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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Epistle for the Week of November 5, 2020

Dear First Congregational,

Quotes for Thought and Reflection During Election Week:

Ephesians 4:31-32:

Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, together with all malice, and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you.

Abraham Lincoln, 16th President of the United States of America:

"Always vote for principle, though you may vote alone, and you may cherish the sweetest reflection that your vote is never lost."

Bayard Rustin:

"If we desire a society of peace, then we cannot achieve such a society through violence. If we desire a society without discrimination, then we must not discriminate against anyone in the process of building this society. If we desire a

society that is democratic, then democracy must become a means as well as an end."

Audre Lorde, Our Dead Behind Us: Poems:

"It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences."

Isaiah 58:6-10:

Is this not the fast which I choose, To loosen the bonds of wickedness, To undo the bands of the yoke, And to let the oppressed go free And break every yoke? Is it not to divide your bread with the hungry And bring the homeless poor into the house; When you see the naked, to cover them; And not to hide yourself from your own flesh?

Adapted from: Prayer for the Elections

by Rev. Shannon Kelly, Missioner for Young Adult and Campus Ministries, The Episcopal Church

God, our Creator, guide us through this election process as a nation, state, and community as we vote for people to do work on our behalf and on the behalf of our communities. Help us create communities that will build your kingdom here on earth – communities that will protect the poor, stand up for the vulnerable, advocate for those who are not seen and heard, and listen to everyone's voice. We pray for this nation that is deeply divided. May we come together for the common good and do as you have called us to do – to act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with you through creation. Help us act out of love, mercy and justice rather than out of arrogance or fear. God, continue to guide us as we work for a more just world. We pray for places that are torn by violence, that they may know peace. We pray for communities who are struggling with inequality, unrest, and fear. May we all work toward reconciliation with one another and with God. Help us to listen in love, work together in peace, and collaborate with one another as we seek the betterment of our community and world. God, our Creator, guide us in truth and love.

Blessings,
Pastor Sarah

THIS SUNDAY

Sunday Adult Education, 9:30 a.m. (Zoom)

November 8: This week Maddy will facilitate a discussion about the concept of

having a growth mindset vs a fixed mindset. The link below provides a brief overview of the concept and some examples: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KUWn_TJTrnU. In conjunction, we will read and discuss the daily devotional about growth mindset available on the United Church of Christ website: https://www.ucc.org/daily_devotional_growth_mindset. Lastly, we will discuss how we can develop a growth mindset in our own personal lives, what it means, and how it might change how we live our daily lives.

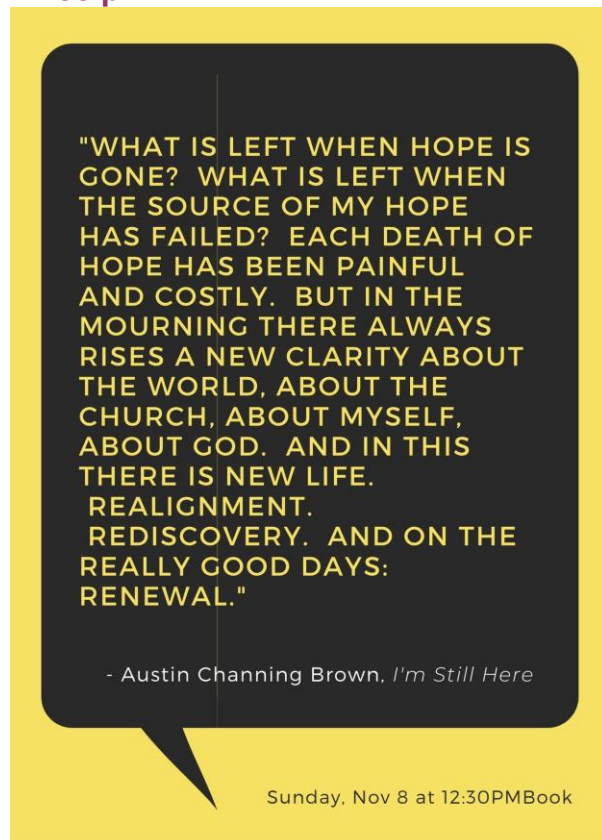
Sunday Worship, 11AM

Scripture: John 11:1-43

Sermon: "To See Beyond" (Student Pastor Cassidy Hall preaching)

Mission of the Month: Faith in Indiana

Coffee Hour via Zoom, immediately after worship, followed by Book Buzz at 12:30 p.m.



We will be continuing our discussion following the remaining chapters - 12-14 - of "I'm Still Here" by Austin Channing Brown. These chapters focus on her perception that not enough has really changed, and how she continues the fight for progress, with a 'shadow of hope'. All are welcome to the discussions. Thanks! From the

racial justice task force:

Pastor Sarah, Carol, Alice, Cassidy, Karen

Outdoor Vespers on Sundays from 4:30 - 5:00 p.m.

Join us for a time of togetherness, Scripture, and sharing of joys and concerns. Bring a chair and face mask. We practice our love by keeping distant and wearing face coverings. *Note: If the weather is threatening, the event will be cancelled, since we cannot run into the building to take cover.*

Thank You for Your Support of First Congregational UCC

Please continue supporting the mission and ministries of your local church at <http://www.fcindy.org/online-giving/>

THIS WEEK AT FC (11/5 - 11/11)

TODAY! Spiritual Support Group - Thursdays from 5:00 - 6:00 PM (Zoom) -

This group openly invites anyone seeking spiritual care concerning well being. Contact Pat Larracey at plainandfancy1963@att.net, or 317-625-6801, or Pastor Sarah at pastorsarah@fcindy.org, or 386-478-9012.

