



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

THE PILGRIM COLONY

June 2019

Pastor's Reflections

First Congregational celebrates a long history of commitment to being a teaching congregation that supports the quest for learning and growth. We do that through weekly adult education sessions, through monthly book discussions, and special community events. The church has also partnered with educational institutions to support the training and equipping of people for ministry and service. We are blessed to have a long partnership with Christian Theological Seminary and as their Vice President of Advancement from 2014-2018, I know that their mission is vital to the future of the church and society. We have the opportunity to support theological education through not only our financial gifts, but also through the mentoring of students. As in the past, First Congregation is invited by Christian Theological Seminary to once again work with a seminary student as they seek experience in ministry. CTS is generously providing a grant to cover the stipend for the internship.

Beginning in the fall of 2019 and through the spring of 2020, we will work with CTS seminary student Cassidy Hall as part of her Master of Divinity training. As the senior pastor, I will serve as her primary supervisor and mentor during her internship as she become familiar with the scope of work of serving as a local church pastor. There will also be a small committee of church members that the Council will assign to support Cassidy's learning experiences throughout her internship. Cassidy recently joined our church and is new to the UCC. We look forward to being a teaching congregation and also to learning from Cassidy.

This fall we will have the additional opportunity to partner with Butler University's Center for Faith and Vocations and mentor a student who seeks to learn more about our Just Peace commitment. The Just Peace team and the Council enthusiastically explored this opportunity this spring and look forward to five months (August—December) to work with undergraduate student Grace Langford who will help the Just Peace team review survey results and begin to create a strategy for the emerging Just Peace ministry at First Congregational. In my role of senior pastor I will supervise Grace's work with us, which will include spending time with us Sunday mornings for adult education and worship with an eye towards integrating Just Peace into the work of the church. As you can see, God has opened up these doors to be richly engaged in the fall as a teaching congregation which will provide us with multiple opportunities to learn.

Please be in touch with me if you have any questions about this opportunity and I look forward to this experience to grow together in faith.

Blessings,
Pastor Sarah

WORSHIP & FAITH

Elizabeth Price, Chair

Sunday Adult Class

Through most of the month of June, the Adult Ed class will continue to read and discuss the book "Anxious to Talk About It; Helping White Christians Talk Faithfully About Racism." You do not need to buy a copy of the book to be a part of this "book group," since we will be displaying the book on the TV during class. Should you wish your own copy, it is available on Amazon Kindle for about \$10.00. A copy of the introduction is available on the publisher's website, and there are copies on the table in the narthex.

Here's a brief description from the publisher's website:

"This book is spot-on for the kinds of conversations we need to be having."-- Walter Brueggemann

"What if I say the wrong thing?" "I'm white - is race really something I need to talk about?"

"I'm worried I'll be called a racist!" "What does race have to do with faith, anyway?" "Why do we have to keep talking about this?"

If talking about racism makes you anxious, afraid, or even angry, you're not alone. In

Anxious to Talk about It, pastor and professor Carolyn B. Helsel draws on her success with white congregations to offer insight and tools to embrace, explore and work through the anxious feelings that often arise in these hard conversations. Through powerful personal stories, new observations on racial identity development, and spiritual practices to help engage issues of racial justice prayerfully, you'll gain a deeper understanding of race in America and your place in it. You will learn how to join conversations with courage, compassion, and knowledge of self, others, and the important issues at stake. Helsel's guidance will inspire you to receive the gifts that come through these difficult race conversations and point to how you can get further involved in the important social justice work around race relations.

June 9 – Bread for the World

June 16 - write letters in support of Bread for the World legislative goals.

Come join us!

- Pastor Carol

All classes meet in the Library (room 212) at 9:45 a.m. All are welcome!

Pride Sunday, June 2



On Sunday, June 2nd, Pastor Sarah will lead worship and Rev. Lawrence Richardson will share the message from the perspective of a Black transgender UCC minister. Rev. Richardson is pastor of Linden Hills UCC in MN, and is author of *I Know What Heaven Looks Like: A Modern Day Coming of Age Story*.



Being a Just Peace Church

Sometimes it is difficult to know what being a "Just Peace Church" means to each of us. What should we be doing as a church and what should we be doing individually? How do we advocate for peace issues without becoming overly political?

Jesus was political. He was always challenging unjust situations and always stood in opposition to the political regime in favor of God's "kin-dom." I think that as long as we are advocating policies that we feel Jesus would advocate, we are on safe ground. Of course,

some would disagree with us as to what Jesus would advocate. However, if we use the measuring stick of LOVE, as God is Love, I believe we are acting as God would call us to do. How we add the component of "justice," I am not sure, but I believe true love includes justice.

