

 [FirstCongregationalUCCIndy](#)

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# FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Epistle for the Week of January 21, 2021

## Dear First Congregational,

On Tuesday of this week I had the honor of offering a prayer at the Indiana State House with along with other Indiana interfaith leaders, including our own President David Mellott, and Mayor Joe Hogsett at an event organized by the Center for Interfaith Cooperation. I offer this prayer to you as we hold our nation in prayer together:

God of the orphan,  
God of the immigrant,  
God of the widow,  
God of the imprisoned,  
God of the hungry,  
God of the thirsty,  
God of the oppressed,  
God of the depressed,  
God of the sick,

God of the lonely,  
God of the dying,  
God of the streets,  
God of the people,  
God of Trayvon Martin,  
God of Breonna Taylor,  
God of George Floyd,  
God of Lisa Montgomery,

We confess that in the face of injustice we often remain silent.  
When your children cry out in the streets "I can't breathe" we watch in silence,  
paralyzed by fear, guilt, and shame for we know we are complicit in this evil that  
values whiteness and demonizes blackness.  
We repent for this era of corruption, racism, and greed that dragged us all through  
the valley of the shadow of death.

We pray for mercy.  
We pray for forgiveness.  
We pray for grace.  
We pray for change.  
We pray for transformation.

On behalf of the hurting people, we cry out to our God of Compassion who hears  
our cries and wipes away every tear.

God of Hope,  
God of Love,  
God of all faiths,  
God of Reconciliation,  
God of Reparations,  
God of Restoration,  
God of Redemption,

Lead us onward into this new day.  
Lead us further along the arc of the moral universe that bends towards justice.  
Lead us into an era that will make all of our children, black, brown and white,  
ambassadors of peace and freedom for all the world.  
Lead us in the way of dignity, equality, and respect as we work together to build  
the Beloved Community here on Earth.

Help us God.  
Save us God.  
Guide us God.

Hand-in-hand with the Holy One, may we leave behind our fears, our terrors, our midnights of despair, and embrace the sacred calling to fulfill our interconnected destiny of liberation and justice for all.

With you, God, we believe this is possible: to live in peace with one another, to live in such a way that demonstrates with our actions our love for our neighbor as our selves.

Let us put away our selfishness, our pride, our obsession with might over right.

Let us lay down our weapons and pick up the pen, writing a new chapter of peace in this land.

We pray this in the Great Name of our Living God....the Creator of us all. Amen.

Here is the pastoral prayer from Sunday, January 17th.

St. Patrick's Breastplate, Adapted: A Prayer for Protection in a Time of Violence

We arise today  
Through a mighty strength  
Calling on the Creator of creation.

We arise today  
Through the strength of Jesus:  
Born and baptized,  
Crucified and buried,  
Resurrected and ascended  
in defeat of violence and death forever.

We arise today  
Through the strength of love,  
In the hope of resurrection,  
In the prayers of our ancestors,  
In the preachings of prophets,

in the resistance of the righteous.

We arise today  
Through the strength of heaven;  
Shining of sun,  
Splendor of fire,  
Speed of lightning,  
Swiftness of wind,  
Depth of sea,  
Stability of earth,  
Firmness of rock.

We arise today  
Through God's strength to lead us;  
God's might to uphold us,  
God's wisdom to guide us,  
God's hand to guard us.

We summon today all these powers  
and place them between ourselves and evil;  
We place these Holy powers  
Against every cruel power that opposes the bodies and souls of God's beloveds,  
Against incantations of false prophets,  
Against those who are lawless,  
And against those who shield their evil with the law,  
Against worship of nation or race or leader,  
Against all lies that the unrighteous speak and live.

Christ in your strength  
Shield us today  
From violence of word,  
From violence of deed,  
From violence of policy,  
From violence of spirit.

We arise today  
Through a mighty strength,  
Calling on the Creator of creation.

Amen.

Blessings,

Pastor Sarah

## THIS SUNDAY

### **Sunday Adult Education, 9:30 a.m. (Zoom)**

**January 24:** Led by Wendy Baldwin, join us to discern and discuss a selected Bible passage, and how it speaks to us about generosity and stewardship. As 2021 dawns with hopes for a new beginning, Generosity remains a key spiritual practice.

