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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Epistle for the Week of January 2, 2020



Dear First Congregational,

Happy New Year beloved ones of God! I pray that 2020 greets you with kindness, peace and love. Know that as we begin a new year together that God is with us. God's love surrounds us. You are loved by God today and every day. Here is one of my favorite blessings that I share with you for the New Year:

St Patrick's Breastplate (an excerpt from this famous prayer, attributed to St Patrick - patron Saint of Ireland)

Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me, Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me, Christ on my right, Christ on my left, Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down, Christ when I arise, Christ in the heart of everyone who thinks of me, Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me, Christ in every eye that sees me, Christ in every ear that hears me.

Blessings,
Pastor Sarah

Worship

Adult Class - 9:45 a.m.

In January, Adult Ed will study "Embracing the Prophets in Contemporary Culture; Walter Brueggemann on Confronting Today's 'Pharaohs'."

Jan 5 - "Moses, Pharaoh, The Prophets and Us"

Sunday Worship Service: Epiphany Sunday & Blessing of the Solar Panels

Pastor Sarah will be preaching on "God's Good Light."

Scriptures: Matthew 5:16 & Ephesians 5:8

This Sunday, we will have a special Blessing of the Solar Panels ceremony during the 11:00 service to dedicate our solar panels.

A Note From Your Music Designer

At night while we slumber in our beds, the sky is dark with only pinpoints of stars hinting at the hope of light to come. We awake to the sun's brightness and warmth peeking over the horizon, once again bringing us a new day's light. As we await the light while darkness reigns at night, we remember that our brothers and sisters on the other side of the planet are enjoying their light until their day ends. This ever-constant resource from God which brings life to our planet's waters, plants, and animals is a reminder that we share all that is given to us with everyone, and everyone is entitled to the sharing and giving.

God not only sent us light in the form of the sun, but with a son. Jesus brought light and brightened awareness to a world of dull darkness and separateness.

Our personal lives are often filled with darkness at times. Then in waiting we suddenly

come back to light. This constant cycle of dark-to-light-to-dark-to-light reminds me of the construction of our beloved Psalms. First there is disorientation, then new orientation.

Music is full of all the drama that mirrors God's creation. It can be warm, cool, fast, slow. Its sound can make us feel many emotions. When I think of the undulating hills and valleys starting at the top and sliding down. It's as if the violins are slowly descending in a portamento as the contrabasses then meet at ground level and take the portamento down to the depths of the valleys, only to again climb back up to the heights of elation. Music has cycles of breath and rest. A good phrase begins a statement, develops it to a climax, and then as it concludes, it takes a pause while another voice is taking their turn in the musical community.

This week I have orchestrated a piece of music by my favorite composer, Henry Mancini, which will occur in the middle of the service. When I thought about light and how it is reflected in music, this piece spoke to me. There is a constant subtle cycle from major-to-minor-to-major-to-diminished-to-major that reminds me of the cycle of the Psalms and the cycles of day and night. In music, in order for the lightness to be recognized, it must be balanced in undulation with darkness (i.e. major/minor). Though this motif cycle continues throughout the piece, I find it interesting that I started it in the key of F, but towards the end decided to raise it to the higher (lighter) key of Ab. This melodic theme is filled with small light/dark cycles, but its overall arc is the journey from dark to light—like night to day where the sun's energy brings us new life. In reflecting on this musical idea and then preparing the orchestration, it occurs to me that this musical journey very much mirrors our individual life experiences. I hope you can meditate on your own life's Psalm cycles but also appreciate how our hope has brought us light from Jesus feeding our souls in addition to light from the sun feeding our solar panels to further our ministry here at First Congregational Church.

-- Sean



What's Happening at FC

(See [January Colony](#) for monthly announcements and further details.)

Choir Rehearsal TONIGHT!

The FC Choir rehearses on Thursdays from 7:00 to 8:30 PM. We welcome new members. If anyone is interested in joining the choir, please email Julie at juliehouston@comcast.net. We would love to have you join us!

Annual Reports Due by TOMORROW, January 3rd!

All Board Chairs, Committee Chairs, and Team Leaders need to be writing up their annual reports! The deadline for all Boards, Committees and Teams is **January 3rd**. Please forward your reports to Shannon Abbott (shannon@fcindy.org) in a timely manner. Thanks to all who have already submitted your reports!

