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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

E-pistle for the Week of July 4, 2019

Dear First Congregational:

There are not too many UCC mega churches where thousands of people worship under the same roof. Yet, at the 32nd General Synod worship service on Sunday, June 23, over 4,000 people gathered to worship and praise God. The Rev. Traci Blackmon preached about how God's light shines when we follow the Jesus of justice. During this worship service, Miah Yager, a young adult living with developmental disabilities and member at First Congregational of Boulder, CO, performed a liturgical dance while a soloist sang about God's liberating love. It truly was beautiful to behold the ways we come together as one, as diverse and beloved children of God.



Blessings,
Pastor Sarah

Worship

Adult Class - 9:45 a.m.

July 7 - We will continue to read and discuss the book *Anxious to Talk About It; Helping White Christians Talk Faithfully About Racism*.

Sunday Worship Service - 11:00 a.m.

Pastor Sarah will be preaching on "Let the Children Come to Me."

Scripture: Matthew 18:1-5 & Matthew 19:13-15



What's Happening at FCC

Parlor Dreams Brainstorming Session - Saturday, July 6, 10am

Please come to a brainstorming session on Saturday, 7/6, at 10 am. The Parlor is widely used for a variety of purposes, and is showing signs of wear and tear. Several have made suggestions in recent years about next steps for this area. Please come to share your thoughts, or email me with ideas and suggestions.

Spiritual Explorers, Sunday, July 7, 12:15 PM (in the library)

FCC Spiritual Explorers will discuss which spiritual practices to focus on in coming months, such as silence, gratitude, poetry, journaling, music, and ways God is calling us. All are welcome!

Community Singing practices on Wed, July 10, 6:00-7:30pm

Our church has been hosting a small group test, to practice a special singalong technique. It is led by Sally McSpadden, who is a music teacher at Orchard School, a co-founder of Justice Choir - Indianapolis, and a member of Indianapolis Women's Chorus, among many other musical credits. We are invited to join her 'group sing' practices in the Mayflower Room. It includes all genre of music, and the key thing is to share community and fun with those involved. Sally emphasizes that musical skill is not necessary!

Green Team Tip

Cooking out this holiday? Enjoy one burger (preferably turkey or veggie) but don't go overboard on beef which causes so much pollution. (If you want to share a green habit, please send it to hoot.gibson.tds@gmail.com.)

Food Donations for the Northside Pantry

Donations have been generous and are appreciated. Please keep them coming!

July Mission of the Month: Underneath It All

This mission provides underwear and school uniforms for children in IHN/Family Promise Aftercare. The Aftercare Program of Family Promise/IHN helps homeless families who get housing remain housed. You can help in any of the ways listed below.

1. **Buy underwear/socks/undershirts/underpants** in any size from **child size 4 to adult Large** - boys or girls. Put in the white laundry baskets during **July**.

2. **Donate new or gently used pants, shirts, skirts, or jumpers**-all sizes from child size 4 to adult. **Shirts** must have collars and can be **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.

With the year-round school calendar, school starts again in early Aug for many schools, so new uniforms will be needed soon. Past donations have provided each child in the Aftercare Program at least 1 full new uniform including underwear and socks. This is much appreciated by the families and Family Promise, so please continue to be generous.

For questions or 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, pancake mix, shampoo and conditioner.

Pastoral Care

Pastor Sarah will be on vacation July 8-14. While she is away, Pastor Carol can be reached at (317)496-9732 or casowle@gmail.com.

THIS WEEK AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL

Thurs – Fri, July 4 & 5		Office Closed
Saturday, July 6	10:00 a.m.	Parlor Brainstorming Session
Saturday, July 6	10:30 a.m.	Bell Choir
Sunday, July 7	9:45 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, July 7	11:00 a.m.	Worship
Sunday, July 7	12:15 p.m.	Spiritual Explorers
Wednesday, July 10	6:00 p.m.	Community Singing
Thursday, July 11	1:00 p.m.	Men’s Lunch

Saturday, July 13

10:30 a.m.

Bell Choir

Sunday, July 14

9:45 a.m.

Sunday Adult Class

Sunday, July 14

11:00 a.m.

Worship w/ Pastor Carol Sowle
preaching

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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

E-pistle for the Week of July 11, 2019



Breathing in the peace of this place for the next few days and finding joy for the journey.

