



## FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

# E-Pistle for the week of September 6th

[Calendar](#)

### Minister's Message

**Dear First Congregational Church Family,**

When I think of our church, I think of a place where we can find authentic belonging, share our journeys, and grow in God's love. One special event coming up to experience belonging, share our stories, and grow in God's love is this Saturday's all church picnic from 4-7pm. Yes, there will be good food, fun, fellowship and faith.

It's a simple thing: coming together, sharing a meal, telling stories, singing songs. And it's deeply spiritual. It's how God weaves us together as beloved community. It's how we care and connect.

For those who cannot join us this Saturday in person for the picnic, please hold us in your prayers. Pray that God would bless our time together with an authentic sense of belonging and being loved.

I'm looking forward to our special time together!

Blessings,  
Pastor Sarah

## **Worship for Sunday**

### **Adult Class**

September 9: Rev. Worth Hartman will be leading a discussion on the article/statement, "Reclaiming Jesus" (copies available in the Narthex).

### **Traditional Service - 11:00 a.m.**

Pastor Sarah will preach on "Let It Be Justice."

Scripture: James 2:1-10, 14-17

### **New Creation - 5:30 p.m.**

With the ending of summer and the coming of fall, we see the daylight begin to shorten and fade. But God's Radiant Light remains strong and steady in our lives. Over the next several weeks in New Creation worship we'll be celebrating that Light from a variety of perspectives. Labor Day may have come and gone, but summer fun shouldn't have to come to an end. So this Sunday our celebration of God's Light will include time outdoors with prisms, bubbles, and other resources to help us "see" the light! Come join in the fun as we worship our one true Source of Light.

### **Who is My Neighbor?**

A United Church of Christ sanctuary church offering immigrants refuge in the Arizona borderlands will soon be offering a place of hospitality, support and hope on the Mexican side of the border for people who find themselves deported from the United States. The Shadow Rock UCC Sanctuary Action Team and the Rev. Ken Heintzelman, in an extension of the spirit and intent of their ministry of sanctuary in Phoenix, are in the process of establishing Hope Station Nogales, in Sonora, Mexico.

The thought is Hope Station, which was funded in part by a \$10,000 grant from Neighbors in Need, can be a place of transition, a place where people who are deported but have family in the U.S. can find a meal, safe lodging and assistance. [Read more via UC News.](#)

## **What's Happening at FCC**

### **Church Picnic & Sing-Along**

**THIS SATURDAY, September 8th, 4-7 p.m.**

Kick off the fall at FCC with fun, faith, food, friends, and even a singalong! Weather-permitting, we will be outdoors on the FCC playground; otherwise, we will be in the Mayflower Room. The church will provide fried & baked chicken, supplemented by your pitch-in contributions. Please come to enjoy fellowship and activities, even if you did not sign up. Questions? Contact Wendy Baldwin.

### **God Speaks Through Music**

Please plan to be present for the opportunity this Sunday, September 9, to hear God speak to us through music. The choir returns to the loft this week, and Sean Baker has prepared another of his signature arrangements for choir, flute, viola, bells, percussion, piano, and organ to infuse the service with another level of spiritual energy. Bring a friend!

### **September Buzz about Just Peace is on September 16th!**

Please join us for a pitch in lunch and discussion starting at 12:15 p.m. with our guest preacher, Rev. Michael Neuroth from the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries office in Washington DC. This is an excellent opportunity to delve further into the meaning of being a "Just Peace" church. For more information, please see the September colony.

### **Choir Rehearsals - New Members Are Welcome!**

Choir rehearsals are on Thursdays from 7:00- 8:30 p.m. in the second floor choir room. We welcome new members to join us. Anyone who is interested in learning more about the choir may email choir director Julie Houston at: [juliehouston@comcast.net](mailto:juliehouston@comcast.net)

### **GOD Logo**

We have been enjoying increasing the exposure of our "GOD" logo design - from t-shirts and bumper stickers to the street sign, the bulletin, the website, and now the e-pistle! We have heard many positive comments from members and visitors - it is very eye catching, memorable, and meaningful. Moving forward, there is a motion coming soon to the council to adopt this as the official logo for the church - so we can simplify and build consistency across all our communications - such as this epistle, the colony, letterhead, envelopes, etc. This would replace all of the orange 'fcc' logo materials we have been using. We invite any comments or questions about this - please contact Pastor Saraha, Bob Cook (chair of Witness & Welcome) or Karen Walker (chair of council) and they will be sure all of the board members and the council members hear all your thoughts and consider them as the motion comes forward. This comment period will be open for two weeks - until September 23rd. For a reminder of the origin of the logo, here is a link to the video shared at a buzz earlier this year: <http://fcindy.org/our-street-sign/>

### **Chautauqua Update**

We're accepting applications through September 30<sup>th</sup>. That is, we hope to! As of Sep 6, we haven't

received a single one! If you have the slightest desire to get a free trip to Chautauqua next summer, why don't you fill out an application and give it to Shannon? As of now, you have ZERO competition! Please check the bulletin board or contact Rich Gibson, Nancy Dickinson, Worth Hartman, Chuck Kiphart, or Pastor Sarah if you have any questions.

