



## FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

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

[www.fcindy.org](http://www.fcindy.org)  
317.257.5397

7171 N. Pennsylvania St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46240

@FirstCongregationalUCCLndy

**UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

**Welcome to your spiritual home! We celebrate being a Just Peace making, Green for care of Creation, WISE (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive and Engaged) for mental health church with an Open and Affirming covenant supporting the LGBTQAAI+ 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.**

**Pastoral Care:** Pastor Sarah may be reached at (386) 478-9012 or [pastorsarah@fcindy.org](mailto: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  
Student Pastor, Cassidy Hall

**We celebrate our church leadership:**

Alice Rutherford, Moderator  
Larry Eckel, Vice Moderator  
Rev. Dr. Pat Larracey, Clerk  
Jim Lootens, Treasurer  
Cheryl Dillenback, Financial Secretary

**We celebrate our worship leaders today:**

The Indiana-Kentucky Conference in collaboration with the Heartland and Illinois South Conferences of the United Church of Christ

JANUARY 3, 2020

11:00 A.M.

## WE GATHER

GREETING

Rev. Chad Abbott

CALL TO WORSHIP

Rebecca Braganza  
and Rev. Dr. Monica Ouellette

The Magi had a dream.

**They dreamed of a Messiah.**

**They dreamed of just rulers.**

**They dreamed of a new day for all people.**

The Magi had a dream,  
and this dream led them to action.

**They journeyed to unknown places.**

**They followed a star. They walked for days to get to Jesus.**

So may we be like the Magi,

**May our dreams inspire action.**

**May we worship the one true God. Amen.**

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

Rev. Nikki Shaw

God of the Milky Way,

We, like the Magi, are walking toward you.

One foot in front of the other, we are walking toward you.

It is our very prayer to move your way.

So if you can, leave the light on and the front door unlocked.

Leave a fire in the hearth and food on the stove.

And when we start to get lost or doubt our dreams,

Give us the will to persevere.

We are walking toward you, O God.

So like the parent that throws open the door,

Open the door to us through this text.

Amen.

## WE PROCLAIM

SPECIAL MUSIC “Arise, Your Light is Come” Mayflower Quartette

CHILDREN’S SERMON Christy Pursell

SCRIPTURE Matthew 2: 1-12 Lynnette Schuepbach

SPECIAL MUSIC “In the Bleak of Midwinter” Rev. David Long-Higgins

SERMON “Unexpected Gifts in An Unexpected Time”  
Rev. Andrew Warner, Rev. Shana Johnson,  
Rev. Chad Abbott, and Rev. David Long-Higgins

GENEROSITY MOMENT Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer

STAR WORDS Rev. Shana Johnson

## WE RESPOND

COMMUNION Rev. Chad Abbott, Rev. David Long-Higgins,  
and Rev. Shana Johnson

### INVITATION TO THE TABLE

Can you remember the first time you saw a shooting star,  
or the first time you saw the Milky Way?

There is something so shockingly holy about it.

One minute it’s a normal night,  
the next minute the sky is taking your breath away.

I feel that same sense of awe here at this Table.

For one minute we are moving through our day to day lives,

And the next we're being told that this Table has room for everything,  
And that at this Table all can be fed.  
Where else in the world do we hear those messages?  
It can take our breath away.  
So today you will be invited,  
as you always are, to come to this Table.  
And you are not invited  
because of what you have or have not done.  
You cannot be invited because  
you're a good Christian or a good person.  
You are invited, simply because you belong to God,  
and that is enough.  
So come to this Table.  
Come with your questions,  
and your doubts, and your fears.  
Come with your hope, your awe,  
and your love for the world.  
Come with all of you,  
authentically and honestly.  
For God is undoubtedly at this Table,  
and God is inviting you.  
Let us pray. . .

#### GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

God of starlight,  
There has always been something holy  
about stars for us. We wish on them.  
We look for them.  
We celebrate when we see them  
streaking across the sky on summer nights.  
We map out their designs,  
and consider glimpses of the Milky Way

holy enough for bare feet.