Blessings,
Pastor Sarah

Worship

Adult Class - 9:45 a.m.

July 11 - We will continue to read and discuss the book *Anxious to Talk About It; Helping White Christians Talk Faithfully About Racism*.

Sunday Worship Service - 11:00 a.m.

Pastor Carol will be preaching on "The Good Question"
Scripture: Luke 10: 25-37



What's Happening at FCC

August Colony Submission Deadline, July 15th

Please have your submissions for the August Colony sent to shannon@fcindy.org by Monday, July 15th.

Friday Night at the Movies, 7/19, 6:30pm



Piggy-backing on a St Peter's UCC program, let's meet on the third Friday each month at 6:30ish at Keystone Art Cinema at the Fashion Mall at Keystone. We'll decide which film(s) to see, get refreshments, and socialize. Then, after the movie, hang out at the Indie Lounge for more fellowship with our fellow FCC folk, as well as getting to know and share with St Peter's people.

YA Game Night, 6pm July 20th



All young adults are invited to a pizza and game night on Saturday, July 20th at 6pm in the parlor! Bring your favorite game and a friend if you'd like and your competitive edge for an evening of fun! For more info, contact Lianna at lcamos33@gmail.com or 317-954-1601.

Green Team Tip

Going on a picnic? Take reusable water bottles/containers and avoid plastic bottled water. If you want to share a green habit, please send it to hoot.gibson.tds@gmail.com.)



Family Promise Clothing Drive in August

For those of you used to spring and fall clothing drives, this year Family Promise is just doing one in August. So we will not be doing a big push this year. Bring clothing donations to the church in tall white trash bags that are securely tied.

Food Donations for the Northside Pantry

Donations have been generous and are appreciated. Please keep them coming!

July Mission of the Month: Underneath It All

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For questions or 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, pancake mix, shampoo and conditioner.

Pastoral Care

Pastor Sarah will be on vacation July 8-15. While she is away, Pastor Carol can be reached at (317)496-9732 or casowle@gmail.com. After July 15th, Pastor Sarah may be reached at (386) 478-9012 or at pastorsarah@fcindy.org.

THIS WEEK AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL

Thursday, July 11	1:00 p.m.	Men's Lunch
Saturday, July 13	10:30 a.m.	Bell Choir Rehearsal
Sunday, July 14	12:15 p.m.	Outreach & Service
Friday, July 19	6:30 p.m.	Friday Night at the Movies
Saturday, July 20	10:30 a.m.	Bell Choir Rehearsal
Saturday, July 20	6:00 p.m.	Young Adult Game Night
Sunday, July 21	9:45 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, July 21	11:00 a.m.	Worship

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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

E-pistle for the Week of July 18, 2019

Dear First Congregational,

We are facing a spiritual crisis at the border of our nation. Many people of faith are asking, “how can we allow people, who are children of God, to be treated this way?” The reports and stories of human rights violations are alarming. When our sacred text makes it clear what God asks of us, then we face a spiritual crisis of faith when we live in violation of the teachings of scripture. The scripture speaks to the challenges we face at the border. I invite you to join me in spiritual reflection and discern with me how God is inviting us to respond as a congregation of people of faith.

Leviticus 19:33-34 “When a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall not do them wrong. You shall treat the stranger who sojourns with you as the native among you, and you shall love them as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.”

Matthew 25:35 “For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me

drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me.”

Hebrews 13:2 “Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.”

Zechariah 7:9-10 “Thus says the Lord of hosts, Render true judgments, show kindness and mercy to one another, do not oppress the widow, the orphan, the sojourner, or the poor, and let none of you devise evil against another in your heart.”

Blessings,
Pastor Sarah

As people of faith and as the United Church of Christ we are called to love our neighbor and right now our immigrant neighbors need our love. Here are resources to provide information, sanctuary, and advocacy for our siblings who are being targeted and threatened by ICE raids.

