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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Epistle for the Week of September 9

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,

statement offers deep wisdom. Join me each Sunday for worship as we ground ourselves in the powerful spiritual teachings of our faith and nurture our souls in the promise of God's loving care for each one of us and all of Creation.

This Sunday we invite everyone to a special Buzz on zoom after worship about what it means to be a "hybrid church." We want to share some exciting plans for worship and to hear your feedback about what online church and worship have been like for you. This will be an important time to share, listen, and reflect on our common life together in covenant. We want to invite you into our collective discernment process about how to faithfully Be The Church today.

Thank you all for your faithful financial support of our mission and ministry. Together we are sharing God's love.

Peace,
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 <u>optional for vaccinated people</u> , and <u>required for unvaccinated</u>	Masks are <u>not required</u>
Blue, positivity is increasing	Masks are <u>encouraged for vaccinated people</u> , and <u>required for unvaccinated</u>	Masks are <u>not required</u>
Yellow	Masks are <u>required for all</u>	Masks are <u>encouraged for vaccinated people</u> , and <u>required for unvaccinated</u>
Orange	Building is <u>closed</u> for in-person gatherings	Masks are <u>required for all</u>
Red	Building is <u>closed</u> for in-person gatherings	No church-sponsored outdoor gatherings

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 12: Psalm 15

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

Scripture: Mark 8:27-38

Sermon: Be a Blessing

Virtual Coffee Hour - While we are not gathering in-person, we will have “Coffee Hour” on [Zoom](#) immediately following online worship.

BUZZ about Hybrid Worship!

Sunday, September 12, 1:00 PM on Zoom! Come and share your thoughts about your experience with hybrid worship so far, and learn more about what’s coming!

Thank You for Your Support of First Congregational UCC

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](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 9th: 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.

Wednesday, September 15th: Church Council 7:00 pm.

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 12 & 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](#).

Ways to help the Afghan Crisis

A Local Partner Looking for Refugee Support: As the war in Afghanistan

needs can be found at [In-kind Support](#) | [Exodus Refugee](#). Families are arriving with very little notice, so watch the weekly Epistle for more information about how our church can be a part of this vital effort to care for our neighbors.

Church World Service: Church World Service, another agency working in partnership with the U.S. government to resettle refugees, has welcomed more than 7,000 Afghan Special Immigrant Visa recipients and their families since 2009, according to its website. CWS has issued an [emergency appeal](#) to support Afghans now arriving in the U.S., asking for \$700,000 in financial support to offer transportation, food and other emergency support and up to \$450,000 in in-kind housing support. Monetary donations can be made [online](#) or mailed to Church World Service, P.O. Box 968, Elkhart, IN 46515 (designated to Protect Our Afghan Allies). Those interested in sponsoring a family arriving in their community or providing in-kind support — including landlords able to rent housing to new arrivals — can [fill out a form online](#) or email refugeewelcome@cwsglobal.org. CWS has also compiled sample messages urging lawmakers to protect Afghans seeking safety [on its website](#) that can be shared on social media or sent to lawmakers. More info here: <https://pres-outlook.org/2021/08/how-to-help-afghans-arriving-in-the-us-after-fleeing-the-taliban/>

COMING SOON

Buzz about Hybrid Worship

Sunday, September 12, 1:00 PM on Zoom! Come and share your thoughts about your experience with hybrid worship so far, and learn more about what's coming!

Outreach & Service - 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. **This year's annual AIDS Walk is scheduled for Sunday, September 19.** The walk has recently been determined to be held virtually, so we encourage anyone who wishes to make a donation to do so through their website, [Indiana AIDS Walk 2021 - The Health Foundation of Greater Indianapolis \(indianaaidsfund.org\)](#). 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 – Meetings Starting Soon!

building, wielding, and sharing power – the power that comes from combining voices, votes and resources. The last 18 months have been a real strain in different ways for everyone, and we want to reconnect with each other, sharing our stories and our passions for a better community. Working together we can fulfill our commitment towards that better future.

Below are 4 choices for joining in that conversation – we will share the combined results with FII in October, along with the other congregations involved. This will help direct all of our actions next year.

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:

- **Saturday, Sept 11 at 4:00 at Worth & Angie Hartman's** 6027 Maple Forge Circle 46254 (outside)
- **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, September 27, 7:00 PM ZOOM Meeting 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.

Circle IV Book Meeting Join us **September 21st at 1:30** outdoors on the 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

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

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

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.

How to Access our Zoom Gatherings

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/9264494206?pwd=dmtWbWE5UXRBTk5pcHZlYlBoaEFVUTo9>

Meeting ID: 926 449 4206

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

Thursday, September 9	5:00 p.m.	Spiritual Support Group (Zoom)
Sunday, September 12	9:30 a.m.	Patio Psalms & Prayers (FC patio)
Sunday, September 12	11:00 a.m.	Sunday Worship (YouTube, FB, Dial In)
Sunday, September 12	12:00 p.m.	Virtual Coffee Hour (Zoom)
Sunday, September 12	1:00 p.m.	All Church Buzz (Zoom)
Wednesday, September 15	7:00 p.m.	Church Council (Zoom)
Thursday, September 16	1:00 p.m.	Men's Lunch
Thursday, September 16	5:00 p.m.	Spiritual Support Group (Zoom)
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)

7171 N. Pennsylvania St.
Indianapolis, IN 46240

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