



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

*No matter who you are, or
where you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here!*



FirstCongregationalUCCIndy



FCINDY DOT ORG

www.fcindy.org
317.257.5397

7171 N. Pennsylvania St.
Indianapolis, IN 46240

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Welcome to your Spiritual Home!

We celebrate being a Just Peace making, Green for care of Creation, and WISE (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive and Engaged) for mental health church, with an Open and Affirming covenant supporting the LGBTQAAL+ community.

Whether you choose to join us online or in-person, we believe we are called together by Jesus to be a transforming presence for God in the world. **We are a place to belong, a place to heal and a place to love.** At First Congregational we recognize God as a loving, creating, all-encompassing Spirit who is not limited by usual human boundaries. Therefore, we practice the use of inclusive, expansive, and non-gendered language when speaking of and to God.

We welcome all who worship with us today and include **all ages** in our hybrid worship service. We invite guests and members to fill out a Welcome/Prayer card found in the pew holder, and put it in the offering plate. Children are invited to play quietly in the “pryground” at the front of the church, or use a “Quiet Bag” found in the Narthex.

***Disclaimer:** Today’s worship service is being live-streamed. While the focus will be on the worship leaders, anything you say or do may be on film. If you have any questions or need to ensure you are not on camera please speak with our minister.

Pastoral Care: You may reach out to Pastor Sarah for Pastoral Care. She may be reached at (386) 478-9012 or pastorsarah@fcindy.org.

In-Person Office Hours: Cassidy (admin) is in office 9-12 on Thursday, meeting with Pastor Sarah by appointment.

Out of concern for community health, we request that you remain up to date with your vaccinations. Mask as needed. Please stay home if you feel unwell.

We celebrate our worship leaders today:

Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund (she/her), Preacher

Sean Baker (he/him), Music Director

Scott Semester (he/him), Worship Song Leader

Mayflower Singers

Ben James (he/him), Media Technician

Abbie Bryant and Aurelia Glennan-March

DECEMBER 3, 2023

11:00 AM

*Please speak the **bold**-printed words in unison.*

Asterisk () indicates those who choose to may stand in body/spirit.*

PRELUDE Awake, Awake, and Greet the New Morn

INTROIT The Universe Is Bending Mayflower Singers
Entering Into the Sacred

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

TRUMPET FANFARE

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: As the season of Advent begins and we await the coming of the Light we listen for the words of the prophet Isaiah, ‘Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob.’

All: The herald speaks and proclaims the words we long to hear.

One: Jesus will teach us and show us the way so that we may walk a holy path of peace.

All: The herald speaks and declares God takes an interest in each one of us, should we seek to learn.

One: God shall judge between the nations, and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into

pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

All: When the shadows grow long and we begin to despair, the herald speaks and gives us a word of hope. In this hour of worship let us band together as a community to listen and learn how we too can be heralds of God's good news of hope for all.

OPENING PRAYER

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

All: Holy One, we confess that all too often we hear the invitation to join you in learning how to turn destruction into peace and we ignore it. We cling to the ways that are familiar to us, even if we know they hurt us or others. We imagine we are too small to make a difference, that nothing will change and no one will listen to us. We ignore the cries of our neighbors in favor of the trappings of the holiday season. We ignore the cries of our hearts and instead bury our pain in consumption and self-criticism. Teach us your ways so that we can heal and become the heralds of hope you created us to be. Amen.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

PEACE MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION

*SONG OF CENTERING #75

Banner of Hope

Sing! Prayer and Praise

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

SCRIPTURE HERALD

Isaiah 2:1-5

Abbie Bryant

MODERN HERALD

Aurelia Glennan-March

RESPONSE TO THE READINGS

One: The Holy One is trying to speak to us now.

All: We struggle to hear God's good news.

One: The Word of God is here for us today.

All: We will focus ourselves on the hope of God. Amen.

MESSAGE

The Heralds of Hope

Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund

*SONG OF REFLECTION #122 Come, O Long Expected Jesus *New Century Hymnal*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & JOYS AND CONCERNS

MEDITATION

PASTORAL PRAYER

PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR (from UCC Book of Worship)

Our God in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

PRAYER RESPONSE

Mayflower Singers

OFFERTORY INVITATION

INTERLUDE

O Come, All Ye Faithful

arr. Baker

*DOXOLOGY *Song of Thanks*

**All praise to God we now do sing.
Our gifts this Advent now we bring.
This waiting time of hope we share,
As for the Christ our hearts prepare.**

OFFERTORY PRAYER

*SONG OF SENDING #104 We Hail You God's Anointed *New Century Hymnal*

*BENEDICTION

One: Hark! Good news is on the horizon!

All: We long for a word of Hope.

One: God's Hope is present for you and for all.

All: We will seek God's Hope in the world this week. Amen.

BLESSING SONG The Universe Is Bending Mayflower Singers

POSTLUDE Jesu, Joy of Our Desiring J. S. Bach
Music for Sending Forth

Opportunities for Giving, Sharing, Fellowship and Fun!

