



# 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, so we use 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 Prayground at the front of the church or use a "Quiet Bag" found in the Narthex.

**\*Disclaimer:** Our worship services are 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.

**Accessibility:** Please see an usher if you'd like a listening device. We also have a variety of fidgets in the Prayground to support neurodiversity. Don't hesitate to let an usher know if there's anything else you need!

**Pastoral Care:** You may reach out to Pastor Sarah for pastoral care, including home visits, hospital visits, home communion, prayer, and conversation. You may reach her by text or phone at (386) 478-9012 or by email at [pastorsarah@fcindy.org](mailto:pastorsarah@fcindy.org).

**In-Person Office Hours:** Shannon (church admin) works in the church office on Tuesdays and Fridays. You may contact her at [shannon@fcindy.org](mailto:shannon@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.**

May 17, 2026

11:00 AM

## We celebrate today's worship leaders:

Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund (she/her), Worship Leader  
Sean Baker (he/him), Music Director and Video Designer  
Ben James (he/him), Media Technician  
Scott Semester (he/him), Worship Song Leader  
Mayflower Singers  
Bonnie Bomer, Helen Walsh, and Sandy Wood, Liturgists  
Rev. Dr. Milton Keys, Preacher

*Please speak **bold** words aloud. Stand as you are able for asterisked (\*) songs.*

## WE GATHER

FANFARE: *This is the Day*

OPENING VIDEO: *Draw the Circle Wide*

arr. Baker

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund

INTROIT: *Praise the Name of Jesus*

Mayflower Singers

## CALL TO WORSHIP

One: God invites us to co-create communities of radical belonging for all. Communities that are welcoming, inclusive, supportive, and engaged for mental health. Communities that are accessible to all.

**All: We are creating communities of radical belonging for people living with mental health experiences, conditions, and disabilities, and their loved ones.**

One: Jesus shows us how to love our neighbors as ourselves.

**All: We are loving our neighbors who experience mental health experiences, conditions, and disabilities and their**

**loved ones. We are loving ourselves no matter where we are on the spectrum of mental wellness today.**

One: The Spirit empowers us to create communities of radical belonging for people with brain diseases and disorders, and people living with substance use and addictions and disabilities and their loved ones.

**All: We are co-creating with God communities of radical belonging and love for everyone. May our worship inspire and empower us for the journey.**

\*SONG OF PRAISE: *Children of God*

Sing! Prayer and Praise#195

POEM: *The Center We Come Back To*

Helen Walsh

He lived from a place of belovedness.  
A steadiness at the center of him.  
A way of moving through the world  
without needing the moment to be anything other than what it was.

And still, life pressed close.  
Voices rose from every side.  
Crowds leaned in.  
Need gathered around him.  
Storms lifted the water.  
Fear filled the room.  
He met it all from the center he kept returning to.

He stopped for the person others passed by.  
He heard the one voice inside the noise.  
He gave time  
for someone to tell their story in their own way.  
He turned toward the hand that reached for him.  
He met people in the simple act of sharing food.

He wept beside the grieving.  
He welcomed the children his friends tried to protect him from.

He knew what it was to fall to the ground in sorrow.  
He knew what it was to feel alone in the wilderness.

And he also stepped back  
when the noise grew too heavy.  
A hillside.  
The water's edge.  
A home where he was known.  
Moments of sleep in a boat rocked by waves.  
Moments of prayer that felt like breathing.  
Moments when he let others care for him  
with their presence,  
their resources,  
their tenderness.

Some days we can ask for help.  
Some days we don't know what to ask for, what to say, what to feel,  
or what to do.  
Sometimes we just don't know,  
but we can come to the center of who we are.  
Jesus reached for God in his not-knowing,  
and we can reach too.  
We are human, held more than we realize.  
And we hold one another too,  
because care is something we learn together.

Care lives in these spaces,  
loud and quiet,  
near and tender,  
in the reaching out

and the receiving.  
One more kindness inward,  
and one more kindness outward.

## SHARING THE PEACE

One: The peace of Christ be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

## UNISON PRAYER

Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund

**God of love, today as we celebrate Mental Health Sunday, stir in us deep compassion for people living with brain disorders and their families. Raise our awareness of how we can create a supportive and safe spiritual community for people who feel isolated, shunned and ashamed. Open our imaginations about ways to be accessible to all in everything we do. Inspire us to reach out in love as a sign of your radical hospitality and grace. Encourage us to receive the gifts that are given by all, including those who are disabled and people living with mental health experiences. Amen.**