Is writing letters for Bread for the World being political? Of course, it is. But wouldn't Jesus advocate feeding the hungry? Not only that, but implementing national and state policies which can attain that goal? There are measures we can take as a church which we feel Jesus would advocate. On the other hand, recently in the Sunday adult class, we individually wrote letters to our representatives in Congress because the church had not taken a stand on immigration issues as a church.

Each of us is constantly challenged to identify issues which we think are imperative to enact not only as Christians, but as members of a just democratic society, and actually DO something about them. It wasn't too many years back when many Church pastors and members were crowding the State House to advocate for inclusivity in GLBQ... justice issues. Still, we were all there as individuals, even though I remember many clergy, including our own Kerby, there in clergy stoles. I know many of us have been down to the state house regarding gun laws, energy policies and other issues as individuals when our religious institutions have not felt authorized to act on our behalf.

Probably the most compelling issue of our time is climate change. Right now this seems to be very political, even though acting to save a climate in which the world can continue is beginning to be a human issue AND an issue for the continuation of God's creation.

Let us each do what we can to enact steps to save earth for all living things, as well as advocate for our church community to act where we can. Let us know your concerns and where you think we should be acting and/or taking a stand.

- Nancy Dickinson, for the Just Peace Team

OUTREACH & SERVICE

Sue Chapman, Chair

June Mission of the Month: Damien Center



Founded in 1987, the Damien Center is the oldest and largest organization in Indiana addressing the health needs of individuals with HIV. Currently the Damien Center serves over 4,000 individuals affected by HIV/AIDS through a comprehensive and innovative approach to HIV care and prevention.

Client services include medical, housing, food pantry, free lunches, counseling, and legal service to ease the stress of living with

HIV. The Damien Center has received a 4-star rating from Charity Navigator for several consecutive years.

In addition to donations from individuals and organization, the Damien Center holds two annual fund raisers to run this program. Dine Out For Life is the 4th Thursday of April and celebrated its 25th anniversary this year featuring restaurants covering all of Marion County. Every October since 1987, the Grande Masquerade has been a hugely popular and profitable event. This fundraiser started in a small building at the State Fair grounds and now is held in a downtown hotel and receives great media coverage.

Even though we hear of the many achievements in medications used to treat HIV here are a couple statistics to keep in mind. In the general population, 1 out of every 6 persons infected with HIV does not know it. 51% of youth between 13 – 24 who are living with HIV, have never been tested. Let's help keep HIV testing and education accessible to Central Indiana through our support of the Damien Center.

Pantry Items of the Month

During June, we are collecting the following items: pudding mix, jello, canned vegetables, soup and toothpaste.

- Betty Schnur

Our April Food Donation

Our food donations to the Northside Food Pantry in April were just fifty-four pounds, somewhat below our historical average. Part of the reason is that we donated some foods that are below the average weight, but the volume was down a little as well. We'll try to get the quantity back up as quickly as possible. Our disadvantaged neighbors need and appreciate our support, so we should all do what we can. Let's fill those baskets in the narthex.

- Bill Gillette

Summer Volunteer Opportunity with Gleaners Mobile Food Pantry

Each summer Gleaners, IMPD, EMS, and IFD join forces to provide mobile food distribution food distributions in six of the highest need areas in Indianapolis. They call the program CARE. These areas have higher crime, lack of educational achievement, high unemployment—all contributing to feelings of isolation. CARE kicks off June 4 and needs help with funds and volunteers.



The Outreach and Service Board will donate money from its Domestic Missions budget to help them purchase fresh fruits and vegetables. Members are invited to consider volunteering at the distribution sites, four of which are at churches. The full list is Save-a-Lot, 3739 E. Washington; Christ Our King Church, 2701 N. California St.; Fervent Prayer Church, 10512 E. 38th St.; North United Methodist Church, 3808 N. Meridian; Mt. Zion Apostolic Church, 4900 E. 38th St., Kroger, 2630 W. Michigan. Times are 3-6:30 p.m.

If you are interested in volunteering go to www.gleaners.org and register as a volunteer through VolunteerHub. Once registered click on "Volunteer," then choose the option for "Individuals, families, and friends." You will then scroll down to June dates to find the CARE Mobile Pantry location and date you prefer. You could sign up as a couple or with a friend.