Soul Care with Pastor Sarah - Join us on **Tuesdays from 5:00-6:00 p.m.** for a time to check-in and to pray together. Here is the Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/494018938?pwd=a3BrdnNyWWEza0tFMUgwek1CVFpYQT09>

** Please note that this Zoom link is different from the Zoom links used for other FC events.*

Zoom Vespers on Tuesdays from 7:00 - 7:30 p.m.

Join us for a time of togetherness, Scripture, and sharing of joys and concerns.

Wellness Wednesdays: 10:30AM (Zoom)

On Wednesday, November 11th join us as we nurture our emotional wellness through stress reducing practices. This Zoom will be recorded and posted on the FC Facebook page and website.

Mental Health Team Meeting (Zoom): Wednesday, November 11 at 5:00 PM -

All are welcome. Contact Sandy Wood at (317) 225-6206 or csjlwood@att.net, or Pat Larracey at plainandfancy1963@att.net, or 317-625-6801 for more info.

Church Council Meeting: Wednesday, November 11 at 7:00 PM - Contact Alice Rutherford at (317) 691-0582 or alice@caloosaspire.net for more info.

Mission of the Month for November: Faith In Indiana

By joining together with people from all walks of life, this organization works toward building a just and inclusive Indiana where everyone belongs and every family thrives. Its initiatives focus on families, solidarity, prophetic voices, and faith voters. For more information, look at <https://faithinindiana.org/what-we-do/>. To contribute to this effort, write a check to First Congregational, and designate Faith in IN in the Memo line, or go to <http://www.fcindy.org/online-giving/>.

COMING UP

Next Thursday, 11/12 - Men's Lunch at 1:00 PM: Contact Randy Walker at (317) 796-2081 or aa28977rwalker@gmail.com for more info.

Food Drive on 11/14, 10AM - noon

So you can prepare in the next week, bring canned goods, as well as hats, scarves, and mittens for the "Mitten Tree".

After raising almost 400 lbs of food supplies in last month's drive, we received the following message from the Northside Pantry: *"We are so thankful for your continued support of our Pantry. This last month we served 512 families/2159 individuals. That is up 25% from our normal distribution. We have steadily been increasing since June. First Congregational Church is a blessing to Northside Food Pantry and we really appreciate all you do for the pantry."*

UCC Congregations for Mental Health – Mental Health Network Fall 2020 Virtual Seminar (hosted by the Indiana-Kentucky Conference of the UCC): Nov 13-14

For more information and to register, go to: <http://ikcucc.org/events/ucc-congregations-for-mental-health-fall-2020-seminar/>

Please click [HERE](#) to view the November Colony with more information and events happening this month!

CONNECTION & SUPPORT

FC Facebook page (CLICK [here](#))

“First Congregational Indy Fellowship” group on Facebook (click [here](#)).

Pastoral Care

We are all still here for you and will stay connected.

While Pastor Sarah is away on family leave through 11/8, Pastor Carol may be reached at (317)496-9732 or casowle@gmail.com.

After 11/8, Pastor Sarah may be reached at (386)478-9012 or pastorsarah@fcindy.org.

Pastor Sarah's Sabbath Days: Mondays & Saturdays

The congregation covenant with Pastor Sarah to provide 2 days per week for personal rest and family renewal. On Mondays and Saturdays, Pastor Sarah is not available unless it is a pastoral emergency. Thank you for honoring this sacred gift of Sabbath time for our Pastor and her family.

Additional Church Support Contacts

Pastor Carol (casowle@gmail.com)

Office Administrator, Shannon (shannon@fcindy.org)

Moderator, Alice Rutherford (alice@caloosaspirt.net)

Vice Moderator, Larry Eckel (lspeckel@comcast.net)

Mental Health Support:

- **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Disaster Distress Helpline:** 1-800-985-5990, or text “TalkWithUs” to 66746.
- **National Suicide Prevention Hotline:** 1-800-273-TALK (8255) (press 1 for veterans, 2 for Spanish)
- **National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)** Information HelpLine provides information and referral services. 1-800-950-NAMI (6264) and www.nami.org.
- **The Trevor Project hotline** offers support for LGBTQIA+ youth and families struggling with mental health challenges at 1-866-4-U-TREVOR (488-7386) and www.theTrevorProject.org

FC Covid Protocols:

Effective immediately, the church building is closed to in-person church

gatherings until the following parameters are reached, based on guidance from Dr Virginia Caine, Marion County Public Health Director:

A 7-day average of 5% (or less) positivity among unique individuals tested for a two-week period, and new cases per day at 35 or under in Marion County, per the metrics shown on www.coronavirus.in.gov.

At that time, the Council will decide reopening measures.

THIS WEEK AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL

3 Ways to Connect for Worship

YOUTUBE

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWV9wqAvPiUKSkEbjav6Zpw>

- YouTube Live broadcasts at 10:45am with 15 minutes of gathering music. The service begins at 11am..
- Use this option for live interacting and messaging. You must have or create a user account and be logged in to message live.

FACE BOOK

https://www.facebook.com/pg/FirstCongregationalUCCIndy/posts/?ref=page_internal

- The video will be posted at 11am.
- This is for viewing only. For live interacting and commenting, please use the YouTube option.