## **WE ENCOUNTER**

SCRIPTURE READING: Luke 8:26-52

Sandy Wood

SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

Mayflower Singers

MESSAGE: *The Case for a Caring Community*

Rev. Dr. Milton Keys

\*SONG OF REFLECTION: *What a Covenant*

New Century Hymnal #471

## WE RESPOND

JOYS AND CONCERNS

MEDITATION

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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

INTERLUDE VIDEO: *In the Bulb There Is a Flower*

arr. Baker

\*DOXOLOGY: *Song of Thanks*

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below; Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Praise God, the source of all our gifts!  
Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!  
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit!  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

## WE GO FORTH AND PROCLAIM

\*SONG OF SENDING: *In the Bulb There Is a Flower*

New Century Hymnal #433

BENEDICTION

BLESSING SONG: *Alleluia*

Mayflower Singers

POSTLUDE: *Our Christ Ascends*

Todd Kendall

### TODAY'S SCRIPTURE

#### Luke 8:26-52

<sup>26</sup> They came to the region of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee. <sup>27</sup> Jesus was stepping from the boat when he was met by a person from the town who was possessed by demons. The demoniac had not worn clothes for a long time, and was homeless, living among the tombs instead.

<sup>28</sup> Seeing Jesus, the individual cried out and fell at his feet, shouting loudly, "What do you want with me, Jesus, Only Begotten of the Most High God? I beg you, don't torture me!"

<sup>29</sup> – for Jesus was ordering the unclean spirit to come out of the person. This spirit had seized the demoniac many times in the past, who then needed to be restrained with chains and shackles and kept under guard – yet every time, the possessed person would break the bonds and be driven by the demon into deserted places.

<sup>30</sup> "What is your name?" Jesus asked.

"Legion," it replied, because many demons had entered the person. <sup>31</sup> And they pleaded with Jesus not to order them to depart into the abyss.

<sup>32</sup> A large herd of pigs was feeding nearby on the hillside. The demons pleaded with Jesus to allow them to enter the swine,

and he gave them permission. <sup>33</sup> The demons left the person and entered the pigs, and the herd rushed down the hillside into the lake and drowned.

<sup>34</sup> When the swineherds saw what had happened, they ran away to tell the story in town and throughout the countryside.

<sup>35</sup> The local residents came out to see what happened. And as they approached Jesus, they also saw the exorcised person sitting at Jesus' feet, clothed and of a right mind. And they were afraid. <sup>36</sup> Those who had witnessed it told the others how the possessed one had been made whole. <sup>37</sup> Panic overcame the whole population of the region of the Gerasenes, and they asked Jesus to leave them.

When Jesus had gotten into the boat to leave, <sup>38</sup> the person who had been healed asked to go with him. But Jesus said, "No, <sup>39</sup> go back home and tell everyone what God has done for you." So the one who had been made whole went off and proclaimed throughout the region what Jesus had accomplished.

<sup>40</sup> When Jesus returned, a crowd of people was waiting for him and welcomed him. <sup>41</sup> A man named Jairus, an official of the synagogue, stepped forward and fell at Jesus' feet. He begged Jesus to come to his house, <sup>42</sup> for his only daughter – who was twelve years old = was dying.

As Jesus moved along, the crowd almost crushed him. <sup>43</sup> In the crowd was a woman who had suffered from Hemorrhages for twelve years, and had found no one who could heal her. <sup>44</sup> She came up behind Jesus and touched the fringe of his cloak, and immediately the bleeding stopped.

<sup>45</sup> "Who touched me?" Jesus asked.

When no one nearby responded, Peter said, "Rabbi, it's the crowd pressing around you."

<sup>46</sup> But Jesus said, "Someone touched me. I felt power leave me."

<sup>47</sup> when the woman realized that she had been noticed, she approached in fear and knelt before him. She explained in front of the crowd why she had touched him and how she had been instantly healed.

<sup>48</sup> Jesus said to her, “Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace.”

<sup>49</sup> While Jesus was still talking, someone from the house of Jairus, the synagogue official, arrived and said, “Your daughter died. Don’t trouble the Teacher anymore.”

<sup>50</sup> But when Jesus heard this, he said to the messenger, “Don’t be afraid. Have faith, and she will be made well.”

<sup>51</sup> When he arrived at the house, Jesus ordered no one to enter with him except Peter, John, James and the girl’s parents. <sup>52</sup> everyone was weeping and wailing for the child, but Jesus said, “Stop crying. She is not dead, just sleeping.”

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

# SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

## MAY 17, 2026 – AFTER WORSHIP

At its April meeting, the Church Council agreed to call a congregational meeting for our members to consider and vote on the following:

The W.I.S.E. Mental Health Team, having received the support of both the Trustee Board and the Church Council, is asking the congregation to support our next step: submitting an application to UCC Disabilities Ministries to become an A2A (Accessible to All) church of the United Church of Christ (UCC). If approved, we will enter into a relationship with the national UCC to engage in an ongoing A2A process, making reasonable and continuing efforts to accommodate people with disabilities. This is a process, not a one-time designation.