Assembling Kits for the Border, THIS SUNDAY, Jan 5

Please join the Outreach & Service Board in the narthex **after worship on Sunday, Jan. 5** to help assemble the hygiene kits that will be taken by our delegation to the Southwest border later this month. Extra hands will make light work. Thank you.

Buzz & Pitch In Lunch: Inclusive Language - Sunday Jan 12

Worship and Faith is hosting a Buzz on the use of Inclusive Language in our worship services. We will have a panel discussion with members of our congregation on **January 12 after worship**. You are invited to bring a dish and voice your experience of the recent changes we have made in our use of scripture, doxology, and prayer.

Will You Serve on a Board in 2020?

Most of the ministries of our church are planned and managed by our 5 boards. We currently have several openings for 2020. This is a great way to get involved, and make a difference in people's lives. Our boards are: Worship & Faith, Care & Connection, Witness & Welcome, Outreach & Service, and Trustees. Also, we are looking for a new Financial Secretary; this position records our pledges, gifts, and donations, and one needs to have a comfort level with numbers and tracking details. If you would like to learn more about these opportunities, please contact Wendy Baldwin.

The Green Team wants YOU!

The Green Team could use more members! Fresh off our success in getting solar panels installed, we have fresh ideas for 2020--but could use some help dragging them across the finish line. If you have any interest in joining up to help, please contact any of us, particularly Rich Gibson, Nancy Dickinson, Bill Gillette, Ann Leatherman or Katie Booth

Green Team Tip

Looking for smart ways to recycle Christmas cards? Three organizations re-use the fronts of Christmas cards for crafts (Zionsville Public Library, Boone County Senior Services) or for re-sale (St Jude's Ranch for Children). The latter cannot use Hallmark, American Greetings, or Disney cards. Contact Janet Selby for more information at 317 873 9539. (If you want to share a green habit, please send it to hoot.gibson.tds@gmail.com.)



Food Donations for the Northside Pantry

Donations have been generous and are appreciated. Please keep them coming! We are grateful to the Meridian Hills Nursery School and Kindergarten who has joined us in donating and delivering food to the pantry.

January Mission of the Month: Indiana Youth Group

Indiana Youth Group (IYG) - Mission of the Month

In 1987 the Indiana Youth Group was founded by two volunteers in order to provide a safe space for social gatherings for self identified LGBTQ+ high schoolers. IYG has grown from a group of about a dozen youth to a social service agency providing resources for almost 1,000 youth and their families. Our donations to IYG help assure that the mission of IYG will expand throughout Indiana and act as a witness to FCC's ONA commitments.

Pantry Items of the Month

During the month of January, we are collecting: noodles, muffin mix, cereal, shampoo

Pastoral Care

Pastor Sarah is still visiting family for the holidays and may be reached after January 3rd at (386) 478-9012 or at pastorsarah@fcindy.org.

Holiday Pastoral Care

While Pastor Sarah is visiting family for the holidays through Jan 3, Pastor Carol may be reached at (317) 496-9732 or casowle@gmail.com.

THIS WEEK AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL

Thursday, January 2	7:00 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal
Sunday, January 5	9:45 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, January 5	11:00 a.m.	Worship – Epiphany Sunday & Solar Panel Blessing
Sunday, January 5	12:30 p.m.	PCRC (Pastor Carol)
Wednesday, January 8	11:00 a.m.	Worship Design Team
Wednesday, January 8	5:00 p.m.	Mental Health Team
Wednesday, January 8	7:00 p.m.	Joint Trustees & Church Council
Thursday, January 9	1:00 p.m.	Men’s Lunch
Thursday, January 9	7:00 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal
Sunday, January 12	9:45 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, January 12	11:00 a.m.	Worship
Sunday, January 12	12:30 p.m.	Buzz & Pitch In : Inclusive Language

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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Epistle for the Week of January 9, 2020

Dear First Congregational,

One of the ways new people find out about our church is in their search to find a truly Open and Affirming congregation. We've been living into this Open and Affirming covenant as a church for over 25 years now and this Sunday our worship will celebrate and reflect upon on the multiple ways we seek to be Open and Affirming.

