be used for that named purpose. Donations to the aforementioned funds are welcomed and appreciated at any time someone wishes.

In May, the 1857 Society, congregation members who have pledged to give funds to FC in their estate planning and prospective members of the society, meet for a luncheon. The Board felt the virtual meeting in 2020 was not optimal to educate and honor those donors and potential donors. Therefore, the luncheon is postponed until later in the year in hopes we might have an in-person luncheon. We will give more information about luncheon plans after our next meeting, Tuesday July 13, 2021 at 9 a.m. EDT.

- Sandy Wood for the Foundation Board

## **COMMUNITY**

### **Light-Heartedness during a Global Pandemic**

*"I praise Yahweh, who guides me, even at night my heart teaches me. I'm always aware of your presence; you are right by my side, and nothing can shake me. My heart is happy and my tongue sings for joy; I feel completely safe with you" (Psalm 16:7-9 The Inclusive Bible).*

*"Once again God will fill your mouth with laughter, and your lips with rejoicing" (Job 8:21 The Inclusive Bible).*

One of the biggest surprises of my almost 75 years occurred early one morning in 2014, while making our bed. i looked over and saw that my husband Earl was doing the same on his side of the bed.

"Am i dreaming or are you actually making the bed?" i demanded. Before Earl could respond, i woke up; my question was answered. Dramatically! i laughed and thanked God for light-hearted dreams which provide opportunities for laughter, or at least a few chuckles. Plus, what a great way to start the day.

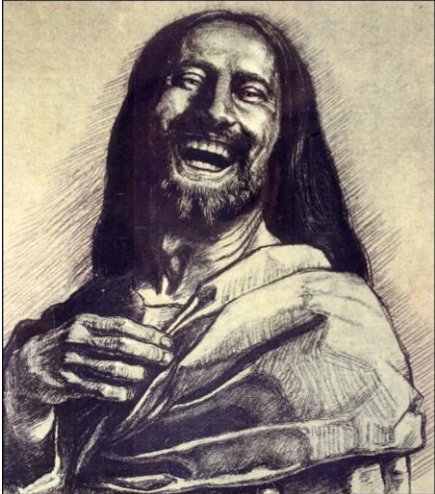
A few hours later, i phoned my then 91-year-old mother, who lived in Orlando, to tell her the bed-making story. Following the punch line, she and i together enjoyed some hearty mirth.

Afterward, i realized that i delighted in providing reasons for merriment in my Mother (1923-2015), who, throughout her life, was well-known for her unique, robust, and spirited guffaws. Likewise, laughing with my children, my grandchildren, and other family members—whether in person or during telephone calls—has long thrilled me. Now, thanks to Zoom, family, friends, and church members can even symbolically frolic together at various times of the day or night.

Nevertheless, my favorite, favorite times of frivolity have been—fifty years or so ago—the first time each of my two sons, when merely a few months old, burst forth with his own unique belly laugh. Five decades later, i can still shriek with joyful laughter at the sheer memory of Rob's and Mike's wonderfully zestful belly laughs, which appeared to delight themselves as much as they delighted their parents!

Correspondingly, our Maker is surely fond of giving us mortals opportunities to laugh, both when we are awake and when asleep. Moreover, dream humor can be a stress-buster to help us through life's challenges, including the ups and downs of repeatedly hearing and reading how many COVID-19 cases have recently beset our own county, nearby counties, and counties of our loved ones. Praise God for stress-busting occasions to laugh whether we are alone or with other people, even during a global pandemic.

*Thank You, O God, for gaiety and for the various gleeful moments with which You provide us, often when we need them the most. May we appreciate such times and use them as reminders to focus on all that is positive in our everyday lives—at home, at work, at school, and at play. Furthermore, dear God, would you please teach us how to decrease our grumbling, complaining, and self-pity, as well as how to surrender joyously to the hope, happiness, and pleasure with which you bless us. Amen.*



“Laughing Christ” by Fred Berger

-susanna-judith rae

**MDiv/MTS Student Cassidy Hall Debuts New Podcast and Film**

Much of MDiv/MTS student **Cassidy Hall**’s adult life has explored the intersection of creativity and spirituality. As an outgrowth of her time at CTS and her own personal development and learning, she recently launched a new podcast and is preparing for the festival debut of a new documentary film.

While working as a filmmaker in Los Angeles, Hall became interested in attending seminary after taking adult education courses at her local church. At the suggestion of a friend who lived in Indianapolis, Hall looked into the degree programs at CTS, which offered the financial assistance she needed to fully engage an MDiv program. Entering as an artist and filmmaker with a hunger for theological education and spiritual growth, Hall said that she quickly found a

home at CTS, whose “eclectic and ecumenical” faculty and staff “create a spaciousness for learning and individual development like no other academic institution I’ve ever been a part of.”

