



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

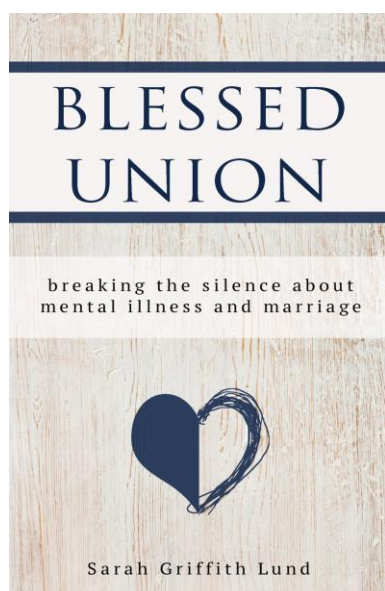
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

THE PILGRIM COLONY

February 2021

Pastor's Reflections

One of the ways I partner with First Congregational is in the work of mental health ministry. In the conversations with the search committee as we discerned how God might be calling us to come together in partnership, I shared with the search committee about my calling to write about and share about my own mental health journey with a wider audience. When we discerned that this was ministry we could do together, I felt God's loving support from First Congregational. Now as a WISE Church for mental health, we have formalized our commitment to being welcoming, inclusive, supportive and engaged for mental health.



This month my next book will be published by Chalice Press, *Blessed Union: Breaking the Silence About Mental Illness and Marriage*. This book tells the story about my own journey in recovery from posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and my husband Jonathan's journey with his mental health challenges. The book is a new resource for people of faith who want to know how to support marriages (their own or people they care about) who experience mental illness. I'm glad God is using me to help break the silence and end the stigma about mental illness. I'm so thankful to Jonathan for his faithfulness, support, and permission to share this story. Here is a link with more information about the book:

<https://chalicepress.com/products/blessed-union-breaking-the-silence-about-mental-illness-and-marriage>.

Sometimes I am asked how I have time to write books. It's the time cobbled together here and there, time on vacation, time while everyone else in the house is asleep, time where God's voice is whispering to me to write. I am thankful for the love and support from our congregation and from my family and friends that supports the vocation of writing. This is one way, the power of stories, the power of testimonies, that we can help spread the good news of God's love, compassion, and healing power in our world.

Thank you First Congregational for being my church family, for your love, your prayers, and your support. Together we are building a more just world for all.

Blessings,
Pastor Sarah

P.S. Use this link to register for the free book launch event:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/real-talk-about-real-marriage-a-conversation-on-mental-illness-marriage-tickets-138466835031>

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

Pastoral Care and Support:

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

Intern Reflections

Just Peace Intern

With the nation so eager to practice division and express their anger, I welcome the opportunity to contribute in a different capacity at First Congregational. It's my hope that my work, in whatever capacity, can add love, empathy, and meaningful support to this community of believers. Through service to others and placing God's purpose above our own, I pray God may grant us the clarity and understanding to connect all creation. I am excited to begin my time amongst your congregation members and take on the challenge of truly being an advocate and servant leader for *just* peace. May God bless and guide our journey together.

- David Clark

daclark1@butler.edu



From Your Student Pastor



Hello Church,

I am now embarking on year 3 and semester 2 of my MDiv and MTS work at CTS. I could not be more excited about my courses this semester: "Holy Rage, Holy Hope" with Dr. Buggs, Independent study "African Roots of Contemplative Activism" with Dr. Russell, "African American Biblical Hermeneutics and Womanist Biblical Interpretation," with Dr. Russaw, "Theology for

Trauma Injury," with Dr. Russell, and "Leading Through Transitions," with Dr. Kincaid. (I'll also be serving as TA for our "Merton, Ministry and Contemporary Life" class. As always, I look forward to continuing to share with you what I'm learning and what questions are stirring within me! Thank you for always being a community of safety, love, and openness. I am grateful for each and every one of you. If you ever want to connect and chat over zoom, email me at studentpastor@fcindy.org

Love, Cassidy

Pastoral Congregation Relations Committee

The pastoral office and other positions of staff leadership exist to build up the congregation as part of the Body of Christ and to equip the saints for the mission of the church. The particular relationship between a pastor and congregants should be tended deliberately, so that the ministries of both pastor and congregation complement each other and further God's grace in the world. As with any relationship, it must be respected and nurtured to grow in healthy and projective ways. For this reason, a Pastoral Congregation Relations Committee (PCRC) exists in a congregation to advise, assist, and promote the growth of this vital relationship.