There has always been something holy  
about stars. We know that.

You know that.

The Magi *must* have known that.

So today we come to you in prayer,  
trusting that if you can paint the stars in the sky,  
Then surely you can hear us over the noise.

So first we pray for people wishing on stars:

We pray for those for whom 2020  
was a year full of hospital rooms and isolation.

We pray for those who lost love in 2020.

We pray for those who lost life in 2020.

We pray for those who lost a job, a home, or a sense of  
hope in 2020.

We pray for parents forced  
to homeschool children in 2020,  
And for children who missed their  
friends in 2020.

We pray for the milestones  
canceled in 2020,  
And for the breath that was stolen  
in 2020.

However, at the same time,  
We also say a prayer of gratitude  
for all the stars you have left for us this last year—  
The signs and mile markers of hope on the horizon.  
For example, we could not have survived without  
the birthday parades and the sidewalk chalk.  
And oh how we needed the slower schedule,  
and the family around dinner tables.  
We thank you for the gifts of technology,

backyard gardening, and sourdough bread.  
We thank you for every variety of essential workers,  
from grocery store clerks and teachers,  
to internet technicians and doctors.  
We thank you for the quiet that came  
with less cars on the road and less planes in the sky.  
We thank you for protesters demanding justice  
and for leaders like the late John Lewis  
who refused to give up on a broken system.  
In so many ways, 2020 was a turbulent year,  
and in so many ways, you were there,  
leaving stars in the sky,  
painting hope on the horizon.  
So today, in this new year,  
we ask that once more you would give us a sign.  
Pour out a double portion of your Spirit  
on this bread and cup,  
and on our star words,  
So that these ordinary objects might provide us  
a glimpse of something more.  
For like the Magi,  
we are seeking you.  
Like the Magi,  
we are looking up.  
Like the Magi,  
we just need a sign.  
Guide our feet.  
Show up in the mundane and the  
extraordinary. Be in the stars in the sky  
and in our everyday lives.  
We are hopeful, O God.  
We are hopeful as

the confidence of children wishing on stars. Amen.

WORDS OF INSTUTION & PRAYER AFTER CONSECRATION

PARTAKING THE ELEMENTS

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

**WE GO**

SPECIAL MUSIC "Go Tell It on the Mountain" Members of Zion UCC  
(Delaware, Ohio) & Music Director, Mr. Brian White

BENEDICTION Rev. Shana Johnson

*Following worship, everyone is invited for Coffee Hour via Zoom.*

- *Liturgy written by Sarah Are/ used with permission and license from Sanctified Art LLC/sanctifiedart.org*
- *All music is used with permission of the licenses of our individual Conferences*

*This worship service is a gift of appreciation and love for all of our local pastors, musicians, worship leaders, and worshipers.*

*May You, the wonderful people of our Conferences, be guided by the Divine Light of Christ's love in every path of life.*

*Wishing you a holy and blessed Epiphany,*

*Shana, Chad and Dave*



## **Worship Participants in order of appearing:**

Rev. Chad Abbott, *Conference Minister of the Indiana Kentucky Conference*

Rebecca Braganza, *Conference Administrator of the Indiana Kentucky Conference*

Rev. Dr. Monica Ouellette, *Minister of Search of the Indiana Kentucky Conference*

Rev. Nikki Shaw, *Director of Communications for Indiana Kentucky, Illinois South and Heartland Conferences*

*The Mayflower Quartet* from First Congregational, Indianapolis, Indiana

- Meagan Johnson, soprano
- Alice Rutherford, alto
- Jim Lootens, tenor
- Sean Baker, baritone, orchestra on keyboard

Christy Pursell, *Executive Administrator of the Illinois South Conference*

Lynnette Schuepbach, *Communication Coordinator of the Illinois South Conference*

