



FirstCongregationalUCCIndy



Forward



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Epistle for the Week of January 27

Dear Church,

I'm looking forward to being with you all for **our Annual Meeting this Sunday at 1:00pm on the church zoom**. In preparation for our time together, I encourage you to read the annual report [here](#). There's so much goodness to celebrate as a church, even amidst all of the challenges of the past year.

I am inspired by this year's annual report. **Thank you all for all your efforts to be a blessing.**

I recently heard this prayer and thought of our church. I have permission to share it with you.

A blessing for the in-between by Rev. Marie Alford-Harkey

This is a blessing for people who love certainty
And can't find any
For people who crave order
And are living in our disordered world
For people who want to know what's next

And have absolutely no idea

This blessing doesn't ask you to figure it all out
It doesn't need your "pretend to be fine" face
Or your grimacing, gripping, "I will get through this"

This blessing invites you to relax into the universe to admit that you can't control –
well – damn near anything to find your people – the ones who can bear the truth to
find your animals, your plants, and your poetry.

This blessing is for now. The in-between.
This blessing is for you. You are enough.
Even when you feel like you are failing.
(By the way, you are not.
You are absolutely killing it at being human.)
It is for you in your wild, beautiful authenticity.
You do not have to do one damn thing to earn it.
That is not how blessings work.
This blessing is pure grace, a reminder
that you are created out of stardust and love.

Blessings,

Pastor Sarah

[Click Here for the 2021 Annual Report](#)



JUST PEACE & ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

LUKE 4:21-30

SUNDAY, 11:00 AM EST



This Year's Annual Meeting! In view of the change in Marion County's covid status that has sent us back to worshipping only virtually, **the Annual Meeting on January 30 will be on Zoom at 1:00 PM.** We regret that we cannot meet in person for this important business meeting, but we hope all who are able will join us virtually to review 2021 and to move First Congregational's ministries forward in 2022.

Church Leadership and Contact Info:

Senior Councilors: Alice Rutherford (Lead), alice@caloosapirit.net

Larry Eckel lspeckel@comcast.net, and Steve Coomer, s.coomer@sbcglobal.net

Care and Connections: Wendy Baldwin, wendy.baldwin@travelandleisure.com

Outreach and Service: Alice Rutherford, alice@caloosaspirt.net

Trustees: Steve Coomer, s.coomer@sbcglobal.net

Witness and Welcome: Judy Fletcher, jkbfaol.com

Worship and Faith: Aurelia Glennan-March, ahoftmarch@gmail.com

Clerk: Pat Larracey, plainandfancy1963@att.net

Financial Secretary: Cheryl Dillenback, dillenback@sbcglobal.net

Treasurer: Jim Lootens, lootens.jb@gmail.com

THIS SUNDAY

REMINDER: Today is Annual Meeting Day! Join us at 1:00 p.m. on the Church Zoom!

Sunday Adult Education, 10:00 AM:

On Sunday mornings, join us online for a gathering time for faith formation **(Now on Zoom Only)**

BEGINNING NEXT WEEK IN ADULT ED: Adult Ed in February will observe Black History Month by delving into the book *Jesus and the Disinherited* by Howard Thurman, noted theologian, scholar, minister and civil rights leader. Though written in 1949, the book is widely read still today, for its deep insights into the human condition in our own time. The book is only 100 pages and is available on Amazon and other book sellers. There are 10 copies and 3 e-book copies in the Indiana Marion County Public Library system. The Internet Archive has the 1949 edition of the book which they claim is in the Public Domain, and is available to read on their website or to download in a variety of formats at this link.

Coffee Hour Is Back and Online Only!

Join us immediately following Worship on the Church Zoom.

