



e-pistle for the week of June 7, 2018

Minister's Message

Dear First Congregational Family,

What an exciting time in the life of our church! We are living out our mission in BIG and BOLD ways.

Through the Indy PRIDE events (play last night, parade and booth Saturday) and through our Installation service Sunday at 3 p.m., we are showing up and showing others the love of God.

Sharing the good news of God's love is at the heart of the role of the church. I am thankful to have such warm, dedicated and gifted members to serve alongside.

I hope to see you at the festivities!

Thankful for God's Presence,
Pastor Sarah

Installation Service for Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund

Join us at 3:00 p.m. this Sunday for the installation service with guest speaker Rev. Traci Blackmon, Executive Minister of Justice and Witness for the United Church of Christ. Her extensive biography can be found in the June Colony.

Worship for Sunday

Adult Class - 9:45 a.m.

The theme this Sunday will be "Called to be a Good Neighbor" (Luke 10:25-37). Meet in the library.

Traditional Service - 11:00 a.m.

The message from Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund will be "Encounters with God."

New Creation - 5:30 p.m.

There will be no New Creation service this Sunday as we celebrate Pastor Sarah's installation in the afternoon. We encourage everyone to attend this very special event in the life of our church. It will be a grand time for all! But be prepared for a unique worship opportunity the following Sunday when we have some fun with scripture. Bring some creativity, insight, and a sense of humor to share as we gather on June 17.

What's Happening at FCC

Mission of the Month, Strengthen the Church

Our mission of the month for June is Strengthen the Church. This offering supports exactly what its name implies. It strengthens the church in many different ways. It goes to seed new churches that minister to people on the margins who would never be reached by a church. It helps established churches begin projects working with refugees and immigrants. It also funds creative ideas experimenting with new ways Christian millennials are gathering. Your support of this offering will fulfill our commitment to creating a more just world.

PRIDE 2018

Anyone interested in helping to plan FCC's participation in the PRIDE parade and festival to be held June 9, please contact Bob Cook 317-401-4889 or bobcook359@yahoo.com. Please see the June Colony for all the PRIDE activities during the month.

Special Summer Music

On Sunday, June 17, a Men's Chorus (made up of men from the congregation) will offer a special anthem in honor of Father's Day. Any men in the pews are welcome to come up during the service to sing an easy, well-known hymn: "This is the Day that our God has Made," Hymn 84. No rehearsal is needed - just come

Pantry Items of the Month

During June we are collecting the following items: pudding, Jell-O, canned vegetables, soup, and toothpaste.

Pastoral Care


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



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e-pistle for the week of June 14 , 2018

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Minister's Message

Dear First Congregational Family,

What does the Lord require of us now? That's the paraphrase of Micah 6:8 that we heard from the preacher Rev. Traci Blackmon on Sunday at the Installation service. We heard words of affirmation, made mutual promises of support and experienced the prayers of our extended faith community. Over 40 clergy participated in the processional...from different denominations, traditions and creeds. I loved seeing the "rainbow" diversity of God's people joined together. What a joyful experience of God's love for us!

I want to thank the planning team: Karen Walker, Wendy Baldwin and Pat Larracey for their guidance and support. We are blessed with many gifted leaders at our church and all these gifts were celebrated through this experience. Thank you to all who participated, provided music, refreshments, helped with logistics, decorations, and attended the celebration.

Thank you to the congregation for the Installation gift of the beautiful red stole. I will always wear it with joy, remembering our glorious day together on June 10 celebrating God's calling us to partner together at First Congregational as pastor and people.

What does God require of us now? To do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with our God. With God's help, I believe that is just what we will do.

With a joyful heart,
Pastor Sarah

Worship for Sunday

Adult Class - 9:45 a.m.

The theme this Sunday will be "The Parable of the Talents" (Matthew 25:14-30). Meet in the library.

Traditional Service - 11:00 a.m.

The message from Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund will be "Who Will Tend to the Harvest?"
A Men's Chorus (made up of men from the congregation) will offer a special anthem in honor of Father's Day. Any men in the pews are welcome to come up during the service to sing an easy, well-known hymn: "This is the Day that our God has Made," Hymn 84. No rehearsal is needed - just come

New Creation - 5:30 p.m.

