



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

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

 @fc_indy  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 LGBTQAAI+ 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, including home visits, hospital visits, home communion, prayer and conversation. She may be reached by text or phone at (386) 478-9012 or pastorsarah@fcindy.org.

In-Person Office Hours: Cassidy (church admin) in office Thursdays. If you need to meet, please contact her at cassidy@fcindy.org

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.

Masks can be found in the narthex.

We celebrate our worship leaders today:

Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund, (she/her), Worship Leader and Preacher
Bonnie Bomer (she/her), Student Pastor
Sean Baker (he/him), Music Director
Scott Semester (he/him), Worship Song Leader
Mayflower Singers
Ben James (he/him), Media Technician
Gini Coomer, Liturgist

***Fiesta is our Student Pastor, Bonnie Bomer's guide dog. Please do not touch Fiesta while she is working and wearing her harness. When her harness is off, Bonnie has invited us to engage with Fiesta and pet her.

September 29, 2024

11:00 AM

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

WE GATHER

PRELUDE To God Be the Glory/My Tribute

INTROIT Lord, Prepare Me to Be a Sanctuary Mayflower Singers

CALL TO WORSHIP (adapted from Psalm 124:8)

One: Our help is in the name of God,
who made heaven and earth.

**All: In speaking, in silence,
in movement, in stillness,
God is with us.**

One: God alone saves us.

All: God alone helps us.

One: God alone sets us on the path of peace.

All: Let us worship our Helper!

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

*SONG OF PRAISE #11 Come On In! *Sing! Prayer and Praise*

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (unison)

God, do you go silent when we perpetuate cycles of retaliation and violence? Does your silence mock our own silence in the face of unchecked weaponization and loss of life? Forgive us for our failure to speak out and speak up for the victims of violence in our midst and around the world. Open our ears and hearts to hold space for your voice to return to us: the voice of a better way of healing and hope for all people. Show us this faithful path and give us the courage to walk in it, even if for the very first time. We pray in the name of the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ, Amen.

GLORIA

Glory to God, glory to God, glory in the highest!

Glory to God, glory to God, alleluia, alleluia!

SHARING THE PEACE

One: The peace of Christ be with you.

People: And also with you.

WE ENCOUNTER

SCRIPTURE

Esther 7:1-6, 9-10, 9:20-22

Gini Coomer

SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

Mayflower Singers



This is what the Spi-rit is sa-ying to the church-es: Thanks be to God!

MESSAGE

Courage For Community Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund

*SONG OF REFLECTION #314 Community of Christ *New Century Hymnal*

WE RESPOND

JOYS AND CONCERNS

MEDITATION

PASTORAL PRAYER

Bonnie Bomer

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

OFFERING

Bonnie Bomer

SPECIAL MUSIC

Courage Is

arr. Baker

DOXOLOGY *Song of Thanks*

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that love has done;
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One.

WE GO FORTH AND PROCLAIM

*SONG OF SENDING #217 Peace I Leave with You *Sing! Prayer and Praise*

BENEDICTION

BLESSING SONG

Wherever You Go

Mayflower Singers

POSTLUDE

By Gracious Powers

Opportunities for Giving, Sharing, Fellowship & Fun!

Soup & Bread Lunch, Sunday, 10/6, following worship: We will have an informal lunch on Sunday, 10/6, to send our CROP walkers off with our blessings. Please plan to join us for a time of community that Sunday following worship, whether you are walking or not.

The 2024 Greater Indianapolis Crop Hunger Walk: On Sunday, October 6th, our Church will be participating in this year's Greater Indianapolis Crop Hunger Walk. The first Crop Walk was in 1969 and was organized by the interfaith Church World Service to address global hunger. Today, thousands of Churches, and 100s of communities participate in the annual Crop Hunger Walk. 25% of the money raised is returned to the host community to support local hunger programs. The Indianapolis Crop Walk is scheduled for October 6, at 2:00pm at the InterChurch Center, 1100 West 42nd Street, near the Butler Campus. The walk is a little over 3 miles around the Butler Campus neighborhood. There is parking at the InterChurch Center, and we are asked to arrive between 1:30 to 1:45 p.m. Wendy will be preparing a light lunch at the Church after the Sunday Service prior to heading out to the InterChurch Center. Steve Leatherman will be at a table in the Narthex of the Church for next two Sundays after the Service to sign up walkers and collect donations in person. Wendy has set up our Church's Team Site on the Greater Indianapolis Crop Hunger Walk website where you can make an online donation. You need to enter the following link: <https://events.crophungerwalk.org/cropwalks/search>. In the Search screen you then need to type in: **First Congregational UCC** and click on **First Congregational UCC – Indianapolis, IN** and you will be at our Church's donation site. If you have any additional questions,

