





F I R S T
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servant community.*

e-pistle for the week of July 5, 2018

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Minister's Message

Dear First Congregational Church Family,

Summertime blessings! As we enter more fully into the summer, July greets us with bright sunshine and summer rains. It's time for many to be more intentional about making time for relaxation, play and wonderment.

It's also a time for us as a faith community to pause and reflect. We have a new settled, installed pastor. Now what? We are pausing to review and update the strategic plan that was developed by the congregation a couple of years ago with the guidance of the church council and all the boards. This strategic plan is the result of many months, even years, of prayer, conversation and discernment about where God is calling the church and who God is calling the church to be.

It's an exciting time for us as a church. We sense that God is with us, guiding us, even

calling each of us to be part of co-creating the beloved community of peace, love and justice. We know that now, more than ever, the world needs disciples of Jesus who are focused on things of God.

So this is a summer of intentional discernment which fits nicely with intentional rest. I find that sometimes my best thoughts come right after I open my eyes, having closed them for awhile as I basked in the summer sun.

Join me in this spiritual practice of reflection, rest, and rumination. I look forward to discovering with you all where our God-guided thoughts leads us.

With hope for growth,
Pastor Sarah

Worship for Sunday

Adult Class - 9:45 a.m. Just Peace

Ezekiel 37:26; Look at St. Peter & Trinity UCC; review our list of what we are already doing; what are the 10 Just Peace Making practices? See further description below.

Traditional Service - 11:00 a.m.

The message from Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund will be "Living Among Scorpions ". Our music will be provided by pianist Sean Baker and violist Aurelia Hoft-March.

New Creation - 5:30 p.m.

Throughout July New Creation worship will focus on the variety of faith traditions that make us all one church.

Adult Ed - Just Peace

Is FCC a Just Peace Church?

Becoming a Just Peace Church will be the focus of the Adult Education classes for the five Sundays in July. Truth is, FCC has in the past and is already now doing many things that promote peace and justice. But we have not yet taken the formal step of writing a Just Peace Church covenant and declaring ourselves to be a Just Peace Church via a congregational vote. FCC - which often takes a lead in UCC initiatives - is a little behind. According to a list from http://www.ucc.org/just_peace_churches, there are at least 162 UCC churches that have declared themselves to be a Just Peace Church. Four of those churches are in the Indiana-Kentucky conference:

1. First United, Rising Sun, IN
2. Zion UCC, Henderson, KY
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Isn't it time that we joined them? Not so fast - there is a process and a time of discernment (though I'm liking your enthusiasm!). For the past several months the Adult Education class has been exploring the interrelated topics of peace, nonviolence, Shalom, and justice. All of that study and discussion has been good preparation for beginning to look in earnest about becoming a Just Peace Church. For five Sundays in July, we will look at the process and what other churches have done. Come join us!

July 8: Ezekiel 37:26; Look at St. Peter & Trinity UCC; review our list of what we are already doing; what are the 10 Just Peace Making practices?

July 15: John 10:10; how has the history of the Just Peace movement in the UCC changed from 1985 to today?; read about Clackamas UCC; begin a list of what FCC might want to do in the future to support Peace and Justice

July 22: Ephesians 2:14; read about Union Congregational UCC and note their covenant; take a look at direct action as a peace making strategy.

July 29: 1 Peter 3:15; present the 9 step process for becoming a Just Peace Church; review our lists of things FCC already is doing and our list of what we might want to do; review suggested actions for ongoing Peace Making from the "Just Peace Church Handbook"

For more information and lots of suggested resources, begin at http://www.ucc.org/justice_just-peace. Also, we are in the process of forming a Just Peace Committee to lead this effort. Please let Nancy Dickinson or Pastor Sarah know if you have an interest in being on the committee.

