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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Epistle for the Week of November 7, 2019

Dear First Congregational,

Our church continues to welcome first time guests every Sunday who find us, they report, by searching the internet for a progressive Christian church in Indianapolis. What does that mean? It means that the unique form of inclusive and open spirituality, faith, and religion that we provide is meeting an important need in our community. This is exciting and is affirmation that our mission and ministry is making a difference in people's lives and in our community. This Sunday we will welcome several new members into the church and I invite you to take time to get to know each one of them personally.

This Sunday we kickoff our three week focus on generosity as we lift up the invitation to support the mission and ministry of our church with your time, talent, and treasure. Then, on Sunday, November 24th we will celebrate with worship, a church family meal and fun festivities. We have much to give thanks for and to celebrate. God is with us! We are doing God's work! Together we are spreading hope and love in the world.

I look forward to being together with you in worship.

Blessings,
Pastor Sarah

Worship

Adult Class - 9:45 a.m.

Our Just Peace Intern, Grace Langford, will be sharing an impactful video about drone warfare and taking time to discuss and react to the impact of drone warfare. We will also learn about ways to draw attention to this issue and be advocates for just peace.

Sunday Worship Service - 11:00 a.m.

Pastor Sarah will preach on "Forgive Often."

Scripture: Job 19:23-27

BUZZ w/ Pitch-In: Faith in Indiana, THIS Sunday, Nov. 10, 12:30 p.m.

We will hear a presentation from Faith In Indiana which acts as a catalyst for marginalized people and faith organizations to address and take action regarding racial and economic equity. How can First Congregational support this statewide initiative? When considering what food to take to Nov 10th Buzz's pitch-in, you might want to take something other than a dessert! susanna-judith rae is providing lots of birthday cake—chocolate sheet cake, white sheet cake, and a layered carrot cake—to celebrate the 80th birthday of her husband Earl Hoppert.



What's Happening at FC

(See November Colony for monthly announcements and further details.)

Choir Rehearsal TONIGHT!

The FC Choir rehearses on Thursdays from 7:00 to 8:30 PM. We welcome new members. If anyone is interested in joining the choir, please email Julie at juliehouston@comcast.net.

We would love to have you join us!

THIS SATURDAY! Games, Pizza, and Fun

Friends, guests, members and all others are invited to a game and pizza night in the parlor beginning at **5:30 on Saturday, Nov. 9**. Come any time and join the fun. We will order pizza and plan to eat around 6:45 pm. Please bring your own beverage. All ages are included. We will have games on hand or bring your favorite.

The Nursery is OPEN!

Starting this Sunday, November 10th we will provide Sunday morning nursery care for preschool and younger from 10:30am—12:30pm. Olivia Beeman, Butler University student, will serve as our Nursery Attendant and will be joined by a church volunteer each Sunday. We will use the playroom at the end of the first floor hallway on the right side. Parents will be asked to fill out a drop off form for each child. If you have any questions or are interested in being a volunteer, please contact Pastor Sarah or Lianna Campos.

Annual Stewardship Campaign – Devoted to Generosity

Our fall annual campaign to identify funding and resources for our 2020 ministries is in progress. Pledge materials have been sent to you, and are also available in the Narthex.

Our stewardship theme, “Devoted to Generosity”, will be a focus during the worship services on **11/10** and **11/17**, culminating in **Generosity Sunday on 11/24**. Pledges can be turned in on any of those Sundays, with a deadline of November 30, to help us with our planning for 2020.



On **Generosity Sunday, 11/24**, everyone is invited to attend a simple luncheon following worship. There will be fun activities and singing, as we give thanksgiving for the generosity of our church family, displayed in so many ways that touch so many people's lives. Following the event, you can walk a labyrinth, set up in the Mayflower Room. Please RSVP to Wendy Baldwin, the church office, or use the signup sheet in the Narthex.

I thank you for all of the generous ways that you give to the church and to the world, as we explore this theme through November!

