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## e-pistle for the week of May 3, 2018

### **Minister's Message**

#### **Dear First Congregational Family,**

This brief window into spring invites us to pause and soak in all the beauty that surrounds us in the blossoming trees and flowers. The magnolia trees at the church are in full bloom. Today I noticed the petals starting to fall, their white and pink petals twirling downward towards Earth.

This spring season, as May unfolds, I am aware of how precious this window of time is as we open ourselves to new life within and around us. It is a time of transitions and changes. I am inspired by the beauty and strength of the magnolia tree, reminding us that God's love is with us no matter what the season. In times of loss and in times of growth, God is with us. My prayer for us as we journey together in faith is that God's love would continue to guide us in this season with renewed hope.

With springtime hope,  
Pastor Sarah

#### **CPR Certification**

Our tenant, MHCNS, is offering a CPR course for their teachers and parents. They have graciously offered us the opportunity to participate as well. Those who desire to take the class should complete step 1 below, and notify Cheryl or Pastor Sarah so the nursery school can get a good headcount.

**The two-part certification must be taken in this order:**

- 1) Heartsaver CPR First Aid AED Online is \$30 and registration is at <https://elearning.heart.org/course/9>. The class is a total of 6 hours and easily broken into time modules, but must be completed before the next step;
- 2) June 8, 2018 Skills Class with an instructor is approximately \$70 (cash, check or charge to Joe Martin; actual amount will depend on how many take the class) - 9:30-11:30 a.m.

**Worship for Sunday**

**Adult Class - 9:45 a.m.**

Our topic this week will be “Bread for the World” issues for 2018. This session will give background for our annual writing of letters to alleviate hunger through Bread for the World. Meet in the library.

**Traditional Service - 11:00 a.m.**

The message from Pastor Sarah will be "God of the Oppressed."

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**New Creation - 5:30 p.m.**

Join us for a special experience of "dinner church." Come find out what it's all about! Meet in the Mayflower room.

**What's Happening at FCC**

**Mission of the Month, Family Promise**

Our congregation has been active with Family Promise for more than 20 years. We participate in the emergency shelter portion, the Interfaith Hospitality Network, housing families experiencing homelessness. All the needs that we have in our daily lives are cared for by Family Promise for around 50 families every year. The van we drive needs gas, maintenance and insurance. Bus passes are provided to the families. IHN helps families find long-term housing. AfterCare helps them keep it by providing supportive services for up to two years. I encourage you to visit their website to see all that they are doing.

“We are Family Promise because we believe in the promise - the potential - inherent in each family that enters our doors. It also refers to our promise to keep a family together, and to help the family

succeed, through its most difficult time. Since 1994, our volunteers and congregations have helped over 750 families with children. We will continue with urgency to find ways to meet the needs of more families, always with the goal to one day find we are no longer needed.”

<http://www.fpgi.org/who-we-are/our-story>

This month we are asking for assistance in several ways – physical assistance with hosting, financial assistance, and your prayerful support. Our gifts of single dollar bills and loose change this month will go towards helping the organization fund their operations and programs. Larger donations are welcome and should be noted on the check or envelope Family Promise because every child deserves a home.

### **It's Hosting Time!**

We are hosting up to four families currently experiencing homelessness later this month. They will arrive evening of May 20 and stay through the morning of May 27. Please sign up to get their rooms ready for them, stay overnight, fix and serve dinner, provide evening activities for the families, be an evening host, drive the van, put the rooms back to normal after hosting week, or do laundry. It takes a village! Please see Ann Leatherman or Katie Booth. All are welcome.

### **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](mailto:bobcook359@yahoo.com)


### **Pantry Items of the Month**

During April we are collecting the following items: ramen noodles, macaroni and cheese, canned fruit and laundry detergent.

### **Pastoral Care**

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

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## e-pistle for the week of May 10, 2018

### **Minister's Message**

#### **Dear First Congregational Family,**

What is the purpose of prayer? I've been praying off and on my whole life, at least since I was a young child. At first I was taught that prayer was talking to God. I learned the Lord's Prayer and the bedtime prayer "Now I lay me down to sleep and pray the Lord my soul to keep." As I've gotten older, I've come to experience prayer also as a way of a listening to God. For me, some of the most profound moments of connection to God come out of a time of praying in silence. For me, prayer is a way to clear my mind of the clutter and to tune into the deep peace that comes when we rest in the heart of God.

