



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

THE PILGRIM COLONY

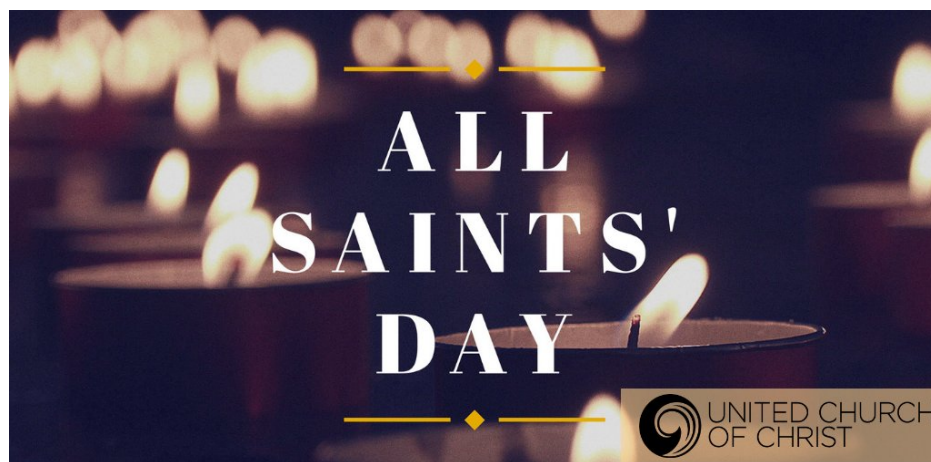
November 2021

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Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside everything that impedes us and the sin that so easily entangles us. Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. – Hebrews 12:1

On November 1st, and every day, we take a moment in our homes or places of work to honor and remember all of those who go before us into the great mystery of God — our ancestors, our neighbors, our friends. Thank you, God for the lives and witness of the Saints who go before us. **Amen.**



Pastor's Reflections

Dear First Congregational,

Together we are exploring how God invites us to “Be a blessing” in the world as part of our Sunday worship sermon series. So far we have been encouraged to:

- Be a Blessing
- Practice Peace
- Lead with Love
- Be Joyful
- Pray Often
- Be Kind
- Give Thanks
- Do Good

Imagine the difference we each could make in the world if we set our daily intention to be a blessing. Recently, I was asked what my hope is for ministry moving forward and these words rolled off my tongue, “I want to be a blessing in the world.”

This is our time, right now, as individuals who follow Jesus and as a community of disciples of Jesus, to get creative, courageous, and clear about our mission and ministry at First Congregational. We have such a powerful and important opportunity as a church to truly make a difference together. Please consider ways you can be a blessing in this life and beyond through including First Congregational in your planned giving. Our Foundation invites you to join the 1857 Society by letting us know the church is included in your will.

I give thanks for each one of you and how you have blessed me and my family. Thank you for blessing one another and our church.

Together we are creating a faith community of belonging, healing, and loving.

Blessings,

Pastor Sarah

Pastoral Care and Support: Contact Pastor Sarah at pastorsarah@fcindy.org and (386)478-9012.



Senior Councilor's Report

Alice Rutherford, Lead Councilor

Thank you, God, for the opportunity to once again gather in person for worship October 24th. And what a wonderful worship service it was! We had our first opportunity to experience new technology, visuals, and video in our sanctuary, and it was marvelous. We heard instrumentation beyond the piano or organ when Sean played along with a recorded string track. We saw our Just Peace Intern Allison Welz share her moment of peace, even though Allison was not in the sanctuary. We heard our Mayflower Quartette and Plymouth Players provide inspiring music recorded at an earlier time. We got to witness calming nature scenes to accompany calming instrumental music. We had the joy of seeing how projected images and videos engaged our youngest worshippers in the playground! As usual, we heard an excellent sermon by Pastor Sarah, live and in person as we always appreciate. And it was all brought to us by our own staff and members. Extraordinary!