It's a great Sunday to bring a friend, neighbor, co-worker or family member with you to church! Our music, prayers, and message will highlight our commitment to a radical belonging for all God's people. Then, after church stay for our Buzz about inclusivity.

We cannot forget or take for granted just how important it is for a Christian community to boldly and publically proclaim our Open and Affirming commitments. The world needs, and Indianapolis needs, our witness and our extravagant love.

Blessings,

Pastor Sarah

Worship

Adult Class - 9:45 a.m.

In January, Adult Ed will study "Embracing the Prophets in Contemporary Culture; Walter Brueggemann on Confronting Today's 'Pharaohs'."

Jan 12 - "The Prophets as Uncredentialed Purveyors of Covenant"

Sunday Worship Service, 11:00 a.m.

Pastor Sarah will be preaching on "Rainbow Power."

Scripture: Proverbs 31:8-9



What's Happening at FC

(See [January Colony](#) for monthly announcements and further details.)

Choir Rehearsal TONIGHT!

The FC Choir rehearses on Thursdays from 7:00 to 8:30 PM. We welcome new members. If anyone is interested in joining the choir, please email Julie at juliehouston@comcast.net. We would love to have you join us!

Out of the Office

Next week, I will be out of the office, serving the wider church at the southern border. While I am away, I will have access to email, and will do my best to check my inbox daily. Cheryl Dillenback has graciously offered to check the mailbox and voicemail messages while I

am away. Thank you, Cheryl!
- Shannon Abbott, Office Administrator

Thank You for Your Generosity!

Thank you for the abundant donations for the hygiene kits. They are on their way to the southern border right now! Thanks to your generous donations, there are some extra hand towels and soap which will be donated to Family Promise, and socks which will be donated to Horizon House. Thank you!

Buzz & Pitch In Lunch: Inclusive Language - Sunday Jan 12

Worship and Faith is hosting a Buzz on the use of Inclusive Language in our worship services. We will have a panel discussion with members of our congregation on **January 12 after worship**. You are invited to bring a dish and voice your experience of the recent changes we have made in our use of scripture, doxology, and prayer.

Celebration of Four-Way Covenant, Sunday, January 19th

During worship, we will celebrate our covenant with the Rev. Worth Hartman, his employer - Westminster Village, the SouthEast Association, and our congregation.

Annual Meeting, January 26th (after worship)

It's amazing! It's wonderful! It's the highlight of the church (governance) year! It's the Annual Meeting, after services on Sunday, January 26! Come one, come all: Members, visitors with a hankering to see how a congregation does business, anyone, everyone! Bring a dish for the pitch-in lunch, and don't worry about what to do with the kids. We'll have the nursery workers staying through the meeting so you have options galore!

Annual Reports

Thank you all for submitting your reports! - Shannon Abbott, Office Administrator

The Green Team wants YOU!

The Green Team could use more members! Fresh off our success in getting solar panels installed, we have fresh ideas for 2020--but could use some help dragging them across the finish line. If you have any interest in joining up to help, please contact any of us, particularly Rich Gibson, Nancy Dickinson, Bill Gillette, Ann Leatherman or Katie Booth

Green Team Tip

Turn off the stove or grill up to 10 minutes before you are done cooking your food to use the residual heat.



Food Donations for the Northside Pantry

Donations have been generous and are appreciated. Please keep them coming! We are grateful to the Meridian Hills Nursery School and Kindergarten who has joined us in donating and delivering food to the pantry.

January Mission of the Month: Indiana Youth Group

In 1987 the Indiana Youth Group was founded by two volunteers in order to provide a safe space for social gatherings for self identified LGBTQ+ high schoolers. IYG has grown from a group of about a dozen youth to a social service agency providing resources for almost 1,000 youth and their families. Our donations to IYG help assure that the mission of IYG will expand throughout Indiana and act as a witness to FCC's ONA commitments.

