



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

THE PILGRIM COLONY



August 2022 at FC Indy:

SUNDAYS	10:00 a.m.	Patio Psalms and Prayers
SUNDAYS	11:00 a.m.	Hybrid Worship (In-Person, YouTube, Facebook, Dial In)
TUESDAYS	1:00 p.m.	Staff Meeting (Zoom)
THURSDAYS	5:00 p.m.	Spiritual Support Group (Zoom)
Tuesday, August 2	All Day	Pastor Sarah's Day of Prayer
Wednesday, August 3	7:00 p.m.	Trustees
Thursday, August 4	1:00 p.m.	Men's Lunch
Wednesday, August 10	7:00 p.m.	Church Council
Tuesday, August 16	4:30 p.m.	WISE Team Meeting
Thursday, August 18	1:00 p.m.	Men's Lunch
Thursday, August 25	11:45 a.m.	Women's Lunch Bunch
Saturday, August 27	9:30 a.m.	Congregational Crafters

Pastor's Reflections

Dear Church,

One of the blessings of serving in ministry with First Congregational is the collective courage and encouragement as a progressive congregation to work and speak out for justice. Our congregational Just Peace, WISE, and Open and Affirming covenants create a solid foundation for our shared witness. We have a long history of advocating for justice. As part of the United Church of Christ, we are part of a bold national faith-based movement to build a more just world for all.

As pastor, I am inspired by First Congregational to use my voice to share God's love and compassion for people who are oppressed by injustice. Recently, I joined other interfaith leaders in signing my name to a letter to elected officials to support reproductive justice as a matter of faith. You can read the full letter on the following page.

I was invited by Rabbi Sandy Sasso to join interfaith leaders at the Indiana Statehouse on July 25 as elected officials met with Vice President Kamala Harris for a special session about reproductive healthcare. I spoke at the rally as a member of the religious community supporting reproductive justice. I am grateful to be part of this witness for justice.

Thank you to the many members and friends of First Congregational who took time to write letters and to advocate for justice. We will keep knocking, keep asking, keep advocating, and "keep keeping on" because we know Jesus promises good will come. And so we will not give up.

Blessings,
Pastor Sarah

Pastoral Care and Support: Contact Pastor Sarah at pastorsarah@fcindy.org and (386)478-9012.

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ADVOCATING, AND "KEEP KEEPING ON" BECAUSE
WE KNOW JESUS PROMISES GOOD WILL COME.
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An Open Letter from a Multi-Faith Collective for Reproductive Choice

We express our concern and protest today as a multi-faith collective of clergy and lay people across the State of Indiana.

The United States Supreme Court decision overturning *Roe v. Wade* and eliminating the federally protected right to abortion significantly impairs a woman's autonomy and ability to access basic health care. It also infringes on the free exercise of religion for those whose teachings allow for, and in some cases require, abortion as part of the care of women and families. Fundamental beliefs in many religions align with the right to seek a safe and legal abortion for a variety of reasons.

We are a country of many faiths. Freedom of religion is a right guaranteed by our Constitution. Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Catholicism, Protestant denominations, and other faith traditions differ in their teachings concerning reproductive matters. For example, the premise that human life begins at conception or that an embryo should be accorded legal protection is not a universally held tenet. Those who hold that belief have every right to do so, but Indiana should not privilege one particular Christian belief above other religious beliefs by codifying it into law. To do so violates the separation of church and state and robs other religious persons - who understand conception, reproduction, pregnancy, and autonomy differently - of the freedom to make these decisions in accordance with their core religious beliefs.

Importantly, we note that reproductive health care is a uniquely sensitive and private matter and one that uniquely affects women's ability to stand in equal citizenship, make choices in their and their families best interest, and determine how, when, and why to use their God-given talents. This is to say nothing of the complex and unpredictable medical circumstances women, including non-binary individuals, may face during a pregnancy. We believe reproductive health care decisions, including abortion, rest with individuals, their physicians, and their faith. The majority of Americans agree. According to a 2022 Pew Research Center Study, 61% of U.S. adults believe that abortion should be legal in all or most cases.

Below we have included examples (not an exhaustive list) of statements from faith groups articulating their position on reproductive choice. Perspectives may be complex and differ within these communities - which is precisely the reason to protect freedom of religion on this issue.

As clergy and lay people across different religions, we raise our voices in concern and protest. As citizens across the state, we call on our elected leaders to honor the integrity, equality, and health of women and to preserve our constitution's guarantee of religious freedom.

Faithfully,

(*note: all signatories below have signed in their individual capacities only and not as representatives of institutions)

[SIGNATORIES]

Senior Councilor's Report

Judy Fletcher, Lead Councilor (June-September)

When I was twelve I spent my allowance at Pottinger's on a packet of deep blue delphinium seeds. I then planted them and waited. I'd never seen a delphinium in person but perhaps they were mentioned in The Secret Garden? Or perhaps I'd seen a photo in a magazine? After reading the packet, I carefully placed my seeds in the sunniest spot of the yard that had the richest soil. Nothing happened.