- Sue Chapman

2019 Bread for the World Offering of Letters: Better Nutrition, Better Future

On Sunday, June 16, First Congregational will hold its Offering of Letters during worship as well as before and after the service. This year's theme is "Better Nutrition, Better Future." Although great strides have been made in reducing the numbers of hungry people in the world, including here in the U.S., nearly 821 million people worldwide—11 % of the world's population—remain hungry. One in 4 of the world's children are affected by stunting, resulting in irreversible life consequences. This is especially prevalent in countries in Central America, South Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa. Almost half of all child deaths are linked to malnutrition.

As Indiana mourns the death of the late Senator Richard Lugar, one way to honor him is to continue to support the bipartisan causes he promoted, such as relieving hunger. As David Beckman, president of Bread for the World, said on Lugar's death, "Senator Lugar was a true champion for people living in hunger both in the United States and around the world. He introduced the original Global Food Security Act along with Senator Bob Casey, a Democrat from Pennsylvania, in 2009, and was a strong supporter of domestic programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)."

In order to accelerate progress on nutrition, we must scale up what we know works: improved access to nutritious food, vitamins and minerals, clean water and sanitation, promotion of breastfeeding, and treatment for severe malnutrition. Current funding is not enough to reach our global nutrition goals, and powerful forces are pushing to curtail poverty-focused assistance. Every child deserves a chance to survive and thrive. And when children thrive, so do economies—leading to greater global economic and political stability.



So on June 16 we will write to our members of Congress and urge them:


1. To support H. Res. 189-- “Recognizing the importance of sustained United States leadership to accelerating global progress against maternal and child malnutrition and supporting United States Agency for International Development’s commitment to global nutrition through its multi-sectoral nutrition strategy.” (This resolution is currently being considered by the Subcommittee on Livestock and Foreign Affairs of the U. S. House Committee on Agriculture.)
 2. To urge Congress to protect and increase funding for global nutrition.
- In addition, the Bread for the World Team is asking the congregation and the Church Council for approval to send the following letter to the editor of the Indianapolis Star from First Congregational UCC:
- We urge our Members of Congress to support House Resolution 189 that will help strengthen the United States’ commitment to global nutrition. As stated in the resolution and supported by Bread for the World’s research, almost half of all child deaths worldwide are linked to malnutrition. The children who survive remain at high risk of irreversible stunting, which affects their physical and cognitive development. For 151 million children under the age of 5, the majority of those living in Central America, South Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa, stunting is a life sentence.*
- As Christians, our faith calls us to have compassion for and stand alongside families around the world. Strengthening the U.S. commitment to global nutrition is in our best interest and would allow millions of children to reach their full potential. When children thrive, so do the countries they live in—leading to greater economic and political stability in the world as a whole.*

If you have comments or concerns about the letter, please share those with Moderator Rich Gibson or Sue Chapman, Chair of the Bread for the World Team.

- Sue Chapman

Public Forum on Childhood Hunger & Poverty

Church Women United is sponsoring a panel discussion at the Interchurch Center at 1100 W. 42nd street on Saturday, June 15 from 10 am - 12:30 pm that is open to the public. There will be speakers from Bread, Gleaners, and other food service organizations participating, sharing info about local conditions and efforts in the fight against hunger. Come and learn more about how you can help! Any questions, please contact Nancy Dickinson or Karen Walker.




CHURCH WOMEN UNITED
INDIANAPOLIS CHAPTER PRESENTS:


PUBLIC FORUM ON
CHILDHOOD HUNGER
AND POVERTY

June 15, 2019
10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Indiana Interchurch Center
Krannert Meeting Room
1100 W. 42nd Street, Indianapolis, IN

FORUM PANELISTS INCLUDE:




Dr. Leah Gunning Francis, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty, Christian Theological Seminary




Mary Dubinin, Food Programs Director Gleaners Food Bank

ALONG WITH:
Representation from the Office of Mayor Joe Hogsett


Congressman Andre Carson's Office: Invited



David Miner, Program Chair Bread for the World



Rev. Dr. Theron D. Williams Sr. Pastor, Mt. Carmel Church



FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

You are encouraged to bring one or more nonperishable food items with you to the Forum

- Karen Walker

Days for Girls Project Completed!

Thanks to all the support from the congregation and the work of our volunteers, we met our goal to turn in 100 kits for Days for Girls at the Indiana-Kentucky Annual Gathering. Special thanks goes to Linda Lupton for her passion, expertise, and above-and-beyond work in cutting, sewing, serging, teaching, and supplying of fabric. Karen Walker also supplied much of the fabric and did extensive sewing. Other sewers were Sue Chapman, Sally Coombs, Nancy Dickinson, and Gloria Boedeker. Donna Wenzel, Sue, and Aurelia Hoft-March were cutters, preparing fabric for the sewers. Sandy Wood and Judy Kaufman helped with finishing touches.