Summer seems like a good time to kick back, try something new, and have some fun. So that's just what we've planned for New Creation this Sunday. Come join us as we have some fun with scripture as part of our worship with our beloved community. And stay tuned for what's coming in New Creation worship this summer!

Administrative Assistant Search and short term office expectations

We are interviewing candidates, and hope to identify a new administrative assistant soon. In the meantime, volunteers will continue the work as we can. If the search stretches beyond a few weeks, we will reevaluate.

- We will monitor the church phone messages daily
- We will monitor the church office email each weekday – please continue to send email to the same address

- We will pick up the mail at least 3 times a week
- We will have reduced weekly printed bulletins and announcements
- We will publish epistles as we can, but might not be as regular
- We will NOT be creating a July Colony

What's Happening at FCC

June 24th - Guest Preacher at 11 AM Service

While Pastor Sarah is teaching a Mental Health seminar at another church next Sunday we will have a special guest preacher. Nathan Wilson is an ordained Disciples minister currently serving as director of communications at Christian Theological Seminary and coordinator of the Faith & Values section of The Indianapolis Star.

June 24th - Movie Night at 7:00 PM

Join us for "Eyes of Tammy Faye" - movie and discussion of the life and work of Tammy Faye Bakker in the Mayflower Room.

In the News!

Tuesday's Indianapolis Star had a front page article championing the expanded work of Meals on Wheels for people with HIV or AIDS and featuring their project manager - Nick Fennig! Much deserved publicity for very important work!

<https://www.indystar.com/story/news/2018/06/12/meals-wheels-expands-service-people-hiv-aids/678071002/>

FCC Solar Project!!!

The First Congregational Green Team is pleased to announce the start of a fund drive to install solar panels. Solar power is clean, renewable and affordable. We've calculated that solar panels would pay back our initial investment at an annual rate of roughly 8% by reducing our church's electrical bills (based on current power consumption). It's not often that doing the right thing for the planet aligns so neatly with doing the right thing for our wallets, so it makes abundant sense for us to take this step.

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. Our tenant, the Meridian Hills Cooperative Preschool and Kindergarten, is collecting pennies from all the children to pitch into this effort.

It's easy to contribute: Simply write "solar panels" on a check you slip into the collection basket. 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, Strengthen the Church

Our mission of the month for June is Strengthen the Church. This offering supports exactly what its name implies. It strengthens the church in many different ways. It goes to seed new churches that minister to people on the margins who would never be reached by a church. It helps established churches begin projects working with refugees and immigrants. It also funds creative ideas experimenting with new ways Christian millennials are gathering. Your support of this offering will fulfill our commitment to creating a more just world.

Pantry Items of the Month

During June we are collecting the following items: pudding, Jell-O, canned vegetables, soup, and toothpaste.

Pastoral Care

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

This Week at First Congregational


Sunday, June 17	9:45 a.m.	Adult Class – Parable of the talents
Sunday, June 17	11:00 a.m.	Traditional Service
Sunday, June 17	5:30 p.m.	New Creation
Wednesday, June 20	7:00 p.m.	Witness & Welcome Meeting
Wednesday, June 20	7:30 p.m.	New Creation Planning
Sunday, June 24	9:45 a.m.	Adult Class - Biblical Hope for Justice in Public Policy.
Sunday, June 24	11:00 a.m.	Traditional Service – guest preacher Nathan Wilson
Sunday, June 24	5:30 p.m.	New Creation
Sunday, June 24	7:00 p.m.	Movie Night - Eyes of Tammy Faye




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e-pistle for the week of June 21 , 2018

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Minister's Message

Dear First Congregational Family,

One of the beautiful aspects of our life together is that God has invited us to partner in exploring ways we can help bring hope to people in need of healing, specifically as relates to mental health. I am thankful that God calls us to share our gifts with each other, even if these gifts are a result of suffering and hardship. I have learned a lot from difficult times in my life. These challenges shape who I am and how I am called to serve the church as a minister and mental health educator.