PCRC meet quarterly and are available throughout the year for support and conversation. We are blessed to have both Pastor Sarah and Pastor Carol serve our congregation. Currently, Pastor Carol's focus is on the following areas: pulpit supply, pastoral care visits, Adult Education and Worship Leader coordination.

PCRC for Pastor Sarah: Randy Walker, Lianna Campos, Nancy Dickinson, Chuck Kiphart

PCRC for Pastor Carol: Bob Cook, Gloria Boedeker, Clark Collier, susana-judith rae

This Month at FC*

SUNDAYS	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class (Zoom)
SUNDAYS	11:00 a.m.	Worship (YouTube, Facebook, Dial In)
SUNDAYS	12:00 p.m.	Coffee Hour (Zoom - immediately after worship)
TUESDAYS	7:00 p.m.	Winter Vespers (Zoom)
TUESDAYS	7:30 p.m.	Soul Care with Pastor Sarah (Zoom)
WEDNESDAYS (beginning 2/17)	12:00 p.m.	Lenten Lunch & Learn
THURSDAYS	5:00 p.m.	Spiritual Support Group (Zoom)
Sunday, Feb 7	11:00 a.m.	Communion Sunday (YouTube, Facebook, Dial In)
Wednesday, Feb 3	7:00 p.m.	Trustees (Zoom)
Saturday, Feb 6	10:00 a.m.	Church Leadership Workshop (Zoom)
Sunday, Feb 7	12:30 p.m.	The Hate You Give Book Buzz
Wednesday, Feb 10	5:00 p.m.	WISE Mental Health Team (Zoom)
Wednesday, Feb 10	7:00 p.m.	Church Council (Zoom)
Wednesday, Feb 10	7:00 p.m.	Church Council (Zoom)
Thursday, Feb 11	1:00 p.m.	Men's Lunch (Zoom)
Saturday, Feb 13	10:00 a.m.	Food Drive (at FC)
Sunday, Feb 14	11:00 a.m.	Worship with guest preacher Rev. Nicole Barnes with Faith In Indiana
Saturday, Feb 20	11:00 a.m.	Neighborhood Walk (at FC)
Wednesday, Feb 24	6:30 p.m.	Calling Circle (Zoom)
Thursday, Feb 25	11:30 a.m.	Women's Lunch (Zoom)
Thursday, Feb 25	1:00 p.m.	Men's Lunch (Zoom)

****All activities are through the use of Zoom, Facebook, YouTube, or phone call-in unless otherwise stated.***

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

According to First Congregational's Constitution & Bylaws, there are three committees– Personnel Committee, Safe Church Committee, and the (2) Pastor-Congregation Relations Committees – which report directly to Church Council, rather than to a Standing Board. Therefore, it is Council's responsibility and purview to recruit committee members in order that the committees can fulfill their charges for the congregation. Here are the committee responsibilities:

- Pastor-Congregation Relations Committee provides support and advocacy for the relationship between the pastor and congregation by serving as a liaison for concerns and feedback, interpretation, and conflict mediation.
 - NOTE: Because we currently have two pastors, Pastor Sarah Lund and Pastor Carol Sowle, we also have two separate PCRCs, chaired by Randy Walker and susanna-judith rae, respectively
- Personnel Committee (chaired by Karen Walker) provides support functions for staff (this committee will not be responsible for supervision, which shall be carried out by the Pastor). Responsibilities include: establishing policies in compliance with applicable laws; developing job descriptions; assisting the Pastor and Council with recruitment of staff (other than a called minister); regular assessment of staff; and developing and implementing staff grievance procedures.
- Safe Church Response Committee (Larry Eckel and Sandy Wood) has responsibility for implementing and reviewing the Church's *Safe Church Policy Concerning Harassment, Exploitation, and Stalking* as described in the policy.

As a new year in First Congregational's life begins, we welcome interested persons to be a part of any one of these committees. In particular, the Personnel Committee is seeking one additional person to serve alongside the two dedicated members who are currently serving there. Please contact the committee chair if you would like to serve your church in one of these capacities.

Comeback Team: Current Building Policy

The church building is closed to in-person church gatherings **until the following parameters are reached, based on guidance from Dr Virginia Caine, Marion County Public Health Director:**

A 7-day average of 5% (or less) positivity among unique individuals tested for a two-week period, and new cases per day at 35 or under in Marion County, per the metrics shown on www.coronavirus.in.gov .