The whole congregation was very generous in donating products (washcloths, soaps, and freezer bags) and funds (\$680), mainly for purchasing flannel and the 200 pairs of panties. It was a much bigger undertaking than we originally envisioned, but with all this help WE DID IT! Girls in developing countries will now not have to miss school and will have bright, pretty supplies to affirm their female dignity. THANK YOU!!!

- Sue Chapman

W.I.S.E. Mental Health Message: Inclusive

On our church ballpoint pens and signs about the church, you will find the motto: "First Congregational United Church of Christ is Progressive, Inclusive, Spiritually Alive!" Then, if you Google the word, inclusive, you will find 511 million, that's right, 511 million uses for this word.

However, I want to bring one story to this one word INCLUSIVE. The story is about our grandson, Ben. Some of you know Ben as he has been singing in our church choir until his college schedule at IUPUI created a class he had to attend on Thursday evenings. Ben's mother, our daughter, Cristy, has also been in the choir but work and her volunteering with FIRST Robotics at Avon High School with husband, Doug, all for our granddaughter, Ellie.

Now back to Ben. Ben is autistic. He has the Asperger syndrome. I invited him to share with you this morning, but he is bashful. Since his diagnosis, the depth of his life and being included has absorbed a lot of time and energy to find answers and how to care for him. Information was scarce at the time of his birth, but with all of us, especially his parents, working and being together and supporting each other, Ben has achieved much through inclusion in school which first resisted and denied training for teachers to assist autistic students. Ben found music to be rewarding and discovered he had perfect pitch, but was denied becoming a member of the Indianapolis Children's Choir. He began to sing in church, did some solos, sang in school choirs, the Avon High School choir and had a role in the school musical, "Music Man." He loves being included in the church choir here and loves Julie and Sean's direction and creations. Believe me, Ben will be back because he feels included.

One of your Mental Health Team's work to become a WISE Congregation is to create a Covenant. As we have identified, "Every WISE Covenant should be grounded in INCLUSION." Our covenant will be done WITH you and those living WITH mental health challenges and brain disorders, NOT for them.



Becoming WISE means actively INCLUDING everyone of all abilities and mental health conditions into the full life and leadership of this church.

Our covenant will demonstrate to people who live with mental health challenges that OUR faith community can be a safe spiritual home for them and their families. As our morning Gospel said, where everyone will know we are Christ's disciples because we have love for one another.

INCLUSIVE language in church and worship about mental health conditions includes those with "major depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, anxiety disorder, PTSD, eating disorder, substance abuse disorder, and autism."

It is an inclusivity of people and resources and intersectionality - a new word - coined in 1989 by Dr. Kimberle Crenshaw of U of Chicago: "through an awareness of intersectionality, we can better acknowledge and ground differences among us.:
Therefore, creating safe boundaries in our church by offering radical INCLUSION to everyone, including individuals with significant mental health and brain disorder challenges, IS A SACRED ACTIVITY, NOT A DANGEROUS ONE.

I invite all of you as individuals to introduce issues and become interactively involved with important ideas to indicate, identify, intervene your inspired inout to intersectionally intercede in our journey to become a W.I.S.E. Congregation. Just Imagine!! Amen.

- Rev. Dr. Patrick Larracey (shared in worship on May 19, 2019)

Mental Health & Wellness Ministries

What a joy it was to celebrate with you on Mental Health Sunday on May 19th! As Rev. Dr. Pat Larracey mentioned in his introduction of me that Sunday, I am seeking ministerial standing in the UCC in partnership with First Congregational. I am grateful for your support as I complete this process with the Committee on Ministry, and I am excited for this opportunity to share in this ministry of wholeness with FCC and the wider church through Mindful Movement, alternative worship opportunities, and in many other ways we will explore together as we seek to bring wholeness and healing to the church and to the world around us.

Throughout college, seminary, and graduate school, my focus was on the work of healing. As a social worker I wanted to work with marginalized people as a bridge between the wounded and those who did the wounding, whether that was in family systems or church systems. My dream job was to create a health and wellness ministry in a church that would serve the mental, physical, and spiritual needs of people, opening the sacred connection found when we recognize our wholeness as children of God. For the past 10 years I have primarily been offering this outside of church settings, in local communities, and connecting with church communities whenever possible, which has given me the opportunity to connect with a variety of health and wellness practitioners, including those in the Indianapolis area. More recently my dreams of connecting wholeness ministries with the church have begun to flourish as I have had the opportunities to share gifts of movement, breath, aromatherapy (through anointing), and full-embodiment experiences of the Divine with FCC and with the wider Church through:

