



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

*No matter who you are, or
where you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here!*

www.fcindy.org
317.257.5397

7171 N. Pennsylvania St.
Indianapolis, IN 46240

@FirstCongregationalUCCIndy

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Welcome home! We celebrate being a Just Peace making church with an Open and Affirming covenant supporting the LGBTQ community since 1994. We welcome first time guests and include **all ages** in our worship service. We believe we are called by Jesus to be a transforming presence for God in the world. We are a place to **belong**, a place to **heal** and a place to **love**. **At First Congregational we recognize God as a loving, creating, all-encompassing Spirit who is not limited by usual human boundaries. Therefore, we practice the use of inclusive, expansive, and non-gendered language when speaking of and to God.**

Pastor Sarah’s Office Hours

Monday: Sabbath
Tuesday: 9am – 12pm
Wednesday: working off site
Thursday: working off site
Friday: working off site

Shannon’s Office Hours

Monday: Sabbath
Tuesday: 9am – 12pm
Wednesday: 9am – 12pm
Thursday: 9am – 12pm
Friday: 9am – 12pm

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

We celebrate our church staff:

Senior Pastor, Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund
Pastoral Care Associate, Pastor Carol Sowle
Office Administrator, Shannon Abbott
Music Designer/Organist, Sean Baker
Choir Director, Julie Houston
Student Pastor, Cassidy Hall

Olivia Beeman, Nursery Attendant

We celebrate our church leadership:

Rich Gibson, Moderator
Lianna Campos, Vice Moderator
Rev. Dr. Pat Larracey, Clerk
Jim Lootens, Treasurer
George Meier, Financial Secretary

We celebrate our worship leaders today:

Nancy Dickinson, Worship Leader
Jesee Wittman, string bass
Mike Kessler, percussion

*The altar flowers are
given by
Susan and Richard Kent
in memory of her mother,
Margaret.*

To the parents of our young children

God put the wiggle in children, please don’t feel you have to suppress it in God’s house. Preschool age and younger may use the nursery or children of all ages are invited toward the front using the Prayground if you like. Keep children engaged by quietly explaining the parts of the service, actions of the pastor, worship leaders, and musicians. Sing, pray, and speak the responses; children learn worship behavior by copying you. The way we adults welcome children in church directly affects how they respond to the Church and to one another. Let all ages know that they are at home in this house of worship. As Jesus said, “Let the children come to me.”

To the members of our congregation

The presence of children is a gift to our church and to our community. They remind us that we are to share and pass on our faith. It is a gift to have children among us. Please welcome our children and encourage their parents with a warm smile.

Thank you.

Please speak the **bold**-printed words in unison.

Asterisk (*) indicates those who choose to may stand.

WE GATHER

PRELUDE	Christmas Dreaming	Gordin, Lee, arr. Baker
INTROIT	Toda la Tierra	A. Taule
WELCOME and PRAYER		Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund

CALL to WORSHIP (*please remain seated*) Nancy Dickinson

We gather together on this second Sunday of Advent to worship the God of love.

Love is here with us now.

We gather together to worship the God of peace.

Peace is here with us now.

We gather together to worship the God of hope.

Hope is here with us now.

Love. Peace. Hope. We give God thanks for these gifts.

We gather together filled with love, peace and hope.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

ADVENT HYMN #429	God Bless Our Homes (vs 2)	<i>New Century Hymnal</i>
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UNISON PRAYER

On this second Sunday of Advent we pray for every heart to receive God's loving spirit. May we live united in our deep sense of the equality of all God's children as we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Amen.

*HYMN #107 <i>Hymnal</i>	Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn	<i>New Century</i>
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*THE PEACE

WE PROCLAIM

MESSAGE FOR ALL AGES

ANTHEM	Lift Up Your Voice	J. Desjardins
Lift up your soul, bring peace to the violence.		
Lift up your mind and open your eyes.		
Lift up your voice for those who fall silent.		
Lift up your heart and freedom will rise.		

Swahili

Kwa imani milele, na elimu ya.
Kwa maneno nguvu, na umoja.
*[By faith forever, and education of.
By powerful words and unity.]*

SCRIPTURE	Matthew 3:1-6	Nancy Dickinson
SERMON	"Cries from the Wilderness"	Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund
HYMN #116	O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (vs. 1-3)	<i>New Century Hymnal</i>

WE RESPOND

SHARING of JOYS and CONCERNS

*We invite those who desire to share a joy or concern. Please share your name so that people might get better acquainted. Loving God **hear our prayer.***

PASTORAL PRAYER & THE PRAYER OF JESUS

Our God in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kin-dom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, as we also have forgiven those who sin against us. Do not let us enter into temptation, but rescue us from the evil one. For yours is the kin-dom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

INTERLUDE	Parade of the Wooden Soldiers	MacDonald, Jessel, arr. Baker
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*Guests, please fill out a **Connect Card** found in the pew holders so that we might learn more about you. The cards may also be used to for prayer requests that will be shared through our weekly prayer chain. Please place Connect Cards in the offering plate.*

All praise to God we now do sing.
Our gifts this Advent now we bring.
This waiting time of peace we share,
As for the Christ our hearts prepare.