Playdate TODAY, December 3rd! Monthly Playdates are here and all ages are welcome to join us! We will read a story, sing a song, and have a light snack. We hope to see you there! Join us on December 3rd for a special Christmas Playdate to start the season of Advent.

Are You Considering Membership at First Congregational UCC? New Member Sunday is December 17, 2023! For more information or to become a member, email Pastor Sarah at PastorSarah@FCIndy.org

Special Congregational Meeting, Dec 10, 12:45: On Sunday, December 10, we will have a pitch-in lunch following worship, and then have a special congregational meeting at 12:45. The purpose of the meeting is to vote on a new Constitution and Bylaws for our church. Our current Constitution requires that any changes be approved by a three-fourths vote of those present and voting, and that

this will be the only business item discussed at this meeting. We hope you can be there! Copies of the final proposal are available in the Narthex, or you can see your epistle. Please let the CBL Team of Wendy Baldwin, Steve Coomer, Steve Leatherman, and Pastor Sarah know of any questions or comments that you have.

Because of you, our church changes lives - This is the theme for our Annual Campaign for 2024. While there are many ways to support the congregation, our annual campaign provides a chance to think about the choices we make with our money, time, and talent in support of First Congregational. Prayerfully consider all the ways that our church blesses your life and the lives of others, and **respond by turning in your pledge and Time & Talent cards by December 10.** You can:

- Put them in the offering plate during worship
- OR, mail them to the church.

Thank you to all who contribute in so many ways to our ministries!

During the month of November, Adult Ed will turn its attention to the wisdom of Indigenous peoples and their deep relationships with all of creation. We will explore the Land Back movement that is gaining momentum from Indigenous peoples around the world, with support from non Indigenous people as well. This is a tough topic to explore, but a necessary one. It is not just about restoring justice. At its core, it is about restoring creation - and perhaps saving the very planet we all depend on. Come with open hearts and minds to consider this important topic together.

Youth Group, Fridays! Join the FC Indy Youth Group meeting each Friday from 6:30-8:30PM. We will have pizza and games and be a safe space for middle school and high school students.

Cards to Our Church Family – Please sign the cards on our “card stand”, for those celebrating birthdays, or in need of prayers.

Food Donations to Northside Pantry – Help those with hunger insecurity by bringing donations of canned or boxed food, and place in the baskets in the Narthex.

Sunday Mornings at 10:00 AM – Several options are available on Sundays before worship. Join our Adult Ed group for thoughtful study and discussion (upstairs at church). Or go to choir practice to rehearse for that morning’s singing; all skill levels welcome!

Spiritual Support Group, Thursdays at 5:00pm (Zoom) – This group openly invites anyone seeking spiritual care concerning well-being. Contact Pastor Sarah at pastorsarah@fcindy.org, or 386-478-9012. *****This group will begin meeting only on the first Thursday of each month, beginning on December 7th.**



Thank You for Your Financial Gifts! Our current Covenant Outreach focus is related to our Open and Affirming Covenant. **We have been an Open and Affirming Church since 1994.** Our current outreach recipients: Indiana Youth Group, Damien Center, and Trinity Haven



Gifts of single dollars, or those designed to Covenant Outreach, are divided evenly to these groups, unless otherwise specified. Also, your pledge or undesignated gifts are greatly appreciated to support the mission and ministries funded by First Congregational's operating budget. You can place gifts in the offering plate, mail a check to the church, or give online at www.fcindy.org

Mental Health Support:

The 988 Lifeline: 988 is now active across the United States. (call or text) **National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI.ORG):** information and referral services: 1-800-950-NAMI (6264) **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

THIS WEEK AT FC INDY:

Tuesday, December 5	3:00 PM	Staff Meeting (Zoom)
Tuesday, December 5	All Day	Pastor Sarah Day of Prayer
Wednesday, December 5	7:00 PM	Trustees Meeting
Thursday, December 7	5:00 PM	Spiritual Support Group
Friday, December 8	6:30 PM	Spiritual Support Group
Friday, December 8	6:30 PM	Youth Group
Sunday, December 10	11:00 AM	Worship (In-Person, YouTube, FB)
Sunday, December 10	12:45 PM	Pitch-in and Congregational Meeting

Today's Readings

SCRIPTURE HERALD: Isaiah 2:1-5

This is what Isaiah ben-Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem:

In the last days, the mountain of YHWH's Temple
will be established as the most important mountain
and raised above all other hills—

all nations will stream toward it.

Many people will come and say:

“Come, let us climb YHWH's mountain
to the Temple of the God of Jacob,
that we may be instructed in God's ways
and walk in God's paths.” Instruction
will be given from Zion

and the word of YHWH from Jerusalem.

God will judge between the nations
and render decisions for many countries.

They will beat their swords into plowshares,
and their spears into pruning hooks;
one nation will not raise the sword against another,
and never again will they train for war.

O house of Leah and Rachel and Jacob, come,
let us walk in the light of YHWH!

MODERN HERALD

Augustine of Hippo - “Hope has two beautiful daughters; their names are Anger and Courage. Anger at the way things are, and Courage to see that they do not remain as they are.”

Priests for Equality. The Inclusive Bible. Sheed & Ward. Kindle Edition.



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