I can only hope that the worship experience was just as meaningful for those worshipping with us virtually through livestream. Those of us in the sanctuary had the opportunity to commune with those folks via the YouTube live chat, but this is a practice we'll need some time to get accustomed to. There is much for us all to learn and adapt to in the coming weeks and months, but I believe these steps will ultimately make us a better faith community.

I'm so excited about the possibilities this new expansion of worship can bring – sermons and other messages delivered long-distance by inspiring speakers; deeper spirituality through inclusion of the breadth of God's natural realm; worshippers from afar, either traveling members or new friends not yet met; engagement of young worshippers for whom video experiences are embedded in their life experiences; and a host of other possibilities not yet envisioned. I encourage us all to embrace this technology to the fullest extent possible to live out our commitment to being a welcoming, inclusive church for all. This is our new way to Be The Church in the 21st century. May God bless our efforts.

–Alice Rutherford, Lead Councilor October – January

Pastoral Congregation Relations Committee

PCRC for Pastor Sarah: Lianna Campos, Nancy Dickinson, Chuck Kiphart, Chair-Randy Walker (aa28977walker@gmail.com)

PCRC for Pastor Carol: Gloria Boedeker, Nathan Howard, Betty Schnur, Chair-Bill Gillette (wmgillette@gmail.com)

This Month at FC*

SUNDAYS	10:00 a.m.	Adult Education
SUNDAYS	11:00 a.m.	Hybrid Worship (In Person, YouTube, Facebook, Dial In)
THURSDAYS	5:00 p.m.	Spiritual Support Group (Zoom)
Tuesday, November 2	All Day	Pastor Sarah's Day of Prayer
Wednesday, November 3	7:00 p.m.	Trustees Meeting
Sunday, November 7	1:00 p.m.	All-Church Buzz (Zoom) to discuss Council Model
Wednesday, November 10	7:00 p.m.	Church Council Meeting
Thursday, November 11	1:00 p.m.	Men's Lunch
Sunday, November 14	12:30 p.m.	Worship and Faith Board Meeting
Tuesday, November 16	1:30 p.m.	Circle Book Meeting
Thursday, November 18	10:00 a.m.	Care and Connections Meeting (Zoom)
Thursday, November 18	5:00 p.m.	W.I.S.E. Mental Health Team Meeting (Zoom)
Sunday, November 21	12:30 p.m.	Pie Reception/Coffee Hour after Church!
Thursday, November 25	Thanksgiving!	NO CHURCH EVENTS
Sunday, November 28	3:00 p.m.	Bill Gillette Birthday Reception

To join Zoom meetings, click this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9264494206?pwd=dmtWbWE5UXRBTk5pcHZlYlB0aEFVUT09>

Meeting ID: 926 449 4206 **Password:** 7171

To Join by Phone call only: 1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago), you will be prompted for the meeting ID 926 449 4206, followed by the # sign, and the Password 7171, followed by the # sign. You can call in and participant as a 'conference call'.

Church Council

Comeback Team: Current Building Policy


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

As of August our covid protocols are based on the county color coding represented on the <https://www.coronavirus.in.gov/2393.htm> website. We encourage everyone to review that site as you are able, and we will post in each week's Epistle (as well as on the patio door) the color for that week.

In mid-August Marion County turned orange, so at that time in-person gatherings were suspended until such time as the county returns to yellow. Per our protocols, the church grounds are open for outdoor gatherings (with masking) when Marion County is orange but closed if the county turns red.

We ask that people prayerfully consider using practices that keep themselves safe as well as others.

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



IT'S OUR
SHOT,
HOOSIERS

COVID-19 VACCINE

YOUR VACCINATION BRINGS US ONE DAY
CLOSER TO CONTROLLING THE PANDEMIC AND
REOPENING CHURCH

GET YOUR VACCINE ASAP!