Three years ago, after we downsized to a lawn, I had to reinvent the flower gardens of the old house. On a whim, I bought a pot of blue delphiniums and planted them in a dry, narrow bed of heavy clay dominated by a black tarmac parking area. *This* delphinium has flourished. Why? Is it a fluke?

Last night I was watching 'Gardener's World' and their coverage of the Chelsea Garden Show. One of the presenters cupped her hand behind a glorious, deep blue delphinium bloom and told the camera that if one had heavy, clay soil, then the delphinium was *just* the flower to grow. Who knew?

As a church, are we flukes? Consider this: we are a progressive, well educated congregation in a state that often has very different values. Indiana ranks 40th out of 50 for educational attainment. 15% of our children live in poverty. Our infant mortality rate is 20% above the national average. And obstetrical care is totally lacking in 32 counties. As long as you are 18 or older, and haven't a court order forbidding it, you can openly carry a gun, no training required.

Our church supports individuals who call for action and we encourage protesting injustices. This year our letter writing campaigns have been directed to hunger, gun violence, and now women's reproductive health. Members march in the Pride parade and protest on the steps of the Indiana Capitol building.

So yes, we are flukes – not the parasitic flukes or the bottom dwelling fish, rather those “unlikely occurrences”. Or just maybe, we are NOT flukes, but just delphiniums thriving in the heavy clay of Indiana? Feel passionate about justice. Write, write often. Speak, speak often. We are here for a purpose. From our Constitution: “We believe in the freedom and responsibility of the individual soul, and the right of private judgment; wherefore no test of creed or dogma shall be required as a condition of membership.” What I love about this church is that we don't have to share the same thoughts and beliefs in order to support one another. All we need is love and the belief that we can improve the lives of others.

All of our efforts, actions, communications, and fellowship rest on the mundane. It is hot, to be sure, and as in past summers we sometimes forget to give. Covid plays a part. But our church needs all of us to remember: give, give often, give generously -- even during the hot doldrums of summer. I'll see you in church – wearing a mask and my name tag too!

Judy Brown Fletcher, Lead Councilor (June - September)

Pastoral Congregation Relations Committee

PCRC for Pastor Sarah: Lianna Campos, Nancy Dickinson, Chuck Kiphart, Chair-Randy Walker (aa28977rwalker@gmail.com)

PCRC for Pastor Carol: Gloria Boedeker, Betty Schnur, Chair-Bill Gillette (wmgillette@gmail.com)

How to Join Zoom Meetings with FC Indy:



To join Zoom meetings, click this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9264494206?pwd=dmtWbWE5UXRBTK5pcHZlYlB0aEFVUT09>

Meeting ID: 926 449 4206 Password: 7171



To Join by Phone call only: 1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago), you will be prompted for the meeting ID 926 449 4206, followed by the # sign, and the Password 7171, followed by the # sign. You can call in and participant as a 'conference call'.

WORSHIP & FAITH

Aurelia Glennan-March, Chair

Adult Education

Worship and Faith

"Patio Psalms and Prayers" continues for the month of August while Adult Ed takes a break. At 10 am, bring your lawn chair, your sunglasses and meet on the patio to reflect together on a selected Psalm. This is a great opportunity to share with one another in an outdoor natural setting, although depending on the weather, we may meet inside. Handouts will be available. Come for the psalm, come for the discussion, come for the pleasure of one another's company.

Ways to Connect for Worship:

In-Person at 7171 North Pennsylvania Street Indianapolis, IN 46240



FACEBOOK

https://www.facebook.com/pg/FirstCongregationalUCCIndy/posts/?ref=page_internal



YOUTUBE

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWV9wqAvPiUKSkEbjAV6Zpw>

- YouTube Live broadcasts at 10:45am with 15 minutes of gathering music. The service begins at 11am.



DIAL-IN (available after 1PM)

- 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.

