



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

THE PILGRIM COLONY

July 2022



Pastor's Reflections

What does it mean to be a Christian? What does the Bible teach us about how to live? What is the purpose of the Church?

There is no single correct answer to all of these fundamental questions. There are as many answers as there are people. However, I wonder how you would answer each one of them. And what questions would you add?

We are living through a time where beliefs of a Christian minority are influencing significant policies in our society. As members of the United Church of Christ, our congregation joins a national movement for justice by providing alternative and progressive ways to understand what it means to be a Christian, interpret the Bible, and share the good news of God's love.

The witness, ministry, and mission of First Congregational is vital today as we create spaces where we can support people who are seeking to follow the way of Jesus. We need communities like First Congregational where we can renew our spirits, organize for positive change, and share God's liberating love with the world.

Thank you for being a part of this faith community, thank you for your prayers, and for your financial support. Together we can build a more just world for all.

Blessings,
Pastor Sarah



UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST
a just world for all

Pastoral Care and Support: Contact Pastor Sarah at pastorsarah@fcindy.org and (386)478-9012.
Note: Pastor Sarah on family vacation July 8-17 and Pastor Carol will be available at casowle@gmail.com or by phone at (317)496-9721.



Bereavement Note: Please hold in prayer and love Larry and Susan Eckel who are grieving the death of Larry's mother, Eleanor, who died peacefully at home on Sunday, June 26. Eleanor was a member of First Congregational and we give God thanks for her life. More information will be provided in the future regarding plans for a memorial service.

A Recent Letter Pastor Sarah Signed on as a Faith Leader:

June 09, 2022

As clergy and faith leaders, we grieve alongside our neighbors in Uvalde, Texas today. We share in their anguish after the murder of at least nineteen children and two adults at Robb Elementary School. Uvalde is a tight-knit predominantly Latino rural community where the schools are a central part of community life. This mass shooting has not only resulted in the loss of nineteen precious children, but has forever changed the fabric of the community, causing an institution of learning, trust, and safety to become a place of tragic loss and suffering.

This mass shooting comes just four years after eight students and two teachers were shot and killed by another student at Santa Fe High School in the Houston area and only 10 days after the tragic shooting in Buffalo, NY. Despite many urgent calls for action from civic and religious leaders, lawmakers have recklessly failed to act on the most basic of gun safety laws.

As religious leaders, we are the ones who bury the dead; who pray with, console, and counsel families; and who help shattered communities try to put the pieces of their lives back together after incidents of violence. We publicly issue a call, once again, for urgent action to prevent further lives lost. We must have common sense gun safety measures in place that are proven to save lives: universal background checks, extreme risk protection orders, community violence intervention funding, and confirming Steve Dettelbach as director of ATF. We will not be silent while our communities and nation suffer daily from the scourge of gun violence.

Senior Councilor's Report

Judy Fletcher, Lead Councilor (June-September)

Our electronic society, over the last 30 years, has changed how we think, reason, feel, and behave. Expectations have shifted dramatically. In so many ways, COVID-19 has fractured our lives with losses and delayed connections. And yet, artificial intelligence has played its part in building connections where none had existed. The isolation of the pandemic and unmet frustrations has caused all of us to forget our essential human frailty and inadequacies. Criticizing minutiae has become a norm. Have I unreasonable expectations? Do I take my anger to the next step in authority or do I just jump to the top?

This summer we will be revising the Constitution and Bylaws. We will also do an updated flow chart. Why? We've had structural changes and we need to encode these to help us function smoothly. We all need to know and understand which Board does what so if we have a concern or idea, we can first go to that Board, then the Church Council, and then to the Pastor.

On the plus side, during the pandemic, artificial intelligence helped us maintain remote contact with one another and with people we've never met in person. I have 968 'friends' on Facebook. About 900 of those are people from around the world that I've never met in person but who also own Greater Swiss Mountain Dogs. 11 of the groups I belong to are Swissy related. But I also belong to 2 of our church's groups: the public group labeled 'First Congregational United Church of Christ' and the private group labeled 'First Congregational Indy Fellowship'.