This Sunday I am serving the wider church's mental health ministry as a guest of Kirk in the Hills Presbyterian Church in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. This invitation came last year when they were planning a series of Sundays to raise awareness and educate members about mental health. After reading my book *Blessed Are The Crazy: Breaking the Silence About Mental Illness, Family and Church*, they invited me to come to help the church learn ways they can help be welcoming, inclusive, supportive, and engaged with people who

have mental health challenges and their families. To learn more about the church, click here: <https://www.kirkinthehills.org/>

While I will miss being with you all this Sunday, June 24, I am looking forward to my time on Sunday with Kirk in the Hills...I always feel blessed by the people I meet and stories they share. Thank you for supporting this important mental health ministry to the wider church. I trust that you will enjoy hearing from the Rev. Nathan Wilson from Christian Theological Seminary and the IndyStar as he shares with you a thoughtful message on Sunday. Please extend to him a warm welcome on my behalf.

I also am happy to share with you a recent interview I did for a podcast about faith and mental health by two friends in Columbus, IN. We talked about my family's history of mental illness, the recent celebrity deaths by suicide, my definition of hope, and how excited I am to be serving as pastor of First Congregational. Take a listen here: <http://revealingvoices.com/>

I am so grateful to be on this journey with you all. I am thankful that God has brought our paths together to partner, with God's help, to offer hope and healing to a hurting world.

With hope,
Pastor Sarah

Worship for Sunday

Adult Class - 9:45 a.m.

The theme this Sunday will be Biblical Hope for Justice in Public Policy. Meet in the library.

Traditional Service - 11:00 a.m.

The message from guest Preacher Rev. Nathan Wilson will be Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund will be "The Future Ain't What It Used To Be".

"If you are longing for something constant in life, how's this: Things are rapidly changing! The question is how do we live -- individually, socially, congregationally -- amidst the changes? That's what we'll explore, sometimes in lighthearted ways, on June 24. Join in -- you may even find it not that scary."

(Nathan Wilson is an ordained Disciples minister currently serving as director of communications at Christian Theological Seminary and coordinator of the Faith & Values section of The Indianapolis Star.)

New Creation - 5:30 p.m.

The gathering this week will be related to and lead into the movie being shown after that night - "Eyes of Tammy Faye"

Movie Night at 7:00 PM

Even if you can't make it to the New Creation service (but what a great lead in opportunity, so please do!), come join us for "Eyes of Tammy Faye" - movie and discussion of the life and work of Tammy Faye Bakker in the Mayflower Room.

What's Happening at FCC

Saturday, June 30th, 9:00 - #FamiliesBelongTogether

Individuals who wish to participate in the #FamiliesBelongTogether rally in Indianapolis are invited to car pool from the church on Saturday, June 30 at 9:00am and we will leave the parking lot at 9:15am. The rally begins at 10am and is taking place at the Birch Bayh Federal Building and United States Courthouse. This is an opportunity for individuals to put their faith into action and express their support of keeping immigrant children together with their parents/caregivers. This event is not officially sponsored by the church and does not represent the views of the congregation as a collective body. If you have questions, please contact Pastor Sarah.

Saturday, June 30th, 2:00 - Young Adults - Bowling!

The young adult group have scheduled to meet at the Woodland Bowling Center at 3421 East 96th St. at 2:00 next Saturday. For more information, please contact Lianna Campos (317-954-1601).

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

3. Shalom UCC, Lafayette, IN
4. Zion UCC, South Bend, IN

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 1: Peace is Possible video; definition of Just Peace; look at two covenants - one brief and one extensive - from two UCC churches; begin a list of what FCC is already doing.

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.