Please remain seated for the postlude or leave the sanctuary quietly. Everyone is invited for coffee, refreshments, and conversation in the church parlor.



CALLS to SERVE

"Here am I; send me!" Isaiah 6:8

Nursery Care - Life is thriving in our Playground, and we are expanding our ministry offerings to our young ones by opening up the Nursery! We welcome our new nursery attendant, Olivia, who will be with us every Sunday from 10:30-12:30 to care for our children. We need volunteers to join her! If you are interested in being a volunteer in the nursery, please contact Lianna Campos at lcampos33@gmail.com or 317-954-1601.

Adult Class, Sunday, December 15, 9:45 a.m. – For December, the Adult Ed class will move through the Advent Season by taking up the first four sessions from *Hallelujah: The Bible and Handel's Messiah*, a curriculum from Kerygma. We will be listening to parts of *Handel's Messiah*, and engaging with the scriptural references. Dec 15 – (led by Nancy Dickinson) - **"For Unto Us a Child is Born"** (Isaiah 7:1-17; 9:2-7 & Matthew 1:18-25; 4:12-16).

Choir Rehearsals - Rehearsals are on Thursday nights from 7:00 to 8:30 PM. We welcome new members. If anyone is interested in joining the choir, please email Julie at juliehouston@comcast.net. We would love to have you join us!

Inclusive Language Buzz, January 12th, 12:30 p.m. - Worship and Faith is hosting a Buzz on the use of Inclusive Language in our worship services. We will have a panel discussion with members of our congregation on January 12 after worship. You are invited to bring a dish and voice your experience of the recent changes we have made in our use of scripture, doxology, and prayer.

Green Team Tip – Temperatures are changing: have you checked your tire pressure recently? (If you want to share a green habit, please send it to hoot.gibson.tds@gmail.com.)

The "Mitten Tree" in the narthex will again be collecting hats, mittens, gloves, scarves, and socks for both children and adults. These will be **delivered to Exodus Refugee on December 16**.

The "Giving Tree" in the parlor will again be collecting \$25 gift cards for big-box stores such as Target, Meier, and Wal-Mart. These will be **delivered to Family Promise on December 16** for the After Care families for purchasing their own gifts.

December Mission of the Month: The Christmas Fund – The Christmas Fund is one of the "5 for 5" offerings of the United Church of Christ that FC has committed to support. The Christmas Fund, formerly known as the "Veterans of the Cross Offering," gives congregations and members an opportunity to reach out in loving compassion, providing assistance to those who have so faithfully

served our churches and now find themselves facing unexpected financial needs. These funds enable the Pension Board’s Ministerial Assistance program to provide, on behalf of the whole Church, pension supplements, health premium supplements, emergency grants for health or unexpected travel expenses, and Christmas “Thank You” gift checks to individuals and families in need. This year’s theme is “A Light Shines in the Darkness.” Your gifts this December will bring light into the darkness of financial need of deserving retired church workers and keep needed funds coming in the year ahead. Watch for the weekly bulletin inserts during Advent for stories of how individuals and their families have been helped by the Christmas Fund.

Pantry Items of the Month – Reverse Advent Calendar - Instead of you getting a treat each day during Advent, you will be adding a designated food item to bring to church. Items should be turned in weekly, and they will be delivered to the Northside Food Pantry weekly. Flyers with the list of items are on the narthex table.

Save the Dates for the following upcoming Special Services:

- **NEXT SUNDAY, December 15th, 11:00 am – Lessons and Carols**
- **December 20th, 6:30 pm – Blue Christmas Service**
- **December 24th, 7:00 pm – Christmas Eve**

THIS WEEK AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL

Sunday, December 8	12:15 p.m.	Outreach & Service
Tuesday, December 10	4:00 p.m.	Care & Connections
Thursday, December 12	7:00 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal
Saturday, December 14	10:30 a.m.	Bell Choir Rehearsal
Sunday, December 15	9:45 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, December 15	11:00 a.m.	Worship: Lessons & Carols
Sunday, December 15	12:45 p.m.	PCRC (w/ Pastor Sarah)

Today's Scripture (Inclusive Bible)

Matthew 3:1-6

¹ At this time John the baptizer appeared in the desert of Judea, proclaiming, ² “Change your hearts and minds, for the reign of heaven is about to break in upon you!” ³ It was John that the prophet Isaiah described when he said, “A herald’s voice cries in the desert:

‘Prepare the way of our God,
make straight the paths of God!’ ”

⁴ John was clothed in a garment of camel’s hair and wore a leather belt around his waist. Grasshoppers and wild honey were his food. ⁵ At that time, Jerusalem, all Judea and the whole region around the Jordan were going out to him. ⁶ John baptized them in the Jordan River as they confessed their sins.



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