VACCINE AND BOOSTER ELIGIBILITY INFO
AVAILABLE NOW AT [OURSHOT.IN.GOV](https://ourshot.in.gov)

WORSHIP & FAITH

Aurelia Glennan-March, Chair

Adult Ed: 10:00 AM

Adult Education began meeting inside on October 17 due to chilly weather. We will continue to meet inside - likely in the library, for as long as the Covid color is yellow or better. If the color goes back to orange or red, we will do adult ed over zoom. Please check each week's epistle for potential updates.

Please join us as we read and reflect on scripture, and share how the readings are speaking to us - or not - today. You don't have to have it all worked out. Simply sharing in a safe place helps us clarify our own thoughts on the matter at hand, and helps to grow our faith. Come and join us!

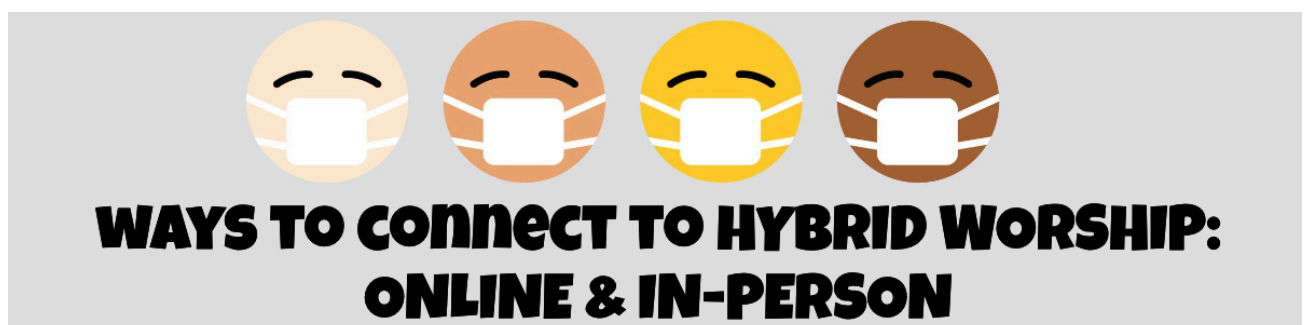
Nov 7 - Psalm 139

Nov 14 - "Naming our Grievs, big and small." If you have a poem, quote, or short writing that helps you **name** your griefs, please bring it to share. Next week we will name what we are thankful for - big and small.

Nov 21 - What does Thanksgiving mean to you? A chance for us to share our own Thanksgiving stories.

Nov 28 - First Sunday of Advent! Allison will lead us as we reflect on the Advent Devotional for that day.

Next Worship and Faith Board Meeting: November 14th 12:30pm



IN PERSON and masked-up Worship began once again on October 24th. You are welcome to continue joining us in-person or online!



[FACEBOOK](https://www.facebook.com/pg/FirstCongregationalUCCIndy/posts/?ref=page_internal)

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



[YOUTUBE](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWV9wqAvPiUKSkEbjav6Zpw)

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

- YouTube Live broadcasts at 10:45am with 15 minutes of gathering music. The service begins at 11am.



DIAL-IN (available after 1PM)

- **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.

OUTREACH & SERVICE

Alice Rutherford, Chair

Thanks to all who participated in our very own neighborhood CROP Walk last month. First Congregational UCC has a long history with CROP, and we're glad to be able to continue that relationship even during pandemic times. Thank you, Wendy Baldwin, for leading the effort this year.

We're again ramping up efforts to support Faith In Indiana. Last month four gatherings were hosted by FC members as we seek to broaden the base of support. There is truly strength in numbers, and Faith In Indiana's impact on improving our community depends on garnering more support, both physically and financially. Contact Worth Hartman, Allison Welz (Just Peace Intern), or Karen Walker to learn about next steps and how you can get further involved in this growing partnership.