DIAL-IN

- Dial **317-204-3862**
- Landline is preferred for clarity.
- If calling with a smart phone, setting your cellular setting to Wi-Fi calling will be clearer.

How to Access our Zoom Gatherings

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/9264494206?pwd=dmtWbWE5UXRBTK5pcHZlYlBoaEFVUT09>

Meeting ID: 926 449 4206

Password: 7171

If you click on the URL, you should not need to enter in the Meeting ID and Password.

To dial in by phone: +1 312 626 6799, Meeting ID 926 449 4206, Password 7171.

Weekly Calendar

Thursday, Nov 5	5:00 p.m.	Spiritual Support Group
Sunday, Nov 8	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, Nov 8	11:00 a.m.	Worship w/ Student Pastor Cassidy Hall preaching (YouTube, FB, & Dial In)
Sunday, Nov 8	12:00 p.m.	Zoom Coffee Hour
Sunday, Nov 8	12:30 p.m.	Book Buzz
Sunday, Nov 8	4:30 p.m.	Outdoor Vespers at FC
Tuesday, Nov 10	5:00 p.m.	Soul Care w/ Pastor Sarah
Tuesday, Nov 10	7:00 p.m.	Zoom Vespers
Wednesday, Nov 11	10:30 a.m.	Wellness Wednesday - Emotional Wellness
Wednesday, Nov 11	5:00 p.m.	Mental Health Team
Wednesday, Nov 11	7:00 p.m.	Church Council
Thursday, Nov 12	1:00 p.m.	Men's Lunch
Thursday, Nov 12	5:00 p.m.	Spiritual Support Group
Fri-Sat, Nov 13-14		Mental Health Network Fall 2020 Virtual Seminar
Saturday, Nov 14	10:00 a.m.	Food Drive + Mitten Tree
Sunday, Nov 15	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, Nov 15	11:00 a.m.	Outdoor Worship at FC (+YouTube, FB, & Dial In)
Sunday, Nov 15	12:00 p.m.	Zoom Coffee Hour
Sunday, Nov 15	4:30 p.m.	Outdoor Vespers

***All events are on Zoom unless indicated otherwise.**



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Epistle for the Week of November 12, 2020

Dear First Congregational,

First Congregational blesses me in so many ways, especially this year when we face so many challenges. I am grateful to be part of the Body of Christ with you all. Together we hold the light of Christ for one another, reminding one another of God's unconditional love for us all. It is with the reassurance of God's love that I share the sad news that my niece, Sydney Griffith, died by suicide at the age of 16. Since her death on Monday, November 2, I have spent time helping my brother Steve (Sydney's father) and the family to make arrangements for the memorial service this Saturday, November 14 in Columbia, Missouri. Here is Sydney's obituary and photo: <https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/columbia-mo/sydney-griffith-9897045>.

I know that as a WISE Church for mental health, I have the love and support of our congregation. I know there is no shame or stigma here. I am grateful that I do not feel ashamed and can speak openly so that I can begin to heal from the pain of this loss. We wish Sydney had gotten the help she dearly needed. If you or

someone you know needs help, please call the **Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-8255**. All of us need the reassurance that we are loved and we are not alone.

I am thankful to Pastor Carol for providing pastoral care during my time away, and to our Student Pastor Cassidy for leading worship. Thanks to our wonderful staff members Shannon and Sean for the extra support as we seek to serve our congregation, even during difficult times.

I am also thankful that this weekend our congregation is helping to host the online UCC WISE Conference in partnership with the UCC Mental Health Network and with the Indiana-Kentucky Conference of the UCC. There's still time to register for this event, which begins Friday evening and ends Saturday afternoon. The keynote is by Rev. Dr. Rachael Keefe who visited us a couple of years ago to talk about how churches can help prevent suicide and minister to people impacted by suicide. Here is the link to register to the WISE Conference: <https://www.mhn-ucc.org/wise-ikc-fall-webinar-2020/>.

No matter what, I am convinced that God is with us. We do not journey alone. Let's continue to work together to share this light of hope and love with the world.

Blessings,
Pastor Sarah

THIS SUNDAY

Sunday Adult Education, 9:30 a.m. (Zoom)

November 15: Led by Wendy Baldwin, join us to discern and discuss a selected Bible passage, and how it speaks to us about generosity and stewardship.

Sunday Worship, 11AM (YouTube, FaceBook, Dial In)

Scriptures: Mark 6:30-32; Luke 6:12-13; Luke 5:15–16

Sermon: "The Holiness of Rest" (Student Pastor Cassidy Hall preaching)

Mission of the Month: Faith in Indiana

Coffee Hour via Zoom, immediately after worship

Outdoor Vespers on Sundays from 4:30 - 5:00 p.m.

Join us for a time of togetherness, Scripture, and sharing of joys and concerns. Bring a chair and face mask. We practice our love by keeping distant and wearing

race coverings. *Note: Outdoor vespers will not be held if the temperature is below 50, it is raining, OR the winds are above 20 mph.*

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THIS WEEK AT FC (11/12 - 11/18)

Remembering Velma Anderson

Our dear friend Velma Lucile Anderson, died on Friday morning, November 6, after a brief time in hospice. Anyone who has met Velma will have a pocket full of stories and memories. Due to the pandemic, we are unable to honor her with a church funeral and reception like we have done for our other church family members in the past. A Celebration of Life will take place at the Leppert Mortuary in Nora on November 17 at 2:00 pm. It will be limited to family and close friends. Pastor Sarah will be participating in the service and representing FC.