What's Happening at FCC

Pastor Sarah Vacation: Monday, July 9 through Sunday, July 15

For pastoral care during that time please contact Carol Sowle at (317) 496-9732

or casowle@gmail.com

Sunday, July 29, 12:00 - Spiritual Explorers invite you to a labyrinth experience

Last August, FCC's Board of Worship & Faith began a new group, called "Spiritual Explorers." It meets in the library one Sunday a month, soon after the 11 AM service, to explore different spiritual practices, such as lectio divina, journaling, music, and poetry. During each meeting, members report briefly on what they've experienced on their own during the previous weeks, and the group decides on which spiritual discipline to focus during the following month.

On July 29, after a brown-bag lunch following traditional worship, Spiritual Explorers will meet at 12:45 at St. Luke's United Methodist Church (100 W. 86th St.) to walk its (outside) labyrinth. All FCC members and visitors who want to walk the labyrinth are welcome. Please inform either Pastor Sarah, PastorSarah@fcindy.org, or susanna-judith rae, at her new email address, sjrae@iu.edu, if you want to become a Spiritual Explorer, walk the labyrinth on July 29, or both. Betty Brandt, director of St. Luke's Spiritual Life Center, encourages labyrinth walkers to wear sunscreen and sunhats and to carry an umbrella.

FCC Solar Project!!!

The First Congregational Green Team has launched a fund drive to install solar panels. We're planning to raise \$60,000 by September 1st. To give this effort a boost, Rich Gibson has pledged to match all contributions, dollar for dollar, up to \$20,000. Simply write "solar panels" on your check. If you'd rather pledge, or even donate shares of stock or mutual funds, we can accommodate that, too. Please contact Rich Gibson, hooteagle@me.com, 770-548-5217 (cell) or 317-735-2895 (home) for details. Thanks!

Mission of the Month, Underneath it all

This mission provides underwear and school uniforms for children in IHN/Family Promise Aftercare. This helps families getting back on their feet stretch their budget through having fewer school clothes to purchase. You can help by doing any of the following:

1. **Buy underwear/socks/shirts/pants** in any size from **child size 4 to adult** - boys or girls. Put in the white laundry baskets in Narthex during July. Sports bras & small size boys & girls underpants are particularly desired.
2. **Donate new or gently used pants, shirts, skirts, or jumpers**-all sizes from child size 4 to adult. Shirts must be collared in any solid color, without decoration or logo. Pants, skirts, or jumpers must be a solid color (tan, navy or black) with no

decoration.

3. **Donate \$ in July to buy uniforms or underwear in-** change, dollar bills and checks designated **Underneath It All** in the memo line will help. We will buy clothes with the money donated.

I know it seems early, but school starts again Aug 1st for many schools, so new uniforms will be needed soon. The Aftercare Program of the Family Promise/IHN program helps those who get housing remain housed. Our past donations have provided each child in the Aftercare Program at least 1 full new uniform including underwear and socks. This is very much appreciated by the families and by Family Promise, so please continue to be generous.

If you have questions or want to help with this ministry, please contact Sandy Wood csjlwood@att.net 317-863-8238 (home) or 317-225-6206 (cell).

Pantry Items of the Month

During July we are collecting the following items: juice, pasta, canned meat, and shampoo.

UCC Keep Families Together Special Offering:

In light of the current situation at our southern border, the UCC has created a special fund to provide assistance to the families fleeing violence in Central America and seeking asylum in the United States. Those of us who ask “What can I do?” when faced with this humanitarian crisis can contribute through the United Church of Christ. You can go to http://www.ucc.org/keep_families_together (underline in the space between words) and donate online or write a check to First Congregational Church with “Keep Families Together” in the notation line. If you donate online please identify yourself as a member of our church. The above-listed Website is also an up-to-date source of information and answers many questions for those concerned about this situation.

Short term office expectations

Please keep in mind we did not create a July Colony, due to the staff shortage but hope to resume with the August edition with the help of our new admin! Thank you! Any questions, please call Karen Walker or Pastor Sarah.