- Informed Immigrant: [Know Your Rights](#)
- CLASP [Immigration Raid Resources](#)
- National Immigration Law Center [How to Be Prepared for an Immigration Raid](#)
- American Immigration Lawyers Association [Local Raids Response Hotlines and Contact Information](#) **Including Atlanta | Baltimore/Washington, D.C. | Chicago | Denver | Houston | Los Angeles and San Diego | Miami | New Orleans | New York City | San Francisco**
- Fair Immigration Reform Movement [Community Raid Preparedness Checklist](#)
- National Immigrant Justice Center [Community Resources](#)
- Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc. [Rapid Response Toolkit](#)
- Immigrant Defense Project **Know Your Rights Flyers** in [English](#) or [Spanish](#)
- United We Dream [Know Your Power, Know Your Rights](#)
- Center for American Progress [tweet thread](#) with resources including info-graphics on your rights, legal assistance numbers by location
- American Immigration Lawyers Association **Know Your Rights Handouts** in [English](#) or [Spanish](#)

Sanctuary Resources:

- [Find a Sanctuary Coalition Near You](#)
- [Rapid Response Toolkit for Faith Allies](#)

- [#SacredResistancePledge](#) to open your house of worship in case of raids
- [Resources on how to become a Sanctuary congregation, build a coalition, etc.](#)
- For step-by-step instructions on how to accompany families targeted by raids and put pressure on the administration to stop them, visit: <http://bit.ly/FaithfulRapidResponse>.

Worship

Adult Class - 9:45 a.m.

July 21 - We will continue to read and discuss the book *Anxious to Talk About It; Helping White Christians Talk Faithfully About Racism*.

Sunday Worship Service - 11:00 a.m.

This Sunday we celebrate music as we join together in a Hymn Sing!

Scripture: Psalm 100



What's Happening at FCC

Friday Night at the Movies, 7/19, 6:30pm



Piggy-backing on a St Peter's UCC program, let's meet on the third Friday each month at 6:30ish at Keystone Art Cinema at the Fashion Mall at Keystone. We'll decide which film(s) to see, get refreshments, and socialize. Then, after the movie, hang out at the Indie Lounge for more fellowship with our fellow FCC folk, as well as getting to know and share with St Peter's people.

YA Game Night, 6pm July 20th



All young adults are invited to a pizza and game night on Saturday, July 20th at 6pm in the parlor! Bring your favorite game and a friend if you'd like and your competitive edge for an evening of fun! For more info, contact Lianna at lcampos33@gmail.com or 317-954-1601.

Borderland Trip - Deadline July 31st!



Below is an excerpt from Rev Chad Abbott's report on the recent General Synod. He is leading a group of IKC volunteers to the border next year, January 14-19, to help and work with activists protesting the mistreatment of refugees. A fee of \$200 is required, plus you must arrange and pay for your own transportation.

It would be really cool if someone from FCC were to go along on this trip. Please let Pastor Sarah or Rich Gibson know if you or anyone you know are interested. Please note the short time on this! Chad wants to hear from interested parties by July 31 (two weeks from yesterday).

Excerpt from Rev. Chad Abbott's IKC report from General Synod:

*"One of the other important conversations coming out of Synod was about the ongoing crisis at our nation's southern border and the treatment of children. Several IKC folks went to the border this January 2019; we spoke at annual gathering about our experience. I would like to invite you to continue the conversation by joining me on a trip to the border. We will be taking a group of 15 people to the border in Arizona with our partners at the Good Shepherd UCC in January 2020. These partners already work and advocate there. Look for a separate email coming out next week. But don't wait. **If you'd like to be on this trip, email me by July 31st at c.abbott@ikcucc.org to express your interest.**"*

Upcoming Labyrinth Walks



FCC Spiritual Explorers will focus on walking local labyrinths on **four Sundays: August 11, September 8, October 13, and November 24**. Please mark your calendars and watch for more details in the August *Pilgrim Colony*.

Green Team Tip

Try to find a good fresh vegetable and fruit stand to eat local produce. It helps our local farmers and tastes better too. (If you want to share a green habit, please send it to hoot.gibson.tds@gmail.com.)