### **Sunday Worship, 11AM (YouTube, FaceBook, Dial In)**

**Scripture:** Mark 1:14-20

**Sermon:** "A Time for Changing Hearts and Minds"

**Coffee Hour via Zoom, immediately after worship**

### **Thank You for Your Support of First Congregational UCC**

Please continue supporting the mission and ministries of your local church by mailing a check to the church or through online donations at <http://www.fcindy.org/online-giving/>

## THIS WEEK AT FC

### **How to Access our Zoom Gatherings**

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/9264494206?pwd=dmtWbWE5UXRBTK5pcHZlYlB0aEFVUT09>

Meeting ID: 926 449 4206

Password: 7171

If you click on the URL, you should not need to enter in the Meeting ID and Password.

To dial in by phone: +1 312 626 6799, Meeting ID 926 449 4206, Password 7171.

### **TODAY!**

- **Spiritual Support Group, 5:00 p.m.** - This group openly invites anyone seeking spiritual care concerning well being. Contact Pat Larracey at [plainandfancy1963@att.net](mailto:plainandfancy1963@att.net), or 317-625-6801, or Pastor Sarah at [pastorsarah@fcindy.org](mailto:pastorsarah@fcindy.org), or 386-478-9012.

### **NEW – Zoom Game Night, Friday, January 22, 7 pm**

Looking for some fun time? Join us on Zoom to play some games together and share some fellowship with one another. Questions? Contact Wendy Baldwin.

### **Zoom Vespers on Tuesdays from 7:00 - 7:30 p.m.**

Join us on Zoom for a time of togetherness, Scripture, and sharing of joys and concerns.

**Soul Care with Pastor Sarah via Zoom-** Join us after Zoom Vespers on **Tuesdays at 7:30p.m.** Simply stick around after vespers for a time to check-in and to pray together.

### **Wellness Wednesday, January 27th at 10:30 a.m. (Zoom)**

On Wednesday, January 27<sup>th</sup>, you are invited to participate in nurturing wellness through a practice of "Clothing Yourself with Divinity." This zoom meeting will be recorded and posted on the FC Facebook page and website.

### **Serving on a Board in 2021**

Would you be willing to serve on one of our boards in 2021? Most of the ministries of our church are planned and managed by our 5 boards. This is a great way to get involved, and make a difference in people's lives. For the time being, board meetings are being held virtually via Zoom. We currently have openings on the following boards:

- Board of Trustees: This board is primarily responsible for the assets of the church.
- Board of Witness & Welcome: This board is primarily responsible for delivering our message to those outside the church family.
- Board of Worship & Faith: This board is primarily responsible for our worship and faith development programs.

We are also seeking to fill the Vice Moderator position. This position assists the Moderator, and is in line for being Moderator in 2022.

If you have an interest in participating, or would like more information, please contact Wendy Baldwin by 1/24.

## **COMING UP**

**Women's Lunch (Zoom) - Thursday, January 28th at 11:30 a.m. - Please**

contact Sue Chapman at (317) 259-1806 or [caroisuecnc59@gmail.com](mailto:caroisuecnc59@gmail.com) for more information.

**Men's Lunch (Zoom) - Thursday, January 28 at 1:00 p.m.** - Please contact Randy Walker at (317) 796-2081 or [aa28977rwalker@gmail.com](mailto:aa28977rwalker@gmail.com) for more information.

### **Annual Meeting, January 31st**

Chairing the Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 31, at 1:00 PM will be my last official act as 2020's Moderator. I look forward to seeing many faces on Zoom as we close out a rather... well, let's just say "special" year. I want to thank everyone who has made the year manageable (and sometimes enjoyable!), so please be there! Everyone's voice is important at this *important meeting!*

- Alice Rutherford, Moderator

### **Racial Justice Team - Time to start our new book (or watch the movie)**

We have chosen the Young Adult novel "**The Hate You Give**" by **Angie Smith** as our next book. The book is available widely at the library. It has also been made into a movie, available at Amazon Prime and other outlets. We will have one discussion about it in a **buzz on February 7**. As a movie reviewer for Time Magazine said "The best way to understand what other people's lives are like is to listen, and to see."

For you who are fans of study/discussion guides, check out this one produced by Kansas State University at this link:

<https://krex.k-state.edu/dspace/bitstream/handle/2097/39158/guide-2018.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

It is very thorough, including classroom recommendations, and includes chapter summaries at the end.

Thank you, the Racial Justice Team: Pastor Sarah, Carol, Cassidy, Alice, Karen

**Please click [HERE](#) to view the January Colony with more information and events happening this month!**

## **CONNECTION & SUPPORT**

**FC Facebook page** (click [here](#))

“**First Congregational Indy Fellowship**” group on Facebook (click [here](#)).