As we return to in-person worship in our sanctuary, please begin bringing your donations to Northside Pantry to the narthex baskets. Watch for more info about Exodus donations in the weekly Epistles. Donations to Camp Atterbury for Afghan refugees are still welcome at [Team Rubicon | Afghan Resettlement \(teamrubiconusa.org\)](https://teamrubiconusa.org).

A few weeks ago we heard an excellent and engaging presentation by Kelsey Kennedy, Host Homes Coordinator for Trinity Haven. Trinity Haven is the only "safe harbor" of its kind in Indianapolis, offering transitional housing and support to homeless LGBTQ+ youth and young adults. The need is great for adults willing to welcome these young people into their homes for a 6-month period, as they transition to living on their own. Screening of both the host and the young adult is extensive in an effort to make the best match possible. If you have an extra bedroom and would like to consider this avenue for living out our commitment to being Open & Affirming with LGBTQ+ youth, contact Kelsey at kelsey@trinityhavenindy.org for more information.

As we continue our focus on our Open & Affirming covenant, please remember your donation to Covenant Outreach to support Trinity Haven, Damien Center, and Indiana Youth Group. See the September Colony for a brief description of these organizations, or visit their websites to learn more.

If you haven't yet contributed to the UCC 5-for-5 special offering Neighbors In Need, there's still time to do so. Simply make a donation online or send a check notated "Neighbors In Need". These funds assist in serving homeless and immigrant communities, our indigenous faith partners, and justice initiatives and ministries across the denomination.

As always, the Outreach & Service Board greatly appreciates the generosity of FC members and friends. Our financial gifts help us to reach into our community to bring a sign of God's peace and justice to those desperate to see one.

CROP Walk & FC Indy – Last Call for Donations

This is the 52nd year for the CROP Walk in Indianapolis, and FC Indy has participated in each one. The CROP Walk works to raise money to “end hunger one step at a time”, and the challenge has increased this year with the effects of the pandemic. In October, we had a symbolic CROP walk around the church’s neighborhood.

If you haven’t already, you can contribute by making out a check to the church and designating it for CROP, or you can make online donations directly to our CROP “team” at <https://events.crophungerwalk.org/2021/team/first-congregational-2> . Thank you for helping to provide more meals for the growing number of people in our community who need them, and greater food security in communities around the world. Questions? Contact Wendy Baldwin.

–Alice Rutherford, Outreach & Service Board Chair



Sunday, November 7th at 1:00pm The Buzz on 11/7 is an opportunity for folks to weigh in with their reactions to the Senior Council model that we've been using this year, along with suggestions for improvement for next year. The meeting will begin with reflections on what it's been like to serve in this model, and then offer open dialog to hear from others. **Location: Church Zoom**

Mental Health Team

"The W.I.S.E. Mental Health Team is using your responses to the survey we sent out this summer to boards, teams, and committees to plan priorities and programs for 2022. Stay tuned!



We are again sponsoring the **Blue Christmas worship service** for those for whom the holidays are not "the most wonderful time of the year." The service will be on the church's Zoom on **Friday, December 10th at 7 p.m. Eastern Standard Time**. The program is being developed by Allison Welz, our Just Peace Intern and a member of our team, with input from a planning group. She requests anyone interested in participating in the service by contributing a poem, song or instrumental music, or art object contact her at awelz@butler.edu. Contributions can be recorded in advance to decrease anxiety about performing in front of an audience."



Need a Lift in Your Spirit? Join us every Thursdays for Spiritual Support Group for Mental Health at 5:00-6:00PM [on Zoom](#)

This gathering is open to everyone and is an informal time to check-in about how you are doing, get emotional support from church family, and offer prayer for one another as we navigate nurturing positive mental health in these difficult days.

We are an open group with confidentiality guidelines. Sessions are on Zoom and led by Pastor Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund and Rev. Dr. Patrick Larracey, co-chair of the church’s WISE Team. Please feel free to call or email either of us if you have questions: Pastor Sarah: pastorsarah@fcindy.org, or 386-478-9012.