The congregational meeting will be held on Sunday, May 17, 2026, following worship. By applying to become an A2A church, First Congregational will be committing to an attitude towards accessibility, both through our physical structure and our practices. For more information about A2A, go to: [www.uccdm.org/a2a](http://www.uccdm.org/a2a).

Questions – contact Senior Councilors Wendy Baldwin, Steve Coomer, and/or Jimmy Hodges.

# Opportunities for Giving, Sharing, Fellowship, and Fun!

**Interested in becoming a member of First Congregational?** Talk to Pastor Sarah about making First Congregational your church home. Joining the church as a member is a way to grow closer to one another and to God in the spirit of love.

**Seeking Gifts for the Acts of Kindness Fund:** This is a special fund for our church members facing temporary financial setbacks. Can you make a special gift to the fund that will help individuals in our church family? Contact Wendy Baldwin with questions.

**Sunday Morning Refreshment Hosting:** Our custom is to provide snacks and beverages before and after worship in the Parlor. There is a sign-up sheet in the Narthex, or you can contact Wendy for more info and/or some 'training' on this process.

**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.

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

**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** – Join our Adult Ed group for thoughtful study and discussion or go to choir practice to rehearse for that morning's singing. All are welcome!



**Thank you for your financial gifts!** Our current Covenant Outreach focus is related to our Just Peace Covenant that includes support for the following organizations: Exodus Refugee Immigration, the Peace Learning Center, and Family Promise. Gifts of single dollars and 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](http://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: 800-950-NAMI (6264). **The Trevor Project hotline** offers support for LGBTQIA+ youth and families struggling with mental health challenges: 866-4-U-TREVOR (488-7386) and [www.theTrevorProject.org](http://www.theTrevorProject.org)

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Join us as our faith based congregations justice community organizing movement, Indy Action Coalition, meets again. We are following up on our wonderfully successful Public Assembly, March 12, where 550 citizens came demanding Mayor Hogsett work with us to:

- insure funding for Phases II & III of the Streets to Homes initiative providing services to move folks from homelessness to permanent housing and engage the city in leveraging private funds for this effort.
- Develop a Community Safety Plan coordinating with the city a plan to resist federal intrusion in Indianapolis by protecting immigrant neighbors from ICE deportation, providing food, housing, and 4th Amendment training for businesses.

We must keep the pressure on to make sure these promises are fulfilled.

Indy Action Coalition: LEADER ASSEMBLY  
Thursday, May 21st at 6:30PM  
Broadway United Methodist Church  
609 East 29th St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46205

Any questions, needs for transportation, etc. contact  
Worth Hartman, First Congregational UCC, Outreach and Service  
Board

PH: 317-417-0806. Email: [worthgrover@sbcglobal.net](mailto:worthgrover@sbcglobal.net)

**OPEN TABLE DINNER: a joint project of FCC and the Garden**  
**Wednesday, May 27, 6-8pm**

**Reservations required by May 20: <https://tinyurl.com/26-05-opentable>**

Let's gather for dinner together! Members of The Garden and First Congregational and all who would like to attend are invited for dinner, relationship building conversation & a program featuring Doran Nash of The Garden and Sean Baker of First Congregational discussing their lives and careers as professional musicians. We're getting the Parlor piano tuned, so hopefully we'll hear some songs from them, as well!

### **Congrats to Gracelynn & Noah!**

We celebrate the marriage of our Family Faith Ministry Leader Gracelynn to Noah Royer in April. We are collecting for a monetary gift to them, so if you would like to contribute, please do so by May 31, marking the gift as "Gracelynn".

### **This Week at FCC**

**Monday, 5/18 at 1:00PM:** Library Team Meeting

**6:00 PM:** ACA Support Group (Parlor)

**Tuesday, 5/19 at 11:30 AM:** Staff Meeting (Zoom)

**1:30 PM:** Robin Run Gathering (Café in Assisted Living Bldg)

**6:00 PM:** Garden Leadership Team (Parlor)

**Wednesday, 5/20 at 7:00 PM:** Trustees Meeting (Zoom)

**Thursday, 5/21 at 5:30 PM:** The Art of Community Workshop (Mayflower Room)

**Friday, 5/22 at 1:30 PM:** Senior Councilors (Zoom)

**Saturday, 5/23 at 1:30 PM:** Wendy Baldwin's 70<sup>th</sup> (Parlor)

**Sunday, May 24th:** Wear **Red** for **Pentecost Sunday!**