I am not always just listening to God...I still talk to God, too. I try to take more time to listen to God these days. In worship on Sundays, we say many prayers out loud. And we also listen, we also make time for silence during worship as part of our prayer. For some this time of silence might be too short and for others the silence might be too long. I've had more than one person who is visiting our church tell me it reminds them of a Friend's Meeting House. It might be the way the sun shines through the sanctuary windows and bathes us in God's light. It might be those moments of silence, too. In our New Creation service, we pray using candles, lighting them to honor the joy or concern that has been lifted up. When we are collecting joys and concerns during our worship, I feel as though the silence in-between the sharing is just as sacred, just as holy, just as God-filled. I am

grateful that we are comfortable with many ways to pray.

Today I am giving thanks for all the ways that we pray...with words, with silence, with music, with tears, with candles, laughter, with our whole selves.

With a prayerful spirit,

Pastor Sarah

### **CPR Certification**

Our tenant, MHCNS, is offering a CPR course for their teachers and parents. They have graciously offered us the opportunity to participate as well. Those who desire to take the class should complete step 1 below, and notify Cheryl or Pastor Sarah so the nursery school can get a good headcount.

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- 2) June 8, 2018 Skills Class with an instructor is approximately \$70 (cash, check or charge to Joe Martin; actual amount will depend on how many take the class) - 9:30-11:30 a.m.

### **Worship for Sunday**

#### **Adult Class - 9:45 a.m.**

This Sunday will be our annual writing of letters to alleviate hunger through Bread for the World. Meet in the library.

#### **Traditional Service - 11:00 a.m.**

The message from Pastor Sarah will be "Esther: For Such a Time as This."

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#### **New Creation - 5:30 p.m.**

Join us as we gather for continued reflection and conversation about the scriptures.

## What's Happening at FCC

### Mission of the Month, Family Promise

Our congregation has been active with Family Promise for more than 20 years. We participate in the emergency shelter portion, the Interfaith Hospitality Network, housing families experiencing homelessness. All the needs that we have in our daily lives are cared for by Family Promise for around 50 families every year. The van we drive needs gas, maintenance and insurance. Bus passes are provided to the families. IHN helps families find long-term housing. AfterCare helps them keep it by providing supportive services for up to two years. I encourage you to visit their website to see all that they are doing.

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<http://www.fpgi.org/who-we-are/our-story>

This month we are asking for assistance in several ways – physical assistance with hosting, financial assistance, and your prayerful support. Our gifts of single dollar bills and loose change this month will go towards helping the organization fund their operations and programs. Larger donations are welcome and should be noted on the check or envelope  
Family Promise because every child deserves a home.

### It's Hosting Time!

We are hosting up to four families currently experiencing homelessness later this month. They will arrive evening of May 20 and stay through the morning of May 27. Please sign up to get their rooms ready for them, stay overnight, fix and serve dinner, provide evening activities for the families, be an evening host, drive the van, put the rooms back to normal after hosting week, or do laundry. It takes a village! Please see Ann Leatherman or Katie Booth. All are welcome.

### Street Sign Video!

If you missed the buzz session where we unveiled the new street sign, the presentation video from that buzz session is now on our website. It can be found in ABOUT US under OUR STREET SIGN or just click on this link:

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### 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](mailto:bobcook359@yahoo.com)

### **Pantry Items of the Month**


During April we are collecting the following items: ramen noodles, macaroni and cheese, canned fruit and laundry detergent.


### **Plymouth Rockers**

We'll meet at noon on Tuesday May 22 at the church, for lunch and a program. The program is, "A Conversation with Pastor Sarah," giving us a great opportunity to learn more. Bring your lunch, thoughts, and guests; we'll provide beverages.

### **Pastoral Care**

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

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## e-pistle for the week of May 17, 2018

### **Minister's Message**

#### **Dear First Congregational Family,**

This coming week we are preparing to host our Family Promise guests in the church, adults and children, who are in need of support as they seek financial stability. As we know, many people are one paycheck away from an eviction. Keep our guests in your prayers as they make their home with us this coming week.

It takes significant effort to host our guests and many people are signed up to help. There are still opportunities to volunteer and the sign up board is in the church narthex. We can all be praying that our guests experience the radical hospitality of the living Christ during their stay.

For all the ways we are church and show up for one another and for our community, I give God thanks. In my experience, this is a very giving and caring congregation with a big heart for helping others. I am grateful to be on this journey with you.

On Sunday we will celebrate Pentecost, welcome new members into our Body of Christ and meet for a buzz session about how to welcome children in worship and how our church budget works. Sounds like the Spirit is moving at First Congregational...Thanks be to God!