Pantry Items of the Month

During the month of January, we are collecting: noodles, muffin mix, cereal, shampoo

Pastoral Care

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

THIS WEEK AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL

Thursday, January 9	1:00 p.m.	Men's Lunch
Thursday, January 9	7:00 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal
Sunday, January 12	12:30 p.m.	Buzz w/ pitch-in: Inclusivity
Thursday, January 16	7:00 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal
Thursday, January 16	7:00 p.m.	Indianapolis Green Congregations
Sunday, January 19	9:45 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, January 19	11:00 a.m.	Worship
Sunday, January 19	12:30 p.m.	Worship & Faith
Sunday, January 19	6:00 p.m.	Christian Unity Worship @ Zion Evangelical UCC (N NJ St)

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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Epistle for the Week of January 16, 2020

Dear First Congregational,

This coming Sunday evening, January 19 at 6pm we have a special opportunity to gather with other Christians to pray for unity. I'm honored to be the preacher for this worship service hosted by Zion Evangelical UCC. I'd love to see you there as my "Amen Corner"!

Annual Prayer Service for Christian Unity

"They Showed Us Unusual Kindness" (Acts 28:2)

Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund, Preacher

hosted this year by

Zion Evangelical United Church of Christ

602 North New Jersey Street, Indianapolis

6:00 p.m., January 19, 2020

with participating Christian denominational leaders and an ecumenical choir.

Come with an "unusual act of kindness" to share in a paper prayer chain to be displayed during the service.

Blessings,
Pastor Sarah

Worship

Adult Class - 9:45 a.m.

In January, Adult Ed will study "Embracing the Prophets in Contemporary Culture; Walter Brueggemann on Confronting Today's 'Pharaohs'."

Jan 19 - "Moral Coherence in a World of Power, Money and Violence."

Sunday Worship Service, 11:00 a.m.

Pastor Sarah will be preaching on "Fight for the Powerless."

Scripture: Psalm 40:1-12

Celebration of Four-Way Covenant, This Sunday, January 19th

During worship, we will celebrate our covenant with the Rev. Worth Hartman, his employer - Westminster Village, the SouthEast Association, and our congregation.



What's Happening at FC

(See [January Colony](#) for monthly announcements and further details.)

Prayer Note

Please continue to pray for Sandy Wood, Cassidy Hall, Shannon Abbott, and other delegates from the IKC that are at the border trip.



Thank you for all of your donations to the border!

Choir Rehearsal TONIGHT!

The FC Choir rehearses on Thursdays from 7:00 to 8:30 PM. We welcome new members. If anyone is interested in joining the choir, please email Julie at juliehouston@comcast.net. We would love to have you join us!

TOMORROW! Friday Night at the Movies

Join us on the 3rd Friday of each month – **1/17, 6:30ish**: We meet at 6:30ish at **Keystone Art Cinema** in the Fashion Mall at Keystone, and decide which film(s) to see, get refreshments, and socialize. Then, after the movie, hang out at the Indie Lounge for more fellowship. Questions? Contact Wendy Baldwin

The Book Circle will meet at **1:30 p.m.** on **Tuesday, January 21** at the home of Rita Hummel. We will begin discussing Joan Chittister's book *The Time Is Now*. For further information, contact Sue Chapman at (317) 259-1806 or carolsuech59@gmail.com.

Annual Meeting, January 26th (after worship)

It's amazing! It's wonderful! It's the highlight of the church (governance) year! It's the Annual Meeting, after services on Sunday, January 26! Come one, come all: Members, visitors with a hankering to see how a congregation does business, anyone, everyone! Bring a dish for the pitch-in lunch, and don't worry about what to do with the kids. We'll have the nursery workers staying through the meeting so you have options galore!

Annual Board Retreat - Saturday, February 8, 9:00a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

The newly elected Boards will meet in the Mayflower Room on Saturday morning,

February 8th, from 9:00am - 12:00pm. New members will get indoctrination and training in Board activities and responsibilities. The Boards will elect their officers; e.g., Chair, Board representative, and secretary/recorder

“Around a table” – Fellowship, Fun, & Food

For the first go around, we had 3 groups of people who have been getting together for 4 months – some for meals, some for desserts, and lots of talking and fellowship! Now it is time to sign up for the next round – to meet monthly March through June. It doesn’t matter if you participated or not the first time – sign up for this next round! We will be changing the groups around – the idea is to be in fellowship and get to know different people – so the more the merrier! **If interested, please click [here to complete the sign up sheet](#) and return it to church by February 16.** Presented by Care & Connections board – please contact Karen Walker (317-319-8950 or karen.e.d.walker@gmail.com) or Wendy Baldwin (317-319-0806 or wendy.baldwin@rci.com) for any questions or help with sign up.

