

 [FirstCongregationalUCCIndy](#)

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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Epistle for the Week of March 25, 2021

Dear First Congregational,

We are blessed by the creative gifts of First Congregational's Worship and Design Team who have thoughtfully planned and prepared online worship with our staff for the past year. I am grateful for the faithful work of this team and their support as we imagine together what our worship life looks like during this unusual season. We think about music, visuals, scripture, prayer, connection, and the Gospel. We ask ourselves as we design worship how do we express the most critical parts of worship in a digital online format? We've benefited from helpful feedback about how to improve and participation from the congregation. Thank you!

For Holy Week, we will highlight in our Sunday morning worship this Sunday both the story of Palm Sunday and the story of Passion Sunday, telling the sacred stories of Holy Week. Then for Easter Sunday, we will celebrate through sacred music and scriptures the good news of the resurrection. We've worked hard to make these services extra special for our congregation. I pray that the

congregation will be blessed by inspiring and creative online worship experiences.

Blessings,
Pastor Sarah



Are you ready to get back to the people and activities you love?

Your vaccination brings us one day closer to controlling the pandemic and reopening Church.

Get your vaccine ASAP!

Register at ourshot.in.gov or call 211.

THIS SUNDAY

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

For March, we are going to read and reflect on the Lenten devotions for the Sundays in March from the UCC resource "Promises, Promises." If you like, bring a poem that speaks to you on your Lenten journey to share with the class, or a piece of art that speaks to you. Our goal is to grow together in faith and love, through listening, reflecting, and sharing.

March 28: Worth will reflect on the devotion for 3/28, Mark 11:4-6

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

This Sunday brings us our annual celebration of Palm Sunday – the commemoration of Jesus's triumphal entry into Jerusalem a week before he was put to death. In this continued time of virtual worship we have opted to incorporate the full story of Holy Week into our Palm Sunday service. So while our service this

Sunday begins with traditional palms and a celebratory hymn, we will move past that time into the drama of the Passion story all the way through the crucifixion. Numerous voices and faces will present in a new way the familiar pieces of this tragic (but unfinished) story. Please join us this Sunday for this special service, in preparation for a grand celebration of the Resurrection through scripture and song on Easter Sunday.

Coffee Hour via Zoom, immediately after worship

Confronting White Supremacy in Our Time - Sunday March 28th 4-5:30pm ET

The Trump presidency unleashed the forces of white supremacy in ways that took many by surprise. How does a Just Peace Church take up the struggle to turn back race hatred? This 90 minute webinar will include input from Rev. Tracy Howe Wispelwey and Scot Nakagawa as well as time for participants to enter into dialogue with the presenters and one another. Please join us at 4:00 pm (EST) on Sunday, February 28 for this important webinar sponsored by the UCC Just Peace Church Education and Witness Committee. [Register here!](#)

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!

- **Women's Lunch Bunch at 11:30 a.m.** - For questions or more information please contact Sue Chapman at (317) 259-1806 or carolsuech59@gmail.com.

- **Spiritual Support Group at 5:00 p.m. (Zoom)** - This group openly invites anyone seeking spiritual care concerning well being. Contact Pastor Sarah at pastorsarah@fcindy.org, or 386-478-9012.

Outreach & Service

Today marks our first Research Action Meeting with Faith In Indiana. This afternoon at 4:00 PM we'll be meeting on Zoom with State Senator Rodric Bray's deputy chief of staff to find common cause with Senator Bray around state legislation affecting gun violence, criminal justice, immigration, and/or climate change. Watch this space for further information about outcomes of our meeting. Kudos to David Clark, our Just Peace Intern, for his outstanding leadership in this effort.

TOMORROW! Game Night, Friday, March 26 at 7 pm

Looking for some fun time? Join us on Zoom to play some games together and share some fellowship with one another. Questions? Contact Wendy Baldwin.

Vespers (Outdoor/Zoom) on Tuesdays from 7:00 - 7:30 p.m.

Join us for a time of togetherness, Scripture, and sharing of joys and concerns. When weather conditions allow, Vespers will be outdoors at the church at 7 pm. Please bring a lawn chair and wear a mask. We will also try to connect to Zoom for those unable to attend in person. We will NOT meet outdoors if the temperature is below 50 degrees, it's raining, or winds are greater than 20 mph; you can join us on Zoom.

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.

Lenten Lunch Journey Recap, Week 5 and Invite to Week 6!

This week we continued to examine the life of poet and activist Sonia Sanchez alongside the life of Jesus. This week we explored the pain of rejection in their lives, and in our own lives — exploring what it means to make our life a prayer to step through the rejection like Jesus stepped through the crowd in Luke 4. Review our conversation on youtube here: <https://youtu.be/58SrZKHdruc>
There are no reflection questions for this week.

As always, feel free to join us next week for our final gathering of exploring the

lives of these two great liberators. **On our Church Zoom at 12noon on Wednesday March 31st.**

Covenant Outreach

Through this month and next our Covenant Outreach is still supporting Family Promise, Exodus Refugee, Faith In Indiana, and Peace Learning Center. To financially support these excellent organizations, please make a single contribution to “Covenant Outreach”, and it will be distributed equally across all of them (unless otherwise specified). See the March Colony for advocacy/volunteer opportunities at Family Promise. Also, please remember to support our UCC special offering to One Great Hour of Sharing throughout March.

Southeast Association Virtual Lenten Series

You can watch the video from last Saturday here: <https://youtu.be/rBKMBvyD4ak>

COMING UP

Food Drive & Fellowship! 1st Saturday of the Month – April 3, 10-noon

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 2021 we have already contributed over 600 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. Since this is the day before Easter, we will also have some Easter goodies on hand.

Please click [HERE](#) to view the March 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

Pastoral Care Associate: Pastor Carol (casowle@gmail.com)

Office Administrator: Shannon (shannon@fcindy.org)

Lead Councilor: Larry Eckel (lspeckel@comcast.net)

(Senior Councilors: Steve Coomer, Larry Eckel, Alice Rutherford)

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

Members in Need Fund - The Members in Need 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>

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Weekly Calendar

Thursday, Mar 25	11:30 a.m.	Women's Lunch Bunch
Thursday, Mar 25	5:00 p.m.	Spiritual Support Group
Friday, March 26	7:00 p.m.	Game Night

Sunday, March 28	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, March 28	11:00 a.m.	Palm Sunday Worship (YouTube, FB, Dial In)
Sunday, March 28	12:00 p.m.	Zoom Coffee Hour
Tuesday, March 30	7:00 p.m.	Vespers
Tuesday, March 30	7:30 p.m.	Soul Care with Pastor Sarah
Wednesday, Mar 31	12:00 p.m.	Lenten Lunch & Learn
Thursday, April 1	1:00 p.m.	Men's Lunch (private Zoom)
Thursday, April 1	5:00 p.m.	Spiritual Support Group
Sunday, April 4	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, April 4	11:00 a.m.	Easter Sunday Worship (YouTube, FB, Dial In)
Sunday, April 4	12:00 p.m.	Zoom Coffee Hour

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