please send me an email. We thank everyone who can walk or donate to this year's Crop Hunger Walk.

Steve Leatherman, Email: stevelnote@gmail.com

FCC is sending someone to Chautauqua next summer.....will it be you? An anonymous donor has gifted our church with an endowment that will send someone to a week at the Chautauqua Institution in New York. Curious? Interested? For more information, including the team member names who can answer questions, please find the information and application at the bulletin board near the Narthex at church—or the weekly Epistle for electronic copies. **Applications are due by September 30.**

Ways to Connect & Serve: Interested in participating with a small group at First Congregational? Check out the Connect & Serve cards in the pews, and take one with you, if you like! Looking for an activity that isn't there - contact Wendy Baldwin.

Soup & Bread Lunch, Sunday, 10/6, following worship: We will have an informal lunch on Sunday, 10/6, to send our CROP walkers off with our blessings. Please plan to join us for a time of community that Sunday following worship, whether you are walking or not.

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.

The Flower Calendar is on the bulletin board by the garden doors. Please sign up for any occasion. The flowers can come from your garden, store or florist. For more information see **Sally Coombs.**

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

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!



Thank You for Your Financial Gifts! Our current Covenant Outreach focus is related to our Mental Health Covenant that includes support for the following organizations: the UCC Mental Health Network, The Julian Center, and GenderNexus.



Gifts of single dollars, or those designated to Covenant Outreach, are divided equally 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 in 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: 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, October 1, 11:30 AM: Staff Meeting**
- **WEDNESDAY, October 2, 11:30 AM: WISE Team Meeting**
- **WEDNESDAY, October 2, 7:00 PM: Personnel Meeting**
- **THURSDAY, October 3, 1:00 PM: Men's Lunch**
- **ADULT EDUCATION, SUNDAY, October 6 10:00 AM: Join us for fellowship and discussion!**
Questions: casowle@gmail.com
- **SUNDAY WORSHIP, October 6, 11:00 AM**

Today's Scripture

Esther 7:1-6, 9-10, 9:20-22

Ahasuerus and Haman arrived at Esther's banquet. The next day, as they were drinking their wine, Ahasuerus said, "What do you desire, Esther? Anything you say will be given to you." Esther replied, "My sovereign, if I have found favor in your eyes and if it be your wish, I ask you to spare my life, and the lives of my people. That is what I desire most. For we, my people and I, have been condemned to be destroyed, slain and turned into chattel—ourselves and our children. Had you merely intended to make us slaves, I would have said nothing. All this has been told to me by a reliable source. Our enemy brings shame upon the imperial court." Ahasuerus said, "Who is this person who would dare do such a thing?" Esther replied, "Our enemy is this scoundrel Haman." Haman was terrified and shrank in the presence of Ahasuerus and Esther.

7:9-10 Then Harbona, one of the eunuchs, said, "I have seen it myself. Haman has prepared a gallows for Mordecai—the very person who gave you true information. The gallows stands in front of Haman's house and is seventy-five feet high." Ahasuerus declared, "That is where Haman will hang. So Haman was hung on the gallows that he had built for Mordecai. Only then was Ahasuerus' anger abated.

9:20-22 Mordecai wrote down all these things in a scroll and sent copies to all the Jewish communities throughout the empire of Ahasuerus, both far and near, telling them that they should keep the fourteenth and fifteenth day of Adar, the days that they vanquished their enemies. They were to commemorate the entire month of Adar, for it was in that month when their lot had been changed from sorrow to joy. They were told to observe these days with celebrations and feasts, giving gifts of food to friends and to the poor.

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