The Green Team wants YOU!

The Green Team could use more members! Fresh off our success in getting solar panels installed, we have fresh ideas for 2020--but could use some help dragging them across the finish line. If you have any interest in joining up to help, please contact any of us, particularly Rich Gibson, Nancy Dickinson, Bill Gillette, Ann Leatherman or Katie Booth

Green Team Tip

Plan ahead and thaw frozen foods in the refrigerator instead of on the counter or microwave.



Food Donations for the Northside Pantry

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January Mission of the Month: Indiana Youth Group

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will expand throughout Indiana and act as a witness to FCC's UNA commitments.

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Pastoral Care

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THIS WEEK AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL

Thursday, January 16	7:00 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal
Thursday, January 16	7:00 p.m.	Indianapolis Green Congregations Meeting
Sunday, January 19	9:45 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, January 19	11:00 a.m.	Worship & Celebration of Ministerial Covenant with Rev. Worth Hartman
Sunday, January 19	12:30 p.m.	Worship & Faith
Sunday, January 19	6:00 p.m.	Christian Unity Worship @ Zion Evangelical UCC (N. NJ St)
Tuesday, January 21	1:30 p.m.	Book Circle @ Rita Hummel's home
Thursday, January 23	1:00 p.m.	Men's Lunch
Thursday, January 23	7:00 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal
Sunday, January 26	9:45 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, January 26	11:00 a.m.	Worship
Sunday, January 26	12:00 p.m.	Annual Meeting

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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Epistle for the Week of January 23, 2020

Dear First Congregational,

Together we will join our hearts and minds this Sunday for worship and fellowship, followed by our important Annual Meeting. Please join us for this time where we truly live into our values as a congregation, affirming our calling as each one of us work together to fulfill the church's mission. It is a joy and honor to serve with you as your pastor.

I am excited about how God will lead our church in 2020. Special thanks to all who have served faithfully in 2019. I want to thank especially our outgoing Moderator, Rich Gibson, for his faithfulness and hard work as he guided our church through many areas of growth and change in 2019.

May God bless our gathering this Sunday as we seek to follow in the way of Christ.

Blessings,

Pastor Sarah

Worship

Adult Class - 9:45 a.m.

In January, Adult Ed will study "Embracing the Prophets in Contemporary Culture; Walter Brueggemann on Confronting Today's 'Pharaohs'."

Jan 26 - "The Shrill Rhetoric that Breaks Denial"

Sunday Worship Service, 11:00 a.m.

Pastor Sarah will be preaching on "The WISE Jesus."

Scripture: Matthew 4:12:23

Annual Meeting, THIS SUNDAY (after worship)

It's amazing! It's wonderful! It's the highlight of the church (governance) year! It's the Annual Meeting, after services on Sunday, January 26! Come one, come all: Members, visitors with a hankering to see how a congregation does business, anyone, everyone! Bring a dish for the pitch-in lunch, and don't worry about what to do with the kids. We'll have the nursery workers staying through the meeting so you have options galore!



What's Happening at FC

(See [January Colony](#) for monthly announcements and further details.)

Choir Rehearsal TONIGHT!

The FC Choir rehearses on Thursdays from 7:00 to 8:30 PM. We welcome new members.

If anyone is interested in joining the choir, please email Julie at julienhouston@comcast.net. We would love to have you join us!

TOMORROW! UCC Asylum Accompaniment Webinar - Jan 24th 2020, 1PM

Please join the United Church of Christ on Friday January 24th at 1PM ET for a webinar on How to Do Asylum Seeker Accompaniment. This is a collaboration between Justice and Local Church and Wider Church Ministries. Over the past year and a half, the number of asylum seekers arriving to the U.S. has increased significantly, and faith and community groups across the country - including numerous United Church of Christ churches - have taken the faith-full step to offer care and welcome to those seeking protection. This webinar will cover the basics of how to do asylum accompaniment, while providing a space to share expertise and experience from congregations already deeply engaged in this work. Additionally, this webinar will be accompanied by the release of the UCC Asylum Accompaniment Toolkit to help walk churches through a new or on-going ministry of accompanying.

