

# The Good News

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC

ANGOLA, IN

FEBRUARY 2020

## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Trine Honor's Martin Luther King.
- Men's Breakfast meets at Mama's Place at 8:00 a.m. on the first and third Tuesdays of February.

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

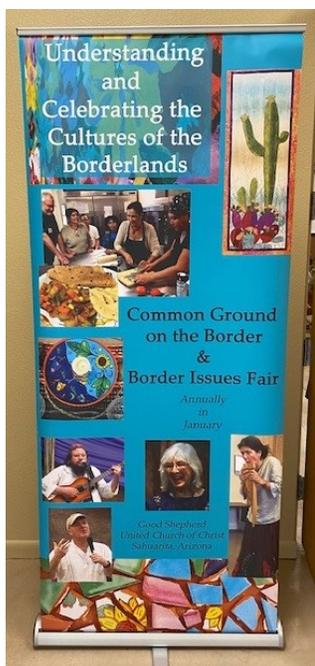
From the Pastor's Screen	2
Ongoing Opportunities	3
Council Highlights	3
February Volunteers	4
February Calendar	5
Welcome Sara Mowrey	6
New Member Classes	6



## Arizona Border Trip

We all agree that this has been a very meaningful trip for us with some happy, sad, angry, frustrating and joyful moments, but we learned a lot! It was incredible to learn how many people living near the border volunteer their time providing humanitarian aid to the migrants. We spoke with many people of various denominations and one group that has devoted their lives for 20+ years providing this help, providing basic needs: water, food, clothing and shelter.

We did not fully understand how the problems at the border began until our first class. We learned that building the wall and the problems associated with it began in the 1990's with the passing of NAFTA, large corporations moving from the United States to Mexico, and the United States providing guns and money to rebels and governments in these countries



that the migrants were (and still are) leaving. They could no longer provide for their families or they feared for their lives. Some highlights of our trip included the migrant memorial walk, volunteering at the migrant shelter and visiting with migrants in a shelter in Mexico.

Here are some quotes from the speakers that stuck with us:

1. "They can take away your bible, prayer cards and rosary at the border but they can't take away your faith."
2. "He who saves one life saves the whole world."
3. "Who's the criminal here to make a crime out of being kind."

There is much more detail of our trip on our [Facebook account](#).



Pastor Nikki Shaw

“You can pray until you faint, but unless you get up and try to do something, God is not going to put it in your lap.”  
 – Fannie Lou Hamer

*From the Pastor’s Screen*

## Praying or napping?

How woke are you? You’re familiar with that term, “woke”? It’s a word that means being aware of the reality around you, specifically when it comes to systemic oppression as we often talk about when we look at the racism that invades our culture and society. Essentially, being “woke” means you are paying attention to, and taking seriously, narratives and realities other than your own.

In the spring of 2018 I took a trip through the American South as part of a seminar while enrolled at Christian Theological Seminary. We stopped in a lot of popular spots along the [Civil Rights Trail](#), as well as out-of-the-way spots. One of those out-of-the-way spots was a small memorial park in Ruleville, Mississippi, the site of the [Fannie Lou Hamer Memorial Statue](#). Until that trip, I hadn’t known who this pioneering activist and advocate for representative democracy was. It woke me up—a bit.

Other experiences along the multi-state route, often by bus, woke me up further. From museums to memorials to conversation

over meals with my cohort, many of whom were black Americans—all of this has been part of what I now understand to be, not arriving at wokeness, but a lifelong process of coming awake to the condition of God’s beloved community.

Fannie Lou Hamer has many memorable quotes from her lifetime of struggle for equality, but the one I singled out at the left seems very important for our lives as Christians who believe in an active justice, accomplished with God and through creation, that is, through us. If we are praying for the end to racism and systems of poverty until we are about to faint—to fall asleep—then maybe it’s not really prayer after all. Because I think Hamer is right, God doesn’t put the things we wish and pray for in our laps, God puts them in our hears and hands, in our feet and mouths. God created us to do justice and love merciful kindness in our humble walk with God. So let us pray with our actions. Let us keep waking up.

All good things,  
*Pastor Nikki*

More Photos of the Arizona Border Trip



# Ongoing Opportunities



## Men's Breakfast

The Men's Breakfast group will meet on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday, February 4 and 18. Join us at Mama's Place at 8am.

## No-Book Book Club

This month, we are gathering for breakfast on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday, February 12

and 26. We have no agenda and no book to read! Join us at Bob Evans at 8:00 for breakfast and fun conversation!

## Soup & Scripture

Pastor Nikki leads Soup & Scripture at Cahoots each Tuesday at 12 noon. We discuss at the Scriptures we'll hear in Sunday worship.