### **IKC Church Vitality Events**

The Indiana-Kentucky Conference gladly presents our final **two** Church Vitality events connected to our Brown Grant. We are blessed to have national staff member, the Rev. Dr. Chris Davies sharing at both events. Chris will engage congregations on issues related to congregational vitality from the "Be the Church" Assessment booklet including:

- \*Congregational Asset Assessment
- \*Equipping Congregational Leadership
- \*Assessing New Ministries
- \*Collecting Community Data for Mission

- Saturday, September 22, 1:00 - 5:00 p.m. (Central Time Zone) at St. Peter's UCC, 7014 Darmstadt Rd., Evansville, IN 47710
- Saturday, October 6, 1:00 - 5:00 p.m. (Eastern Time Zone) at St. Peter's UCC, 915 N Ironwood Dr., South Bend, IN 46615

To Register:

Email the following to [ikc@ikcucc.org](mailto:ikc@ikcucc.org)

- Date Attending
- Church Name and Location (for example: First UCC, City and State)
- Number of Persons Attending

\*\*For more information or if you have questions, please reach out to Conference Minister, Rev. Chad Abbott at [c.abbott@ikcucc.org](mailto:c.abbott@ikcucc.org)

### **New Member Sunday!**

Make First Congregational UCC your new church home and join with others on Sunday, October 28<sup>th</sup> during the 11am worship service. Pastor Sarah is looking forward to hearing about your faith journey and welcoming you into this church family. Contact Pastor Sarah to schedule a conversation about membership [pastorsarah@fcindy.org](mailto:pastorsarah@fcindy.org).

### **Pastoral Transition Team**

As Pastor Sarah continues to serve the congregation in her first six months, the church has a Transition Team to offer guidance, support and to ensure open and transparent communication between the pastor and the congregation. The members of this team are Randy Walker, Liana

Campos, Jim Rutherford and Nancy Dickinson. Please feel free to be in touch with the Transition Team with any feedback, concerns, or comments that you wish to be addressed during this important time of transition and new beginnings.

### **Church Social Media/Website/Design Team Update**

We are blessed by a talented team of volunteers who help with church social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter), Website and design. Team members include Sean Baker, Angela Edwards, Josh Cody, and Pastor Sarah. Pastor Sarah leads this team and is the primary contact for members wishing to share church information on social media and the website. Thank you for helping to spread the good news about the mission and ministry of the church through the website and social media. These are popular platforms for people to first learn about our church and where most of our visitors find information about us. We want to hear from you, so please contact Pastor Sarah with your social media and website updates.

### **Green Team Tip**

Save energy! A recent study showed that washing your hands in cold water is just as sanitary as with hot.

### **September Mission of the Month is the UCC Mental Health Network.**

The United Church of Christ Mental Health Network works to reduce stigma and promote the inclusion of people with mental illnesses/brain disorders and their families in the life, leadership and work of congregations. Its stated values are

- Jesus has shown us the way to embrace those who are marginalized by society and advocate with and for them.
- Every person has value and worth and deserves love, dignity and respect.
- All people, regardless of mental health or disability status, have something to contribute to the life, leadership and work of their congregations.
- Community matters. A sense of belonging is important to us all, whether we face mental health challenges ourselves or not.
- True compassion in ministry and relationships is based on equality.

The Network also helps churches such as FCC that are considering becoming a W.I.S.E. Church (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, Engaged) by providing resources and support to reach that goal and to do so by embodying the love of Jesus in the process. During the month of September your loose dollar bills in the offering plate or larger amounts in the Mission Offering envelopes marked “Mental Health Network” or checks with that notation will go to support its work.

### **Pantry Items of the Month**

During September we are collecting the following items: soups, beans, rice, mac'n'cheese, paper towels, and body wash.

### **Pastoral Care**

Please contact Pastor Sarah at (386) 478 - 9012 or at [pastorsarah@fcindy.org](mailto:pastorsarah@fcindy.org).

### **This Week at First Congregational**

<b>Sunday, September 9</b>	<b>5:30 p.m.</b>	New Creation
<b>Wednesday, September 12</b>	<b>6:30 p.m.</b>	Church Council Meeting
<b>Wednesday, September 12</b>	<b>7:30 p.m.</b>	New Creation Planning Team
<b>Thursday, September 13</b>	<b>7:00 p.m.</b>	Choir Rehearsal
<b>Sunday, September 16</b>	<b>9:45 a.m.</b>	Sunday Adult Class with guest, Rev. Michael Neuroth
<b>Sunday, September 16</b>	<b>11:00 a.m.</b>	Traditional Service with guest preacher, Rev. Michael Neuroth
<b>Sunday, September 16</b>	<b>12:15 p.m.</b>	Just Peace Buzz and pitch-in with guest Rev. Michael Neuroth
<b>Sunday, September 16</b>	<b>5:30 p.m.</b>	New Creation