Led by: Amanda Sheldon, Program Associate, UCC Refugee and Asylum Ministries & UCC Disaster Ministries

Rev. Noel Andersen from the UCC National Collaborative on Immigration

Special guest speakers from congregational around the country

Sign up here! <https://forms.gle/RUXh7MhMEAK4erx76>

Urgent Just Peace Concern: Tenants' Rights Bill Needs a Hearing

H.B. 1103 (iga.in.gov/legislative/2020/bills/house/1103) is currently in the Indiana House Judiciary Committee. It would make much needed changes in tenants' rights and help lower Indiana's high eviction rate. According to the latest data Indianapolis has the 4th highest rate of evictions of major metropolitan areas in the entire U.S.!

Please contact Rep. Jerry Tor, chair of that committee, **before Jan. 27** to urge him to give that bill a hearing so it can be considered by the full House. His phone is 317-234-9499. Email is H39@iga.in.gov. This is a "Just Peace" activity we can easily take part in.

Youth Climate Day - Tuesday, Jan 28, 12:00-3:00 p.m.

Pastor Sarah, the Green Team and Board of Witness and Welcome invite you to join together at the State Capitol on Tuesday, January 28 from 12 - 3 PM to support the Youth Climate Day.

Bring a sack lunch and your own water bottle. There will be key speakers addresses the gathering and you may talk with your legislators if you wish. Please click the following website to learn more and to register. We will provide FCC signs or you may bring your own to support climate legislation.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/youth-climate-action-day-the-indiana-statehouse-tickets->

Just Peace Tip

Dharma in Hell: Buddhist Mindfulness in Prisons

Tuesday, January 28, 2020 - 7:00 pm in the Shelton Auditorium on South Campus, Butler University

From the office to the hospital room, the benefits of mindfulness have been scientifically proven. In this session, we learn about various efforts to improve the lives of inmates through the practice of meditation. Fleet Maull will be the keynote speaker, founder of the Prison Mindfulness Institute and author of “Dharma in Hell” and “Radical Responsibility.”

Nicaragua Mission trip information meeting - Sunday, Feb 2 (after worship)

We are looking into FCC's next mission trip to Nicaragua in 2020. We have a relationship with CEPAD, the Council of Protestant Churches in Nicaragua, and support the organization as it strives to improve the situation of people who are victims of earthquakes, hurricanes, and times of crisis, especially in the isolated rural areas of the country. Brigades from FCC go to Nicaragua and help with local community programs and projects that improve the lives of the people who live in the second poorest country in the western hemisphere. If you are interested in participating, come to the information meeting in the library on February 2nd after the service. Contact Rita Hummel for more information Ph: 317-875-8388, email: rithum1970@comcast.net.

Annual Board Retreat - Saturday, Feb 8, 9:00a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

The newly elected Boards will meet in the Mayflower Room on Saturday morning, February 8th, from 9:00am - 12:00pm. New members will get indoctrination and training in Board activities and responsibilities. The Boards will elect their officers; e.g., Chair, Board representative, and secretary/recorder

“Around a table” – Fellowship, Fun, & Food

For the first go around, we had 3 groups of people who have been getting together for 4 months – some for meals, some for desserts, and lots of talking and fellowship! Now it is time to sign up for the next round – to meet monthly March through June. It doesn't matter if you participated or not the first time – sign up for this next round! We will be changing the groups around – the idea is to be in fellowship and get to know different people – so the more the merrier! **If interested, please click [here](#) to complete the sign up sheet and return it to church by February 16.** Presented by Care & Connections board – please contact Karen Walker (317-319-8950 or karen.e.d.walker@gmail.com) or Wendy Baldwin (317-319-0806 or wendy.baldwin@rci.com) for any questions or help with sign up.

Green Team Tip

Going shopping? Be sure to take your reusable shopping bags. Don't have any? They are available cheaply at most grocery stores. Also, we may still have some at church.