If you need to be in the building, please wash your hands in the kitchenette or use the sanitizer at the cleaning cart, sign in, and wear a face mask. We value the opportunity to be together, but are equally desirous to keep one another healthy by limiting ways to inadvertently shed virus!

Virtual Church Leadership Workshop: Feb 6th at 10AM



WORSHIP & FAITH

Elizabeth Price, Chair

Sunday Adult Class, 9:30-10:30 am

Adult Education will continue to meet [via Zoom](#). February is Black History Month, and we all know that there is simply too much rich Black history to cover in just one month. In some ways, we have been engaging with Black History for several months now in our Adult Ed classes. This month we will focus on two leaders of the civil rights movement – one of whom will likely be new to most of us, which simply shows us how many more opportunities we have to broaden our knowledge. Join us for lively discussions and thoughtful reflections.

February 7: This Sunday we will look at **the storied career of John Lewis (1940-July 17, 2020)**. There are many articles, to choose from, but we will read this article “How John Lewis spent his life bridging America’s racial and political divides” by Phillip Morris from *National Geographic*, available at this link: <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/history/2020/07/john-lewis-built-bridges-across-racial-political-divides/>

We will also watch this 9 minute video “Remembering John Lewis; Inspirational Documentary” at <https://youtu.be/ZszlldKiuwE>

February 14: Led by Wendy Baldwin, join us to discern and discuss a selected Bible passage, and how it speaks to us about generosity and stewardship.

February 21: Today we will learn about a pivotal but largely forgotten civil rights advocate and leader, Bayard Rustin. A gifted organizer, he schooled Martin Luther King Jr. in the art of civil disobedience. We will read a short summary of his contributions in this bio “Bayard Rustin” from *Quakers in the World*, found at this link: <https://www.quakersintheworld.org/quakers-in-action/160/Bayard-Rustin>.

We will also watch a video from Democracy Now, “Black, Gay & Pacifist: Bayard Rustin Remembered for Role in March on Washington, Mentoring MLK” at: https://youtu.be/FW5z98A_eAo

For a longer article about his life, see “Who Designed the March on Washington” by Henry Louis Gates, Jr. at this link: <https://www.pbs.org/wnet/african-americans-many-rivers-to-cross/history/100-amazing-facts/who-designed-the-march-on-washington/>

February 29: Student pastor Cassidy Hall will continue to lead us in exploring Black theology and Womanist Theology and how it may impact our common life together.

3 Ways to Connect for Worship



FACE BOOK

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



YOUTUBE

<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

- **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.

Lenten Lunch & Learn (beginning February 17th)



Join us for a seven week study as we explore "A New Day" with poet Sonia Sanchez. The gatherings will be curriculum-based, and you are welcome to join to eat your lunch and listen as we gather to learn from videos of Sonia and others from The Katie Geneva Cannon Center for Womanist Leadership. Womanist work and theology centers on the insights and wisdom of Black women, and we will therefore be focusing on hearing from those voices through this study.

Questions? Email Student Pastor Cassidy Hall at studentpastor@fcindy.org

OUTREACH & SERVICE

The Outreach & Service Board has been hard at work developing a new vision for how we carry out our commitment to justice and peace in our community. On January 10 we presented that vision in a Buzz, and we're grateful to all who attended and contributed thoughts and ideas to our process. The presentation from that Buzz is available [here](#) for anyone who missed it or wants a refresher. In a nutshell our goals are:

- to support the Just Peace Team's vision of developing a focus on advocacy in addition to financial giving;
- to begin a partnership with Faith In Indiana in support of our current commitment to racial justice and other areas of just peace;
- to streamline our outreach efforts to align with our UCC covenants and current human and financial resources;
- to move from our current Mission of the Month to a "Covenant Outreach", which will bring a four-month focus to ministries related to one of our UCC covenants (Open & Affirming, Just Peace, and WISE for Mental Health); and
- to have a deeper impact on fewer ministries through both dollars and advocacy.

The most obvious change for the congregation will be the move from the Mission of the Month to our four-month Covenant Outreach. From now through April we'll be focusing our outreach efforts on our Just Peace covenant, with a special focus this year on racial justice. Recipients of our advocacy and our financial giving during this time period will be the Peace Learning Center, Faith In Indiana, Exodus, and Family Promise. We clearly see a racial justice component in all of these excellent organizations. Congregants are encouraged to financially support these organizations by making a single contribution that will be equally disbursed across all four (unless otherwise specified). Checks can be sent to the church with a notation for "Covenant Outreach", or donations made online with a note to Cheryl Dillenback, Financial Secretary, noting the same. Several contributions across the four-month period are welcomed but not expected. Advocacy efforts for these non-profits will also be highlighted and requested, as we learn more of what we

can do as a congregation. We see education about the ministries we support as necessary for a full advocacy response, so articles describing Peace Learning Center and Faith In Indiana can be found elsewhere in this newsletter.