However, you will be able to watch the service. The service will be live streamed on Leppert's website. If you click on the link below, you will find a link at the bottom of the page "JOIN LIVESTREAM" that will take you to the service. This page also includes Velma's obituary. She was certainly a remarkable woman!

<https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/indianapolis-in/velma-anderson-9892158>

On this page you can also make a donation to Camp Riley and/or First Congregational United Church of Christ memorial fund. You may also share a memory and condolences.

Cards can also be sent to her son Alan at this address:

Alan Anderson
2280 Surface Drive
Greenwood, IN 46143

As we gather at coffee hour this coming Sunday we can take some time to share our memories of Velma.

TODAY!

- **Men's Lunch at 1:00 PM:** Contact Randy Walker at (317) 796-2081 or aa28977rwalker@gmail.com for more info.
- **Spiritual Support Group from 5:00 - 6:00 PM (Zoom):** This group openly invites anyone seeking spiritual care concerning well being. Contact Pat

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** Please note that this Zoom link is different from the Zoom links used for other FC events.*

Zoom Vespers on Tuesdays from 7:00 - 7:30 p.m.

Join us for a time of togetherness, Scripture, and sharing of joys and concerns.

Wellness Wednesdays: 10:30AM (Zoom)

On Wednesday, November 18th join us as we nurture our physical wellness through mindful movements. This Zoom will be recorded and posted on the FC Facebook page and website.

Mission of the Month for November: Faith In Indiana

The November Mission of the Month is the Indianapolis based community action organization Faith in Indiana. Faith in Indiana helps churches to more actively address local social needs. In Indianapolis, the current action agenda includes addressing the issues of gun violence, mass incarceration, immigrant justice,

economic dignity, healthcare, and voting rights. Faith in Indiana provides an opportunity to work with other churches and have a greater voice and impact than if we acted alone. Faith in Indiana acts in the spirit of our Church's historical mission to join with others in faith to address the needs of others in our local community.

For more information, go to: <https://faithinindiana.org/what-we-do/>. To contribute to this effort, write a check to First Congregational, and designate Faith in IN in the Memo line, or go to <http://www.fcindy.org/online-giving/>.

COMING UP

Devoted to Generosity - Annual Campaign to Fund our Ministries for 2021

We are currently in the midst of our Annual Campaign for 2021. Even during a pandemic, First Congregational continues its mission to transform lives through so many important ministries. Will you show your support by mailing in your pledge card and Time & Talent by November 30, 2020? Questions, or need the materials, contact Wendy Baldwin.

December Colony Submission Deadline - NEXT WEEK

Please email your submissions to Shannon at shannon@fcindy.org **no later than Thursday, November 19th**. Earlier submissions are greatly appreciated due to the Thanksgiving holiday.

Women's Lunch Bunch (Zoom) - Thursday, 11/19 at 11:30 a.m.

All women of the church are invited to get together once a month at **11:30am.** via Zoom for lunch, friendship and fellowship. This month, they meet on **November 19th**. For questions or more information please contact Sue Chapman at (317) 259-1806 or carolsuech59@gmail.com.

Book Buzz - last one on Sunday, November 22!

We had another impactful discussion this Sunday - recognizing that progress doesn't always feel like progress when there is still so much racism happening and figuring out how to keep hopeful as the movement continues. There is no book buzz this Sunday - the next one is November 22, where we will share how this book has impacted or challenged us and what our potential next steps could be as a church community.

Austin Channing Brown's challenge includes these words from page 171 in *I'm Still Here*: *"Reconciliation is not about white feelings. It's about diverting power and attention to the oppressed, toward the powerless. It's not enough to dabble at*

diversity and inclusion while leaving the existing authority structure in place. Reconciliation demands more."

A lot to think about! All are welcome to the discussion

Thanks! From the racial justice task force:

Pastor Sarah, Carol, Alice, Cassidy, Karen

Book Circle (Zoom) - Tues, 11/24 (NEW DATE) at 1:30PM

We continue our discussion of *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston. For the meeting in November we will finish the book. For more information please contact Karen Walker at 317-319-8950 or karen.e.d.walker@gmail.com

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How to Access our Zoom Gatherings

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Password: 7171

If you click on the URL, you should not need to enter in the Meeting ID and Password.

To dial in by phone: +1 312 626 6799, Meeting ID 926 449 4206, Password 7171.

Weekly Calendar

Thursday, Nov 12	1:00 p.m.	Men's Lunch
Thursday, Nov 12	5:00 p.m.	Spiritual Support Group
Fri-Sat, Nov 13-14		Mental Health Network Fall 2020 Virtual Seminar
Saturday, Nov 14	10:00 a.m.	Food Drive
Sunday, Nov 15	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, Nov 15	11:00 a.m.	Sunday Worship (YouTube, FB, Dial In)
Sunday, Nov 15	12:00 p.m.	Zoom Coffee Hour
Sunday, Nov 15	4:30 p.m.	Outdoor Vespers
Tuesday, Nov 17	5:00 p.m.	Soul Care w/ Pastor Sarah
Tuesday, Nov 17	7:00 p.m.	Zoom Vespers
Wednesday, Nov 18	10:30 a.m.	Wellness Wednesday
Thursday, Nov 19	11:45 p.m.	Women's Lunch Bunch (Zoom)