CARE & CONNECTIONS
Wendy Baldwin, Chair

Happy Birthday in November!

- | | |
|------------------|---------------|
| Eleanor Backman | Sarah Evans |
| Madeline Baldwin | Bill Gillette |
| Sue Chapman | Jessica Hamm |
| Earl Hoppert | Cassidy Hall |



Birthday Reception November 28! There will be a casual reception recognizing **Bill Gillette’s ninetieth birthday** on **Sunday November 28 in the parlor, from 3:00 to 5:00**. All church members and friends are invited. No presents please, but gifts to the church are welcomed!

If you’re having a birthday in November, and you are not on this list, please contact Wendy Baldwin, so we can add you to our master list for the future!



Coffee Hours & Pie for Thanksgiving?
While Marion County is “Yellow”, we will enjoy seeing each other in-person, but will refrain from refreshments. Hopefully, by Thanksgiving, the county will be “Blue”, and we can enjoy some pie after worship on our traditional Thanksgiving Sunday, November 21st.

Joys & Concerns Brainstorming Follow Up –
We have been having some lively discussion about how we might do Joys & Concerns once concerns of COVID are lower. But beyond that, there are new factors to think about with hybrid worship. Since we will be streaming and recording worship to YouTube, there are some privacy concerns to consider. Many of us have valued having a time of Joys & Concerns (J&C) during our worship service. It allows us to lift up prayers in a communal way, and also is a great way of connecting and caring for one another. The individual joys & concerns are also passed on to our Prayer Team.

In October, we had a brainstorming session about what the next generation of Joys & Concerns might look like. Ideas discussed included:

1. Discontinue J&C, and use cards for people to record their prayer concerns
2. Do J&C as we did in the past, with guidelines about only using first names, etc, maybe not have the camera on people.
3. Continue J&C during worship, but stop recording during this time; in the online version, display a visual with some music, while online worshippers do J&C in the Chat (the Chat is deleted after 24 hours).
4. Have a designated J&C time prior to worship, before recording begins
5. Have a designated J&C time after worship, after recording has ended
6. Have dry erase boards in the Narthex that members could write on as they come in to the worship service or as they leave the service.
7. Have a list of J&C scrolling on a TV in the narthex. That might be a way of maintaining an ongoing list, and a dry erase with weekly additions could be fed into the scroll, or might be able to be typed in instead of written on the dry erase.
8. Do a "cacophony" of J&C, where everyone lifts up a name or concern at the same time.

There has been discussion about being mindful of how the online community is experiencing worship, as well as those participating in in-person worship; the two different methods will not be the same experience, but want to do what we can for each one to be enriching and meaningful.

We will experiment with different ways to provide what has been a valued element of our worship services. We ask for your prayers and grace as we go on this new journey. If you have thoughts about this, please contact Wendy Baldwin, chair of Care & Connections, Aurelia Glennan-March, chair of Worship & Faith, and/or Pastor Sarah.

TRUSTEES

During the summer, we contracted to have the paving around the memorial wall in the Memorial Garden repaired. Aggressive root growth in the past 15 years had lifted several sections, breaking some of the slate and causing severe trip hazards.



The work was completed in September, and it looks great. Funding for the project came from the Memorial Garden Fund, but further donations are greatly appreciated!

Questions or comments for Trustees, contact current Chair, Steve Coomer, 317-255-9328,

s.coomer@sbcglobal.net

Financial Update

When We Give, We Reach Out With Helping Hands

Here are the financial results through September 30, 2021.