Of special interest to us currently is our nascent partnership with Faith In Indiana. A resolution for partnership has been adopted by Church Council and has been publicized in our 2020 Annual Report. We expect to soon learn more about our role in this partnership, and a Faith In Indiana team (headed by Worth Hartman and assisted by our new Just Peace intern, David Clark) is already being formed. This team will act as a liaison with FII leaders to promote our congregation's advocacy on a topic of our choosing. Please let Worth know if you're interested in serving on this team, and/or if you're eager to engage in advocacy for racial justice in some way. We're excited about where God is leading us on this new path of bringing peace and justice to our world.

Outreach & Service Board – Nancy Dickinson, Worth Hartman, Steve Leatherman, George Meier, Alice Rutherford (chair), Paul Terheide

Peace Learning Center Teaches Peacemaking

The Outreach and Service Board is encouraging members to financially support community organizations that align with our churches' just peacemaking covenant. Consider a contribution to the Peace Learning Center (PLC). The PLC was created in 1997 by a team of people that included Tim Nation, the PLC's current Executive Director, to reduce violence and increase kindness in our community. It is housed at Eagle Creek Park and has reached more than 210,000 people locally and internationally.

The PLC's programs are designed to teach safe and simple ways to manage anger, solve problems, and develop appreciation for differing perspectives. They believe everyone can be a peacemaker. The PLC supports communities in redefining peace through equity, social emotional learning and the implementation of innovative practices. The PLC embodies values of Relationships, Equitable Practices, Antiracism, Inclusiveness, Learning, Sustainability, and Accountability.



Even with the challenges of COVID and reductions in funding the PLC has still accomplished much in 2020. They have served 6,463 individuals, hired three new positions, made their building ADA accessible, and trained the entire IPS district administration in Restorative Practices. The Peace Learning Center's sums up 2020 with this statement:

"2020 has revealed truths many do not want to face. Systemic racism is undeniable. A pandemic is unrelenting. Police violence is real. The economy is hurt.

But we know that Peace Learning Center has so much to contribute to the healing of these ills. Help us achieve our vision of a healed world where strong and caring communities strive together to fully live in peace."

Learn more about the Peace Learning Center at their website:

www.peacelearningcenter.org

- Worth Hartman



Faith in Indiana is a statewide non-profit that brings congregations together to increase their collective power to address locally agreed upon economic and social issues. Faith in Indiana is part of a national organization, Faith in Action, that was founded in 1972 in Oakland, California by a Jesuit Priest, Father John Baumann. Faith in Action has spent almost 50 years developing a model of congregation based community action to address local social issues.

Faith in Indiana was founded in 2010 and has its headquarters in Indianapolis with offices in six Indiana Counties representing 40% of the State's population. Besides monetary support, the emphasis is on personal interaction and community outreach to solve locally identified issues. For 1920-1921, some of these issues include: practices to reduce gun violence and support gun safety, fair redistricting and voter registration, expanded Medicaid and lower cost prescription drugs, and access to driver's licenses and K-12 school for immigrants.

Faith in Indian echoes the efforts of our own First Congregational Minister, Oscar McCulloch, who over 100 years took a similar faith based approach to social action. In one of his sermons, McCulloch stated that the hardships of the impoverished should be addressed with a spirit of love along with legislative reform and organized protest. Oscar McCulloch would find common ground with Faith in Indiana.

- Steve Leatherman

Racial Justice Team - Book Buzz on February 7

Please join us at 12:30pm on Sunday February 7 to discuss the themes from the book **"The Hate You Give"** by Angie Smith - which is also available as a movie! It covers topics of race, interracial dating, political activism, grief, friendship, wealth disparity, police brutality, addiction, and the media's depiction of African Americans. Please feel free to join in the conversation even if you haven't had a chance to read the book or see the movie as these are very critical issues today.

According to the reviewer for The Guardian, this book "says more about the contemporary black experience in America than any book I have read for years, whether fiction or non-fiction". It is a fairly long book, but rather quick to read. There is some swearing, additional violence, sexual situations, and drug use in the book, but it's not gratuitous.



