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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Epistle for the Week of February 4, 2021

Dear First Congregational,

I invite you to join me in planning to engage in time of fellowship, connection, and learning during Lent. Our congregation will gather on zoom every Wednesday of Lent to explore together the deep spiritual wisdom of Womanist theology created by Black women. Our Student Pastor will lead us for a noon experience of learning and spiritual nourishment starting with Ash Wednesday, February 17 at noon on our church zoom. Our Ash Wednesday observance will be different this year, yet will be a meaningful time of spiritual growth.

We are also invited to experience connection with the other churches in the United Church of Christ as part of our Southeast Association through our Saturday Lenten Series on zoom from 10:00am—11:00am. This program is open to everyone in the Indiana-Kentucky Conference and will highlight the ministries of our active chaplains, hearing their stories on the frontlines, and praying for them. The dates are: February 20, 27 and March 6, 13, and 20. The flyer and IKC zoom link are included below.

Our Worship and Design Team is also preparing special worship service videos for our Lenten season together, filled with many voices from our congregation and inspiring music. Though this Lent will be different than the past, we know God's loving Spirit will be with us, bringing us together in Spirit for encouragement and hope.

Blessings,
Pastor Sarah

THIS SUNDAY

Sunday Adult Education, 9:30 a.m. (Zoom)

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/ZszlIdKiuwE>

Sunday Worship, 11AM (YouTube, FaceBook, Dial In)

Scripture: Mark 1:29-39

Sermon: "The Holiness of Loneliness"

Coffee Hour via Zoom, immediately after worship followed by....

Racial Justice Team - Buzz discussion THIS Sunday (February 7 at 12:30PM)

If you haven't read the book or watched the movie "**The Hate You Give**" by **Angie Smith** there is still time! In fact, you are welcome to get your lunch and join in the discussion of the themes even if you haven't read or seen it. The study guide at this link even has chapter summaries in it to help out:

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

This New York Times best selling book and subsequent movie, Inspired by the Black Lives Matter movement, involves the police shooting of an unarmed black teen. The book covers topics of race, interracial dating, political activism, grief, friendship, wealth disparity, police brutality, addiction, and the media's depiction of African Americans. 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". There is some swearing, additional violence, sexual situations, and drug use, but it's not gratuitous.

We will explore the perspectives and perceptions represented and how they impact and possibly inspire us. Quoting one character in the book: **"I'll never forget. I'll never give up. I'll never be quiet. I promise."**

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

Thank You for Your Support of First Congregational UCC

Please continue supporting the mission and ministries of your local church by mailing a check to the church or through online donations at <http://www.fcindy.org/online-giving/>

THIS WEEK AT FC

How to Access our Zoom Gatherings

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/9264494206?pwd=dmtWbWE5UXRBTk5pcHZlYlB0aEFVUT09>

Meeting ID: 926 449 4206

Password: 7171

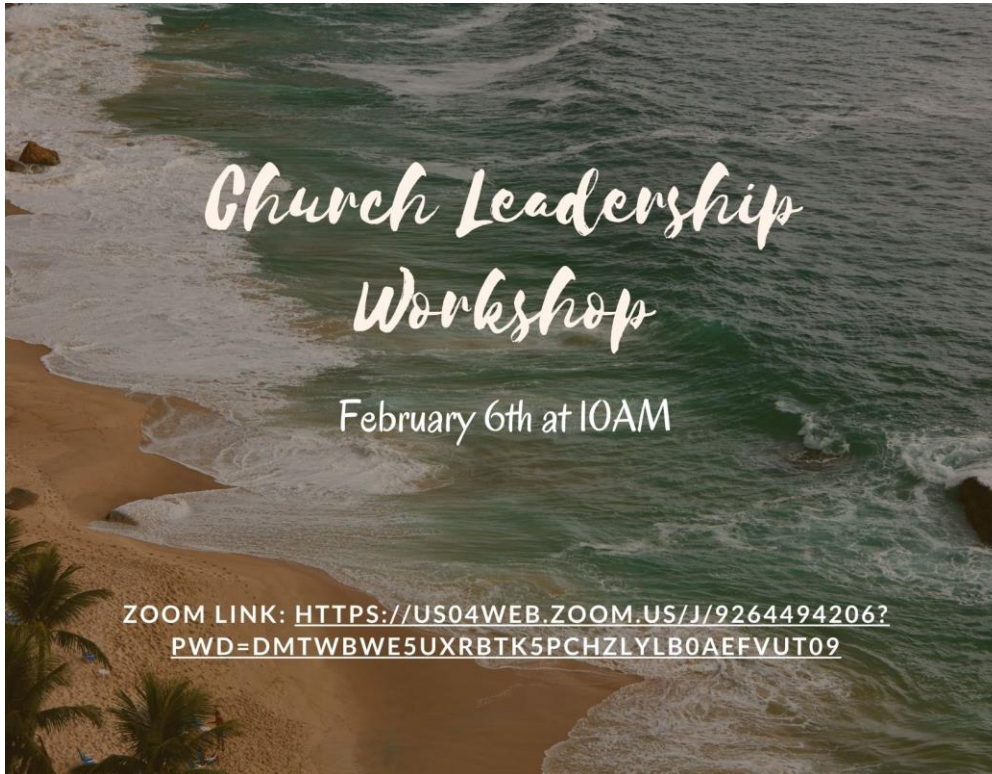
If you click on the URL, you should not need to enter in the Meeting ID and Password.

To dial in by phone: +1 312 626 6799, Meeting ID 926 449 4206, Password 7171.