**Cahoots:**  
Good coffee  
for a  
great cause!



## Church Council Highlights

Church Council met on Sunday, January 12, and the following items were among those discussed/approved/reported:

**Treasurer:** Bruce Andres reported that 2019 ended on a positive note showing a substantial excess; this was due to the unusual circumstance of not having a fulltime staff for the entire past year. He presented the 2020 Budget, which is currently not a balanced budget. However, it is hoped that with reinstating a Ways and Means Committee to oversee some fundraisers (no fundraisers were held in 2019) and bringing in new members, we will be able to meet our budget needs for the upcoming year. It was also suggested that in 2020 we send out statements in the fall to those who get behind with their pledges. Council voted and approved the 2020 budget to be presented for congregational approval at the Biannual Meeting, January 19. (Budget was passed by the Congregation.)

Pastor Nikki will get together with Bruce to establish a policy and standards for meeting the needs of walk-ins (i.e. gas cards, lodging, etc.). Nikki would like the entire church to be aware of a protocol to follow in order to ensure consistency. She also plans to work with other area churches in handling these needs and requests to avoid duplication.

### Welcome to our new Pastor:

The Moderator welcomed the Rev. Nikki Shaw as our settled pastor and teacher. Nikki added that she conducted a funeral yesterday for the grandson of Ruby Jones.

**Christian Education:** Jill Noyes has set up the Sunday School curriculum for the future based on the Lectionary. Kim Couch and JoAnn Lewis were thanked for working with the children for the Christmas Eve play. Jill continues to look for volunteers to teach Sunday School through May. Please contact her if interested

**Deacons Report:** Bonnie Snyder reported that Reverse Advent was very successful with the congregation contributing a full 50-pound suitcase of stuffed animals and toiletry items for the trip to Arizona. CAVA and Women in transition, along with the Faith Health Clinic and TLC, also benefited from the donations.

**Missions:** The group traveling to Arizona for the mission trip are looking forward to the experience. A flyer has been made up for the congregation to pray for them while they are gone.

**Pastoral Relations:** The Pastoral Committee has set up to meet regularly with Nikki Shaw.

**Welcoming:** Marj Lilley announced that we have had several new folks worshipping with us in the last few weeks. They have all

received their popcorn and a warm welcome from many members.

**Trustees Report:** Sue Myers reported that after three attempts to fix the upstairs water fountains, it was recommended that they be replaced, which would be quite costly. Other options are being looked into, including replacing the downstairs water fountain as well. Clearing the parking lot and sidewalks for winter has been set up.

### Old Business:

**Status of Filling Music Director Position:** While council was discussing temporary plans to meet the need for a choir director, Marj Lilley, from the Music Committee, came into the meeting and announced that the Music Search Committee had just completed interviewing and offering the position to Sara Mowrey who had accepted it.

Pastor Nikki plans to re-initiate a Worship Committee (formerly the Hymn Committee), and Sara Mowrey will serve on it.

**Approval of Open & Affirming (O&A) Committee:** Gayle Newton has offered to chair this new committee, which will also include Liz and Bruce Andres and Lauralee MacLeod as members. Gayle has been in touch with the denomination to get further information on establishing this



The next Council meeting will be Sunday, February 9, following worship.

new committee. Council approved the new committee which will be represented on Council.

### New Business:

**Sunday Worship IT Responsibilities:** Erica Mays, in charge of FCUCC IT, trained Mark Elliott to handle the Sunday morning Worship Service IT needs, when she moved to Montana. Council discussed payment to Mark for these duties, which in turn brought up discussion on handling H.R. needs for all paid staff. At Pastor Nikki's suggestion, consistency needs to be established, and she will look into forming a committee to handle these responsibilities.

*Submitted by Vicki Harris.*

## February Birthdays and Anniversaries



- |                      |                       |                                  |
|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| 12 - Carol Carpenter | 21 - Veryl Carpenter  | 19 - Deborah and Crane McClennen |
| 13 - Linda Driver    | 22 - Tim Hine         | 27 - Sally and Jon Welter        |
| 13 - Marj Lilley     | 23 - Matt Julien      |                                  |
| 16 - Paul Nailor     | 24 - Sally VandenElst |                                  |
| 17 - Bonnie Snyder   | 25 - Dave Snyder      |                                  |
| 20 - Janis Groth     | 26 - Joyce Yoder      |                                  |
| 20 - Barbara Lotter  |                       |                                  |

## February Volunteers

Date	Liturgist	Greeters	Children's Sermon
Feb 02	Marj Lilley	Bev Gerner and Marge Mueller	Celia Motz
Feb 09	Rita Lechleidner	Marge Mueller and Jennifer Decker	Vicki Harris
Feb 16	Ron Hays	Rosie and Claudia Camargo	Nikki Shaw
Feb 23	John French	Marge Stoudinger and Jennifer Decker	Michelle Olson

Date	Usher	Refreshments	Counter
Feb 02	Jim Harris	Group 3	Gayle Newton
Feb 09	Jim Harris	Group 4	Claudia Camargo
Feb 16	Jim Harris	Group 5	Dave Syler
Feb 23	Jim Harris	Group 6	Gary VendenElst

## Upcoming in March

- March 3–15** Pastor Nikki on vacation
- March 29** PULSE, Sarah Franzen discusses Women in the Bible

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 26.