For you who are fans of study/discussion guides, check out this one produced by Kansas State University at this link:

<https://krex.k-state.edu/dspace/bitstream/handle/2097/39158/guide-2018.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

It is very thorough and includes chapter summaries at the end.

Thank you, the Racial Justice Team: Pastor Sarah, Carol, Cassidy, Alice, Karen

WISE Mental Health Team (Next Zoom meeting: February 10th, 5:00PM)



The FC WISE Mental Health Team seeks new members interested in promoting mental health, removing stigma of mental illness and working for justice for those affected by mental illness. We meet monthly (currently [via Zoom](#)) the second Wednesday of each month from 5 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. Come join our active and caring team trying to live out God's call to love one another through our commitment to those experiencing mental health challenges, their families and friends.

For more information contact co-chairs, Pat Larracey, [317-625-6801](tel:317-625-6801)-plainandfancy1963@att.net and Sandy Wood, 317-225-6206- csjlwood@att.net.

Hacking Away at the Stigma of Mental Illness

“And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:7 NRSV).

Are you aware your mental health can benefit from your attending FC's WISE (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, and Engaged for Mental Health) Spiritual Support Group's Thursday Zoom meetings at 5 to 6 PM? As a regular attender, i find the gatherings intriguing, informative, and comforting, as well as supportive. The group is not only for individuals with mental illness; it's also for their spouses, family members, and caregivers. i am not exaggerating when i affirm, “Being part of FC's WISE spirituality group is often the highlight of my week.” Also, i like knowing that one of our goals is hacking away at the stigma of mental illness as well as breaking its silence: to me, two sides of the same coin.

Before i share some of my experiences during the get-togethers, i want to stress that complete, total confidentiality is majorly important to us. Frequently we proclaim: “What you say here stays here.” Nevertheless, the group assured me that sharing with *Pilgrim Colony* readers some of **my own experiences** would not break our confidentiality rule.

Moreover, i have permission from my husband Earl to mention his participation at the meetings. Like i do, Earl looks forward to Thursdays at 5 when we eagerly greet the WISE group leaders, Pastor Sarah and Pat Larracey, as well as others. Earl and i are grateful that before the January 21 death of our terminally ill neighbor and dear friend Bob, either or both of us numerous times talked openly in the group about our love for Bob and how much we would miss him after his death. We certainly do!

Since joining the WISE mental health group, i've thought repeatedly about a pet-peeve of mine: how crossword puzzle clues and answers often include derogatory words about mental health. For example, hints and answers frequently contain the words “crazy,” “loony,” “mad,” or “nuts.” When many people utter such words aloud, no wonder others feel a stigma around having anxiety, depression, PTSD, or other mental illness.

Perhaps you have heard persons scorn or ridicule the work, writings, or comments of psychoanalysts, therapists, or other mental health professionals. Maybe the speaker derisively called the professional a “shrink,” a term originally

short for “head shrinker.” Such disrespectful remarks, sometimes accompanied by sneers, are common in real life, as well as in novels, films, and TV shows. For example, in *School Days*, a Spenser series novel by Robert Parker, a lawyer informed private eye Spenser about the likelihood of a judge’s being sensitive to a teen’s mental health challenges this way: “The honorable C. A. Murphy thinks Freud is a fraud misspelled.” (Parker, *School Days*, 2005.)

Because i enjoy creative puns, the attorney’s comment struck me as clever; i scribbled it down on paper. When i later pondered the words, i realized such remarks fit my own mother’s mindset about most matters related to mental health.

In addition, i considered one of my early attempts at healthy differentiation from Mother (1923-2015). After becoming an Indiana certified Marriage and Family Therapist, i once said, “Mother, i wonder what it’s like for you to have a daughter who’s a mental health professional—given your lack of regard for—or belief in—mental health therapy.” Calmly and with much curiosity, i awaited her reply.

i was not surprised when Mother claimed i had misunderstood times i heard her criticize, disparage, condemn, or make fun of therapists. i was sad and disappointed in Mother’s attitude. Likewise, i’ve long felt sad that Mother, who would have, i think, benefitted from getting into therapy or into a support group after she got divorced in 1964, was widowed in 1990, and grieved deaths of loved ones throughout her life. How helpful it would have been to Mother if she had spoken openly in a WISE Support Group, gone online at the WISE UCC Mental Health Network [here](#) or clicked on its blog [here](#).