- Blue Christmas Mindful Movement Meditation at FCC
- Wellness Breaks at the UCC Pension Board Clergy Retreat for IKC Clergy
- Ash Wednesday Mindful Movement Meditation at FCC
- Chapel at Franklin College
- "Healing for Our Lives" Good Friday Celebration with Women in Ministry – provided 70 anointing oils for participants, and participated in mind, body, spirit healing through anointing
- Spiritual Life Retreat for St. Peter's UCC – "One Body, Many Senses: A Sensual Experience of the Divine"
- Mental Health Sunday at FCC – Metta (Loving-Kindness) Movement Meditation
- UCC General Synod (June 2019) – Mindful Movement Meditation

- IKC Women's Retreat (September 2019) – "Quiet Spaces: A Time for Meditation & Storytelling"
- Borderland Trip & Workshop (January 2020) – "The Spiritual Art of Letting Go"

Some people have begun asking what this new ministry would mean for my current position and for FCC. I want to assure you that I plan to continue to serve as your Office Administrator for as long as it serves us all well. I envision the role to be a gradual process that will develop more and expand as necessary over the coming years. Within the first year, here are a few areas of wellness ministry you may expect to see at FCC:

- Continue Mindful Movement opportunities at FCC – with day and evening options, possibly including the incorporation of noon/evening prayers with body prayer and meditation.
- Participate in Worship & the life of the congregation – Blue Christmas, Ash Wednesday, Mental Health Sunday, and other Sundays as requested; lead All-Church Retreat wellness activities.
- Collaborate with Pastor Sarah on a grant through the Center for Congregations – This will open up opportunities for bringing more mental, physical, and spiritual health practices into our space. One project this may serve to fund is....
- Monthly Interactive Wellness Workshops – learn about and practice ways to stay mentally, physically, and spiritually healthy; may include guest speakers.
- Continue to serve the wider church (as a part of FCC's widening outreach) – leading retreats, mindful movement/yoga at wider church events
- Serve the wider community (on behalf of FCC) – through movement practices and meditation in locations that may be outside of the walls of the church.

I look forward to partnering with the congregation as we dream and vision together about this health and wellness ministry.

Be well,
Shannon Abbott

WITNESS & WELCOME

Bob Cook, Chair

June is PRIDE Month!

Come join First Congregational as we celebrate INDY PRIDE DAY Saturday, June 8, on Mass Avenue and in Military Park. Various forms of LGBTQ Pride events have been held since the 1980's when 175 people attended the privately held celebration. In the late 1990's, the first public PRIDE Parade was held and lasted for all of 15 minutes. Time have changed! This year's parade will last around 2 hours and the festival will attract over 100,000 visitors to the city.



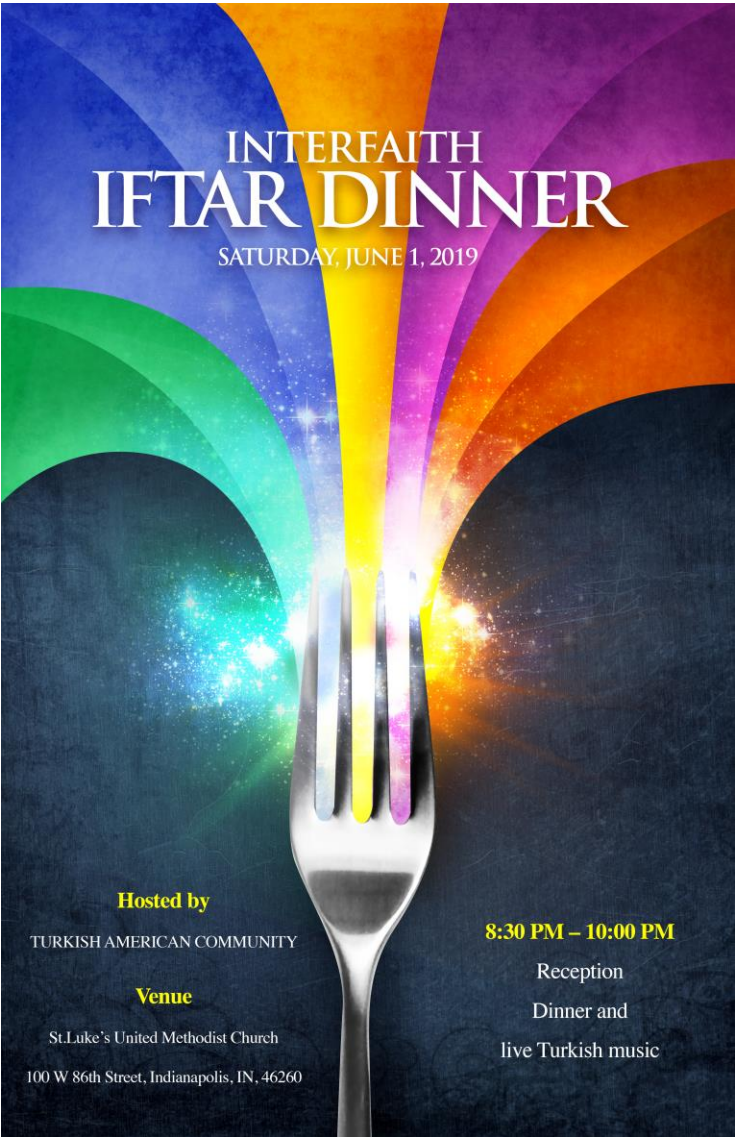
- Join us along with other UCC church parade participants at First Congregational for a light breakfast buffet around 8:00 a.m.
- Then we can carpool from FCC to downtown to ease parking. People might want to organize as those only doing the parade and those who would like to stay at least for part of the festival.