## February Calendar

- 2 - Worship/Holy Communion 10:00 a.m. Sanctuary  
 - Sunday School 10:15 a.m.  
 - Worship Committee 11:30 a.m. Sanctuary
- 4 - Men's Breakfast 8:00 a.m. Mama's Place  
 - Soup & Scripture 12 noon Cahoots
- 5 - Bell Choir 5:45 p.m. Sanctuary  
 - Chancel Choir 7:00 p.m. Sanctuary
- 7 - Trine Univ.'s MLK Celebration 7:00 p.m. Furth Center
- 9 - Worship 10:00 a.m. Sanctuary  
 - Sunday School 10:15 a.m.  
 - Council Meets 11:30 a.m. Community Room
- 11 - Soup & Scripture 12 noon Cahoots
- 12 - No-Book Club 8:00 a.m. Bob Evans  
 - Bell Choir 5:45 p.m. Sanctuary  
 - Chancel Choir 7:00 p.m. Sanctuary
- 16 - Worship 10:00 a.m. Sanctuary  
 - Sunday School 10:15 a.m.  
 - Pastor Relations Committee 11:30 a.m. Pastors Office
- 18 - Men's Breakfast 8:00 a.m. Mama's Place  
 - Soup & Scripture 12 noon Cahoots
- 19 - Bell Choir 5:45 p.m. Sanctuary  
 - Chancel Choir 7:00 p.m. Sanctuary
- 23 - Border Trip Immersion Experience 9:00 a.m. Sanctuary  
 - Worship 10:00 a.m. Sanctuary  
 - Sunday School 10:15 a.m.
- 25 - Soup & Scripture 12 noon Cahoots
- 26 - No-Book Book Club 8:00 a.m. Bob Evans  
 - Bell Choir 5:45 p.m. Sanctuary  
 - Chancel Choir 7:00 p.m. Sanctuary  
 - Ash Wednesday Service/Lent Begins 7:00 p.m. Sanctuary



- In the hospital in January: **Ruby Jones, Lauralee Macleod** and **Rita Lechleidner**.
- Our sympathy to: **Bev** and **Cary Baird** at the death of their step son /son **CJ**.
- Our sympathy to: **Marge Mueller** on the death of her brother, **Ray**.

## Trine Honors Dr. King Friday

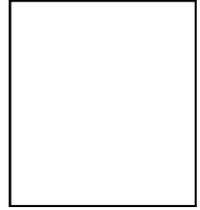
On Friday, February 7, Trine University will host its 29th annual celebration of the life and legacy of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Themed "Unity is Our Greatest Strength," the celebration will begin at 7 p.m. Feb. 7 in Ryan Concert Hall of the T. Furth Center for Performing Arts. Dr. Joe Martin, EdD, returns for a second year to give the keynote address. The Union Baptist Church Mass Choir of Fort Wayne and Chris Ford and Sounds of Redemption will perform. Mayor Hickman and Trine University's Multicultural Student Organization (advised by Deb McHenry and participants in the FCUCC Diversity Sunday) will participate in the program. Not only is the program free and open to the public, refreshments will also be served. Don't miss it!



**First Congregational  
United Church of Christ  
314 West Maumee Street  
Angola, Indiana 46703**

Phone: 260-665-9362  
Email Office: [info@angolaucc.org](mailto:info@angolaucc.org)  
Email Pastor Nikki: [PastorNikki@angolaucc.org](mailto:PastorNikki@angolaucc.org)  
Website: [angolaucc.org](http://angolaucc.org)

**First Congregational United Church of Christ, as an inclusive and caring Christian community, welcomes into its full life and ministry persons of every race, ethnic background, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, marital status, criminal history and faith background. As we serve those within our church family, the community and the world in the name of Jesus Christ, we celebrate each person's uniqueness and look forward to the gifts they bring to us.**



*God is still speaking,*

**UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST**



## Welcome Sara Mowrey, our new choir director!



Sara Mowrey comes to us with a background in opera and a degree in music (vocal performance) from Indiana University-Purdue University, Fort

Wayne. We are gaining not only a talented musician and choir director, but a local woman who grew up singing with the choir at Peace Lutheran Church in Fremont. She was a National Lutheran Honor Choir Member and brings her love of choral and vocal music to us here at FCUCC. We are grateful to have her on our staff. Welcome and congratulations, Sara!

## **Membership Classes Forming**

Been here a few years but haven't officially joined the church? Are you starting to think, "maybe now's the time"? Or are you new to First Congregational UCC and wonder, "how do I join"? Everyone curious about membership is invited to be in touch with Pastor Nikki at [PastorNikki@angolaucc.org](mailto:PastorNikki@angolaucc.org). She's forming a membership class soon.

You will never be required to join this church in order to be counted among our congregation, but making a covenant commitment has benefits for one's sense of belonging to God's church. Contact Pastor Nikki to learn more, or call the church office and let us know you'd like to hear from the pastor.