Dear God, we pray for Your will concerning good mental health for all. Amen.
- susanna-judith rae

Spiritual Support Group for Mental Health Conditions or Challenges, and Wellness: Thursdays from 5:00-6:00PM [on Zoom](#)

This group openly invites anyone seeking spiritual care concerning their well-being. We have covenanted with:

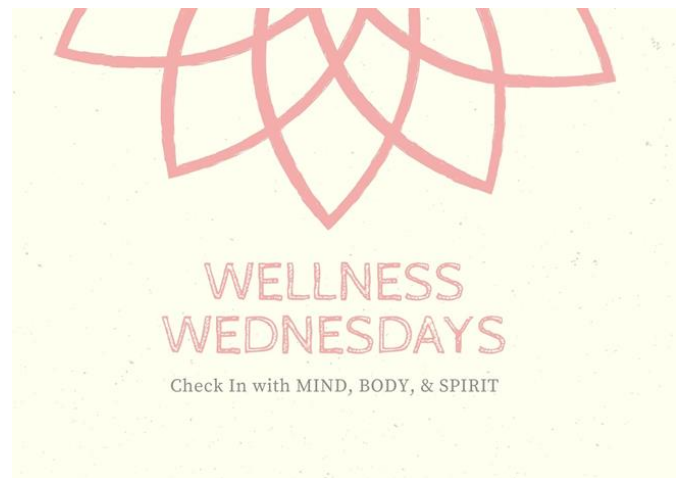
- care givers of loved ones who have mental illness, i.e. dementia and Alzheimer’s
- chaplains seeking to renew their wellness
- burned out and overwhelmed medical folk
- fears of parents, grandparents, and teachers about school and college
- those with trauma, grief, up and down moods, disorders, stigma, emotional issues

We are an open group with confidentiality guidelines. Sessions are on Zoom and are 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. Dr. Pat: plainandfancy1963@att.net, or 317-625-6801.

Thank you,
Rev. Dr. Patrick Larracey

Wellness Wednesdays: Nurturing Wellness through the Practice of Sacred Pause

Shannon Abbott, our Office Administrator, who is also certified in yoga and meditation and who has ministerial standing, has been offering weekly Wellness Wednesday presentations this fall and winter focused on body, mind and spiritual wellness through mindfulness and meditation exercises. These practices have been offered live via the church's Zoom link at 10:30 a.m. each Wednesday and are available to access after the presentation via the church website (fcindy.org) and Facebook. The Mental Health Team has sponsored this effort and Shannon has worked hard to promote participant wellbeing during this difficult time of isolation.



The team and Shannon have agreed to a sacred pause for reflection and discernment during Lent to determine if this ministry will continue and if we so, whether it will be live and recorded as it is now or only recorded and the optimal length and frequency of presentations.

The Mental Health team desires the congregation's input about this ministry so we plan to develop a short survey (online and on paper) to get feedback on current use of the Wellness Wednesday presentations and desire for such programming in the future. The survey will be developed in the next few weeks and offered to the congregation. We encourage you to give us feedback and help us plan the future of the mental health ministry of First Congregational UCC.

- Sandy Wood for the Mental Health Team

CARE & CONNECTIONS

Wendy Baldwin, Chair

Celebrating our Special Days

As a church family, we would like to honor and remember the special dates that we individually celebrate. In the Colony each month, we will list people with events that they are celebrating or remembering; due to privacy concerns, we won't include specific dates. This will provide an opportunity for each of us to reach out to one another, and the church will also start celebrating with individuals with a small token of our love.

We currently only have a partial list, so we hope you will let us know of birthdays, anniversaries, etc that you celebrate. Also we want to know of "angel-versaries" where you are remembering a special someone or event in your life. In early February, we will send out a letter and a form that you can fill out, as well as an online version. We hope to hear from everyone, so we can be a family in celebrating and supporting one another!

January & February Birthdays

Judy Deng (Feb)
Worth Hartman (Feb)
Carol Kohls (Jan)

Ceil Larson (Feb)
Alice Rutherford (Jan)
Carol Sowle (Feb)



Feeding the Community

Food Drive & Fellowship! In February – Change of Dates: February 13th, 10-noon

Due to the Board Workshop on the first Saturday of February, our monthly food drive is moved to 2/13. Our food donations to the Northside Pantry are helping to fight hunger needs, and the Pantry is very grateful that we are doing this – in 2020 we contributed over 2000 lbs of food and supplies! And our greatest gift – the ability to spend a few minutes of in-person fellowship with those that are there, while maintaining safe virus protocols. We will also have cards for people to sign for those with February events.

