



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Epistle for the Week of May 13, 2021

Dear First Congregational,

In celebration of May's Mental Health Awareness and Mental Health Sunday, we welcome as our guest author and minister Rev. David Finnegan-Hosey. Join us for adult education discussing his book *Christ on the Psych Ward*, for worship with David preaching, and then a "talk back Buzz" following worship with David joining live on zoom for conversation.

Here is a power excerpt from the introduction to *Christ on the Psych Ward*:

This is my story, or a piece of it at least. The story I know. When I write about my experiences with mental health, mental illness, and faith, this is where I am coming from... All of our stories, in all of their multiplicity and layers, must be told, not simply for their own sakes, but because telling our stories of mental health and mental illness, of hurt and resilience, of despair and healing, is a powerful act of resistance in a culture of silence and isolation.

mental illness is an experience of fragmentation and alienation. It shatters our narratives and forces us into the hardest task of our lives: to somehow reintegrate all of these broken bits into some kind of whole.

Thank you all for joining me on this journey of mental health advocacy, awareness, and support. As a WISE (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, and Engaged) church for mental health, we are making the world a better place by loving each other just as we are, no matter who we are or where we are on life's journey.

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)

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 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.

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

Scripture: Acts 1:1-11

Sermon: "Alone?" with Rev. David Finnegan-Hosey preaching

Coffee Hour via Zoom at 12:00PM

Mental Health Buzz at 12:30PM - During our Buzz, David Finnegan-Hosey will be discussing his 2018 book "Christ on the Psych Ward" published by Church Publishing.

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.

Outdoor Gathering Policy

On 5/12/21, the Church Council modified the outdoor gathering policy to read: The church grounds are available for in-person gatherings where social distancing is maintained between households. Face masks are optional for those who are fully vaccinated, but are required for those who are not fully vaccinated. Participants are asked to bring their own chairs and beverages. Restrooms are available for use; people should be masked and socially distant while in the building.

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.

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.

A Gift for Cassidy Hall

The Church Council has approved (former Student Pastor) Cassidy Hall's Support Team's recommendation for a financial gift — a scholarship for her last semester at CTS - **A GIFT FOR CASSIDY !** She will not have time for another internship or job, thus no income as she completes this counseling training.

Send your donations to the church marked "A Gift for Cassidy". We will award this to Cassidy later in May to allow you time to send your gift for the gift which has been ours through her ministry with First Congregational.

If you have questions, please direct them to Rev. Dr. Patrick Larracey, chair of Cassidy's Support Team. We plan to "stick with her" through her training and preparation for ordination in the United Church of Christ. Thank you for your support and gift for the future of this maturing UCC pastor.

Outreach & Service

Through May we are supporting the UCC 5-for-5 special offering Strengthen the Church. Please donate generously to this opportunity to support expansion and growth of UCC local congregations. All individual contributions will be added to our budgeted contribution, so let's be a leader in this financial support for our denomination's commitment to the emerging needs of local communities.

This month our Covenant Outreach shifts to support for our W.I.S.E for Mental

health covenant, so please support our efforts in advocacy and financial support for mental health in our community. Please see the May Colony and upcoming newsletters for specific information about our focused organizations over the next several months.

Bread for the World

The Bread for the World team thanks those who have already written their letters or emails to their Senators and Representatives and reported them. We hope many others will still write and report during the coming days so we can influence future legislation and report an increase in participation to our Indiana Bread leadership. If you have questions, please contact the person who invited you to participate or Sue Chapman at carolsuech59@gmail.com.

COMING SOON

Fun at First! – Sunday, May 30, 3:30- 5 pm

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 our current outdoor safety protocols of distancing and mask wearing. Please bring your own chair, if possible. We'll start gathering at 3:30, and Mark will begin his presentation at 4:00. All ages welcome, and bring a friend! Questions? Contact Wendy Baldwin.

IKC UCC Virtual 2021 Annual Gathering: June 3, 2021 - June 5, 2021

Click [HERE](#) to Register.

Welcome to the Indiana-Kentucky Conference Virtual Annual Gathering 2021! Our theme this year is "From Sackcloth to Joy" as we name the hardship of this past year, but also the joy of moving towards a new beginning. We will be blessed by storytelling, worship, an engaging keynote experience with the Rev. Dr. Gregory Ellison II, and look towards our future as a Conference that will not only host the next in person General Synod in 2023, but is beginning to imagine a new vision for where God is leading us.

Per our new Constitution and Bylaws passing in 2019, you will notice that we will not have a business meeting this year and so your registration will be streamlined not as a delegate or guest, but to everyone identifying as a guest to the gathering. It is out of an abundance of caution that we will have this gathering virtually as the

COVID-19 pandemic continues to present some current risk and we seek to continue loving our neighbor by mitigating the spread of the virus further. With great anticipation, however, we look forward to a gathering in 2022 with hope that we can actually be together in person. All that said, we welcome you to the Indiana-Kentucky Conference 2021 Annual Gathering as we step from sackcloth and into the joy of God. May you experience the God of joy in our time together.

Please click [HERE](#) to view the May 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.

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:

On 5/5, the Church Council approved the following revision to our policy for gathering outdoors:

The church grounds are available for in-person gatherings where social distancing is maintained between households. Face masks are optional for those who are fully vaccinated, but are required for those who are not fully vaccinated. Participants are asked to bring their own chairs and beverages, and restrooms are available for emergency use only.

The church building is still 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=dmtWbWE5UXRBTk5pcHZlYlBoaEFVUT09>

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Weekly Calendar

Thursday, May 13	5:00 p.m.	Spiritual Support Group
Saturday, May 15	9:00 a.m.	Virtual Mental Health First Aid
Sunday, May 16	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, May 16	11:00 a.m.	Mental Health Sunday Worship (YouTube, FB, Dial In)
Sunday, May 16	12:00 p.m.	Zoom Coffee Hour
Sunday, May 16	12:30 p.m.	Mental Health Buzz with David Finnegan-Hosey
Tuesday, May 18	7:00 p.m.	Vespers (outside & Zoom)
Thursday, May 20	1:00 p.m.	Men's Lunch (private Zoom)
Thursday, May 20	5:00 p.m.	Spiritual Support Group

Sunday, May 23	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, May 23	11:00 a.m.	Sunday Worship (YouTube, FB, Dial In)
Sunday, May 23	12:00 p.m.	Zoom Coffee Hour

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