We know that the Facebook algorithms control what we see on our home pages, but that doesn't mean that Facebook blocks us from seeing what is available to us. I usually have the private group in my 'feed' but not the public. So I need to start mechanically going to our church's public page to 'like' and 'share' what is posted there. So do you! If you are a Facebook user (or Twitter or Instagram), please take time to 'like' and 'repost' what our church has posted. It makes a huge difference. It helps others find us and connect with us. It helps those of us in the church build and rebuild those connections we've lost during the COVID pandemic.

Engage. Welcome. Share. Spread the word that life in our church is so much more than an electrical connection, more than a cyber existence. If you feel comfortable, come in person. Grab a cup of coffee, water, lemonade and head out to the patio for some after service conversation. Come early, before the service and sit in on a discussion of a proverb.

A couple of 'shout outs' are in order: a huge thank-you to Alice Rutherford for being our cantor. When we sing unfamiliar hymns with just the lyrics projected, she makes it so much easier to follow along. Sally Coombs has put the flower chart back up! And the ushers have returned to the narthex and to the service of passing the offering plate. Oh, and I love the procession entailed in communion... walking forward, pondering the meaning, slowly returning to the pew.

See you in person in church!

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)

This Month 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)
THURSDAYS	5:00 p.m.	Spiritual Support Group (Zoom)
Tuesday, July 5	All Day	Pastor Sarah's Day of Prayer
Thursday, July 7	1:00 p.m.	Men's Lunch
Sunday, July 10	11:00 a.m.	Guest Preacher, Cassidy Hall
Wednesday, July 13	7:00 p.m.	Church Council
Tuesday, July 19	4:30 p.m.	WISE Team Meeting
Thursday, July 21	1:00 p.m.	Men's Lunch
Thursday, July 28	11:45 a.m.	Women's Lunch Bunch



To join Zoom meetings, click this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9264494206?pwd=dmFkbWWE5UXRBTK5pcHZlYlB0aEFVUT09>

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'.

JUNE PRIDE PARADE RECAP! FC INDY at INDY PRIDE, 2022



WORSHIP & FAITH

Aurelia Glennan-March, Chair

Adult Education

Worship and Faith

"Patio Psalms and Prayers" returns for the month of July 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.

The selected Psalm will be noted each week in the epistle, and handouts will be available. Come for the psalm, come for the prayer, 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)

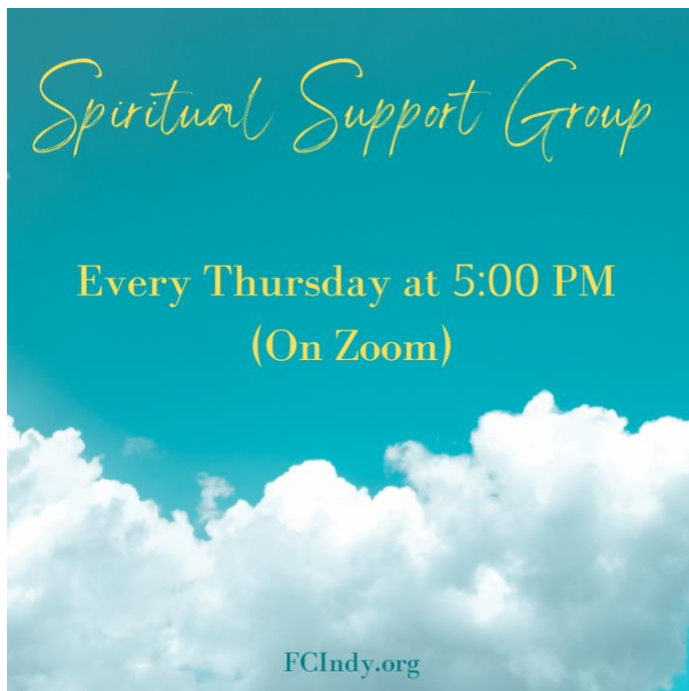
- **Dial 317-204-3862**
- Landline is preferred for clarity.
- If calling with a smart phone, setting your cellular setting to Wi-Fi calling will be clearer.

OUTREACH & SERVICE

Mental Health Team

Outreach and Service Board

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.