Pastoral Care

Please contact Pastor Sarah at (386) - 478 - 9012

For Monday, July 9 through Sunday July 15, please contact Carol Sowle at (317) 496-9732 or casowle@gmail.com

This Week at First Congregational


Sunday, July 8	9:45 a.m.	Adult Class – Just Peace
Sunday, July 8	11:00 a.m.	Traditional Service
Sunday, July 8	12:30 p.m.	Chautauqua Team
Sunday, July 8	5:30 p.m.	New Creation
Wednesday, July 11	6:30 p.m.	Council
Wednesday, July 11	7:30 p.m.	New Creation Planning
Thursday, July 12	1:00 p.m.	Men’s lunch – at Arni’s
Thursday, July 12	7:00 p.m.	Music Support Team
Saturday, July 14	10:00 a.m.	Bell choir rehearsal
Sunday, July 15	9:45 a.m.	Adult Class – Just Peace
Sunday, July 15	11:00 a.m.	Traditional Service – Pat Larracey
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e-pistle for the week of July 12, 2018

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Message from the Office

Dear First Congregational Church Family,

As I complete my first week as your new Administrative Assistant, I can already tell this is a community that cares. You care about your environment. You care about your history and the legacy you leave for the future. You care about your community. You care about those outside of your community. As someone who has a family, a yoga and health business, and is an ordained clergy invested in issues of health and justice, I hope my work here will also embody your culture of care.

I am grateful to be a part of such a community and look forward to more caring connections and communications with you as I continue in this role. I hope you will see the church office as a welcoming space where we can share some tea and conversations as we get to know one another better.

With Gratitude,
Shannon Abbott

Worship for Sunday

Adult Class - 9:45 a.m. Just Peace

John 10:10; How has the history of the Just Peace movement in the UCC changed from 1985 to today? Read about Clackamas UCC. Begin a list of what FCC might want to do in the future to support Peace and Justice. See further description below.

Traditional Service - 11:00 a.m.

The message from Rev. Dr. Pat Larracey will be "Dancing in Church". Our music will be provided by pianist Sean Baker and the bell choir led by Bob Cook.

New Creation - 5:30 p.m.

Throughout July New Creation worship will focus on the variety of faith traditions that make us all one church.

Another Event This Sunday - 3:00 p.m.

"If You Knew Me, You'd Love Me"

The choral group Ripple Effect presents uplifting music to build acceptance and understanding in today's society.

at Friedens UCC 8300 S. Meridian St. 3 PM

Presented by Friedens' ONA Team

For more information, contact Bob Cook.

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FCC Solar Project!!!

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This Week at First Congregational


Thursday, July 12	1:00 p.m.	Men’s lunch – at Arni’s
Thursday, July 12	7:00 p.m.	Music Support Team
Saturday, July 14	10:00 a.m.	Bell choir rehearsal
Sunday, July 15	9:45 a.m.	Adult Class – Just Peace
Sunday, July 15	11:00 a.m.	Traditional Service – Pat Larracey
Sunday, July 15	5:30 p.m.	New Creation
Wednesday, July 18	6:00 p.m.	Personnel Committee
Wednesday, July 18	7:30 p.m.	New Creation Planning
Sunday, July 22	9:45 a.m.	Adult Class – Just Peace.
Sunday, July 22	11:00 a.m.	Traditional Service
Sunday, July 22	5:30 p.m.	New Creation



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e-pistle for the week of July 19, 2018

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Minister's Message

Dear First Congregational Church Family,

For the past nine years, my family has trekked up to the North Woods of Wisconsin to spend quality time together reunited with siblings, cousins, aunts, uncles, parents and grandparents from both sides of the family. It's a lot of people and it's a lot of fun. We stay at a lake house with swimming, kayaking, canoeing, fishing and campfire activities daily. The timing falls on the week of our son's birthday, so it's an extra special time of celebration.

As a child, I grew up spending time at the Lake of the Ozark in the summer with my cousins and they are some of the most fun memories of my childhood. I'm so happy this family tradition continues for the next generation. Different lake, but same concept: family togetherness and time outdoors enjoying nature.