Thankful for God's Presence,  
Pastor Sarah

### **Save the Date! Mental Health Sunday is June 3, 2018**

You are invited to join us for Mental Health Sunday to celebrate the release of *The Lifesaving Church: Faith Communities and Suicide Prevention*, by Rev. Dr. Rachael Keefe. Rev. Dr. Keefe will be preaching both worship services, leading adult education and leading an afternoon workshop with Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund.

### **CPR Certification**

Our tenant, MHCNS, is offering a CPR course for their teachers and parents. They have graciously offered us the opportunity to participate as well. Those who desire to take the class should complete step 1 below, and notify Cheryl or Pastor Sarah so the nursery school can get a good headcount.

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- 2) June 8, 2018 Skills Class with an instructor is approximately \$70 (cash, check or charge to Joe Martin; actual amount will depend on how many take the class) - 9:30-11:30 a.m.

### **What's the Buzz! Sunday May 20**

Join us for a pitch in lunch and discussion on two topics: welcoming children to our sanctuary - a 'playground' discussion, and budget education - understanding the basics of our church finances. Any questions, please contact Karen Walker.

### **Worship for Sunday**

#### **Adult Class - 9:45 a.m.**

This Sunday's theme will be : Doing Justice " An Open Table." Meet in the library.

#### **Traditional Service - 11:00 a.m.**

The message from Pastor Sarah will be "When the Spirit Moves."

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#### **New Creation - 5:30 p.m.**

Join us as we gather for continued reflection and conversation about the scriptures.

## What's Happening at FCC

**Any additional Colony articles are due by EOD tomorrow. I will start on the the Colony on Friday morning.**

### **Mission of the Month, Family Promise**

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Family Promise because every child deserves a home.

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### **Bread for the World Letters**

Last Sunday we collected 73 letters to our Senators and Representatives urging them to invest in and protect in key programs that will reduce hunger and poverty in the fiscal year 2019 budget. SNAP (food stamps) is the most important of these. If you were away, you may still write your letters at home and bring them this Sunday to be included in our Offering of Letters.

### **Solar 101 Presentation**

The Green Team will host a speaker from Rectify Solar to speak on "Solar 101" on Friday, May 25<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00 PM. The topics will cover the theory and practice of using solar power on churches, businesses and residences, and the particulars of the installation this company is proposing for FCIndy. He will speak for approximately 30 minutes and be available for questions. The Green Team would like to invite all interested congregants, particularly current members of the Board of Trustees and the council. Location is TBD depending on the projected size of the audience, so please RSVP to Rich Gibson, [hoot eagle@me.com](mailto:hoot eagle@me.com)

### **Street Sign Video!**

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## e-pistle for the week of May 24, 2018

### **Minister's Message**

#### **Dear First Congregational Family,**

The church welcomed three new members on Sunday and as part of that we renewed our covenant with each other. That word “covenant” is the church’s way of promising to live together in community with love.

Letting love be our guide, as Bishop Curry said in his now famous royal wedding sermon, means that the way we treat people, the way we talk to people and all the action we take comes from a place of love. This means that we humble ourselves, we honor others and we respect each other...especially the ways we are different.

It is the gift that the church can offer the world: a different way of being together, different because we intentionally choose love—above all else. It’s what makes the church a beloved community—God’s love motivates us to do justice, to be kind and to be humble in a world filled with hatred, fear and violence.

As we continue to grow, with more and more new members joining us, we will continue to renew our covenant—to be led by God first and always, and to be led by love.

Thankful for God's Presence,  
Pastor Sarah

### **Save the Date! Mental Health Sunday is June 3, 2018**

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### **Installation Service for Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund**

Join us at 3:00 p.m. on June 10 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.**

This Sunday's theme will be : Doing Justice "Uttering Truth." Meet in the library.

#### **Traditional Service - 11:00 a.m.**

The message from Pastor Sarah will be "Listen to the Spirit."

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#### **New Creation - 5:30 p.m.**

Peace between Israel and the Palestinians seems ever more elusive these days, as the recent violence attests. In New Creation this Sunday we'll be exploring some of the obstacles to Middle Eastern peace from a scriptural perspective. Please join us for this timely and important discussion, especially as we continue our consideration of becoming a Just Peace church.

## What's Happening at FCC

### Mission of the Month, Family Promise

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### PRIDE 2018


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### Pantry Items of the Month

During April we are collecting the following items: ramen noodles, macaroni and cheese, canned fruit and laundry detergent.