Vesper Gatherings – Tuesdays, 7-7:30 pm on Zoom

For now, we are cancelling in-person Sunday Vesper gatherings, due to winter weather. If we have a mild day, we will have a “pop up” Vespers service, and we’ll notify folks via email. On Tuesdays, we are meeting at 7 pm for a half hour on Zoom, to be together virtually to share some scripture and joys & concerns. For those who want, Pastor Sarah will be available for pastoral discussion following Vespers.

Monthly Walks – 3rd Saturday of the month, February 20, 11 am

Join us each month for a half hour walk in the beautiful neighborhood around the church. On Saturday, 2/20, we’ll meet at 11 am and head off for a walk and a time to catch up with one another. Please wear a mask, and dress appropriately for the weather.

TRUSTEES

Steve Coomer & Randy Walker, Co-Chairs

Financial Update

When We Give, We Reach Out With Helping Hands

2020 Operating Results vs. Budget

Highlights:

- **Income** of \$225,000 was \$37,000 below budget. After adjusting for \$32,400 of Foundation draws that were budgeted but not needed, income was still \$4,500 below budget. Our pledges were \$6,200 above budget, while unpledged income was \$10,700 below budget because of the pandemic.
- **Expenses** of \$246,200 were \$15,600 below budget. Most of this savings resulted from the pandemic (no choir director since June, no child care since March, no travel, etc.)
- **Year-end deficit** was \$21,300. We could have balanced the budget by drawing funds from the Foundation, but because we didn’t need the cash

flow, we chose to leave the funds in the Foundation where they can continue to grow. We will draw those unused funds in 2021.

1. Current Year Actual vs Budget Summary - Last year

1/1/2020 through 12/31/2020 Using 2020 Budget 1

21

Category	Actual	2020 Budget	Difference
INCOME	224,957	261,811	-36,854
M. Unrestricted Contributions	224,957	261,811	-36,854
M.01 Pledged Offerings	189,199	182,945	6,254
M.02 UnPledged Offerings	9,431	20,100	-10,669
M.03 Rollover Prior Year Surplus_D...	15,327	15,327	0
M.04 Foundation - Endowment Fund...	10,000	27,439	-17,439
M.05 Foundation - Minister Fund Draw	0	16,000	-16,000
M.06 Foundation - Trad. Music Fund...	1,000	0	1,000
M.07. Transfer from Youth Fund	0	0	0
M.08 Other Transfers from Restr Ac...	0	0	0
EXPENSES	246,241	261,811	15,570
A. Pastoral Leadership	119,706	122,899	3,193
B. Worship & Faith	34,909	41,890	6,981
C. Care & Connections	226	420	194
D. Witness & Welcome	600	1,100	500
E. Outreach & Service	20,840	21,500	660
F. Trustees	268	420	152
G. Administration & Operations	19,768	20,990	1,222
H. House & Grounds	43,153	45,605	2,452
I. Miscellaneous	6,770	6,987	217
Net Difference:	-21,284	-0	-21,284

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

Jim Lootens, Treasurer

lootens.jb@gmail.com

Green Team: Resolutions for a Green New Year

It's 2021! Have you made your New Year's resolutions? If not, or even if you have, consider resolving to help our planet in ways that you may not have done in the past. There are many ways, from conserving energy, to reducing pollution of land, air and water, to advocating with local and national environmental groups. Let's resolve to do more and then find ways to proceed that suit our circumstances. As we are reminded frequently in the news media and can see with our own eyes, our planet home needs us.

- Bill Gillette for the Green Team

COMMUNITY

IKC UCC Southeast Association Eviction Ministry: A Story of Hope

Just a couple of weeks ago, we received our first call of 2021 for assistance with rent in order to avoid eviction. Amanda is a single mom and a full time student who was laid off a couple of months ago (and was only two weeks from starting a new job). Due to these circumstances, she found herself behind on her rent, and her landlord was days away from filing for the eviction process.



Even though Indiana's moratorium on eviction is through January 31st (and hopefully will be extended further), landlords are still filing the paperwork in order to get in line for court proceedings when the moratorium is lifted. Even having the eviction paperwork filed against a tenant can reduce their chances of being able to find affordable housing in the future. Amanda had contacted multiple state and county rental assistance programs, but these programs are all overwhelmed and were unable to help her in the time required by her landlord. With no other options, she called First Congregational UCC in Indianapolis, and was immediately connected with our ministry. Because of generous donations to the IKC Southeast Association Eviction Ministry, we were able to pay the full amount required to keep Amanda and her family in their home.