Among the many formative experiences she has had at CTS—including courses with Prof. Bill Kincaid, Prof. Helene Russell, and Prof. Kimberly Russaw, along with her field experience as a student pastor at First Congregational UCC—Hall said that the Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference and the Mixed Methods Preaching Conference have been “life-changing.” She explained that her introduction to Black and Womanist theologies has been especially transformative, in particular the Womanist insistence on “the survival and liberation of all people.” Inspired by these experiences and what she has learned along the way, Hall launched a new podcast in February, [Contemplating Now](#), which is being hosted by *Christian Century*. Having long been drawn to the contemplative life, Hall quit her job in 2011 and traveled to all 17 Trappist monasteries in the United States after reading Thomas Merton’s *New Seeds of Contemplation*. Existing in what she refers to as the “white-contemplative world” for nearly a decade, Hall said that she became increasingly aware of how it too often “remains tethered to systems of oppression.” Noting the influence of Barbara A. Holmes and Therese Taylor-Stinson, she explained that “the BILPOC contemplative expressions, and Black contemplative expression in particular, have helped me to understand the power of full embodiment in contemplative life when it comes to actions and the way one shows up in the world.” As a response, Hall launched the new podcast, where she interviews scholars, mystics, and activists to discuss the intersection of contemplation and social justice.

Along with the podcast, Hall has been working on another project pertaining to spirituality and contemplation. As mentioned, Hall has been deeply influenced by the life and works of Thomas Merton, the prominent twentieth century Trappist monk and writer. Last year, she completed her film [Day of a Stranger](#) about Merton’s years living in a hermitage, which will debut at a film festival in May.

Hall is now preparing for ordination in the UCC and considering further graduate studies. Reflecting on her time in seminary, she said, “CTS has taught me what it means to be an embodied person of faith—to be one whose whole life is reflective of one’s learning, growth, and continued understanding. While I’ve never been one who can easily compartmentalize, I’m grateful that CTS welcomes the wholeness of its students (in all of our uniqueness) and values our growth, always making more room for our continual becoming.”

Learn more about Cassidy Hall’s podcast, film, and other work [here](#).

(Article copied from: <https://www.cts.edu/mdiv-mts-student-cassidy-hall-debuts-new-podcast-and-film/>)



SAVE THE DATE: IKC Virtual Annual Gathering: June 3-5, 2021



We'll feature worship and wisdom, including a key note address from the Rev. Dr. Gregory C. Ellison II. Rev. Dr. Ellison is the Associate Professor of Pastoral Care and Counseling at the Candler School of Theology since 2009. His teaching draws primarily from his work with the organization he founded called Fearless Dialogues, a non-profit organization

that creates unique spaces for unlikely partners to have hard, heartfelt conversations on taboo subjects like racism, classism, and community violence.

Ellison's research focuses on caring with marginalized populations, pastoral care as social activism, and 20th and 21st century mysticism. He is the author of *Cut Dead But Still Alive: Caring for African American Young Men*, and *Fearless Dialogues: A New Movement for Justice* and is the editor of *Anchored in the Current: Discovering Howard Thurman as Educator, Activist, Guide, and Prophet*.



IKC UCC Southeast Association Eviction Ministry: 2020-2021 Report

The Southeast Association Eviction Ministry is a ministry of the Southeast Association of the Indiana-Kentucky Conference of the United Church of Christ. This ministry began in 2019 as a result of a need in our communities to assist individuals and families facing eviction who do not meet the criteria for other financial or housing assistance programs.

Since January of 2020, we have provided assistance to four eviction assistance requestes. Two of these requests were in 2020, and we have had two requests so far in 2021. Request funds are paid directly to the landlord or property management company.

Eviction Ministry Fund 2020-2021

Deposits:	\$6,027.00
Requests:	\$2,871.10
*Additional Request Made by Direct Donation:	\$ 896.37
Balance (as of 04/01/2021):	\$3,156.40

Many churches, like First Congregational, receive calls regularly from individuals asking for assistance due to an impending eviction. This ministry works with UCC congregations in the Southeast Association to provide assistance when these calls arise. We know that most congregations cannot afford to help someone with an entire month's rent. This is why we ask congregations (and members) to contribute as much as possible as often as possible, so that when a need arises, we can step in and help.

## How can you 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



Thank you for your support,

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

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**June Colony Submission Deadline:** Please email your submissions to Shannon at [shannon@fcindy.org](mailto:shannon@fcindy.org) no later than **Tuesday, May 18<sup>th</sup>**.

**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 **May 22<sup>nd</sup>**. For questions or more information please contact Sue Chapman at (317) 259-1806 or [carolsuech59@gmail.com](mailto:carolsuech59@gmail.com).

**Men's Lunch:** This lunch and discussion gathering for men of First Congregational meets every other Thursday at **1:00pm**. For more information, please contact Dick Clough at (317) 872-3910.

**Women's Book Circle:** 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](mailto:karen.e.d.walker@gmail.com)

**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.