**Pastoral Care**

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## e-pistle for the week of May 31, 2018

### **Minister's Message**

#### **Dear First Congregational Family,**

Rachael Keefe will be a guest worship and discussion leader at FCC this Sunday, including New Creation. In addition to Ms. Keefe's message around mental health concerns, New Creation will also offer a healing service. Anyone who has been touched by suicide or other mental health issues should find this service informative, uplifting, and healing. All are welcome.

This is a full season of new beginnings in our life together! I appreciate the ways our church comes together to do ministry, stepping up and in when there is need for action and leadership. This church is definitely a "can do" congregation. When I began in March, I was happy to learn that our office administrator Cheryl Dillenback stepped up and into the role in the office during a time of transition. Cheryl has provided the church with necessary and important leadership and service for which we are grateful. I want to share with you that Cheryl has been invited to a new opportunity to expand her work at the public library and June 6 will be her last day as office administrator. While I am sad to lose Cheryl in this role in the church office, I am happy that she is able to follow her passion. Please join me in thanking Cheryl for her "can do" attitude and hard work on behalf of the church and congratulating her on this new opportunity. Please add your signature to a thank you card that will be available at church this Sunday.



When Cheryl shared this news with me, I contacted our moderator and we are working with our personnel committee on a transition plan. We will share with you as soon as information detailing the transition is ready to share. We thank you in advance for your patience as our church office experiences this staff transition. Please feel free to contact our moderator Karen Walker or myself with any questions. We ask for your prayers that God would continue to provide the church with a “can do” spirit in this time of change and transition.

I am looking forward to a wonderful next week with you all. This Sunday’s Mental Health focus will be educational and important as we learn from Rev. Dr. Rachael Keefe about how the church can be lifesaving, helping to prevent suicide. Please join us for her afternoon workshop at 1pm. For our New Creation service at 5:30pm, we will honor and remember those who have died by suicide. You are invited to bring a memento as a symbol to be shared on the altar as we take time to reflect on the ways our lives have been touched by suicide.

This weekend is also the Indiana Kentucky UCC Conference Annual Gathering, where Dr. Keefe and I will be co-leading a workshop on Friday about how congregations can be WISE (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, Engaged) for mental health. There is still time for you to sign up to attend, please see the information further down in the Epistle.

I am grateful to this church family for the ways in which we come together to support one another. I appreciate all the ways you have supported me in my first three months serving with you all. Earlier this week we held our final small group gathering “Get to know Pastor Sarah” and it was wonderful. I look forward to more opportunities in the future for us to gather and enjoy fellowship together.

Thankful for God’s Presence,  
Pastor Sarah

### **Guest Minister on Mental Health Sunday!**

You are invited to join us for Mental Health Sunday to celebrate the release of *The Lifesaving Church: Faith Communities and Suicide Prevention*, by Rev. Dr. Rachael Keefe. Rev. Dr. Keefe will be preaching both worship services, leading adult education and leading an afternoon workshop with Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund. Please note that snacks will be provided so people can stay after church for the workshop!

### **Installation Service for Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund**

Join us at 3:00 p.m. on June 10 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.**

Rev. Dr. Rachael Keefe will be the guest speaker. Meet in the library.

#### **Traditional Service - 11:00 a.m.**

The message from Rev. Dr. Rachael Keefe will be "Embodying Christ; Embodying Love."

#### **New Creation - 5:30 p.m.**

Rachael Keefe will be a guest worship and discussion leader at FCC this Sunday, including New Creation. In addition to Ms. Keefe's message around mental health concerns, New Creation will also offer a healing service. Anyone who has been touched by suicide or other mental health issues should find this service informative, uplifting, and healing. All are welcome.

## **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.

### **May 31-June 2: Ignite Church Event**

Don't Miss a Beat!

Don't be sad if you cannot join the 200+ participants at the Igniting Church Annual Gathering! You will have many opportunities to experience plenary sessions, worship services and more through social media:

LIVESTREAMING key elements of our plenary sessions, posting photos of all the action

and video reflections from our participants on **Facebook**. Like our **page** to make sure you don't miss a post!

LIVE TWEETING the best quotes, photos and videos from our gathering. Just use the #IgnitingChurch2018 hashtag to search for what everyone's talking about whether you are in the room or far away. You can also follow **@ikcucc**.

Not sure how to use a #hashtag? No problem. Just **Read This**.

### **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.

### **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**.