### **Pastoral Care**

Pastor Sarah may be reached at (386) 478-9012 or [pastorsarah@fcindy.org](mailto:pastorsarah@fcindy.org).

### **Pastor Sarah's Sabbath Days: Mondays & Saturdays**

The congregation covenant with Pastor Sarah to provide 2 days per week for personal rest and family renewal. On Mondays and Saturdays, Pastor Sarah is not available unless it is a pastoral emergency. Thank you for honoring this sacred gift of Sabbath time for our Pastor and her family.

### **Additional Church Support Contacts**

Pastor Carol ([casowle@gmail.com](mailto:casowle@gmail.com))

Office Administrator, Shannon ([shannon@fcindy.org](mailto:shannon@fcindy.org))

Moderator, Alice Rutherford ([alice@caloosaspirt.net](mailto:alice@caloosaspirt.net))

Vice Moderator, Larry Eckel ([lspeckel@comcast.net](mailto:lspeckel@comcast.net))

### **Mental Health Support:**

- **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s Disaster Distress Helpline:** 1-800-985-5990, or text “TalkWithUs” to 66746.
- **National Suicide Prevention Hotline:** 1-800-273-TALK (8255) (press 1 for veterans, 2 for Spanish)
- **National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)** Information HelpLine provides information and referral services. 1-800-950-NAMI (6264) and [www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org).
- **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](http://www.theTrevorProject.org)

**FC Emergency Fund** - The FC Emergency Fund is available to support financial needs for any of our church family who find themselves in need. To request funds for you or your family, please contact Pastor Sarah by email [pastorsarah@fcindy.org](mailto:pastorsarah@fcindy.org) or cell (386) 478-9012.

### **FC Covid Protocols:**

Effective immediately, the church building is closed to in-person church gatherings until the following parameters are reached, based on guidance from Dr



virginia Caine, Marion County Public Health Director:

*A 7-day average of 5% (or less) positivity among unique individuals tested for a two-week period, and new cases per day at 35 or under in Marion County, per the metrics shown on [www.coronavirus.in.gov](http://www.coronavirus.in.gov).*

At that time, the Council will decide reopening measures.

## **THIS WEEK AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL**

### **3 Ways to Connect for Worship**

#### ***YOUTUBE***

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWV9wqAvPiUKSkEbjav6Zpw>

- YouTube Live broadcasts at 11am..
- Use this option for live interacting and messaging. You must have or create a user account and be logged in to message live.

#### ***FACE BOOK***

[https://www.facebook.com/pg/FirstCongregationalUCCIndy/posts/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/FirstCongregationalUCCIndy/posts/?ref=page_internal)

- The video will be posted at 11am.
- This is for viewing only. For live interacting and commenting, please use the YouTube option.

#### ***DIAL-IN***

- 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.

#### **How to Access our Zoom Gatherings**

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/9264494206?pwd=dmtWbWE5UXRBTk5pcHZlYlBoaEFVUT09>

Meeting ID: 926 449 4206

Password: 7171

If you click on the URL, you should not need to enter in the Meeting ID and Password.

To dial in by phone: +1 312 626 6799, Meeting ID 926 449 4206, Password 7171.

### Weekly Calendar

Thursday, Jan 21	5:00 p.m.	Spiritual Support Group
Friday, Jan 22	7:00 p.m.	Zoom Game Night
Sunday, Jan 24	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, Jan 24	11:00 a.m.	Sunday Worship (YouTube, FB, Dial In)
Sunday, Jan 24	12:00 p.m.	Zoom Coffee Hour
Tuesday, Jan 26	7:00 p.m.	Zoom Vespers
Tuesday, Jan 26	7;30 p.m.	Soul Care with Pastor Sarah
Wednesday, Jan 27	10:30 a.m.	Wellness Wednesday
Thursday, Jan 28	11:30 a.m.	Women's Lunch Bunch
Thursday, Jan 28	1:00 p.m.	Men's Lunch
Thursday, Jan 28	5:00 p.m.	Spiritual Support Group
Sunday, Jan 31	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Adult Class
Sunday, Jan 31	11:00 a.m.	Sunday Worship (YouTube, FB, Dial In)
Sunday, Jan 31	12:00 p.m.	Zoom Coffee Hour
Sunday, Jan 31	12:30 p.m.	Annual Meeting

**\*All events are on Zoom unless indicated otherwise.**