There is a sign up sheet on the table in the vestibule. Please give your name and email address so we can communicate the necessary details which usually come to us after June 1st. Then after June 8th, watch our website for fun photos of the day.

Questions? Please contact Bob Cook 317-401-4889 or bobcook359@yahoo.com

Interfaith Dinner

June 1, 8:30 – 10:00 p.m. at St. Luke's UMC
Reception * Dinner * Live Turkish Music



CARE & CONNECTIONS

Wendy Baldwin, Chair

Picnic Pitch-In – Welcome to Summer!



Please plan to attend a pitch-in picnic following worship on Sunday 6/2. The church will provide baked and fried chicken, so salads, desserts, chips, or drinks are welcomed contributions. A sign-up sheet is available in the Narthex to give an idea of who's bringing what. We'll be sharing fellowship and fun, with a few games also available to participate in. Depending on the weather, we'll gather in the playground or the Mayflower Room. Questions? Contact Wendy Baldwin, Care & Connections

FOUNDATION

Bill Gillette, Chair

1857 Society

The 1857 Society had its first annual celebration on May 3. It honored the fifteen church members who are committed to donating a portion of their residual estates to First Congregational. This collective action gives our church a firm financial foundation for many years into the future. We hope and expect that others will join this initial class of members in the future. Those who do will be invited to join future annual celebrations. We all should

have a will or trust that expresses our wishes for allocation of our assets when we leave this earth. If you have questions about the Society or the Foundation, feel free to contact a Foundation member – Pastor Sarah, Judy Fletcher, Glenn Evans, Randy Walker or Bill Gillette.

- Bill Gillette

TRUSTEES

Randy Walker, Chair

Green Team: Earth Sunday Feedback



The Green Team conducted an Earth Sunday service on May 5th. During the service, it asked congregants to write down ideas they had to help reduce our load on dear old Mother Earth. We are gratified by the response we got, and are happy to share everyone's ideas. Of course, ideas don't help unless you implement some of them! Please review these and consider making one or more of them new habits that you do regularly

1. Avoid using chemicals on the lawns
 2. Upkeep the vegetation on our premises
 3. Participate in Robin Run's Green Team
 4. Recycle
 5. Pick up trash on the streets
 6. Reuse shopping bags
 7. Avoid plastic packaging
 8. Plant native species
 9. Conserve – Waste Not - Want Not
 10. Don't use straws, even biodegradable ones
 11. Do more to support groups that work to improve the environment
 12. Avoid styrofoam
 13. Plant a bush and wildflowers
 14. Take "Navy" showers to conserve water
 15. Write to legislators to support environmental issues
 16. Find ways to conserve water in the home
 17. Reduce energy use
 18. Vote
 19. Plant trees
- Rich Gibson, Green Team

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle Sale – Saturday, June 15th

The Green Team has set a date for the Reduce, Reuse, Recycle Sale. Plan now to bring your useful (but now useless to you) items to sell on Saturday, June 15th, from 9a.m. – 2p.m.

As in the past, 6-foot tables are \$10; longer 8-foot ones are \$12 this year. You set up, sell, keep the income, and clean up. Items should be brought Friday afternoon – until 7 p.m.

As you do your spring cleaning, set aside those extras that you want to contribute to recycle to someone else while reducing your own inventory. If you think you do not have enough to sell to make purchasing a table feasible, you are still welcome to bring things for the church's table. In that case, please sign up for a couple hours overseeing the sale at that table. We also need a couple of people to be present at the church before the sale (preferably by 8 a.m. – bargain hunters arrive early) and as the sale begins when a crowd is often experienced.



