

THE GOOD NEWS

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HOMEMADE FACEMASKS FOR CROSSROAD

A FCUCC has long supported Crossroad Child & Family Services, an institution that provides care for children in deep need who are without a safe place to call home.

They would like to provide some protective gear to their staff and residents and have asked for homemade masks.

Several people in our community have already reached out to our church about making and donating homemade masks, and we are thrilled to be able to

match that charitable impulse with an organization we support.

If you want to make a mask of your own, you can find information in various places on the internet, but might try these links first.

Mask directions from JOANN fabric stores: bit.ly/JOANNMaskInfo.

An article from the CDC on the effectiveness of homemade masks: bit.ly/CDCMaskInfo

To donate your masks, you can mail them to FCUCC at 314 W. Maumee St., Angola, IN 46703, or email us and we'll help get the masks from you to Crossroad. Our email is info@angolaucc.org.

(Full disclosure, Pastor Nikki is also a volunteer member on the Crossroad Board of Directors.)



Mask made by Marty Diller

FROM THE PASTOR'S SCREN

CHURCH HAPPENS WHERE WE GATHER

There is a movement that is always afoot in Christian circles. It's a movement to return to the worship ways of the early church, the one that formed in the wake of Christ's crucifixion. Some folks will become disenchanted (not without cause) by the ways of our, yes these are the right words, industrialized and institutionalized churches. Cathedrals, elegant old churches full of stained glass, lofty pulpits, and a certain amount of liturgical formality, can sometimes become false gods. And so, these early church movements scour the records of the first few centuries after Christ's death and resurrection and try to reclaim it in some way in our contemporary era.

Early "churches" where nothing like what we understand today as the building and institution that is "Church." These first places of worship were not places of worship at all, at least they didn't function as *only* places of worship.

They were living rooms and dining rooms, atria where people could gather to eat and pray and baptize and teach. They were house churches, places that became church as soon as the work of the people undertaken inside them involved prayer, agape meals, and Christian fellowship. It was only much later, as the Christian institution coalesced and was sanctioned under the Roman Emperor Constantine in the 300s, that churches as we might understand them began to be erected.

When the Christian, Justin Martyr, was pressed by the Roman authority in the second century about the meeting place of Christ followers, he responded, "Wherever it is each one's preference or opportunity . . . [i]n any case, do you suppose we can all meet in the same place?" (This quote is from the Christianity Today article found here: bit.ly/EarlyChurchCT.)

“

[Christians gather w]herever it is each one's preference or opportunity . . . [i]n any case, do you suppose we can all meet in the same place?

— JUSTIN MARTYR

Because Christians are not an assembly in one place, but a beloved community in many places, all part of the same body. In many ways, our churches and denominations obscure that most basic reality. Do we truly suppose we can all meet in the same place? So when some folks, out of a sincere desire to be a more authentic church, begin to insist that we abandon our pews in favor of our couches, they have a point. But may I suggest that the point is not that everyone should return to their dining rooms to worship because that's the only authentic way.

(cont'd.)

Instead, let us be more authentic wherever we meet. Let's open our eyes to the possibility that being church is what we do and how we pray together and the bread we break and pass to one another--no matter where that happens, no matter under which roof we assemble, and even when we assemble in our modern, virtual spaces.

We will never stop being the church, friends, so long as we remain a community of faith, a family of believers (and questioners, of course!). So while we no longer meet in our sanctuary in Angola, take heart and know that wherever we meet, whether over the phone or the internet or in person at coffee shops or in our own building, we are still the church.

All good things through Christ who is present wherever we gather,

Pastor Nikki



MAUNDY THURSDAY

APRIL 9TH

We will have online Maundy Thursday Prayer Gathering on April 9 at 7 pm. It will not be live streamed, but instead will be held as a Zoom gathering which you can join at the following link bit.ly/FCUCCMaundyThursday2020 (just type it into your browser. We'll have music from the home of the Weller's and Sara Mowrey.

This contemplative time together will prepare us for the reality of Good Friday, the sorrow we are right to feel to our very bones. For those of us who have, in particular, been struggling during this pandemic, please consider joining us so that we can hold one another's pain and fear collectively, acknowledging it and channelling it through prayer, so that we can prepare ourselves for Easter joy.