Thursday, Nov 19	5:00 p.m.	Spiritual Support Group
Saturday, Nov 21	11:00 a.m.	Neighborhood Walk (FC)
Sunday, Nov 22	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, Nov 22	11:00 a.m.	Sunday Worship (YouTube, FB, Dial In)
Sunday, Nov 22	12:00 p.m.	Zoom Coffee Hour
Sunday, Nov 22	12:30 p.m.	Zoom Book Buzz
Sunday, Nov 22	4:30 p.m.	Outdoor Vespers

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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Epistle for the Week of November 19, 2020

Dear First Congregational,

One of the greatest gifts of this congregation is our commitment to lifelong learning, growth, and development. This continuing process of spiritual evolution is rooted in our faith tradition. Progressive Christianity embraces change. We celebrate God's presence in us, through us, and around us in all of Creation. As we change and as the world changes, our experiences and understanding of God changes with us.

I rejoice in the opportunity to share our values of justice, liberation, love and peace with younger generations through our internship programs. Our partnership with Butler University's Center for Faith and Vocation is now in its second year and continues strong through our Just Peace Internship program. This week we say "thank you" to our fall 2020 Just Peace Intern, Maddy Vaughn. This semester she has led the way for voter justice, leading our efforts to get out the vote in this historic election. Maddy has strengthened our relationship with Faith In Indiana, and she has encouraged us to embrace a "Growth Mindset." Join me in wishing

ivaddy well as she completes her senior year at Butler and prepares for law school next fall. Thank you Maddy and God's blessings be with you!

We will be welcoming a new Just Peace Intern for the spring, and I am excited to continue this important ministry (more details to come). While we may be a smaller size congregation, we can have a mighty big impact on the lives we touch. For this, I give you and God thanks.

Blessings,
Pastor Sarah

THIS SUNDAY

Sunday Adult Education, 9:30 a.m. (Zoom)

November 22: In 1970 at the 350th commemoration of the Mayflower landing at Plymouth, a Wampanoag leader named Wamsutta (Frank B.) James was invited to speak at the state dinner. Wamsutta accepted, and wrote a speech explaining how to the native peoples, the Thanksgiving holiday is a day of mourning. The planners asked to review his speech prior to the event, and they determined it was not appropriate. They asked Wamsutta to change it. He refused, and his invitation to speak was withdrawn. We will read and reflect on his speech, found at this link. http://www.uaine.org/suppressed_speech.htm. Time permitting, we will return to our previous resource and look at pages 6-8 from "American Indian Perspectives on Thanksgiving," from the National Museum of the American Indian, found here: https://www.uccfiles.com/pdf/Native_American_Perspectives_on_Thanksgiving.pdf

Sunday Worship, 11AM (YouTube, FaceBook, Dial In)

Scripture: Matthew 25:31-46

Sermon: "Giving to God"

Mission of the Month: Faith in Indiana

Coffee Hour via Zoom, immediately after worship, followed by Book Buzz at 12:30 p.m.

Book Buzz - last one on November 22!

We have had a wonderful, meaningful journey with "I'm Still Here: Black Dignity in a World Made For Whiteness" by Austin Channing Brown. This Sunday we will look back at how this book has impacted each of us. We will also be discussing what the next steps should be for our church community on this journey towards

racial justice - what can we do together that will help us move forward - ourselves, each other, our community and the bigger systems. There are many paths we can follow, including more education, advocacy, partnering, and other actions. Bring you ideas!

While there are many many noteworthy quotes in this book, I think this one is worth repeating in preparation for our discussion on Sunday: "Reconciliation is not about white feelings. It's about diverting power and attention to the oppressed, toward the powerless. It's not enough to dabble at diversity and inclusion while leaving the existing authority structure in place. Reconciliation demands more."

As an indicator of some progress (thanks for sharing Susanna-Judith!) - note this article: "Sen. Greg Taylor Is First Black Leader of Legislative Caucus in State History,":

<https://www.wfyi.org/news/articles/sen-greg-taylor-is-first-black-leader-of-legislative-caucus-in-state-history>

A lot to think about! All are welcome to the discussion.

Thanks! From the racial justice task force:

Pastor Sarah, Carol, Alice, Cassidy, Karen

Outdoor Vespers on Sundays from 4:30 - 5:00 p.m.

Join us for a time of togetherness, Scripture, and sharing of joys and concerns. Bring a chair and face mask. We practice our love by keeping distant and wearing face coverings. *Note: Outdoor vespers will not be held if the temperature is below 50, it is raining, OR the winds are above 20 mph.*

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THIS WEEK AT FC (11/19 - 11/25)

TODAY!

- **Women's Lunch at 11:45 AM:** Contact Sue Chapman at (317) 259-1806 or carolsuech59@gmail.com for more information.
- **Spiritual Support Group from 5:00 - 6:00 PM (Zoom):** This group openly

invites anyone seeking spiritual care concerning well being. Contact Pat Larracey at plainandfancy1963@att.net, or 317-625-6801, or Pastor Sarah at pastorsarah@fcindy.org, or 386-478-9012.

December Colony Submission Deadline

If you have not already done so, please email your submissions to Shannon at shannon@fcindy.org right away. Due to the Thanksgiving holiday, the December Colony will be sent out early next week.

Neighborhood Walk – Sat, 11/21, 11 am

Meet in the church parking lot for our monthly walk in the neighborhood. We will wear masks, and keep distant, while walking and catching up with each other. The walk will last about a half hour. Dress appropriately, but we will cancel if it is raining.