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Pantry Items of the Month

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Pastoral Care

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

THIS WEEK AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL

Thursday, January 23	1:00 p.m.	Men's Lunch
Thursday, January 23	7:00 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal
Saturday, January 25	11:30 a.m.	CIBA Meeting
Sunday, January 26	9:45 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, January 26	11:00 a.m.	Worship
Sunday, January 26	12:00 p.m.	Annual Meeting
Tuesday, January 28	7:00 p.m.	Dharma in Hell: Buddhist Mindfulness in Prisons (Butler University, Sheldon)

Thursday, January 30	11:45 a.m.	Auditorium)
Thursday, January 30	7:00 p.m.	Women's Lunch
Saturday, February 1	10:30 a.m.	Choir Rehearsal
Sunday, February 2	9:45 a.m.	Bell Choir
Sunday, February 2	11:00 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
		Worship

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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Epistle for the Week of January 30, 2020

Dear First Congregational,

I am profoundly grateful to this congregation for your faithful discernment to vote to become a WISE (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, and Engaged) congregation for mental health. Thank you to the members of our Mental Health Team and especially thanks to co-chairs, Sandy Wood and the Rev. Dr. Pat Larracey. As you may know, I personally have been on my own WISE journey for a long time. I was there in 2015 at the United Church of Christ General Synod when our denomination voted to support the WISE movement. I then worked on the UCC Mental Health Network Board of Directors as Vice Chair to develop the steps for congregations to become WISE.

So as you may imagine, on Sunday as I listened to our congregation read aloud our own WISE covenant, my heart was filled with deep awe at how God's Spirit moves. Being part of this journey for so many years, it was quite gratifying to be part of a local church living out this commitment. I am excited about how our WISE journey will unfold.

It truly is humbling and an honor to be part of First Congregational United Church of Christ as we are trailblazers in this WISE movement. God is surely well pleased.

Blessings,
Pastor Sarah

Worship

Adult Class - Feb 2, 9:45 a.m.

This Sunday, we will finish the study on "Embracing the Prophets in Contemporary Culture: Walter Brueggemann on Confronting Today's 'Pharaohs'." This final topic will be on "The Grief of Loss as Divine Judgement."

Sunday Worship Service, 11:00 a.m.

Pastor Sarah will lead us in an interactive sermon, "Our Savior's Prayer Reflections and Workshop."

Scriptures: Matthew 6:9-13, Luke 11:2-4



What's Happening at FC

(See [January Colony](#) for monthly announcements and further details.)

Greetings from your new Moderator!!

I am so very grateful that you have entrusted me with the awesome responsibility of this office for the year of 2020! By the end of this year I hope you will be happy that you did. Excitement frequently accompanies change (hopefully, positive excitement), and that's what I'm feeling as I step into this new role. Pastor Sarah, Vice Moderator Larry Eckel, and

I am planning the upcoming **board retreat on Saturday, February 8, 2020, 9:00-12:00 AM, with breakfast snacks and coffee available at 8:30.** This will be an opportunity for some socializing, visioning, orientation, and organizing, with some fun thrown in for good measure. I hope to see all board members – new and old – present that morning, but anyone not currently serving on a board is invited to attend as well. Ministry teams are essential to the work of the church, so please see this as an opportunity for meeting with boards about plans and needs. And if you're not currently on either a board or a team, come for the breakfast and socializing! You just may hear something that inspires you to serve in a new way.

One more thing: I consider listening with an attentive ear to be a large part of the Moderator's role, so please feel free to contact me about anything church-related, good or bad, positive or negative. I will do my best to hear you, as you are a vital part of this place of belonging, healing, and love.

In faith,

Alice Rutherford

Choir Rehearsal TONIGHT!

The FC Choir rehearses on Thursdays from 7:00 to 8:30 PM. We welcome new members. If anyone is interested in joining the choir, please email Julie at juliehouston@comcast.net. We would love to have you join us!

Church Office Hours Next Week - Jury Duty

Our office administrator, Shannon, has been called upon next week to fulfill her civic duty through jury duty. Therefore, she may or may not be in the office next week, depending on whether or not her jury group is selected to appear. She is working hard this week to make sure all publications for next week are completed, and may be able to check office email from home in the event that she is indeed called to be on a jury. Thank you for your understanding.

Nicaragua Mission trip information meeting - Sunday, Feb 2 (after worship)

We are looking into FCC's next mission trip to Nicaragua in 2020. We have a relationship with CEPAD, the Council of Protestant Churches in Nicaragua, and support the organization as it strives to improve the situation of people who are victims of earthquakes, hurricanes, and times of crisis, especially in the isolated rural areas of the country. Brigades from FCC go to Nicaragua and help with local community programs and projects that improve the lives of the people who live in the second poorest country in the western hemisphere. If you are interested in participating, come to the information meeting in the library on February 2nd after the service. Contact Rita Hummel for more information Ph: 317-875-8388, email: rithum1970@comcast.net.