"We Are Not Alone" Breakfast

Date:

Tuesday, November 12, 2018
9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

Goal:

To raise money for and awareness of Circle City Clubhouse

Location:

St. Luke's United Methodist Church
100 W. 86th St.
Indianapolis, IN 46260

Reservations:

Eventbrite: [We Are Not Alone](#)
Email: meetme@centralindianaclubhouse.org

Hoosier Village Alternative Gift Event: Sunday, November 17 from 1:30-4:00 p.m. in the Chapel

Do you struggle to find meaningful Christmas gifts for your family and friends? Do you dread receiving more "stuff" for Christmas? This event is an alternative to the commercialization of Christmas. You and your family members will have the opportunity to make donations in a loved one's name to one or more not-for-profit agencies that provide a variety of needed services in Marion and Boone counties. If you are unable to attend, you may pick up order forms in our narthex for absentee participation. Questions? Contact Sue Chapman, chair of Outreach & Service Board.

Green Team Tip

An idling vehicle uses a cup of gasoline in one minute. Avoid drive-thru's (unless you're in a hybrid vehicle). If the line is long, turn off your engine while you wait, or park your car and order inside the restaurant. (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!

November Mission of the Month: Family Promise

This month our Mission of the Month is Family Promise of Greater Indianapolis, the organization that serves families in crisis by providing short term housing while helping them to find permanent housing and providing skills that will help clients keep jobs and manage finances. FCC has been affiliated with Family Promise, formerly known as Interfaith Hospitality Network, for over 25 years. As our congregation's make-up and size have changed in recent years, the Council has approved a recommendation from Outreach & Service for us to discontinue hosting families at our church but to continue as a "supporting congregation." This means providing monetary support, taking part in the clothing drives, providing school clothing for the children in the After Care program through our "Underneath It All" drives, and providing Christmas gifts from the gift cards on our "Giving Tree." Our monetary support helps with maintaining the day center and services for clients, including providing bus passes and gas cards. Since we are no longer hosting, our monetary support is even more important now. Please give generously to support the important service Family Promise provides to homeless families in our city.

Pantry Items of the Month

During November we are collecting the following items: fruit cocktail, spaghetti sauce, quick oats, and tooth paste.

Pastoral Care

Pastor Sarah may be reached at (386) 478-9012 or at pastorsarah@fcindy.org.

THIS WEEK AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL

| | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------|------------------------------------|
| Thursday, November 7 | 6:30 p.m. | In Harmony |
| Thursday, November 7 | 7:00 p.m. | Choir Rehearsal |
| Saturday, November 9 | 5:30 p.m. | Game Night |
| Sunday, November 10 | 9:45 a.m. | Sunday Adult Class w/ Grace |

| | | Langford |
|------------------------|------------|-----------------------------------|
| Sunday, November 10 | 11:00 a.m. | Worship |
| Sunday, November 10 | 12:30 p.m. | Buzz Pitch-In: Faith in Indiana |
| Tuesday, November 12 | 11:00 a.m. | Worship Design Team |
| Wednesday, November 13 | 11:00 a.m. | Music Support Team |
| Wednesday, November 13 | 5:00 p.m. | Mental Health Team |
| Wednesday, November 13 | 7:00 p.m. | Church Council |
| Thursday, November 14 | 1:00 p.m. | Men's Lunch |
| Thursday, November 14 | 7:00 p.m. | Choir Rehearsal |
| Sunday, November 17 | 9:45 a.m. | Sunday Adult Class w/ Rich Gibson |
| Sunday, November 17 | 11:00 a.m. | Worship |
| Sunday, November 17 | 12:45 p.m. | PCRC w/ Pastor Sarah |

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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Epistle for the Week of November 14, 2019

Dear First Congregational,

One of the greatest gifts of being part of a church family is that we get to be part of something greater than ourselves. In a world that isolates us and divides us, the church is a place for belonging and unity. I love First Congregational. I love being your pastor. I love that our church practices the art of loving as Jesus loves.

As we think about our pledges to support the mission and ministry for 2020, I give thanks for the ways our church is “devoted to generosity.” Thank you for your support and for your commitment to our bright future. I am excited about our mission and ministry for 2020. God knows that we all need a place to heal, a place to belong and a place to love in this world...I’m so glad we are creating this kind of place together at First Congregational!

Blessings,
Pastor Sarah

Worship

Adult Class - 9:45 a.m.

Rich Gibson will lead us through a discussion of "Plymouth's Pilgrims: Their Church, Their World; and Ours." Copies of the discussion guide will be made available for attendees. Come with an open mind to learn more about our Congregational ancestors.

Sunday Worship Service - 11:00 a.m.

Through word and liturgical dance, Pastor Sarah and Rev. Ayanna L. Garrett will preach on "I Forgive You."