Soul Care with Pastor Sarah - Join us on **Tuesdays from 5:00-6:00 p.m.** for a time to check-in and to pray together. Here is the Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/494018938?pwd=a3BrdnNyWXEza0tFMUgwek1CVFpYQT09>

** Please note that this Zoom link is different from the Zoom links used for other FC events.*

Book Circle (Zoom) - Tues, 11/24 (NEW DATE) at 1:30PM

We continue our discussion of *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston. For the meeting in November we will finish the book. For more information please contact Karen Walker at 317-319-8950 or karen.e.d.walker@gmail.com

Zoom Vespers on Tuesdays from 7:00 - 7:30 p.m.

Join us for a time of togetherness, Scripture, and sharing of joys and concerns.

Wellness Wednesdays: 10:30AM (Zoom)

On Wednesday, **November 25th** join us as we nurture our **spiritual wellness** through a celebration of autumn, its gifts and lessons. We will celebrate this season of gratitude through *scripture, storytelling, prayer, meditation, and movement*. This Zoom will be recorded and posted on the FC Facebook page and website.

Thanksgiving Zoom Gathering – Thurs, 11/26, 3 pm

we'll gather together with our church family on our Zoom link to share Thanksgiving fellowship, fun, and friendship.

Mission of the Month for November: Faith In Indiana

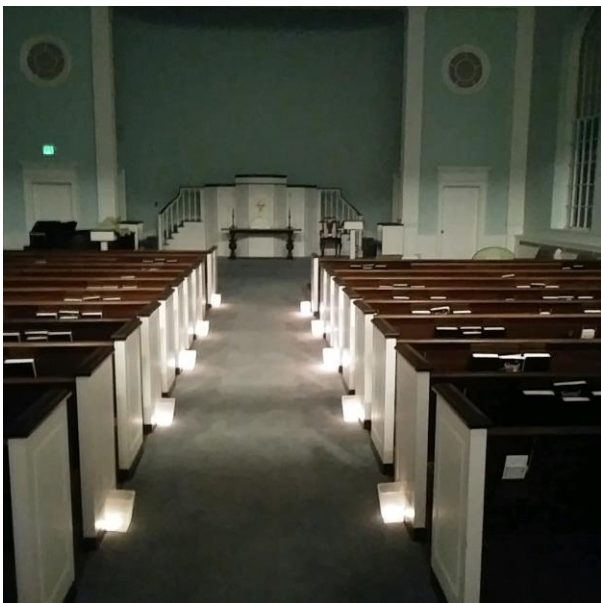
The November Mission of the Month is the Indianapolis based community action organization Faith in Indiana. Faith in Indiana helps churches to more actively address local social needs. In Indianapolis, the current action agenda includes addressing the issues of gun violence, mass incarceration, immigrant justice, economic dignity, healthcare, and voting rights. Faith in Indiana provides an opportunity to work with other churches and have a greater voice and impact than if we acted alone. Faith in Indiana acts in the spirit of our Church's historical mission to join with others in faith to address the needs of others in our local community.

For more information, go to: <https://faithinindiana.org/what-we-do/>. To contribute to this effort, write a check to First Congregational, and designate Faith in IN in the Memo line, or go to <http://www.fcindy.org/online-giving/>.

COMING UP

Advent

After so many months of pandemic mitigation, it's hard to believe that Advent is almost upon us! November 29 marks the first Sunday of Advent this year, and our worship that day and in coming weeks will honor this holy season. Each Advent Sunday service will include a candle-lighting segment, so we suggest worshippers have a candle handy for lighting at home. Scripture readings will include time-honored familiar passages from Isaiah and the Gospels, and familiar hymns and carols will lift our spirits throughout the season. There's even something special for our children, so we hope all families and households – large and small – will gather each Advent Sunday morning on YouTube as our beloved faith community. Even in these dark days we can fill our lives with music and light!



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Please click [HERE](#) to view the November Colony with more information and events happening this month!

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FC Facebook page (click [here](#))

“First Congregational Indy Fellowship” group on Facebook (click [here](#)).

Pastoral Care

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

Pastor Sarah's Sabbath Days: Mondays & Saturdays

The congregation covenant with Pastor Sarah to provide 2 days per week for personal rest and family renewal. On Mondays and Saturdays, Pastor Sarah is not available unless it is a pastoral emergency. Thank you for honoring this sacred gift of Sabbath time for our Pastor and her family.

Upcoming Vacation:

Our Office Admin, Shannon, will be on vacation Nov 26 - Nov 30.

Pastor Sarah will be on vacation Nov 26 - Nov 29.

Additional Church Support Contacts

Pastor Carol (casowle@gmail.com)

Office Administrator, Shannon (shannon@fcindy.org)

Moderator, Alice Rutherford (alice@caloosaspirt.net)

Vice Moderator, Larry Eckel (lspeckel@comcast.net)

Mental Health Support:

- **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Disaster Distress Helpline:** 1-800-985-5990, or text "TalkWithUs" to 66746.
- **National Suicide Prevention Hotline:** 1-800-273-TALK (8255) (press 1 for veterans, 2 for Spanish)
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At that time, the Council will decide reopening measures.

THIS WEEK AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL

3 Ways to Connect for Worship

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<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWV9wqAvPiUKSkEbjav6Zpw>

- YouTube Live broadcasts at 10:45am with 15 minutes of gathering music. The service begins at 11am..
- Use this option for live interacting and messaging. You must have or create a user account and be logged in to message live.