CARE & CONNECTIONS BOARD

Wendy Baldwin, Chair

Happy Birthday in July!



Carol Beck	Bob Cook
Ann Leatherman	Beverly Blose
Gini Coomer	Jessica Leatherman
Rick Blose	Yvonne Dittmer
Linda Lupton	Jane Ann Buchanan
Judy Fletcher	susanna-judith rae

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

Address Directory Update

The updated Address Directory is currently available in print and electronically. If you would like a PDF version sent to you, please contact Cassidy Hall at cassidy@fcindy.org.

WANTED: Greeters and Refreshment Hosts

Isn't it wonderful to have a welcoming greeting as you come to worship on Sunday? If you would like to help with being a "greeter", please contact Wendy Baldwin.

And how wonderful to be able to share and catch up with one another after worship. And even nicer with some refreshments. If you are willing to host a Sunday of providing coffee and refreshments, a sign-up sheet is in the Narthex, along with instructions. Questions? Ask Wendy Baldwin.

Wendy Baldwin, Chair



On Sunday, June 5, First Congregational welcomed 4 new members:

Annie Bryant & Abbie Lewis – Annie & Abbie started attending in April, and are planning to be married in our sanctuary in October.

Joan Byron – Joan started attending online during the pandemic, and we got acquainted during our virtual coffee hours. She moved to Brownsburg from California to be closer to family.

Eric Kelso – Eric started attending in April, and moved back to the Indy area, most recently from Ohio. They participated in the Pride Parade with us!

We look forward to getting to know each other as we participate in worship and our ministries!

TRUSTEES

Chair, Steve Coomer

Questions or comments for Trustees, contact current Chair, Steve Coomer, 317-255-9328, s.coomer@sbcglobal.net

Financial Update

When We Give, We Reach Out With Helping Hands

Here are the financial results through May 31, 2022.

1. Current Year Actual vs Budget Summary
1/1/2022 through 5/31/2022 Using 2022 Budget

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	Category	1/1/2022 Actual	- Budget	5/31/2022 Difference
	INCOME	105,546	122,108	-16,562
	M. Unrestricted Contributions	105,546	122,108	-16,562
	M.01 Pledged Offerings	2,995	4,043	-1,048
	M.02 UnPledged Offerings	73,089	78,793	-5,703
	M.02.a Plate_Usher Counted	101	540	-439
	M.02.b Contributions	72,162	78,000	-5,838
	M.02.c Miscellaneous	825	250	575
	M.02.d Investment Income	2	3	-1
	M.03 Rollover Prior Year Surplus_D...	9,272	9,272	0
	M.04 Foundation - Endowment Fund...	10,000	20,000	-10,000
	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	117,521	119,125	1,605
	A. Pastoral Leadership	53,236	53,731	495
	B. Worship & Faith	11,855	14,324	2,469
	C. Care & Connections	146	125	-21
	E. Outreach & Service	6,994	8,085	1,091
	F. Trustees	0	60	60
	G. Administration & Operations	18,920	15,790	-3,130
	H. House & Grounds	23,511	23,655	145
	I. Miscellaneous	2,859	3,355	496
	Net Difference:	-11,974	2,983	-14,957

Highlights:

- **Income** of \$105,500 was \$16,600 below budget. However, we had budgeted a need for \$30,000 in funds from the FCC Foundation but we only needed \$20,000 through the end of May. Adjusting for this, income was \$6,600 short of our budget.
- **Expenses** of \$117,500 were \$1,600 below budget. Savings in Worship and Faith (mostly lower music expenses) and Outreach and Service (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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Invitation to Create Prayer Shawls



For UCC General Synod 2023

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.

Also, we hope to gather over

600 prayer shawls to be used during Synod. Let Wendy know if you are interested in making one - no particular patterns required, just be inspired by our ever-speaking God. For more information on volunteer opportunities for GS2023 or anything else regarding the IKC General Synod Local Arrangements Committee, contact Co-Chairs, Becky Moore or Rev. Merlyn Lawrence at generalsynod2023@ikcucc.org.

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. Questions about what the blog is or how it functions? Check out <http://fcindy.org/blog/newblog/>

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.