Questions?? Inquiries to any Green Team member: Katie Booth, Nancy Dickinson, Rich Gibson, Bill Gillette, Ann Leatherman, Paul Terheide

- Nancy Dickinson, Green Team

Financial Update

When We Give, We Reach Out With Helping Hands

Here are the financial results through April 30, 2019.

1. Current Year Actual vs Budget Summary			
1/1/2019 through 4/30/2019 Using Budget 1			
19			
Category	1/1/2019 Actual	- Budget	4/30/2019 Difference
INCOME	96,580	85,348	11,232
M. Unrestricted Contributions	96,580	85,348	11,232
M.01 Pledged Offerings	83,435	70,559	12,876
M.02 UnPledged Offerings	6,756	8,400	-1,644
M.03 Rollover Prior Year Surplus_D...	4,766	4,766	0
M.04 Foundation - Endowment Fund...	0	0	0
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...	1,623	1,623	0
EXPENSES	88,793	92,711	3,918
A. Pastoral Leadership	42,340	42,813	472
B. Worship & Faith	13,588	14,853	1,265
C. Care & Connections	196	175	-21
D. Witness & Welcome	99	233	134
E. Outreach & Service	5,677	5,754	77
F. Trustees	57	0	-57
G. Administration & Operations	6,635	7,220	585
H. House & Grounds	18,256	19,615	1,359
I. Miscellaneous	1,944	2,048	104
Net Difference:	7,787	-7,363	15,150

Highlights:

The first four months were very solid financially:

- Income of \$96,600 exceeded expenses of \$88,800.
 - **Income** was \$11,200 above budget due largely to a handful of large annual pledges that came in during March. Pledge income will likely level out somewhat during the rest of the year.
 - **Expenses** were \$3,900 below budget, with most of the savings coming from Worship & Faith and House & Grounds.
- Our cash position at April 30 was strong, with \$41,000 in the checking account and \$45,000 invested in a money market fund.
- Our April 30 net position ((cash + investments) – restricted account obligations) was \$3,000 positive.

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

Jim Lootens, Treasurer - lootens.jb@gmail.com

COMMUNITY

Peacemaking Experiences

By susanna-judith rae

"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God" (Matthew 5:9 KJV).

During FCC's May 12 worship service, Pastor Sarah asked how God was calling each of us to be a person of peace. What a crucial question for members of a Just Peace Church. Surely many of us will want to share peacemaking experiences. Here are some of mine.

In the late 1950s, when about 13, i discreetly facilitated the cessation of fighting words between my older sister's poker-playing friends and one or more adults at our house. This was long before the Internet and before poker was featured on television or in newspapers. Suddenly, loud arguments erupted about which was the winning hand. Various players were certain that they were the only one who knew the rules of poker. In contrast, i—the youngest, shortest, smallest, most soft-spoken, and most reticent—knew almost nothing about poker except that poker chips came in red, white, and blue.

Can you guess how i brought peace, resolution, and calm to the uproar? By making a beeline for *The World Book Encyclopedia* in our den and quickly returning with a volume. Looking in the entry under POKER, i swiftly found the game's official rules. Then, i placed the opened volume on the table where the squabble was continuing. i didn't need to say a single word. Players could all clearly see the solution to their bickering. Soon, peace prevailed.

Unfortunately, a lot of people don't appreciate peacemaking attempts. On the day mentioned, only the most experienced poker player seemed at peace with my actions. The others appeared merely to want to be on the winning side of the dispute. For some, clarifying the factual information or arriving at the truth was not a goal. How like partisan politics of 2019!

Throughout my life, i have felt sad to hear references to "namby-pamby peacemakers." Furthermore, many prefer hawks to doves. In my experience, true peacemaking is consistently a positive, much needed, worthy goal. Some individuals say that our prayers for peace have, obviously, gone unanswered. Nevertheless, we mortals have no idea how much more aggression, conflict, violence, fighting, wars, fatalities, and injuries would be occurring if not for past and present prayers for peace.

Moreover, we can all improve our communication. i have found that seriously committing to, and fully embracing, respectful interpersonal communication can lead us closer and closer to peace in our families, peace among friends, and peace among strangers.

Let us pray, share peacemaking experiences, and speak respectfully to all as we progress toward a Just Peace.

Dear God, thank You for opportunities to contribute to peace. May we each turn to You at such times, keep our eyes on You, and do our part to make FCC, our family, our neighborhood, our workplace, our state, our country, and our world better. Amen.