It was on an evening like this that Christ gathered with his followers, his students and friends, and broke bread or washed their feet, all acts of collective care. The link for the virtual gathering is: bit.ly/MaundyThursdayFCUCC2020. If you need to download Zoom, go to <https://zoom.us/>. Contact us if you need help with Zoom.

HAVE/NEED NEEDS YOU

Our FCUCC email account, haveneed@angolaucc.org is active and in use! If you have something you can share during this time of scarcity, email us. If you have something you need, email us! We'll match up people's donations of items or service with those who need it most.



VIRTUAL COFFEE HOUR

Join us for coffee hour virtually on Fridays at 10 via Zoom video conference 10-11:30 am. It's a great way to see and talk to your FCUCC friends. Start by visiting <https://bit.ly/FCUCCVirtualCoffeeHour>. If you need help, please contact us at info@angolaucc.org or PastorNikki@angolaucc.org.

SCRIPTURE STORIES

Join us for a live stream on facebook Thursdays at noon for Scripture Stories with Pastor Nikki and January Simpson. Find us on Facebook at <https://www.Facebook.com/FCUCCAngola/>.
April 2 Palms and Passion
April 9 John 20:1-18
April 16 John 20:19-31
April 23 Luke 24:13-35
April 30 Psalm 23/John 10:1-10

CHURCH COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

SUBMITTED BY VICKI HARRIS, CLERK



Treasurer's Report: Income continues to be strong. Several members make their total annual pledge in January and February. Under in expenses due to pastor costs, which will balance out later in the year.

Deacons Report: Successful Game Night February 28; hoping to schedule another in the future. Continue to update name tags.

Trustees Report: Council approved the proposal to replace the double-unit water fountain unit upstairs from D. Baker & Son, for \$1500. One unit will meet the requirements for the Americans with Disability Act (ADA). Tabling replacement of fountain downstairs, where water is available from the kitchen.

Looking into purchasing a new vacuum cleaner.

Pastor's Report: Sarah Franzen to lead a Pulse session after church on Sunday, March 29, on women in the Bible. Plans have been made with Laurie and Roger Eberhart to conduct Art Eberhardt's memorial service on Saturday, March 21.

Proposed adding bell choir direction to Chancel Choir Director Sara Mowrey's duties. Council unanimously approved the change, Congregation notified via email March 11.

Submitted list of duties for AV Tech position as a contractor responsible for recording Sunday worship and special services. Mark Elliott is the AV tech contractor.

Pastor will start monthly staff meetings in April.

Christian Education: Looking for teachers to fill Sundays following Easter through summer break.

Missions: Planning follow-up on the January mission trip to the border.

Looking to support Crossroad Child & Family Services; Pastor Nikki is newly elected to their board of directors.

Nominating: Vice Moderator formed a committee to identify and fill the slate of officers who take over in June on Council after elections. Council opportunities will be communicated through posting, email, & announcements.

Pastoral Relations: Pastoral Relations Committee (PRC) meets monthly with the pastor.

OLD BUSINESS:

- 1) Personnel Task Force: Bruce A, & Linda Bohman developing policies and procedures manual for contractors and hired employees.
- 2) FCUCC Insurance Policy: Rod L. and John F. reviewing current insurance coverage with Croxton & Roe, up for renewal in March. Churches required to include an abuse and molestation policy, this increases insurance cost. Looking at competitive bids.

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1) Additional Hymnals: Worship Committee proposes purchase of New Century Hymnal (official UCC hymnal). They are approx. \$18 each. Council approved purchase of hymnals paid for from the music fund. Individuals may make donations to offset costs; plaques to be placed in the individual hymnals listing the donor or memorial name.
- 2) Facilities Use Request: George Weller requested use of the sanctuary for a musical program on , July 3, 2021. Council approved the usage.
- 3) April Council Meeting: Council will meet on April 5, 2020.

First Congregational
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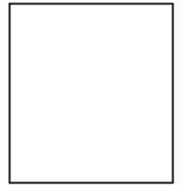
Phone: 260-665-9362

Email Office: info@angolaucc.org

Email Pastor Nikki: PastorNikki@angolaucc.org

Website: 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**



April Birthdays

- 3 - Cathy Covell
- 4 - Walt Lilley
- 11 - Deborah Miller
- 13 - Larry Watkins
- 20 - Jeannie Hetrick
- 22 - Henry Shaw
- 24 - Kimberly Couch

**HAPPY
BIRTHDAY**