We look forward to our summer reunion all year long. Like many extended families, now we live all over the country: Minnesota, Missouri, Florida, and Indiana. So we have to be intentional about making time to be together.

Last week we met for our annual reunion and it was everything we hoped for and more. The weather was perfect, no one got hurt and we enjoyed unhurried time to just be, to pick wildflowers, to read books, to play games, to blow bubbles, and to enjoy home cooked meals.

To me this is more than vacation. This is sacred time to experience God's love and grace through relationships with people who've known me my whole life. Just as God loves us no matter what, there are people who love us just as we are and when you are with them, you know it. You don't have to prove anything or be someone you are not.

Church communities can offer a similar experience of creating relationships where we can truly be ourselves and know that we are loved. I realize that not everyone has a family and not all families offer unconditional love. Churches can be our chosen family. A place where we extend grace and love, a place to be reminded of our value and worth simply because we are children of God.

I am grateful to be part of this church family and hope that you will feel and experience the love of God through community life together. Families and churches can be messy and imperfect. It's God's unconditional love and grace that make the difference, always calling us back to our whole, best selves. With God in our midst and with attention towards God's Spirit guiding us, we can continue to grow in our relationships with one another as we welcome new people who are looking for a church family.

Thank you for being God's Family. May God continue to build us up and strengthen our church so that we can share this blessing with others.

With God's love,
Pastor Sarah

Worship for Sunday

Adult Class - 9:45 a.m. Just Peace

July 22: Ephesians 2:14; read about Union Congregational UCC and note their covenant; take a look at direct action as a peace making strategy.

Traditional Service - 11:00 a.m.

The message from Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund will be "Sacred Pause." Our music will be provided by pianist Sean Baker and the Mayflower Quartet.

New Creation - 5:30 p.m.

What makes up a salad? Lettuce, cucumbers, peppers, radishes, tomatoes, carrots, celery, ham, eggs, croutons.... The list can go on and on. But for many of us the more different items in the salad, the better the whole thing tastes. The New Creation Team saw some similarities between the variety of foods in a tasty tossed salad and the variety of faith journeys that we all bring to First Congregational UCC. So this Sunday, as we finish our series on Growing Our Faith, we'll be sharing a salad dinner together. Please join us for salad and faith stories. Bring whatever salad item you want to toss in, along with your story of how your faith fits with FCC.

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What's Happening at FCC

Exciting New Opportunity!

Have you heard about Chautauqua? It's a summer retreat that gives you space for religious, spiritual, aesthetic, intellectual and personal growth. A long-time FCC member has had such a wonderful time there, for so many years, that they decided to fund other FCC members to enjoy a week there each year. The first selectee will attend in the summer of 2019. We're about to roll out more information on applying and being selected, so stay tuned!

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Pastoral Care

Please contact Pastor Sarah at (386) 478 - 9012 or at pastorsarah@fcindy.org.

New Office Email

We have a new office administrator and with that comes a new office email address. Please direct all administrative needs to shannon@fcindy.org. Shannon will continue to receive emails directed to the previous administrative email account, but please direct future correspondence to the new email address.

This Week at First Congregational


Sunday, July 22	9:45 a.m.	Adult Class – Just Peace.
Sunday, July 22	11:00 a.m.	Traditional Service
Sunday, July 22	12:30 p.m.	Worship & Faith Meeting
Sunday, July 22	5:30 p.m.	New Creation
Thursday, July 26	11:45 a.m.	Women’s lunch –at East side LePeep
Thursday, July 26	1:00 p.m.	Men’s lunch – at Rusty Bucket
Sunday, July 29	9:45 a.m.	Adult Class – Just Peace
Sunday, July 29	11:00 a.m.	Traditional Service
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Minister's Message