Supply Drive for Family Promise

This month, Family Promise is holding a supply drive to collect many items needed for use by families at the Day Center and while in the IHN shelter and After Care programs. Fliers listing needed items are in the narthex and in the link [here](#). Donations will be collected from **Feb. 7 - Feb. 23**. Please put items in the large white laundry hampers in the narthex or use the white trash bags that are in those hampers. Supplies will be delivered to Family Promise from Feb. 24 through Feb. 27. Your generosity will be appreciated by Family Promise and those they serve.

Border Information & Vigil – Monday, February 10, 6:30 p.m.

Please join us for an educational program about what is happening at the U.S.-Mexico border. Education and witness of stories from the border will be followed by a prayer vigil for Jose Antonio Elena Rodriguez, a young boy killed by U.S. Border Patrol on October 10, 2012 in Nogales, Sonora, Mexico.

FEBRUARY 10

**JOSE ANTONIO ELENA RODRIGUEZ
WAS KILLED BY BORDER PATROL
ON THE MEXICAN SIDE OF THE BORDER**

WHAT: An educational program about what is happening at the U.S. Mexico border followed by a prayer vigil for Jose Antonio Elena Rodriguez a young boy killed by U.S. Border Patrol Oct 10, 2012 in Nogales, Sonora, Mexico.

WHERE: First Congregational United Church of Christ,
7171 North Pennsylvania, Indianapolis, IN 46240.

WHEN: Monday February 10, 2020 6:30-8:30 p.m.

WHO: For anyone who wants to learn more and help make a change.

FCINDY.ORG

“Around a table” – Fellowship, Fun, & Food

For the first go around, we had 3 groups of people who have been getting together for 4 months – some for meals, some for desserts, and lots of talking and fellowship! Now it is time to sign up for the next round – to meet monthly March through June. It doesn't matter

if you participated or not the first time – sign up for this next round! We will be changing the groups around – the idea is to be in fellowship and get to know different people – so the more the merrier! **If interested, please click [here](#) to complete the sign up sheet and return it to church by February 16.** Presented by Care & Connections board – please contact Karen Walker (317-319-8950 or karen.e.d.walker@gmail.com) or Wendy Baldwin (317-319-0806 or wendy.baldwin@rci.com) for any questions or help with sign up.

Green Team Tip

Water is becoming scarce, even though our area has plenty. West coast is in a drought. Save clean water by using dry detergent rather than liquid in your laundry.



Food Donations for the Northside Pantry

Donations have been generous and are appreciated. Please keep them coming! We are grateful to the Meridian Hills Nursery School and Kindergarten who has joined us in donating and delivering food to the pantry.

January Mission of the Month: Indiana Youth Group

In 1987 the Indiana Youth Group was founded by two volunteers in order to provide a safe space for social gatherings for self identified LGBTQ+ high schoolers. IYG has grown from a group of about a dozen youth to a social service agency providing resources for almost 1,000 youth and their families. Our donations to IYG help assure that the mission of IYG will expand throughout Indiana and act as a witness to FCC's ONA commitments.

Pantry Items of the Month

During the month of January, we are collecting: noodles, muffin mix, cereal, shampoo

Pastoral Care

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

THIS WEEK AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL

Thursday, January 30

11:45 a.m.

Women's Lunch

Saturday, February 1

10:30 a.m.

Bell Choir Rehearsal

Sunday, February 2	9:45 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, February 2	11:00 a.m.	Worship – New Member
Sunday, February 2	12:00 p.m.	Sunday
Sunday, February 2	12:00 p.m.	Nicaragua Meeting
Wednesday, February 5	1:00 p.m.	Worship & Design Meeting
Thursday, February 6	1:00 p.m.	Men’s Lunch
Thursday, February 6	7:00 p.m.	Men’s Lunch
Saturday, February 8	9:00 a.m.	FC Board Retreat (all are welcome)
Sunday, February 9	9:45 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, February 9	11:00 a.m.	Worship
Sunday, February 9	12:00 p.m.	Student Pastor Support Team