OUTREACH & SERVICE

Mental Health Team Outreach and Service Board

WISE Mental Health Team Report

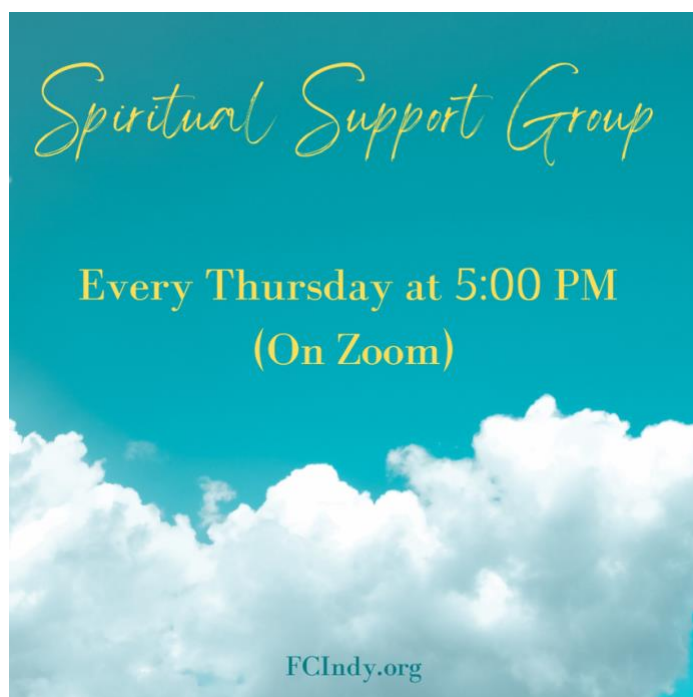
Just before the pandemic the Library acquired several mental health books. The pandemic slowed getting them in the database and ready for FCC members to borrow. The Library Team has the books almost ready to borrow. In the next month they should be ready to be taken out. They are on a special Mental Health designated shelf on the rolling cart in the Southwest corner of the library on the second floor of the church. Come check out the new books and take one out to read!

As some of you may have heard there is a new mental health related emergency number in the U. S. It is 988 and will connect callers or texters directly to mental health services they need rather than sending police and ambulances to the location of a mental health crisis when that type of care is not optimal for the person experiencing the crisis. It should be easier for people to remember than the national crisis line- 1-800-273-TALK (8255) though that number will still be operational.

Please tell your friends and family about the new number so it becomes well known.

The Mental Health Team

Questions? Contact Sandy Wood: csjlwood@att.net



Need a Lift in Your Spirit? Join us Thursdays for Spiritual Support Group for Mental Health at 5:00-6:00PM [on Zoom](#)

This gathering is open to everyone and is an informal time to check-in about how you are doing, get emotional support from church family, and offer prayer for one another as we navigate nurturing positive mental health in these difficult days. We are an open group with confidentiality guidelines. Sessions are on Zoom and led by Pastor Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund.

Please feel free to call or email us if you have questions: Pastor Sarah, pastorsarah@fcindy.org, or 386-478-9012.

Calendars for Exodus Once again we are collecting new calendars for Exodus Refugee. They need them for their new arrivals as well as for already settled refugees. Over the coming months please leave them in the box in the narthex labelled "Calendars." **Thank you!**

Sue Chapman **Carol Sue Chapman** carolsuech59@gmail.com

CARE & CONNECTIONS BOARD

Wendy Baldwin, Chair

Happy Birthday in August!

Marion Harcourt
Angie Hartman

Judy Kaufman
Carol Slocum

Michael Johnson

★ HAPPY ★
BIRTHDAY!

If you're having a birthday in August, and you are not on this list, please contact Wendy Baldwin, so we can add you to our master list for the future!

Congregational Crafters! Calling all knitters, crocheters, sewers and crafters: The Indiana/Kentucky Conference of churches have been asked to make prayer shawls for the participants in next year's UCC Synod to be held in Indianapolis in June. Many years ago, we had a similar group from the church that met once a month to craft together and we thought this would be fun to resurrect our creative talents. We will meet at the church at 9:30 on the 4th Saturday of each month between now and then (weather and Covid restrictions permitting). We do have some yarn and patterns, but you are welcome to devise your own method (knitting, sewing, crocheting, quilting, chain mail is right out). Please let Linda Lupton know of your interest in joining the group (lkupton@aol.com, 765-621-5763). **Our first meeting will be August 27th at 9:30 am.**

Save the Date – Church Picnic, Sunday, September 18, after church

Join us for fun, food, and fellowship as we gather outside (weather dependent) to share a meal and outdoor games – corn hole anyone? It will be a pitch-in lunch – our first in two and a half years!

Wendy Baldwin, Chair



**CONGREGATIONAL
CRAFTERS**

**CALLING ALL KNITTERS,
CROCHETERS, SEWERS
AND CRAFTERS**

**JOIN US ON AUGUST
27TH AT 9:30 AM.**

**WE WILL MEET AT THE
CHURCH AT 9:30 ON THE
4TH SATURDAY OF
EACH MONTH**

TRUSTEES

Chair, Steve Coomer

Financial Update

When We Give, We Reach Out With Helping Hands

Here are the financial results for the first half of 2022.