Scripture: Isaiah 11:1-9



Rev. Ayanna L. Garrett is a spirit-filled preacher and teacher of the gospel of Jesus Christ. She is a native of Bellwood, Illinois and grew up at First Christian Church (DOC) of Maywood, IL. She attended the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign where she earned a BS in Communications and a Master of Science in Counseling at Eastern Illinois University. Soon after graduation from EIU, Rev. Garrett was hired at Ball State University where she directed the College and Career Counseling Center at the Indiana Academy for Science, Mathematics, and Humanities for ten years. During her time in Muncie, Rev. Garrett was very active in her church and in the community where she began a mentoring program within the city for young girls. Rev. Garrett received her call to ministry while in Muncie and was licensed to preach soon after.

In 2006, Rev. Garrett moved to Indianapolis to pursue a Master of Divinity at Christian

Theological Seminary (CTS). While in in seminary she taught dance at First Congregational United Church of Christ in Indianapolis for the New Creation Service, a service dedicated to the worship of God through the arts. Rev. Garrett graduated from CTS in 2010 and was ordained into the Christian ministry.

Rev. Garrett has a heart for seeing the sacred expressed and experienced through the arts. She skillfully incorporates the arts into her lectures, workshops, teaching and preaching. She has been dancing since the age of three and has been trained in ballet, modern, African and tap dance. Rev. Garrett is a highly sought-after speaker and has spoken at church related and secular workshops and conferences throughout the United States, Germany and Nicaragua. She currently resides in Bolingbrook, Illinois. She fulfills her call to walk with students as they discern their call to ministry as the Associate Director of Recruitment at Chicago Theological Seminary.



Sneak Peek at Upcoming Special Worship Services - Please Mark Your Calendar!

Blue Christmas - December 20, 6:30pm

Christmas Eve - December 24, 7:00pm

What's Happening at FC

(See [November Colony](#) for monthly announcements and further details.)

Meet Our New Nursery Attendant!

My name is Olivia Beeman and I am from Cleveland, Ohio. I am currently a student at Butler University studying Accounting. I love to travel and try to new things!



Sunday morning Nursery Care for preschool and younger is offered from 10:30am—12:30pm. Our Nursery Attendant, Olivia Beeman, will be joined by a church volunteer each Sunday. We will use the playroom at the end of the first floor hallway on the right side. Parents will be asked to fill out a drop off form for each child. If you have any questions or are interested in being a volunteer, please contact Pastor Sarah or Lianna Campos.

Choir Rehearsal TONIGHT!

The FC Choir rehearses on Thursdays from 7:00 to 8:30 PM. We welcome new members. If anyone is interested in joining the choir, please email Julie at juliehouston@comcast.net. We would love to have you join us!

TOMORROW! Friday Night at the Movies, 11/15, 6:30pm-ish

Join us on the third Friday of each month at 6:30ish at Keystone Art Cinema in 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. Questions? Contact Wendy Baldwin

TOMORROW! Deadline for December Colony Submissions

Remember: Tomorrow, Friday, November 15th is the deadline for submitting your December Colony newsletter articles and events! Please send them to shannon@fcindy.org. If you will not be able to meet that deadline, please call the church office (317-257-5397) or email Shannon and let her know the date she can expect your Colony article. (The newsletter will be sent out before Thanksgiving, so timeliness is important.)

Hoosier Village Alternative Gift Event: Sunday, November 17 from 1:30-4:00 p.m. in the

Chapel

Do you struggle to find meaningful Christmas gifts for your family and friends? Do you dread receiving more “stuff” for Christmas? This event is an alternative to the commercialization of Christmas. You and your family members will have the opportunity to make donations in a loved one’s name to one or more not-for-profit agencies that provide a variety of needed services in Marion and Boone counties. If you are unable to attend, you may pick up order forms in our narthex for absentee participation. Questions? Contact Sue Chapman, chair of Outreach & Service Board.

Annual Stewardship Campaign – Devoted to Generosity

Our fall annual campaign to identify funding and resources for our 2020 ministries is in progress. Pledge materials have been sent to you, and are also available in the Narthex. Our stewardship theme, “Devoted to Generosity”, will be a focus during the worship services on **11/17**, culminating in Generosity Sunday on **11/24**. Pledges can be turned in on any of those Sundays, with a **deadline of November 30**, to help us with our planning for 2020. Small balloons will be added to the sanctuary for each pledge received, to designate our thanks for the generosity of those responding.



