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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Epistle for the Week of September 16

Church Gathering Update:

Reminder: We are back to worship ON-LINE ONLY at 11:00 AM.

We will continue in-person Outdoor Patio, Psalms, and Prayers, Sundays at 9:30 AM.

Marion County Status: ORANGE
(see policy update from the church council below)

BE A BLESSING PRACTICE PEACE.
LEAD WITH LOVE.
BE JOYFUL. PRAY OFTEN. BE KIND. GIVE THANKS.
DO GOOD. HAVE COURAGE. WORK FOR JUSTICE.
BE THE LIGHT. ENCOURAGE OTHERS.  UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Dear First Congregational,

build a more peaceful world. This Sunday we will hear from members of our Just Peace ministry, including our Just Peace Intern Allison Welz. As we prepare for Sunday, I invite you to meditate on God's personal invitation to you to be a peacemaker.

Let us consider these words from the UCC national Just Peace ministries: being a Just Peace Church is not a final destination, but "a path requiring awareness and constant vigilance to resolve existing and developing conflict in ourselves, our families, our communities, our institutions and our world... Just Peace envisions a renewed, vibrant, diverse, and sustainable world free of violence." Imagine a world free of violence, what a wonderful world that would be.

Our city continues to experience high levels of gun violence. As a church, how are we to respond? We can make positive, peaceful change through partnering with Faith In Indiana and joining them to advocate for solutions to gun violence. Please sign up and attend a house meeting so you can be a peacemaker for our city. (See below for house meeting information).

One of the most powerful gifts of the Christian faith is to offer the world this conviction: Peace is possible!

Let peace begin with me. Let peace begin with you. Let peace begin today.

Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund
www.fcindy.org

COVID Protocols for First Congregational UCC

Approved by Church Council on 7/28/21; amended on 8/11/21

Marion County is currently in **Orange** status, therefore, the building of First Congregational UCC is closed for in-person gatherings based on the current standings of Marion County on <https://www.coronavirus.in.gov/2393.htm>.

Marion County "color"

Indoors

Outdoors

Blue, positivity is decreasing

Masks are optional for vaccinated people, and required for unvaccinated

Masks are not required

Blue, positivity is increasing

Masks are encouraged for vaccinated people,

Masks are not required

YellowMasks are required for allMasks are encouraged
for vaccinated people,
and required for
unvaccinated**Orange**Building is closed for in-
person gatheringsMasks are required for
all**Red**Building is closed for in-
person gatheringsNo church-sponsored
outdoor gatherings

Current “color status” will be posted on the patio door, as well as communicated in the weekly e-pistle. Mask wearing is based on the honor system; we will not be checking vaccination status. We ask that people prayerfully consider using practices that keep themselves safe as well as others.

Current Marion County “color status”: **Orange**

Click [HERE](#) for updated details further explaining FC's Covid protocols.



Are you ready to get back to
the people and activities you love?

Your vaccination brings us one day closer
to controlling the pandemic and reopening Church.

Get your vaccine ASAP!

Register at ourshot.in.gov or call 211.

THIS SUNDAY

Sunday Adult Education: Patio Psalms & Prayers, 9:30 a.m. (on FC Patio)

(Please note the return to 9:30 a.m. while not meeting in person for worship.)

September 19: Psalm 16

Virtual Sunday Worship, 11AM (YouTube, FaceBook, 2PM Dial In)

Scripture: Mark 9:30-37

Sermon: Practice Peace

Thank You for Your Support of First Congregational UCC

Please continue supporting the mission and ministries of your local church by mailing a check to the church or through online donations at <http://www.fcindy.org/online-giving/>

THIS WEEK AT FC

How to Access our Zoom Gatherings

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/9264494206?pwd=dmtWbWE5UXRBTk5pcHZlYlB0aEFVUT09>

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.

TONIGHT, Thursday September 16th: Spiritual Support Group at 5:00 p.m.

(Zoom) - This group openly invites anyone seeking spiritual care concerning well being. Contact Pastor Sarah at pastorsarah@fcindy.org, or 386-478-9012.

Invitation to new faith formation opportunities:

As a hybrid church it's important for us to offer faith formation activities in a variety of ways. One such avenue is the ongoing Patio Psalms and Prayers meeting on the church's patio each Sunday morning at 9:30. This group is studying and discussing the psalms and offering personal joys and prayer concerns in an in-person format. In support of our hybrid church vision, the Worship & Faith Board is offering an online-only faith formation opportunity for anyone wishing to participate. Over the next few months we'll gather on the church's Zoom link for a "sermon talkback" every other Sunday at 5:00-6:00 PM. Pastor Sarah's sermons are usually stimulating and thought-provoking, so this will be an opportunity for some interactive reflection on what she has offered to us in worship. **Tune in as you feel comfortable on any or all Sundays – September 26, October 10 & 24, November 7 & 21.** Another online opportunity is being offered by the UCC – the 6-month series "Reason to Have Hope". This course was developed as a resource to support the recently adopted General Synod resolution defining racism as a public health issue. The discussion group will meet **every other Tuesday, 1:00-2:00 PM, beginning on September 14 and ending on March 15.** Learn more and register at [CHHSM Discussion Group to Delve into 'Reason to Have Hope' Course - CHHSM.](#)

Outreach & Service - If you've read the last couple of Epistles you may be expecting more info about how we as a church can be helpful to Exodus as they settle Afghan refugees here in the Indianapolis area. At [In-kind Support | Exodus Refugee](#) a list can be found of specific needed items. On **Saturday, October 25, 10:00-12:00**, you can bring donated items (included monetary donations) to church, and we'll see that they are delivered to Exodus the following week. Also on that day during those same hours you can bring any donations for Northside Pantry. While we remain virtual only we feel the need to resume food drive days for both fellowship and service to our community. See the October Colony for info about a food/donation drive day in October.