1. Current Year Actual vs Budget Summary
1/1/2022 through 6/30/2022 Using 2022 Budget

7/5/2022	1/1/2022 Actual	- Budget	6/30/2022 Difference
INCOME	129,987	137,338	-7,351
M. Unrestricted Contributions	129,987	137,338	-7,351
M.01 Pledged Offerings	2,995	4,043	-1,048
M.02 UnPledged Offerings	87,530	94,023	-6,493
M.02.a Plate_Usher Counted	101	720	-619
M.02.b Contributions	86,280	93,000	-6,720
M.02.c Miscellaneous	1,145	300	845
M.02.d Investment Income	4	3	1
M.03 Rollover Prior Year Surplus_D...	9,272	9,272	0
M.04 Foundation - Endowment Fund...	20,000	20,000	0
M.05 Foundation - Minister Fund Draw	10,000	10,000	0
M.06 Foundation - Trad. Music Fund...	0	0	0
M.08 Other Transfers from Restr Ac...	0	0	0
EXPENSES	136,884	139,673	2,789
A. Pastoral Leadership	63,712	64,428	716
B. Worship & Faith	13,946	17,262	3,316
C. Care & Connections	146	150	4
E. Outreach & Service	8,419	9,780	1,361
F. Trustees	0	72	72
G. Administration & Operations	21,570	18,244	-3,326
H. House & Grounds	25,529	25,794	265
I. Miscellaneous	3,563	3,944	381
Net Difference:	-6,897	-2,335	-4,562

Highlights:

- **Income** of \$130,000 was \$7,400 below budget due primarily to lower-than-budgeted contributions.
- **Expenses** of \$136,900 were \$2,800 below budget. Savings in Worship and Faith (mostly lower music expenses) and Outreach and Service (mostly timing-related) were partially offset by higher-than-budget Administrative Operations expenses.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

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

Note: Cash donations of \$1.00 or less are counted as donations to the current Covenant Outreach. Cash of \$5.00 or more should be put in pew envelopes with a designation of Pledge/Contribution, Covenant Outreach, or the specific charity. Unless designated, cash over \$5.00 will go to the church budget.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

UCC General Synod 2023 The IN-KY Conference is thrilled to be hosting the General Synod of the United Church of Christ on June 30-July 4, 2023! This

event, held every 2 years, is a time for the UCC to gather to make important decisions, share ministry, and be in community with one another. It will be held at the Convention Center in Indianapolis, and we need lots of volunteers to put this together! Wendy Baldwin is on the Local Arrangements Committee, so please let her know if you are interested in helping out in the months before and/or during the event.

Women's Lunch Bunch: All women of the church are invited to get together once a month for lunch, friendship, and fellowship. This month we will meet on **Thursday, June 30 at 11:45 a.m.** For any questions or for more information please contact Sue Chapman at 317-259-1806 or carolsuech59@gmail.com

Men's Lunch: This lunch and discussion gathering for men of First Congregational meets every other Thursday at 1:00pm.

This month, June 9th and June 23rd at 1:00PM

Questions? Contact Bill Gillette wmgillette@gmail.com

The FC Indy Blog is here, "Pew Reflections": Please email your submissions to Cassidy (cassidy@fcindy.org) anytime to be shared on the blog.

Acts of Kindness Fund - Members can make requests for use of this fund to assist themselves or others in our church family who might not ask for help. These gifts can help support financial needs, as well as help with ride-share transportation, shovel or plow snow, pay an unexpected expense, etc. Honoring the dignity of the recipient, all requests for use of this fund will be confidential, and privacy will be respected. To request funds or gifts, please contact Pastor Sarah by email pastorsarah@fcindy.org or cell (386) 478-9012.

A NOTE ON OUR CURRENT COVENANT OUTREACH GIVING

Our Current Covenant Outreach focus is related to our WISE Covenant (May – August) Our current outreach recipients: The Julian Center, The UCC Mental Health Network, and The Trevor Project.



August 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 1p – Staff Meeting Pastor Sarah's Day of Prayer	3 7p – Trustees	4 1p – Men's Lunch 5p – Spiritual Support Group	5	6
7 0a – Patio Psalms and ayers 1a – Hybrid Worship (in- erson and on YouTube)	8	9 1p – Staff Meeting	10 7p – Church Council	11 5p – Spiritual Support Group	12	13
14 0a – Patio Psalms and ayers 1a – Hybrid Worship (in- erson and on YouTube)	15	16 1p – Staff Meeting 4:30p – WISE Team Meeting	17 SEPTEMBER COLONY SUBMISSIONS DUE!	18 1p – Men's Lunch 5p – Spiritual Support Group	19	20
21 0a – Patio Psalms and ayers 1a – Hybrid Worship (in- erson and on YouTube)	22	23 1p – Staff Meeting	24	25 11:45a – Women's Lunch Bunch 5p – Spiritual Support Group	26	27 9:30a – Congregational Crafters
28 0a – Patio Psalms and ayers 1a – Hybrid Worship (in- erson and on YouTube)	29	30 1p – Staff Meeting	31			