Rev. Andrew Warner, *Generosity Outreach Officer of the United Church of Christ*

Rev. Shana Johnson, *Conference Minister of the Illinois South Conference*

Rev. David Long-Higgins, *Conference Minister of the Heartland Conference*

Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer, *General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ*

Mr. Brain White, *Music director of Zion UCC, Delaware, Ohio*

Members of Zion UCC Choir, Delaware, Ohio

## **CALLS to SERVE**

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

**TODAY! Coffee Hour, immediately after worship on Zoom**

**Zoom Vespers Service - Tuesdays, 7:00-7:30 p.m.** - With lessening daylight and colder weather, we are exploring ways to continue the fellowship we

have shared the past few months. On Tuesdays, we will meet at 7 pm for a half hour on Zoom, to be together virtually.

**NEW TIME for Soul Care with Pastor Sarah (Zoom)** - Join us on **Tuesdays** from **7:30-8:30pm.** for a time to check-in and to pray together.

**Wellness Wednesday** - On Wednesday, January 6<sup>th</sup>, you are invited to participate in a pre-recorded practice of Grounding & Centering to start your new year. This video will be posted on the FC Facebook page and website.

**Spiritual Support Group** – No Spiritual Support Group this Thursday due to the holiday. Rev. Dr. Pat Larracey will be available by phone or email for support.

**Publications** - Bulletins, Sermons, Epistles, and Colony are all available on our website: [www.fcindy.org](http://www.fcindy.org)

**Continue Your Support of First Congregational UCC** - Please continue supporting the mission and ministries of your local church at <http://www.fcindy.org/online-giving/>

**FC Emergency Fund** - The FC Emergency Fund is available to support housing, food, and medical needs for any of our church family who find themselves unemployed or underemployed due to Covid-19 impacts. To request funds for you or your family, please contact Pastor Sarah by email [pastorsarah@fcindy.org](mailto:pastorsarah@fcindy.org) or cell (386) 478-9012. To make a donation, send a check to the church with "emergency fund" on the memo or make a donation on the church website.

**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](http://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](http://www.theTrevorProject.org)

### This Week at First Congregational

<b>Sunday, Jan 3</b>	<b>9:30 a.m.</b>	<b>Sunday Adult Class</b>
<b>Sunday, Jan 3</b>	<b>11:00 a.m.</b>	<b>Sunday Worship (YouTube, FB, Dial In)</b>
<b>Sunday, Jan 3</b>	<b>12:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Zoom Coffee Hour</b>
<b>Tuesday, Jan 5</b>	<b>7:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Zoom Vespers</b>
<b>Tuesday, Jan 5</b>	<b>7:30 p.m.</b>	<b>Soul Care with Pastor Sarah</b>
<b>Wednesday, Jan 6</b>	<b>-----</b>	<b>Wellness Wednesday</b>
<b>Wednesday, Jan 6</b>	<b>7:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Trustees</b>
<b>Thursday, Jan 7</b>	<b>1:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Men’s Lunch</b>
<b>Thursday, Jan 7</b>	<b>5:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Spiritual Support Group</b>
<b>Sunday, Jan 10</b>	<b>9:30 a.m.</b>	<b>Sunday Adult Class</b>
<b>Sunday, Jan 10</b>	<b>11:00 a.m.</b>	<b>Worship (YouTube, FB, Dial In)</b>
<b>Sunday, Jan 10</b>	<b>12:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Zoom Coffee Hour</b>
<b>Sunday, Jan 10</b>	<b>12:30 p.m.</b>	<b>Outreach &amp; Service Buzz</b>

**\*All events are on Zoom unless indicated otherwise.**

### 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.

## Today's Scripture

### Matthew 2: 1-12, NRSV

<sup>1</sup> In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup> asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising and have come to pay him homage." <sup>3</sup> When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; <sup>4</sup> and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. <sup>5</sup> They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

<sup>6</sup> 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'"

<sup>7</sup> Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup> Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." <sup>9</sup> When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup> When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. <sup>11</sup> On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. <sup>12</sup> And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.



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