FACE BOOK

https://www.facebook.com/pg/FirstCongregationalUCCIndy/posts/?ref=page_internal

- The video will be posted at 11am.
- This is for viewing only. For live interacting and commenting, please use the YouTube option.

DIAL-IN

- Dial **317-204-3862**
- Landline is preferred for clarity.
- If calling with a smart phone, setting your cellular setting to Wi-Fi calling will be clearer.

How to Access our Zoom Gatherings

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/9264494206?pwd=dmtWbWE5UXRBTK5pcHZlYlBoaEFVUTo9>

Meeting ID: 926 449 4206

Password: 7171

If you click on the URL, you should not need to enter in the Meeting ID and Password.

To dial in by phone: +1 312 626 6799, Meeting ID 926 449 4206, Password 7171.

Weekly Calendar

Thursday, Nov 19	11:30 a.m.	Women's Lunch
Thursday, Nov 19	5:00 p.m.	Spiritual Support Group
Friday, Nov 20	10:00 a.m.	PCRC (Pastor Sarah)
Saturday, Nov 21	11:00 a.m.	Neighborhood Walk (at FC)
Sunday, Nov 22	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, Nov 22	11:00 a.m.	Sunday Worship (YouTube, FB, Dial In)
Sunday, Nov 22	12:00 p.m.	Zoom Coffee Hour
Sunday, Nov 22	12:30 p.m.	Book Buzz
Sunday, Nov 22	3:00 p.m.	Outreach & Service
Sunday, Nov 22	4:30 p.m.	Outdoor Vespers
Tuesday, Nov 24	1:30 p.m.	Book Circle
Tuesday, Nov 24	5:00 p.m.	Soul Care w/ Pastor Sarah
Tuesday, Nov 24	7:00 p.m.	Zoom Vespers
Wednesday, Nov 25	10:30 a.m.	Wellness Wednesday
Thursday, Nov 26	3:00 p.m.	Thanksgiving Day Zoom Gathering
Thursday, Nov 26	5:00 p.m.	Spiritual Support
Sunday, Nov 29	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, Nov 29	11:00 a.m.	Sunday Worship (YouTube, FB, Dial In)
Sunday, Nov 29	12:00 p.m.	Zoom Coffee Hour
Sunday, Nov 29	4:30 p.m.	Outdoor Vespers

***All events are on Zoom unless indicated otherwise.**

 [FirstCongregationalUCCIndy](#)

 [Forward](#)



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Epistle for the Week of November 26, 2020

Dear First Congregational,

I give God thanks for each one of you, for our faith community at First Congregational, and for the creative and meaningful ways we come together to Be The Church. As part of the United Church of Christ, we join together with our wider church family to pray this special Thanksgiving Day Prayer:

*On this day, O God, we give thanks
in all kinds of communities, or even in solitude.
Our desire in this moment is to come before you
with our prayers of thanksgiving.
For some of us the words we offer
will flow easily from our lips.
For others trying to name our blessing may prove difficult.
Thanksgiving 2020 may be very different from previous years:
a smaller table at which to sit,
new persons sitting with us,*

*or a dear one absent,
worries crowding out our sense of blessing.
These realities may reshape our prayers from years past.
To seek joy may lead through heartbreak.
Whatever our reality, O God,
We ask that you help us focus
not so much on material things
(whether their abundance or scarcity)
but rather on how we are living our lives.
Help us recognize
all the ways you are present in our lives this year.
Help us gather the strength we need for today
and for all of our tomorrows.
Grant us the satisfaction of intimacy with Jesus,
your great gift to us, through whom you offer
Living Water, Bread of Life,
more than we can ask or imagine.
Help us to extend our prayers of thanksgiving to you
into tomorrow with joyful spirits.
We are loved and blessed and thankful. **Amen.***

Prayer for Thanksgiving Day was written by Henrietta Stith Andrews, a retired UCC Pastor who served as Associate Conference Minister in Michigan. Rev. Andrews is a certified Spiritual Director and presently residing in Powderfield, GA.

Blessings,
Pastor Sarah

THIS SUNDAY

Sunday Adult Education, 9:30 a.m. (Zoom)

November 29: Poetry as Prophecy – Student Pastor Cassidy Hall will be walking us through some poetry (including videos of readings) so that we can discuss the prophetic nature of poetry. You're encouraged to bring your own poem to share with the group, as we plan to hear from a variety of poets. One thing to keep in mind when selecting a poem: *what makes this poem or this poet feel prophetic?*

Advent

Advent begins this Sunday! Join us on YouTube as we light the candle of hope. We begin our preparation for Christ's coming with scripture passages Isaiah 40:1-

11 and Mark 1:1-15, and we'll sing and hear inspirational seasonal music. Pastor Carol Sowle will be leading worship while Pastor Sarah enjoys some needed time of rest and renewal.

For ideas for Advent candles, luminaries, and other festive home décor, check out this link: [40+ I Believe Even When... ideas in 2020 | paper bag lanterns, luminary, luminaries bags \(pinterest.com\)](#)

Advent devotionals may be picked up in the narthex.



The 1st Sunday of Advent Worship, 11AM (YouTube, FaceBook, Dial In)

Scriptures: Isaiah 40:1-11 and Mark 1:1-15

Sermon: "Comfort and Joy" (Pastor Carol preaching)

Mission of the Month: Faith in Indiana

Coffee Hour via Zoom, immediately after worship

Outdoor Vespers on Sundays from 4:30 - 5:00 p.m.