On **Generosity Sunday, 11/24**, everyone is invited to attend a simple luncheon following worship (not a pitch in). There will be fun activities and singing, as we give thanksgiving for the generosity of our church family, displayed in so many ways that touch so many people’s lives. Please RSVP to Wendy Baldwin, the church office, or use the signup sheet in the Narthex.

Thank you for all of the generous ways that you give to the church and to the world, as we explore this theme through November!

Note from the Financial Secretary

We are grateful for the recent pledge of \$300/month to support First Congregational’s mission. Thank you for being “devoted to generosity!” Please contact George if this was your pledge because there was **no name** to identify who this pledge is coming from. The Financial Secretary can be reached at: george.a.meier4.civ@mail.mil or (317) 526-2235

Circle IV Book Group - Tuesday, November 19, 1:30pm

The Book Circle will meet at the home of Sue Chapman on Tuesday, Nov. 19 at 1:30 p.m to finish reading and discussing *Jayber Crow* by Wendell Berry. Please contact Sue Chapman for more information and directions to her home.

Green Team Tip

If you have a computer, have you adopted paperless bills with paperless payments? (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!

November Mission of the Month: Family Promise

This month our Mission of the Month is Family Promise of Greater Indianapolis, the organization that serves families in crisis by providing short term housing while helping them to find permanent housing and providing skills that will help clients keep jobs and manage finances. FCC has been affiliated with Family Promise, formerly known as Interfaith Hospitality Network, for over 25 years. As our congregation's make-up and size have changed in recent years, the Council has approved a recommendation from Outreach & Service for us to discontinue hosting families at our church but to continue as a "supporting congregation." This means providing monetary support, taking part in the clothing drives, providing school clothing for the children in the After Care program through our "Underneath It All" drives, and providing Christmas gifts from the gift cards on our "Giving Tree." Our monetary support helps with maintaining the day center and services for clients, including providing bus passes and gas cards. Since we are no longer hosting, our monetary support is even more important now. Please give generously to support the important service Family Promise provides to homeless families in our city.

Pantry Items of the Month


During November we are collecting the following items: fruit cocktail, spaghetti sauce, quick oats, and tooth paste.

Pastoral Care

Pastor Sarah may be reached at (386) 478-9012 or at pastorsarah@fcindy.org.

THIS WEEK AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL

| | | |
|------------------------|------------|--|
| Thursday, November 14 | 1:00 p.m. | Men's Lunch |
| Thursday, November 14 | 7:00 p.m. | Choir Rehearsal |
| Sunday, November 17 | 9:45 a.m. | Sunday Adult Class w/ Rich Gibson |
| Sunday, November 17 | 11:00 a.m. | Worship w/ guest liturgical dancer, Rev. Ayanna Garrett |
| Sunday, November 17 | 12:30 p.m. | PCRC w/ Pastor Sarah |
| Sunday, November 17 | 1:30 p.m. | Worship & Faith Meeting |
| Tuesday, November 19 | 1:30 p.m. | Circle IV Book Group |
| Wednesday, November 20 | 6:30 p.m. | Calling Circle |
| Thursday, November 21 | 6:30 p.m. | In Harmony |
| Thursday, November 21 | 7:00 p.m. | Choir Rehearsal |
| Sunday, November 24 | 9:45 a.m. | Sunday Adult Class w/ Grace Langford |
| Sunday, November 24 | 11:00 a.m. | Worship |
| Sunday, November 24 | 12:00 p.m. | Generosity Lunch & Celebration |

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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Epistle for the Week of November 21, 2019

Dear First Congregational,

First Congregational is devoted to generosity and it shows. There is a deep love that flows through this congregation and this love is what makes our church a generous community of faith. We share core values that shape our identity as people who seek to follow Jesus and love like Jesus...loving all of Creation! We show our devotion to this generosity through the dedicated work of our members who faithfully serve our church. If you are reading this...there's a good chance that YOU are devoted to generosity, too. Every day I count my blessings of being here with you at First Congregational.

I look forward to celebrating this Sunday in worship as we lift up our commitments and pledges to support our mission and ministry. I hope you can join us for the festive meal and activities following worship. While we give thanks to God for the blessings of this life, we also

celebrate this calling we have to be devoted to generosity. To be shaped by generosity is a good thing. I believe it pleases God when we give from the heart.

Through our generosity, we can help make the world a better place.