Dear First Congregational Church Family,

Last Sunday the sermon message about “Sacred Pause” (from the story of Jesus taking his disciples to a deserted place away from the crowds in order to pray) reminds us of the invitation from God to rest, to take Sabbath, to take time for the sacred. This is the last week of July, and as the summer months flow by, and we look to beginning the month of August, we reflect on the swift passage of time. I am grateful for regular times of “sacred pause” throughout my day. These “sacred pauses” are good for individuals and for groups and communities, like the church. In the month of August some of our church activities will take a “sacred pause” so that we can take time for reflection and rest. This is wise and faithful stewardship of our time. We are human after all, and not God. There is only so much we can do before we need to stop to rest, and spiritually refuel. What are you going to do this week for your “sacred pause”? Maybe there is something you can say “no” to, so that you can say “yes” to God’s invitation for “sacred pause.” Sometimes our “no” can be just as faithful as our “yes.”

With prayers for rest and renewal,
Pastor Sarah

Worship for Sunday

Adult Class - 9:45 a.m. Just Peace

July 29: Peter 3:15; present the 9 step process for becoming a Just Peace Church; review our lists of things FCC already is doing and our list of what we might want to do; review suggested actions for ongoing Peace Making from the "Just Peace Church Handbook"

Traditional Service - 11:00 a.m.

First Congregational Member Lianna Campos Preaching this Sunday!
Pastor Sarah will lead worship while we welcome to the pulpit for the sermon and message for all ages at the Traditional 11am service First Congregational member Lianna Campos. Lianna serves as an active member and offers her leadership on several committees as well as serves on the Indiana-Kentucky Conference Southeast Associate Committee on

Ministry. This Sunday Lianna will be preaching on the gospel story from John 6:1-21 about the feeding of the 5,000, reflecting on the theme "When You Are Enough." Lianna is discerning a call to ordained ministry in the United Church of Christ as a preacher and teacher, so we embrace her and offer her support on her journey of faith.

New Creation - 5:30 p.m.

For many of us music is a primary avenue of spiritual connection to God. So this Sunday our focus will be on singing and listening to the music of New Creation. Please join us for a good old hymn... well, "song" sing and bring your requests of familiar (and maybe unfamiliar) songs from our songbooks. And be aware of our upcoming August series based on John McDowell's Gospel According to Star Wars: Faith, Hope, and the Force. Our first film, *Revenge of the Sith*, will be shown right after New Creation on August 5 in preparation for our first service in the series on August 12. Stay tuned!

Adult Ed - Just Peace

August 5 & 12 - Continued discussion of "Just Peace" and Just Peace church process

August 19 - Rev. Chip Jahn, pastor of two IKC churches. will present his experiences of leading two Just Peace congregations.

August 26 - Katie Booth will present her insights of our relationship and service with Family Promise as a prelude to the "buzz" after church that day by the head of Family Promise, Mike Chapuran

What's Happening at FCC

Music Update

June 10 was Nick Fennig's last Sunday serving as the organist for our church. Over the past few years, Nick provided inspiring and moving music for our traditional worship service, as well as helped lead our music ministries. We wish him all the best as he moves forward in his journey, offering our prayers and hopes for his future success. His exceptional talents and generous, kind spirit will be greatly missed. The music committee is working on interim plans and will be making recommendations to the personnel committee for moving forward. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Sarah.

Exciting New Opportunity!

Have you heard about Chautauqua? It's a summer retreat that gives you space for

religious, spiritual, aesthetic, intellectual and personal growth. A long-time FCC member has had such a wonderful time there, for so many years, that they decided to fund other FCC members to enjoy a week there each year. The first selectee will attend in the summer of 2019. We're about to roll out more information on applying and being selected, so stay tuned!

This Sunday, July 29, 12:00 - Spiritual Explorers invite you to a labyrinth experience

Last August, FCC's Board of Worship & Faith began a new group, called "Spiritual Explorers." It meets in the library one Sunday a month, soon after the 11 AM service, to explore different spiritual practices, such as lectio divina, journaling, music, and poetry. During each meeting, members report briefly on what they've experienced on their own during the previous weeks, and the group decides on which spiritual discipline to focus during the following month.