Join us for a time of togetherness, Scripture, and sharing of joys and concerns. Bring a chair and face mask. We practice our love by keeping distant and wearing face coverings. *Note: Outdoor vespers will not be held if the temperature is below 50, it is raining, OR the winds are above 20 mph.*

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THIS WEEK AT FC (11/19 - 11/25)

TODAY! Thanksgiving Zoom Gathering – Thurs, 11/26, 3 pm

We'll gather together with our church family on our Zoom link to share Thanksgiving fellowship, fun, and friendship.

No Spiritual Support Group today due to the holiday. However, Pat Larracey is available by phone or email for anyone needing support. You can contact him at plainandfancy1963@att.net, or 317-625-6801.

Soul Care with Pastor Sarah - Join us on **Tuesdays from 5:00-6:00 p.m.** for a time to check-in and to pray together. Here is the Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/494018938?pwd=a3BrdnNyWXEza0tFMUgwek1CVFpYQT09>

** Please note that this Zoom link is different from the Zoom links used for other FC events.*

Zoom Vespers on Tuesdays from 7:00 - 7:30 p.m.

Join us for a time of togetherness, Scripture, and sharing of joys and concerns.

Wellness Wednesdays: 10:30AM (Zoom)

Throughout most of December, we will use excerpts from the Advent devotional, *Draw Near*, to guide us as we nurture ways we can connect with one another and connect within ourselves.

This month, we are going to switch it up a little bit, and have live Zoom the first 4 weeks of December, and then on December 30th, there will be a pre-recorded ritual of letting go and setting intentions as we transition into the coming year.

Wednesday, December 2: Nurturing Wellness through Knowing God for Myself

Personnel Committee Staff Review Survey

You should have very recently received a brief survey related to our staff either through email or on paper (however you get the colony). If you did not receive one, please contact Karen Walker (317-319-8950 or karen.e.d.walker@gmail.com) or Bill Hummel (317-875-8388 or whummel001@comcast.net) of the Personnel Committee. Please take the time to complete the survey and help us grow in our ministries - thanks!

Mission of the Month for November: Faith In Indiana

The November mission of the month is the Indianapolis based community action organization Faith in Indiana. Faith in Indiana helps churches to more actively address local social needs. In Indianapolis, the current action agenda includes addressing the issues of gun violence, mass incarceration, immigrant justice, economic dignity, healthcare, and voting rights. Faith in Indiana provides an opportunity to work with other churches and have a greater voice and impact than if we acted alone. Faith in Indiana acts in the spirit of our Church's historical mission to join with others in faith to address the needs of others in our local community.

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COMING UP

WISE Mental Health Team - Wednesday, Dec 2 at 5:00 PM (on Zoom) - For more information contact co-chairs, Pat Larracey, 317-625-6801-plainandfancy1963@att.net and Sandy Wood, 317-225-6206- csjlwood@att.net.

Trustees - Wednesday, Dec 2 at 7:00 PM (on Zoom)

Men's Lunch - Thursday, Dec 3 at 1:00 PM - Please contact Randy Walker at (317) 796-2081 or aa28977rwalker@gmail.com for more information.

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BOOK BUZZ and I thank you!

Thanks for a wonderful Book Buzz journey! A lot of sharing of hearts, minds, and perspectives, with some personal movement along the journey for racial justice. Through some discussion focused on what we do next we recognize that everyone is at their own point on their journey of understanding racial justice. In considering a variety of options for the church to support - more study, more dialogue, partnerships, and actions - we see many possible directions toward fighting racism embedded systemically, institutionally, and socially. We have a grant from Bethany Fellows to help us move in our direction(s) of choice. If anyone would like to join the task force to determine the next steps on this long journey, please contact any of us currently on the team.

The videos of Maya Angelou that Cassidy shared were especially powerful and meaningful - here are the links

Still I Rise poetry reading: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qviM_GnJbOM

Lessons from her life: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N8RA4JsoKjY>

Passing the books on: If you have a copy of *I'm Still Here* that was provided by the church - please bring it back to church by December 15 so we can pass them on to another congregation to use. It is fine if they are written in and marked up as long as there isn't any private information in there. There is a box inside the patio door of the church to collect them, if you can bring them when you drop off other donations that would be great! Please contact Karen Walker (karen.e.d walker@gmail.com or 317-319-8950) - Thanks!

- The racial justice task force: Pastor Sarah, Carol, Cassidy, Alice, Karen

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Sunday, Nov 29	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, Nov 29	11:00 a.m.	1st Sunday of Advent Worship (YouTube, FB, Dial In) w/ Pastor Carol preaching
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Sunday, Nov 29	4:30 p.m.	Outdoor Vespers
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Wednesday, Dec 2	10:30 a.m.	Wellness Wednesday
Wednesday, Dec 2	5:00 p.m.	WISE MH Team
Wednesday, Dec 2	7:00 p.m.	Trustees
Thursday, Dec 3	1:00 p.m.	Men's Lunch
Thursday, Dec 3	5:00 p.m.	Spiritual Support
Sunday, Dec 6	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, Dec 6	11:00 a.m.	2 nd Sunday of Advent/Communion Sunday Worship (YouTube, FB, Dial In)
Sunday, Dec 6	12:00 p.m.	Zoom Coffee Hour
Sunday, Dec 6	4:30 p.m.	Outdoor Vespers

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