Meagan Johnson

Alexander Technique
for Music & Life



What is Posture Anyway?

We all know that 'good posture' is important. It helps us move through the world with confidence. It helps us have presence in performance or public speaking. We feel better and look better with it. But if you ask people what good posture is, you're likely to hear something like the following:

"Well, I know I should use it, but I don't."

"When I was a kid, I was told to pull my shoulders back and lift my chest. But my back hurts after I do this for a while."

If you ask a group of people to show you "good posture," and then you are attentive to what each person is doing, you're likely to notice that everyone has a different idea, and that often, our conception of posture involves a lot of effort and pulling to try to achieve some ideal "correct outer form." Sometimes, striving for that form can lead to pain, strain, and tension, even if our "form" looks good from the outside.

Alexander Technique teachers aren't interested in a correct outer form, but in the way that a person coordinates themselves. People's posture improves as a part of Alexander Technique study, but often as a side benefit. F.M. Alexander called this self-coordination our **Use. Your Use is your own, individual way of being in your body, in your thinking, and in your responses to the world around you.**

So the next time you catch your reflection in a mirror try to not to go for a correct outer form. Experiment with one of these phrases instead. They are all based in solid biomechanics, and draw on the Alexander Technique in that they start with our thinking and our goals, not a plan for a "correct position."

"My feet (and if sitting, my sitting bones) are supported by the earth/the surface I'm resting on, and I'm allowing myself to be supported."

"I let my head rest to balance freely on top of my spine (way up between the ears)"

"I let my shoulders release to either side from the center of the chest"

One of my favorite aphorisms from F.M. Alexander is:

"There is no such thing as a right position, but there is a right direction."

If you want to work to improve your posture in a way that will also bring you more mental and physical ease and peace, please contact me!

Read the full version of this article on Meagan's blog at sound-direction.com/what-is-posture-anyway/

- Meagan Johnson is a certified teacher of the Alexander Technique and voice instructor. Her studio is in the "Treehouse Room" on the second floor of the church, next to the library.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Family Promise Clothing Drive in August: For those of you used to spring and fall clothing drives, this year Family Promise is just doing one in August. So we will not be doing a big push this spring. If you are doing spring cleaning and can't save donations at home, we will have a place to store them at church. Just bring them in in tall white trash bags that are securely tied, and we'll keep them here.

Men's Lunch: This lunch and discussion gathering for men of First Congregational meets at various restaurants in the greater Indianapolis area. They meet every other Thursday at 1 p.m. This month they will meet on **June 13th & 27th**. Please contact Randy Walker at (317) 796-2081 or aa28977walker@gmail.com for information.

Sacred Organ Music on June 30th, Special guest organist Charles Manning.

July Colony Submission Deadline: Please have your submissions sent to Shannon by **June 15th**.

Circle IV Book Discussion: Circle IV will be meeting at the home of Jackie Gibson on Tuesday, June 18th. We will complete the Phillip Gulley book, *Unlearning God: How Unbelieving Helped Me Believe*, and discuss next fall's selection. All are welcome to join us. Feel free to carpool. For further information, contact Susan Kent at (317)351-0510 or susankent510@sbcglobal.net.

Women's Lunch Bunch: All women of the church are invited to get together once a month for lunch, friendship and fellowship. This month we will meet on Thursday, **June 27th** at 11:45 a.m. For any questions or for more information, please contact Sue Chapman at 317-259-1806 or carolsuech59@gmail.com.

Flower Calendar: The 2019 Flower Calendar is on the bulletin board by the garden doors. Flowers can be for any occasion, and can come from the store, florist, or from your garden. The cost is \$25.00 from our florist. Any questions, please email Sally Coombs at sallysews73@gmail.com or call 317-446-2853. You can also let Shannon Abbott know the occasion at shannon@fcindy.org or call the church office at 317-257-5397.

The Summer Day

Who made the world?
Who made the swan, and the black bear?
Who made the grasshopper?
This grasshopper, I mean—
the one who has flung herself out of the grass,
the one who is eating sugar out of my hand,
who is moving her jaws back and forth instead of up and down—
who is gazing around with her enormous and complicated eyes.
Now she lifts her pale forearms and thoroughly washes her face.
Now she snaps her wings open, and floats away.
I don't know exactly what a prayer is.
I do know how to pay attention, how to fall down
into the grass, how to kneel down in the grass,
how to be idle and blessed, how to stroll through the fields,
which is what I have been doing all day.
Tell me, what else should I have done?
Doesn't everything die at last, and too soon?
Tell me, what is it you plan to do
with your one wild and precious life?

—Mary Oliver