Blessings,
Pastor Sarah

Worship

Adult Class - 9:45 a.m.

Just Peace Intern, Grace Langford will lead us as we take a look at the 2019 Hunger Report from Bread for the World. The report this year is called "Back to the Basics" and focuses on five key aspects: nutrition, gender, fragility, climate, and livelihoods. We will discuss each of these key aspects in the context of the world and local community.

Sunday Worship Service : Generosity Sunday - 11:00 a.m.

Pastor Sarah will preach on "Devoted to Generosity."

Scripture: Colossians 1:11-20



Sneak Peek at Upcoming Special Worship Services - Please Mark Your Calendar!

Lessons & Carols - December 15, 11:00am

Blue Christmas - December 20, 6:30pm

Christmas Eve - December 24, 7:00pm

What's Happening at FC

(See [November Colony](#) for monthly announcements and further details.)

Choir Rehearsal TONIGHT!

The FC Choir rehearses on Thursdays from 7:00 to 8:30 PM. We welcome new members. If anyone is interested in joining the choir, please email Julie at juliehouston@comcast.net. We would love to have you join us!

Annual Stewardship Campaign – Devoted to Generosity

Our fall annual campaign to identify funding and resources for our 2020 ministries wraps up this week. Pledge materials have been sent to you, and are also available in the Narthex.



Generosity Sunday, 11/24, is the end of our Annual Campaign, where we have the opportunity to bless the pledge gifts we are receiving. Everyone is invited to attend a simple lunch following worship (not a pitch in). There will be fun activities and singing, as we give thanksgiving for the generosity of our church family, displayed in so many ways that touch so many people's lives.

Thank you for all of the generous ways that you give to the church and to the world! To help with our planning, we ask that all pledges, as well as Time & Talent cards, be turned in by December 1.

Multi-Faith Thanksgiving Service, Nov 26, 7:00 p.m.

You are invited to the 2019 Multi-faith Thanksgiving Service, to be held Tuesday, Nov. 26th at 7:00 pm at the Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation, [6501 N Meridian St, Indianapolis, IN 46260](#)

Hanging of the Greens, Saturday November 30th, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Please come help decorate the church for the Advent Season. Any questions, email Sally Coombs at sallysews73@gmail.com or call 317-446-2853.

Advent Devotionals

Advent devotionals are available in the narthex. Please take one as we reflect during the

season of waiting.

Just Peace Buzz with Pitch In Lunch, Sunday, December 1, 2019, 12:30 p.m.

The Just Peace Church Team invites you to this important presentation and discussion. We will hear from our Just Peace Intern, Grace Langford, who has been with us for three months studying our just peace process. She has summarized the findings of eleven just peace surveys, interviewed current and past team members and others involved in our just peace efforts and observed how we are doing in our first year as an official Just Peace Church. Join us for this time of discernment and receiving parting gifts from our Just Peace intern, Grace. Also, join us for **Advent wreath making** during and after the Buzz (1 wreath per family).

Check it out! - Church Women United on December 2, 9:30 -11:30 a.m.

CWU (Church Women United) will be meeting at our church on Monday, Dec 2 from 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.. At the meeting on December 2, the focus is on Human Rights - presenting the annual Humanitarian award, and there will be a presentation from Project Transformation - a United Methodist literacy-based summer program for disadvantaged youths.

All are welcome to attend - there will be light refreshments and a short service (with participation from our Carol Sowle), and we will be collecting articles and donations for the Julian Center – (suggested items include: towels, washcloths, adult blankets, fitted twin sheets, deodorant, lotion, bars of soap, baby care items and umbrellas).

We have been affiliated with this organization since the Indiana chapter was started over 70 years ago. This ecumenical group has representatives from a dozen different denominations including Roman Catholic, Episcopal, Baptist, Methodist, AME (African Methodist Episcopal) and over 100 churches. It is a “racial, culturally, and theologically inclusive Christian women's movement, celebrating unity in diversity and working for a world of peace and justice ... impassioned by the Holy Spirit to act on behalf of women and children throughout the world”. I feel privileged to belong to an organization whose early history includes fighting to desegregate the hotels in Indy, before laws forced the issue, and we have been actively involved in social justice ever since.

If you have any interest in or questions about this organization - please contact Karen Walker or Nancy Dickinson.

The Green Team wants YOU!