The Southeast Association Eviction Ministry was designed to prevent eviction before it happens by providing assistance to those who are at risk of eviction and do not qualify for other forms of assistance. Many Hoosiers, like Amanda, are just one or two paychecks away from eviction or homelessness, and due to circumstances beyond their control find themselves with an eviction notice at their door. They just need a little help and a little hope to get back on their feet.

Ways you can help:

- Join our Team - We welcome new members who want to join our team.
- Legal resources - If you have legal experience with the eviction process, we would love to talk with you to gain better insight into the legal process.
- Checks can be made out to:

Southeast Association of the IKC UCC. Please include in the memo line: "Eviction Ministry." Donations can be mailed to the treasurer at:

SE Association Eviction Ministry

Attn: Margie Potter

726 Coach Rd.

Indianapolis, IN 46227

- Rev. Shannon Abbott (shannon@fcindy.org), Pastor Sarah Frische-Mouri Hannigan (pastorsarahzucc@gmail.com), Walter Ziebell (wziebell@gmail.com)

Southeast Association Virtual Lenten Series



Southeast Association Virtual Lenten Series *Highlighting and Celebrating our Chaplains*

When: Saturdays from 10:00am—11:00am
February 20, 27, March 6, March 13, March 20

What: Stories from active chaplains serving in ministry, questions and answers, and time for community prayers

Why: To Build Community in the Southeast Association as we seek to love and serve like Jesus

Who: Everyone from the Southeast Association is invited to join us

Where: On the Indiana-Kentucky Zoom Link
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81305889617?pwd=dVNMTXRpdE12M0lRcDREcUJDVWVxQT09>

For more information, contact
Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund at pastorsarah@fcindy.org

ANNOUNCEMENTS

March Colony Submission Deadline: Please email your submissions to Shannon at shannon@fcindy.org no later than **Friday, February 19th**.

Women's Lunch Bunch: All women of the church are invited to get together once a month at **11:30am.** via Zoom for lunch, friendship and fellowship. This month, they meet on **February 25th**. For questions or more information please contact Sue Chapman at (317) 259-1806 or 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 are meeting only on **February 11th & 25th**. Please contact Randy Walker at (317) 796-2081 or aa28977rwalker@gmail.com for more information.

Women's Book Circle: We meet on the **third Tuesday** of each month at **1:30** on the church **zoom** account. Join us! For more information please contact Karen Walker at 317-319-8950 or karen.e.d.walker@gmail.com

FC Emergency Fund - The FC Emergency Fund seeks to support your housing, food, and medical needs if you find yourselves unemployed or underemployed. You can send a check to the church with "emergency fund" on the memo or make a donation on the church website. To request funds for you or your family, please contact me by email pastorsarah@fcindy.org or cell (386) 478-9012.



ACTION CALENDAR: FRIENDLY FEBRUARY 2021

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
1 Send someone a message to say how much they mean to you	2 Ask a friend how they have been feeling recently	3 Do an act of kindness to make life easier for someone else	4 Organise a virtual 'tea break' with colleagues or friends	5 Show an active interest by asking questions when talking to others	6 Get back in touch with an old friend you've not seen for a while	7 Make an effort to have a friendly chat with a neighbour
8 Share what you're feeling with someone you really trust	9 Thank someone and tell them how they made a difference for you	10 Look for the good in people, even when they frustrate you	11 Send an encouraging note to someone who needs a boost	12 Focus on being kind rather than being right	13 Send a friendly message of support to a local business	14 Tell your loved ones why they are special to you
15 Smile at the people you see and brighten their day	16 Check in on someone who may be struggling and offer to help	17 Respond kindly to everyone you talk to today, including yourself	18 Appreciate the good qualities of someone in your life	19 Share a video or message you find inspiring or helpful	20 Make a plan to connect with others and do something fun	21 Actively listen to what people say, without judging them
22 Give sincere compliments to people you talk to today	23 Be gentle with someone who you feel inclined to criticise	24 Tell a loved one about their strengths that you value most	25 Thank three people you feel grateful to and tell them why	26 Give positive comments to as many people as possible today	27 Call a friend to catch up and really listen to them	28 Make uninterrupted time for your loved ones



"The best way to cheer yourself up is to cheer somebody else up" - Mark Twain



"The only way to have a friend is to be one" - Ralph Waldo Emerson



ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

www.actionforhappiness.org

Learn more about this month's theme at www.actionforhappiness.org/friendly-february

Happier · Kinder · Together