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

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Sunday, June 24	11:00 a.m.	Traditional Service - Rev. Nathan Wilson: The Future Ain't What It Used To Be
Sunday, June 24	5:30 p.m.	New Creation
Sunday, June 24	7:00 p.m.	Movie Night - Eyes of Tammy Faye
Tuesday, June 26	6:00 p.m.	Prayground Exploratory Team meeting
Wednesday, June 27	7:30 p.m.	New Creation Planning
Thursday, June 28	11:45 a.m.	Women's lunch –at West side LePeep
Thursday, June 28	1:00 p.m.	Men's lunch – at Sahn's Ale House
Saturday, June 30	2:00 p.m.	Young Adults – bowling at Woodland
Sunday, July 1	9:45 a.m.	Adult Class – Just Peace
Sunday, July 1	11:00 a.m.	Traditional Service
Sunday, July 1	12:30 p.m.	Worship & Faith
Sunday, July 1	5:30 p.m.	New Creation



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e-pistle for the week of June 28 , 2018

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Minister's Message

Dear First Congregational Family,

“Who will be the next one hundred people to join our congregation? Why will they join our church rather than some other congregation? After they join, how active will these new members be in the life, program, fellowship, ministry and witness of this congregation? How long will it take our congregation to receive one hundred new members? A year? A month? A decade?” From an article titled, “Membership Recruitment,” The Parish Paper, Yokefellow Institute, May 1974.

Wow. This is the opening paragraph of an article in old newsletter I discovered while going through a box of donated materials and the newsletter is dated May of 1974. While a lot has changed about American society and the trends of church membership, what has not changed is the desire for congregations like ours to grow. We want to grow both in deepening our faithfulness and in our impact in making the world a more just and loving place. We would like for more people to know about our mission, to get involved, to join us

and to grow with us.

How do churches grow? According to this newsletter, the key to growth is “to build new and strengthen existing friendship lines between members of your congregation and persons who are not actively involved in the life of any worshipping congregation. Studies of rapidly growing congregations reveal that most new members had at least one friend or relative in that congregation who opened the door to membership. While it is difficult to increase the number of kinship ties, the number of friendship ties can be increased by systemic, persistent and intentional efforts to increase face-to-face contacts and to focus on the other person’s need.”

I think this focus on membership growth through friendships is worth giving some additional thought. While many of our first time visitors report discovering our church through our website or our Facebook page, we know that people looking for a church home are looking for connection. I like this idea of keeping in mind the people we know and intentionally “opening the door” for people to experience worship at First Congregational UCC. As we look towards the future, we know that we want to grow with new members. How long will it take for us to get 100 new members? I’m not sure the answer to that question. But I do know that it is important for all of us to reach out to others, invite them to church, and help us to grow as the body of Christ.

With hope for growth,
Pastor Sarah

Worship for Sunday

Adult Class - 9:45 a.m.

Peace is Possible video; definition of Just Peace; look at two covenants - one brief and one extensive - from two UCC churches; begin a list of what FCC is already doing. See further description below.

Traditional Service - 11:00 a.m.

The message from Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund will be "Blessed are the Perplexed".

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. This Sunday we'll explore the traditions that comprise the United Church of Christ from several different perspectives. Whether or not you are familiar with the various faith paths that are joined together as the UCC, you can expect to learn something

new this Sunday.

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review our lists of things FCC already is doing and our list of what we might want to do;
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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.

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The young adult group have scheduled to meet at the Woodland Bowling Center at 3421 East 96th St. at 2:00 next Saturday. For more information, please contact Lianna Campos (317-954-1601).

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!!!

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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.

Short term office expectations

Please keep in mind we will not be creating a July Colony, due to the staff shortage. Thank you! Any questions, please call Karen Walker or Pastor Sarah.

Pastoral Care

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

This Week at First Congregational

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Sunday, July 1	11:00 a.m.	Traditional Service
Sunday, July 1	12:30 p.m.	Worship & Faith
Sunday, July 1	5:30 p.m.	New Creation
Tuesday, July 3	1:00 p.m.	Care & Connections
Wednesday, July 4		Church Office Closed
Thursday, July 5	7:00 p.m.	Trustees
Sunday, July 8	9:45 a.m.	Adult Class – Just Peace
Sunday, July 8	11:00 a.m.	Traditional Service
Sunday, July 8	5:30 p.m.	New Creation