The Green Team could use more members! Fresh off our success in getting solar panels installed, we have fresh ideas for 2020--but could use some help dragging them across the finish line. If you have any interest in joining up to help, please contact any of us, particularly Rich Gibson, Nancy Dickinson, Bill Gillette, Ann Leatherman or Katie Booth

Green Team Tip

When using the oven for pie baking, turkey baking and other holiday use, leave the oven door

open for a few minutes and let the warmth help heat the house. (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!

November Mission of the Month: Family Promise

This month our Mission of the Month is Family Promise of Greater Indianapolis, the organization that serves families in crisis by providing short term housing while helping them to find permanent housing and providing skills that will help clients keep jobs and manage finances. FCC has been affiliated with Family Promise, formerly known as Interfaith Hospitality Network, for over 25 years. As our congregation's make-up and size have changed in recent years, the Council has approved a recommendation from Outreach & Service for us to discontinue hosting families at our church but to continue as a "supporting congregation." This means providing monetary support, taking part in the clothing drives, providing school clothing for the children in the After Care program through our "Underneath It All" drives, and providing Christmas gifts from the gift cards on our "Giving Tree." Our monetary support helps with maintaining the day center and services for clients, including providing bus passes and gas cards. Since we are no longer hosting, our monetary support is even more important now. Please give generously to support the important service Family Promise provides to homeless families in our city.

Pantry Items of the Month

During November we are collecting the following items: fruit cocktail, spaghetti sauce, quick oats, and tooth paste.

Pastoral Care

Pastor Sarah may be reached at (386) 478-9012 or at pastorsarah@fcindy.org.

Holiday Pastoral Care: While Pastor Sarah is visiting family for the Thanksgiving holiday from Nov 27-30, Rev. Worth Hartman may be reached at (317) 417-0806 or at whartman@westminstervillage.com.

THIS WEEK AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL

| | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|--|
| Thursday, November 21 | 7:00 p.m. | Choir Rehearsal |
| Sunday, November 24 | 9:45 a.m. | Sunday Adult Class w/ Grace Langford |
| Sunday, November 24 | 11:00 a.m. | Worship – Generosity Sunday |
| Sunday, November 24 | 12:30 p.m. | Generosity Celebration |
| Thursday, November 28-29 | ----- | Church Office Closed |
| Sunday, December 1 | 9:45 a.m. | Sunday Adult Class |
| Sunday, December 1 | 11:00 a.m. | Worship: First Sunday of Advent |
| Sunday, December 1 | 12:30 p.m. | Just Peace Buzz Pitch-In & Advent Wreath Making |

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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Epistle for the Week of November 28, 2019



 american greetings

Dear First Congregational,

Thank you for being a church devoted to generosity! We are blessed with the love, kindness, and caring that flows through us as we seek to Be The Church. This goodness comes from God and together we can be God's hands and feet in the world. We can each choose to work together to use our lives to make the world "a bit better" as Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote. Here is Emerson's quote from last Sunday's sermon:

*To laugh often and much;
To win the respect of intelligent people
And the affection of children;
To earn the appreciation of honest critics
And endure the betrayal of false friends;
To appreciate beauty;
To find the best in others;*

*To leave the world a bit better
Whether by a healthy child,
A garden patch, or a redeemed social condition;
To know even one life has breathed easier
Because you lived here.
This is to have succeeded.*

Thank you for helping First Congregational be a church that seeks to faithfully live out our mission and ministry. Thanksgiving blessings to each of you.

Blessings,
Pastor Sarah

Worship

Adult Class - 9:45 a.m.

For December, the Adult Ed class will move through the Advent Season by taking up the first four sessions from *Hallelujah: The Bible and Handel's Messiah*, a curriculum from Kerygma. We will be listening to parts of *Handel's Messiah*, and engaging with the scriptural references. Come and be awed!

Dec 1 – (led by Pastor Carol) "*Comfort, Comfort My People*" (2 Kings 17-19; Isaiah 40:1-1; 1:21-31; John 10:1)

Sunday Worship Service : Generosity Sunday - 11:00 a.m.

Pastor Sarah will preach on "Be the Church: Reject Racism."

Scripture: Isaiah 2:1-5

Just Peace Buzz with Pitch In Lunch, Sunday, December 1, 2019, 12:30 p.m.