TODAY!

- **Spiritual Support Group at 5:00 p.m.** - This group openly invites anyone seeking spiritual care concerning well being. Contact Pat Larracey at plainandfancy1963@att.net, or 317-625-6801, or Pastor Sarah at pastorsarah@fcindy.org, or 386-478-9012.

Virtual Church Leadership Workshop: Feb 6th at 10AM



Zoom Vespers on Tuesdays from 7:00 - 7:30 p.m.

Join us on Zoom for a time of togetherness, Scripture, and sharing of joys and concerns.

Soul Care with Pastor Sarah via Zoom- Join us after Zoom Vespers on **Tuesdays at 7:30p.m.** Simply stick around after vespers for a time to check-in and to pray together.

WISE Mental Health Team Meeting (Zoom) - Wed, Feb 10 at 5PM - 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

Church Council Meeting (Zoom) - Wed, Feb 10 at 7PM

Covenant Outreach - As our Covenant Outreach gets underway, for the next few months we'll be focusing our attention on our Just Peace covenant, specifically as it relates to racial justice ministries. See the [February Colony](#) for information about **Faith In Indiana** (<https://faithinindiana.org>) and **Peace Learning Center** (<https://peacelearningcenter.org>). The Outreach & Service Board invites financial donations (designated "Covenant Outreach") to these organizations, and

we'll be sharing more information about advocacy involvement in the coming weeks. Stay tuned!

COMING UP

Men's Lunch - NEXT Thursday, Feb 11th at 1PM - This lunch and discussion gathering for men of First Congregational meets every other Thursday at **1:00pm**. Please contact Randy Walker at (317) 796-2081 or aa28977rwalker@gmail.com for more information.

Monthly Food Drive – Rescheduled to Sat, 2/13, 10-noon

Please bring canned goods and supplies to benefit the Northside Pantry to our food drive, which is rescheduled to February 13. Last year, we donated over 2000 lbs from our monthly drives. Come to the church patio – rain, snow, or shine – where we can spend a few minutes connecting with one another. You can also pick up a Lenten devotional. Hope to see you there!

Ash Wednesday Lunch & Learn - Wednesday, February 17th at Noon

LENTEN LUNCH + LEARN

Wednesdays in Lent,

BEGINNING ASH WEDNESDAY

12:00 noon - 1pm on Zoom

Bring your lunch

All Are Welcome



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=dVNMTXRpdE12M0IRcDREcUJDVWVxQT09>

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

Please click [HERE](#) to view the February Colony with more information and

events happening this month:

CONNECTION & SUPPORT

FC Facebook page (click [here](#))

“**First Congregational Indy Fellowship**” group on Facebook (click [here](#)).

Pastoral Care

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

Pastor Sarah's Sabbath Days: Mondays & Saturdays

The congregation covenant with Pastor Sarah to provide 2 days per week for personal rest and family renewal. On Mondays and Saturdays, Pastor Sarah is not available unless it is a pastoral emergency. Thank you for honoring this sacred gift of Sabbath time for our Pastor and her family.

Additional Church Support Contacts

Pastor Carol (casowle@gmail.com)

Office Administrator, Shannon (shannon@fcindy.org)

Moderator, Alice Rutherford (alice@caloosaspirt.net)

Vice Moderator, Larry Eckel (lspeckel@comcast.net)

Mental Health Support:

- **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Disaster Distress Helpline:** 1-800-985-5990, or text “TalkWithUs” to 66746.
- **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.
- **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

FC Emergency Fund - The FC Emergency Fund is available to support financial needs for any of our church family who find themselves in need. To request funds

for you or your family, please contact Pastor Sarah by email pastorsarah@fcindy.org or cell (386) 478-9012.

FC Covid Protocols:

Effective immediately, 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.

At that time, the Council will decide reopening measures.

THIS WEEK AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL

3 Ways to Connect for Worship

YOUTUBE

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWV9wqAvPiUKSkEbjAV6Zpw>

- YouTube Live broadcasts at 11am..
- Use this option for live interacting and messaging. You must have or create a user account and be logged in to message live.

FACE BOOK

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

- The video will be posted at 11am.
- This is for viewing only. For live interacting and commenting, please use the YouTube option.

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.

How to Access our Zoom Gatherings

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/9264494206?pwd=dmtWbWE5UXRBTK5pcHZlYlBoaEFVUT09>

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.

Weekly Calendar

Thursday, Feb 4	5:00 p.m.	Spiritual Support Group
Saturday, Feb 6	10:00 a.m.	Church Leadership Workshop
Sunday, Feb 7	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, Feb 7	11:00 a.m.	Sunday Worship (YouTube, FB, Dial In)
Sunday, Feb 7	12:00 p.m.	Zoom Coffee Hour
Sunday, Feb 7	12:30 p.m.	Zoom Racial Justice Buzz
Tuesday, Feb 9	7:00 p.m.	Zoom Vespers
Tuesday, Feb 9	7:30 p.m.	Soul Care with Pastor Sarah
Wednesday, Feb 10	5:00 p.m.	W.I.S.E. MH Team Meeting
Wednesday, Feb 10	7:00 p.m.	Church Council Meeting
Thursday, Feb 11	5:00 p.m.	Spiritual Support Group
Saturday, Feb 13	10:00 a.m.	Food Drive
Sunday, Feb 14	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, Feb 14	11:00 a.m.	Communion Sunday Worship (YouTube, FB, Dial In)
Sunday, Feb 14	12:00 p.m.	Zoom Coffee Hour

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