

 [FirstCongregationalUCCIndy](#)

 [Forward](#)



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Epistle for the Week of April 22, 2021

Dear First Congregational,

Over the past year I've taken my time, savoring reading *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants* by Robin Wall Krimmerer. The author describes herself this way: "a mother, scientist, decorated professor, and enrolled member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation." On this Earth Day, I recall her stirring words, "A deep awareness of the gifts of the earth and of each other is medicine." As our world experiences multiple challenges to our physical, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing, I believe this deep awareness of the gifts of the earth and each other brings healing.

What gifts of the earth do you receive this day? What gifts of kindness, compassion, friendship, and love from others bring healing to you? My prayer is for us as a congregation is that we continue to be a community of belonging, healing, and love. This, too, is medicine. We belong to the earth and one another. We can heal the earth and one another. We can love the earth and one another.



Thank you all for living into this way to Be The Church with me and with one another.

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)

In April we will celebrate resurrection, new directions for building a beloved community and new beginnings. Join in!

April 25 - Student Pastor, Cassidy Hall leading discussion.

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

Scripture: John 10:11-18

Just Peace Intern, David Clark, preaching

Coffee Hour via Zoom, immediately after worship followed by Buzz at 12:30PM

This Buzz will cover two important areas of our church life. In the first half, we will engage in a celebration and “talk back” session with our Just Peace Intern, David Clark, on his last Sunday with us. During the second half, we will discuss when and how to safely begin to re-open the Church building for worship and gatherings.

SE Association Annual Meeting on Sunday, April 25th at 3:00pm (IKC Zoom)

We will be electing officers and hear from the Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson

who is the Associate General Minister and Administrator of General Synod. We are currently seeking nominations for the position of President and Registrar for the Southeast Association. If you or someone you know is interested in serving in one of these positions, please let Pastor Sarah know.

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. (Zoom)** - This group openly invites anyone seeking spiritual care concerning well being. Contact Pastor Sarah at pastorsarah@fcindy.org, or 386-478-9012.

The **Women's Lunch Bunch** will **not** meet today, but will meet by **Zoom at 11:30 a.m. on Thursday, April 29.**

Fun at First! – POSTPONED from April 23 to Friday, April 30, 6-8 pm, Church Playground & Front Lawn

Due to cool weather and possible rain, this event is postponed to next week - Looking for some in-person fun and community? We will gather outdoors at the church playground to have some pizza, play various games, and share community, while observing safety protocols of distancing and mask wearing. We'll have croquet & corn hole, as well as table games & cards. Dress appropriately for the cooler weather, and come when you can/leave when you want. There will also be

donation basket to help cover the cost of the pizza. All ages welcome, and bring a friend! So we have an idea of expected attendance, please let Wendy Baldwin know if you plan to attend.



CTS Labyrinth Workshop, Saturday, April 24 from 11 AM – 1 PM

The Indiana Interchurch Center Labyrinth, 1100 W. 42nd St., Indianapolis.

The labyrinth is located in the back of the center.

For people who choose not to walk, but want to participate, please bring a lawn chair and follow with [this finger labyrinth sheet](#).

Registration and Masks Required. Register [HERE](#).

Wanting to learn to pray in brand new ways?

Join us for “silent prayer” on the Church Zoom, **Mondays in April at 10:00 AM EST** for only 20 minutes. Student Pastor, Cassidy Hall will open our time with a brief reading and a reminder that there’s no wrong way to pray! Then we will simply be together (cameras on or off, eyes open or closed) while a candle rests lit on Cassidy’s screen. Our time is based off of the four-steps of Centering Prayer (1. “as the symbol of your intention to consent to God’s presence and action within.” 2. “Sitting comfortably...settle briefly and silently introduce the sacred word as the symbol of your consent to God’s presence and action within.” 3. When thoughts arise, “return ever-so gently to the sacred word.” 4. “At the end of the prayer period, remain in silence” and Cassidy will close us in prayer. Any questions or concerns? Email Student Pastor Cassidy Hall at studentpastor@fcindy.org

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.

A Gift for Cassidy Hall

Cassidy's last Sunday with us is May 2. She will share a sermon during worship and the coffee time following worship will be a time for conversation. Join us on on-line for this special time.

The Church Council has approved her Support Team's recommendation for a financial gift — a scholarship for her last semester at CTS - **A GIFT FOR CASSIDY !** She will not have time for another internship or job, thus no income as she completes this counseling training.

Send your donations to the church marked "A Gift for Cassidy". We will award this to Cassidy later in May to allow you time to send your gift for the gift which has been ours through her ministry with First Congregational.

If you have questions, please direct them to Rev. Dr. Patrick Larracey, chair of Cassidy's Support Team. We plan to "stick with her" through her training and preparation for ordination in the United Church of Christ. Thank you for your support and gift for the future of this maturing UCC pastor.