1. Current Year Actual vs Budget Summary

1/1/2021 through 9/30/2021 Using 2021 Budget

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Category	1/1/2021 Actual	- Budget	9/30/2021 Difference
INCOME	151,285	175,087	-23,802
M. Unrestricted Contributions	151,285	175,087	-23,802
M.01 Pledged Offerings	135,128	126,524	8,604
M.02 UnPledged Offerings	2,991	7,997	-5,006
M.03 Rollover Prior Year Surplus_D...	-21,284	-21,284	0
M.04 Foundation - Endowment Fund...	0	27,400	-27,400
M.05 Foundation - Minister Fund Draw	0	0	0
M.06 Foundation - Trad. Music Fund...	0	0	0
M.07. Transfer from Youth Fund	0	0	0
M.08 Other Transfers from Restr Ac...	0	0	0
M.09 PPP Loan Forgiveness	34,450	34,450	0
EXPENSES	184,399	193,717	9,319
A. Pastoral Leadership	92,929	93,748	819
B. Worship & Faith	24,419	26,090	1,671
C. Care & Connections	309	161	-148
D. Witness & Welcome	0	367	367
E. Outreach & Service	13,542	13,048	-494
F. Trustees	0	130	130
G. Administration & Operations	17,732	19,952	2,220
H. House & Grounds	30,573	34,276	3,702
I. Miscellaneous	4,895	5,946	1,051
Net Difference:	-33,114	-18,630	-14,483

Highlights:

- **Income** through September 30 was \$151,300 – \$23,800 below budget. However, we had anticipated \$27,400 in income from a draw from the FCC Foundation which we did not need. Adjusting for that, income was \$3,600 above our 2021 budget, thanks to strong pledge income.
- **Expenses** of \$184,400 were \$9,300 below budget. Some of the savings are real (later-than-planned hiring of communications director and no choir director) but some are timing only (house and grounds).
- **Cash** was acceptable at \$36,900. Cash benefited from \$34,700 of 2021 funding from the federal Payroll Protection Program. These funds are allowing us to continue to pay our employees and musicians as if we were operating fully in person. The PPP funds will also reduce the amount we will ultimately need to draw from the FCC Foundation to balance the 2021 budget.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Jim Lootens, Treasurer
lootens.jb@gmail.com

Green Team – Fall is Here!

Autumn's arrival served as a reminder that cold weather is approaching and we need to prepare for it. In addition to digging out our winter clothes, we need to prepare our dwelling. Windows may need to have glass panels replace the screens and to be checked for leaks. The furnace should be checked to be sure that it will keep the dwelling warm. The air filter probably needs replacement and the thermostat may need to be reset. In addition to having the fallen leaves removed, the gutters may need to be cleaned so that ice doesn't form harmful dams when it's too late to prevent them. The car may need to be serviced too, with an oil change, adding a little more air in the tires, and a check of the windshield wipers. As the old saying goes, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."



–Bill Gillette for the Green Team

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The FC Indy Blog is here, "Pew Reflections": Please email your submissions to Cassidy (cassidy@fcindy.org) anytime to be shared on the blog. Questions about what the blog is or how it functions? Check out <http://fcindy.org/blog/newblog/>

Women's Lunch Bunch: This group welcomes all women of the church to get together once a month for lunch, friendship, and fellowship. For any questions or for more information please contact Sue Chapman at 317-259-1806 or at carolsuech59@gmail.com.

Men's Lunch: This lunch and discussion gathering for men of First Congregational meets every other Thursday at **1:00pm**. This month, they meet on **November 11th**. For more information, please contact Randy Walker at (317) 796-2081.

Circle IV Book Meeting

We will meet at Linda Lupton's home: 114 Warwick Way, Pendleton, on **November 16th, 1:30**. We'll finish the book "Remember" by Lisa Genova (pp. 155-232, Chapter 11 to the end). There will be carpool opportunities. Karen Walker will provide the devotional. Questions? Contact Linda Lupton lkupton@aol.com

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. All requests for financial support will be confidential and your privacy will be honored and respected. To request funds for you or your family, please contact Pastor Sarah by email pastorsarah@fcindy.org or cell (386) 478-9012.