Family Promise Clothing Drive in August

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Food Donations for the Northside Pantry

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THIS WEEK AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL

Friday, July 19	6:30 p.m.	Friday Night at the Movies (Keystone Art Cinema)
Saturday, July 20	10:30 a.m.	Bell Choir Rehearsal
Saturday, July 20	6:00 p.m.	YA Game Night
Sunday, July 21	9:45 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, July 21	11:00 a.m.	Worship - Hymn Sing
Thursday, July 25	11:45 a.m.	Women's Lunch
Thursday, July 25	1:00 p.m.	Men's Lunch
Thursday, July 25	6:00 p.m.	Community Singing
Sunday, July 28	9:45 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, July 28	11:00 a.m.	Worship

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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

E-pistle for the Week of July 25, 2019

Dear First Congregational,

In the midst of the demands of ministry and all the work that needs to be completed, our faith tradition calls us to take time for sabbath. I am grateful for the biblical mandate to rest. It can be hard for me to “turn off” from work mode and to simply be present to life. There’s so much that I miss out on in the moment because I am focused on the future and what needs to get done. Can you relate? We all benefit from the healthy practices of self-care and studies show that a healthy pastor helps to make a healthy congregation.

As your pastor, I am thankful for the gift of sabbath rest and of the encouragement to take vacation time—truly time away from work for renewal, play and simply being present to myself and my family. July is a good time for vacation for my family as our child has time off from school. For vitality and health in ministry, for your sake and mine, vacation is a mutual blessing. Special thanks to Carol Sowle and others who provide meaningful leadership and care to the congregation while I am away.

I look forward to returning to church Sunday, July 28 both renewed and refreshed to continue to partner with you all in ministry. Thanks be to God.

Blessings,
Pastor Sarah

Worship

Adult Class - 9:45 a.m.

July 28 - We will continue to read and discuss the book *Anxious to Talk About It; Helping White Christians Talk Faithfully About Racism*.

Sunday Worship Service - 11:00 a.m.

Pastor Sarah will preach on "Snakes at the Border."
Scripture: Luke 11:1-13

What's Happening at FCC

Borderland Trip - Deadline July 31st!



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*to the border this January 2019; we spoke at annual gathering about our experience. I would like to invite you to continue the conversation by joining me on a trip to the border. We will be taking a group of 15 people to the border in Arizona with our partners at the Good Shepherd UCC in January 2020. These partners already work and advocate there. Look for a separate email coming out next week. But don't wait. **If you'd like to be on this trip, email me by July 31st at c.abbott@ikcucc.org to express your interest.***

Dear Friends of Exodus Refugee Immigration,

Trump administration officials are considering the unprecedented step of **shutting down** refugee resettlement in 2020. After already setting the lowest goal in the program's history - only 30,000 refugees in 2019 - some officials have proposed admitting ZERO. Cutting the program further at a time when record numbers of people are fleeing for their lives is unjustifiable.

Even as we fight this cruel proposal to decimate the US refugee resettlement program, Exodus continues to serve the many refugees who already call Indianapolis home. We are committed, we are prepared, and **with your help** we will keep making Indianapolis a haven of freedom and safety for all.

CALL YOUR SENATORS & REPRESENTATIVE TODAY

Call 202-224-3121 to be connected to your 2 Senators and 1 Representative.

Sample Script:

"I am your constituent from [CITY/TOWN], and I urge you to do everything in your power to protect the refugee resettlement program from being decimated by the administration. The administration is considering setting the refugee admissions goal for next year at ZERO. Congress must hold the administration accountable. By law, the administration must consult with Congress prior to setting the refugee admissions goal, which means you are uniquely poised to ensure that the administration fulfills its obligation to consult with Congress ahead of deciding how many refugees to welcome in FY20. Please do everything in your power to see that the administration stops its attacks on refugees and commits to resettling 95,000 in 2020. My community welcomes refugees, and I urge you to reflect the best of our nation by supporting refugee resettlement."

Thank you for standing with refugees.

Cole Varga
Executive Director, Exodus Refugee Immigration

Upcoming Labyrinth Walks



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Green Team Tip

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Pantry Items of the Month



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Pastoral Care

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After July 26th, Pastor Sarah may be reached at (386) 478-9012 or at pastorsarah@fcindy.org.

THIS WEEK AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL

Thursday, July 25	11:45 a.m.	Women's Lunch
Thursday, July 25	1:00 p.m.	Men's Lunch
Thursday, July 25	6:00 p.m.	Community Singing
Sunday, July 28	9:45 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, July 18	11:00 a.m.	Worship
Tuesday, July 30	1:30 p.m.	Connector Meeting
Saturday, August 3	1:00 p.m.	Green Team Meeting
Sunday, August 4	9:45 a.m.	Sunday Adult Worship
Sunday, August 4	11:00 a.m.	Worship
Sunday, August 4	12:30 p.m.	Just Peace Meeting