The Just Peace Church Team invites you to this important presentation and discussion. We will hear from our Just Peace Intern, Grace Langford, who has been with us for three months studying our just peace process. She has summarized the findings of eleven just peace surveys, interviewed current and past team members and others involved in our just peace efforts and observed how we are doing in our first year as an official Just Peace Church. Join us for this time of discernment and receiving parting gifts from our Just Peace intern, Grace. Also, join us for **Advent wreath making** during and after the Buzz (1 wreath per family).



Sneak Peek at Upcoming Special Worship Services - Please Mark Your Calendar!

Lessons & Carols - December 15, 11:00am

Blue Christmas - December 20, 6:30pm

Christmas Eve - December 24, 7:00pm

What's Happening at FC

(See [December](#) Colony for monthly announcements and further details.)

Annual Stewardship Campaign – Devoted to Generosity

Thank you to all who have already turned in a pledge card and/or Time & Talent card for

2020. The ministries of our church depend on our faithful gifts. If you have not turned one in, extra cards are available in the Narthex, or by contacting the church office; to help with our planning, please turn these in by December 1.

Thank you for all of the generous ways that you give to the church and to the world!

Hanging of the Greens, Saturday November 30th, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Please come help decorate the church for the Advent Season. Any questions, email Sally Coombs at sallysews73@gmail.com or call 317-446-2853.

Poinsettia Time

It is the Advent Season. Please order a poinsettia to help celebrate this special time of year. The cost per plant is \$10.00. Have any questions, please see or email Sally Coombs at sallysews73@gmail.com.

Deadline: December 15th. Display: December 22nd.

Advent Devotionals

Advent devotionals are available in the narthex. Please take one as we reflect during the season of waiting.

Check it out! - Church Women United on December 2, 9:30 -11:30 a.m.

CWU (Church Women United) will be meeting at our church on Monday, Dec 2 from 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.. At the meeting on December 2, the focus is on Human Rights - presenting the annual Humanitarian award, and there will be a presentation from Project Transformation - a United Methodist literacy-based summer program for disadvantaged youths.

All are welcome to attend - there will be light refreshments and a short service (with participation from our Carol Sowle), and we will be collecting articles and donations for the Julian Center – (suggested items include: towels, washcloths, adult blankets, fitted twin sheets, deodorant, lotion, bars of soap, baby care items and umbrellas).

We have been affiliated with this organization since the Indiana chapter was started over 70 years ago. This ecumenical group has representatives from a dozen different denominations including Roman Catholic, Episcopal, Baptist, Methodist, AME (African Methodist Episcopal) and over 100 churches. It is a “racial, culturally, and theologically inclusive Christian women's movement, celebrating unity in diversity and working for a world of peace and justice ... impassioned by the Holy Spirit to act on behalf of women and children throughout the world”. I feel privileged to belong to an organization whose early history includes fighting to desegregate the hotels in Indy, before laws forced the issue, and we have been actively involved in social justice ever since.

If you have any interest in or questions about this organization - please contact Karen Walker or Nancy Dickinson.

Updates about Ways to Serve in 2020

The Care & Connections Board is responsible for filling the slate of church officers and boards for the congregation's approval at our Annual Meeting at the end of January. There will be several openings on our various boards, and we hope you will consider getting involved with one of them.

Of note, there are 3 open leadership positions:

- The Moderator position is our church's top lay position, with the primary function of leading Church Council, among other things. It is normally filled by the Vice Moderator from the prior year. Lianna Campos agreed to be our Vice Moderator in April 2019, and has chosen to not continue in leadership during 2020. Alice Rutherford, who has a background of serving on boards and Church Council, has agreed to be on the slate for 2020 for the Moderator position. If you would also like to be considered, or have a suggestion of someone who could step into the Moderator position, please contact Wendy Baldwin by 12/20.
- At this time, we have no candidate for the 2020 Vice Moderator position. This position assists the Moderator, and is in line for being Moderator in 2021. If you would like to be considered, or have a suggestion, please contact Wendy Baldwin by 12/20.
- George Meier has been our Financial Secretary for several years, and he no longer wishes to serve in this role. The Financial Secretary records our pledges, gifts, and donations. This position is the only person in the church who has access to what individuals give. One needs to have a comfort level with numbers and tracking details. If you would like to be considered, or have a suggestion, please contact Wendy Baldwin by 12/20.

Thank you to all who have served on boards in 2019, and our great appreciation to Lianna and George as their service journeys follow a different path in 2020!

The Green Team wants YOU!