On July 29, after a brown-bag lunch following traditional worship, Spiritual Explorers will meet at 12:45 at St. Luke's United Methodist Church (100 W. 86th St.) to walk its (outside) labyrinth. All FCC members and visitors who want to walk the labyrinth are welcome. Please inform either Pastor Sarah, PastorSarah@fcindy.org, or susanna-judith rae, at her new email address, sjrae@iu.edu, if you want to become a Spiritual Explorer, walk the labyrinth on July 29, or both. Betty Brandt, director of St. Luke's Spiritual Life Center, encourages labyrinth walkers to wear sunscreen and sunhats and to carry an umbrella.

FCC Solar Project!!!

The First Congregational Green Team has launched a fund drive to install solar panels. We're planning to raise \$60,000 by September 1st. To give this effort a boost, Rich Gibson has pledged to match all contributions, dollar for dollar, up to \$20,000. Simply write "solar panels" on your check. If you'd rather pledge, or even donate shares of stock or mutual funds, we can accommodate that, too. Please contact Rich Gibson, hoot eagle@me.com, 770-548-5217 (cell) or 317-735-2895 (home) for details. Thanks!

Mission of the Month: Greater Indy Habitat for Humanity

Celebrating 30 years of providing strength, stability, and independence through home ownership, in 2017 5650 GIHH volunteers built or rehabbed 26 homes and repaired 63. A study by the Sagamore Institute revealed that Habitat homeowners benefit in many ways. Chronic housing-related illnesses decrease. 71% of homeowners started, completed, or plan to complete higher education or professional training. Homeowners end or reduce their dependence on public assistance programs like Public Housing

Assistance, Utility Bill/Energy Assistance, Supplemental Nutritional Assistance (SNAP), Temporary Aid for Needy Families (TANF), and aid to Women, Infants, and Children (WIC).

FCC has supported Habitat for over 20 years financially and through volunteer hours on builds. Please give generously in August to support Greater Indy Habitat. Single dollar bills in the offering plate will go to Habitat. For larger amounts please use the Special Offering envelopes noting "Habitat" or put that in the notation line of your check. Thank you!

If you have questions or want to help with this ministry, please contact Sandy Wood csjlwood@att.net 317-863-8238 (home) or 317-225-6206 (cell).

Pantry Items of the Month

During July we are collecting the following items: beans, canned peaches, canned pears, jelly and jam, and bathroom tissue.

UCC Keep Families Together Special Offering:

In light of the current situation at our southern border, the UCC has created a special fund to provide assistance to the families fleeing violence in Central America and seeking asylum in the United States. Those of us who ask "What can I do?" when faced with this humanitarian crisis can contribute through the United Church of Christ. You can go to http://www.ucc.org/keep_families_together (underline in the space between words) and donate online or write a check to First Congregational Church with "Keep Families Together" in the notation line. If you donate online please identify yourself as a member of our church. The above-listed Website is also an up-to-date source of information and answers many questions for those concerned about this situation.

Pastoral Care

Please contact Pastor Sarah at (386) 478 - 9012 or at pastorsarah@fcindy.org.

This Week at First Congregational

Sunday, July 29

12:15 p.m.

Spiritual Explorers Brown Bag Lunch in

Sunday, July 29	12:45 p.m.	Mayflower Room
Sunday, July 29	5:30 p.m.	Meet at St. Luke's UMC for Labyrinth Walk
Wednesday, August 1	7:30 p.m.	New Creation
Thursday, August 2	11:00 a.m.	New Creation Planning Team
Sunday, July 29	9:45 a.m.	Witness & Welcome Board
Sunday, July 29	11:00 a.m.	Adult Class – Just Peace
Sunday, July 29	5:30 p.m.	Traditional Service
		New Creation