ONLINE Worship: Online, and Dial-In Sunday Worship, 11AM (YouTube, FaceBook, 2PM Dial In)

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, Thursday, January 27th: Spiritual Support Group (Zoom) at 5:00 PM

An Update from Outreach And Service:

Happy New Year to all! Now that we're into a new year, the Outreach & Service Board plans to replicate our 2021 Covenant Outreach based in our UCC Covenants – Just Peace, W.I.S.E. for Mental Health, and Open & Affirming. This month through April we return our focus to our Just Peace covenant as we support our partners at Exodus Refugee, Peace Learning Center, Family Promise, and Faith In Indiana. Contributions to Covenant Outreach over the next four months will be equally divided among these recipients, unless otherwise specified. Please be generous in your gifts to these ministries that clearly reflect First Congregational's values.

In December we donated hats, mittens, scarves, and gloves to Exodus Refugee to assist their efforts in settling immigrants into the Indiana winter, especially those who may have come from warmer climates. You can learn more about the work of Exodus Refugee Immigration, along with volunteer opportunities, at [Exodus Refugee Immigration | Building a New Life in Indiana](#).

Also, as mentioned in a previous Epistle, the Indiana-Kentucky Conference is accepting donations and volunteers to assist in recovery efforts in the Kentucky areas devastated by tornadoes last month. Information on how to help can be found on the IKC website, ikc@ikcucc.org.

COMING SOON

Monday, January 31st: Chalice Press is hosting a conversation about fighting for racial justice after Ferguson. *What has changed? What still needs to change?* You'll hear from Chalice Press author, Leah Gunning Francis and those who were in the frontlines of the protests. Event is free but registration is required for link. Please register here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/250563330667>

February 5, 10AM-12 Noon, Food Drive & Fellowship!

Our food donations to the Northside Pantry are helping to fight hunger needs, and the Pantry is very grateful that we are doing this – while we are not meeting in person for worship, join us outdoors at church on Saturday, 2/5, to collect items for those in need! 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.

The Mental Health Team is seeking new members who want to become part of the team. If interested or have questions, contact Sandy Wood csjlwood@att.net or 317-225-6206.

The Blog Here! What is it? Check out this updated page where you'll find more info and where your submissions will go! (You can see a list of current entries on the right-hand side). **Want to submit? Email me your piece at cassidy@fcindy.org**

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.org.

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 & External Communications Manager: Cassidy Hall

(cassidy@fcindy.org)

Lead Councilor: Alice Rutherford (alice@caloosaspirit.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" is now the "Acts of Kindness Fund" This fund has been repositioned as the "Acts of Kindness Fund". Members can now make requests for gifts to be made from the fund to assist others in our church family. This could be to help with ride-share transportation, shovel or plow snow, pay an unexpected expense, etc. While honoring the dignity of the recipient, these gifts are to assist people who might not ask for help. The fund also continues to be available to support financial needs for any of our church family who find themselves in need. All requests for use of this fund will be confidential, and your privacy will be honored and respected. To request funds or gifts, please contact Pastor Sarah by email pastorsarah@fcindy.org or cell (386) 478-9012.

GIVING

*We seek to love and to share our joy.
We offer care, give thanks and praise, when Christ is present among us all.
We know the world's a mission field, needing forgiveness, justice and hope.*

Our Current Covenant Outreach focus is related to our Just Peace Covenant.

Our current outreach recipients: Exodus Refugee, Peace Learning Center, Family Promise, and Faith In Indiana.



**EXODUS
REFUGEE**
The life ahead.



THIS WEEK AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL

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 (available after 2PM)

- 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



This Week at First Congregational:

Thursday, January 27	5:00 p.m.	Spiritual Support Group (Zoom)
Sunday, January 30	10:00 a.m.	Adult Education (Zoom)
Sunday, January 30	11:00 a.m.	Sunday Online Worship (YouTube, FB) (Dial-in only at 2pm)
Sunday, January 30	Reminder	Coffee Hour Following Worship (Zoom)
Sunday, January 30	1:00 p.m.	Annual Meeting (Zoom)
Tuesday, February 1	All Day	Pastor Sarah's Day of Prayer
Wednesday, February 2	1:00 p.m.	Men's Lunch
Thursday, February 3	5:00 p.m.	Spiritual Support Group (Zoom)

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