Covenant Outreach shifts this month to support of organizations reflecting our Open & Affirming covenant. Please see the September Colony for information about Indiana Youth Group, Trinity Haven, and Damien Center, and consider a generous contribution to Covenant Outreach over the next four months.

Also, remember to support the virtual [Indiana AIDS Walk 2021 - The Health Foundation of Greater Indianapolis \(indianaaidsfund.org\)](#), happening **this Sunday, 9/19, through their website**. Reflecting our Open & Affirming covenant, First Congregational has supported this important ministry in the past. Even as we remain distanced it's possible to provide support again this year.

Faith In Indiana – Join the meetings! Faith In Indiana - meetings have started - ok, they are really "house parties"! The first was held at the Hartman's on Saturday and the sharing of stories and concerns and passions was impactful for all who attended. There is still time to sign up for a future one. Please contact Karen Walker (317-319-8950, Karen.e.d.walker@gmail.com) with your choice of which event you will attend. More details will be sent after the choices are made.

Options remaining:

- **Sunday, Sept 19 at 5:00** at Randy & Karen Walker's 9033 Buckeye Court, 46260 (outside)
- **Sunday, Sept 26 at 1:00** at church (outside) hosted by Steve Leatherman
- **Monday, Sept 27 at 7:00** on zoom hosted by Alice Rutherford

If you have any questions, please contact the chair - Worth Hartman (worthgrover@sbcglobal.net) or the communication lead - Karen Walker (karen.e.d.walker@gmail.com)

The Mental Health Team is seeking new members who want to become part of the team. **The next meeting is September 22nd at 5PM.** If interested or have questions, contact Sandy Wood@ csjlwood@att.net or 317-225-6206.

church patio (weather permitting—otherwise Zoom) reading the first 61 pages of *Remember by Lisa Genova*. Questions? Contact Linda Lupton lklupton@aol.com

Calling all writers and poets! One thing I love about this church is the incredible talent we have in the pews (that's you!) Beginning this week, I'll be collecting poems and short reflections (up to 250 words) on the topic of nature. Have you fallen in love with a tree, met a squirrel you've been wondering about, or was stopped in your tracks by a hummingbird? Write about it and submit here: <https://forms.gle/FaJZPMPMmJsyzWf6> **Submit by October 1st.** Questions? Email me at cassidy@fcindy.org

Next Buzz:

Sunday, October 3rd, 12:30 PM on Zoom! Allison Welz will be making a presentation on her visits and work in Myanmar.

October 10th Buzz:

Sunday, October 10th, 12:30 PM on Zoom! Join to learn more about Trinity Haven.

Please click [HERE](#) to view the September 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

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

Pastoral Care Associate: Pastor Carol (casowle@gmail.com)

Office Administrator & External Communications Manager: Cassidy Hall (cassidy@fcindy.org)

Lead Councilor: Steve Coomer (s.coomer@sbcglobal.net)

(Senior Councilors: Steve Coomer, Larry Eckel, Alice Rutherford)

- **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

Members in Need Fund - The Members in Need Fund is available to support financial needs for any of our church family who find themselves in need. To request funds for you or your family, please contact Pastor Sarah by email pastorsarah@fcindy.org or cell (386) 478-9012.

THIS WEEK AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL

Ways to Connect for Worship

YOUTUBE

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWV9wqAvPiUKSkEbjaV6Zpw>

- YouTube Live broadcasts 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 (available after 2PM)

- 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.

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/9264494206?pwd=dmtWbWE5UXRBTk5pcHZlYlBoaEFVUTo9>
Meeting ID: 926 449 4206

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.

This Week at First Congregational:

Thursday, September 16	5:00 p.m.	Spiritual Support Group (Zoom)
Thursday, September 16	1:00 p.m.	Men's Lunch
Sunday, September 19	9:30 a.m.	Patio Psalms & Prayers (FC patio)
Sunday, September 19	11:00 a.m.	Sunday Worship (YouTube, FB, Dial In)
Sunday, September 19	12:00 p.m.	Virtual Coffee Hour (Zoom)
Wednesday, September 22	5:00 p.m.	WISE Mental Health Team (Zoom)
Thursday, September 23	5:00 p.m.	Spiritual Support Group (Zoom)
Sunday, September 26	9:30 a.m.	Patio Psalms & Prayers (FC patio)
Sunday, September 26	11:00 a.m.	Sunday Worship (YouTube, FB, Dial In)
Sunday, September 26	12:00 p.m.	Virtual Coffee Hour (Zoom)

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