Outreach & Service

In our last month of our Just Peace Covenant Outreach, we are presented with an additional opportunity for support and advocacy for Family Promise. Throughout April, Family Promise is promoting a #NightWithoutABed campaign to provide sheltering apartments for homeless families. \$15,000 raised from Indianapolis congregations will provide one rented apartment for 12 months. Family Promise has found this new approach to housing homeless families to be exceedingly successful. Many families are able to rent on their own after a short time in an apartment provided by Family Promise. Through the rest of April we are requesting a special donation specifically to Family Promise, through either online giving or checks sent to the church. Let's see how much First Congregational can donate to this worthy project as a way of living out our Just Peace covenant! Learn more at [Family Promise of Greater Indianapolis | Facebook](#) and [Family Promise](#).

Part Time Church Communications Job

First Congregational Church (UCC) is a small, progressive church looking for an External Communication Manager, to be responsible for marketing, our website and social media platforms. Managing our online presence and content, handling the dissemination of all content that is intended for public consumption will help us fulfill our commitment to being a witness to the world of God's radical love. We expect this position to start now and to take about 10 hours a week, at an hourly

rate around \$20 (depending on experience and qualifications) and could be accomplished remotely and primarily on your own time. Please see the attached job description (click [HERE](#)) for more details about the job and more information about our church at www.fcindy.org. If interested, please send your resume and contact information to Shannon Abbott, at shannon@fcindy.org or call at 317-257-5397.

COMING SOON

Food Drive & Fellowship! 1st Saturday of the Month – May 1, 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 1300 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.

Virtual Mental Health First Aid Training – May 15th

Mental Health First Aid is a nationally recognized early intervention public education program. It teaches adults how to recognize signs/symptoms of potential mental health challenges, how to listen nonjudgmentally, to give reassurance to someone who may be experiencing a mental health challenge and to refer that person to appropriate professional services.

Thanks to a grant, the cost of the training has been reduced from \$50 to \$25 per person. In addition, several scholarships are available to make your cost zero. If you are interested in this training, use the following link to register for the class: https://secure.lglforms.com/form_engine/s/bOAM_odBAx0wnS9ji7GU_w

Ten participants are required for the workshop to be held, so please register as soon as possible if you are interested. The deadline for registration is May 7th.

Click [HERE](#) for additional information on the workshop, how to pay, or scholarships.

This is an exciting learning opportunity for our congregation and I hope to “see” several of you at this virtual workshop.

- Sandy Wood (csjlwood@att.net or call/text 317-225-6206)

May 16th- Mental Health Sunday Buzz & Christ on the Psych Ward Books - We

are fortunate to have a guest preacher, David Finnegan-Rosey, at our virtual Mental Health Sunday this year who has also agreed to do a Buzz after Worship. During our Buzz he will be discussing his 2018 book “Christ on the Psych Ward” published by Church Publishing. Though you do not have to have read this book to attend and benefit from his talk, there is a cart containing the books and a sign-up for pick-up in the hallway by the garden door. If you wish to have a book delivered to you, and there are books available, please let Sandy Wood know (csjlwood@att.net or 317-225-6206).

Please click [HERE](#) to view the April 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=dmtWbWE5UXRBTK5pcHZlYlBoaEFVUTo9>

Meeting ID: 926 449 4206

Password: 7171

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Weekly Calendar

Thursday, April 22	5:00 p.m.	Spiritual Support Group
Sunday, April 25	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, April 25	11:00 a.m.	Sunday Worship with David Clark preaching (YouTube, FB, Dial In)
Sunday, April 25	12:00 p.m.	Zoom Coffee Hour
Sunday, April 25	12:30 p.m.	Buzz: Just Peace + Re-opening
Sunday, April 25	3:00 p.m.	Southeast Association Meeting (IKC Zoom)
Monday, April 26	10:00 a.m.	Prayer Sit w/ Student Pastor Cassidy Hall
Tuesday, April 27	7:00 p.m.	Vespers (outside & Zoom)
Wednesday, April 28	5:00 p.m.	WISE Mental Health Team (Zoom)
Wednesday, April 28	6:30 p.m.	Calling Circle (IKC Zoom)
Thursday, April 29	11:45 a.m.	Women's Lunch Bunch (Zoom)
Thursday, April 29	5:00 p.m.	Spiritual Support Group
Friday, April 30	6:00 p.m.	Friday Fun Night (outside at FC)
Saturday, May 1	10:00 a.m.	Food Drive (outside at FC)
Sunday, May 2	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, May 2	11:00 a.m.	Communion Sunday Worship with Student Pastor Cassidy Hall preaching (YouTube, FB, Dial In)
Sunday, May 2	12:00 p.m.	Zoom Coffee Hour

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