The Green Team could use more members! Fresh off our success in getting solar panels installed, we have fresh ideas for 2020--but could use some help dragging them across the finish line. If you have any interest in joining up to help, please contact any of us, particularly Rich Gibson, Nancy Dickinson, Bill Gillette, Ann Leatherman or Katie Booth

Green Team Tip

When the dishwasher has finished running (before it goes to the dry cycle), open the door to let the hot humid air put warmth and humidity into the house. (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!

December Mission of the Month: The Christmas Fund

The Christmas Fund is one of the “5 for 5” offerings of the United Church of Christ that FC has committed to support. The Christmas Fund, formerly known as the “Veterans of the Cross Offering,” gives congregations and members an opportunity to reach out in loving compassion, providing assistance to those who have so faithfully served our churches and now find themselves facing unexpected financial needs. These funds enable the Pension Board’s Ministerial Assistance program to provide, on behalf of the whole Church, pension supplements, health premium supplements, emergency grants for health or unexpected travel expenses, and Christmas “Thank You” gift checks to individuals and families in need. This year’s theme is “A Light Shines in the Darkness.” Your gifts this December will bring light into the darkness of financial need of deserving retired church workers and keep needed funds coming in the year ahead. Watch for the weekly bulletin inserts during Advent for stories of how individuals and their families have been helped by the Christmas Fund.

Advent Giving Opportunities

We have several opportunities to give to those in need during Advent. Some are old traditions, others are new:

- The “**Mitten Tree**” in the narthex will again be collecting hats, mittens, gloves, scarves, and socks for both children and adults. These will be **delivered to Exodus Refugee on December 16.**
- The “**Giving Tree**” in the parlor will again be collecting \$25 gift cards for big-box stores such as Target, Meier, and Wal-Mart. These will be **delivered to Family Promise on December 16** for the After Care families for purchasing their own gifts.
- After the gift cards are removed from the “**Giving Tree**” on Dec. 15, it will become a place to donate items for the **Church World Service hygiene kits** that will be taken to the Southwest Border by our delegation in mid-January. Many of the items are being provided by the Outreach & Service Board, but there will be tickets on the tree for the remaining items needed. This is a way for all of us to be a part of this Witness at the

Border. These items should be returned by **Sunday, Jan. 5**, Epiphany Sunday.

- **New this year** is the **Reverse Advent Calendar** for collecting food items for the Northside Food Pantry. Instead of you getting a treat each day during Advent, you will be adding a designated food item to bring to church. Items should be turned in weekly, and they will be delivered weekly. Flyers with the list of items will be on the narthex table or may be accessed [here](#).

Pastoral Care

Pastor Sarah may be reached at (386) 478-9012 or at pastorsarah@fcindy.org.

Holiday Pastoral Care: While Pastor Sarah is visiting family for the Thanksgiving holiday from Nov 27-30, Rev. Worth Hartman may be reached at (317) 417-0806 or at whartman@westminstervillage.com.

THIS WEEK AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL

| | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------|--|
| Sunday, December 1 | 9:45 a.m. | Sunday Adult Class w/ Pastor Carol |
| Sunday, December 1 | 11:00 a.m. | Worship – First Sunday of Advent |
| Sunday, December 1 | 12:30 p.m. | Just Peace Buzz Pitch-In w/ Grace Langford & Advent Wreath Making |
| Monday, December 2 | 9:30 a.m. | Church Women United |
| Tuesday, December 3 | 1:00 p.m. | Worship Design Meeting |
| Wednesday, December 4 | 11:00 a.m. | Witness & Welcome Meeting |
| Wednesday, December 4 | 6:00 p.m. | Just Peace Presentation w/Grace Langford (repeat from 12/1) |
| Wednesday, December 4 | 7:00 p.m. | Trustees Meeting |
| Thursday, December 5 | 11:45 a.m. | Women’s Lunch |
| Thursday, December 5 | 1:00 p.m. | Men’s Lunch |
| Thursday, December 5 | 7:00 p.m. | Choir Rehearsal |

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|-----------------------------|-------------------|---|
| Saturday, December 7 | 10:30 a.m. | Bell Choir Rehearsal |
| Sunday, December 8 | 9:45 a.m. | Sunday Adult Class w/ Rev. Worth Hartman |
| Sunday, December 8 | 11:00 a.m. | Worship – Second Sunday of Advent |
| Sunday, December 8 | 12:15 p.m. | Outreach & Service |