



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH • HENDERSONVILLE

April Chronicle 2026

Dear FCCH,

My favorite month is September, but a close second is April. I love the promise of all things spring, and I am both grateful and relieved that April is upon us. With everything going on, the healing blessings of renewal are so welcome in my heart.

I am very excited that Becca Stevens of Thistle Farms will be with us on April 11 & 12 for our Ashley Lecture Series. You really don't want to miss on this great opportunity. Bring a FRIEND!

Since we are in Holy Week, I thought you should have one of my favorite poems by Mary Oliver:

The Poet Ponders the Donkey
On the outskirts of Jerusalem
the donkey waited.
Not especially brave, or filled with understanding,
he stood and waited.
How horses, turned out into the meadow,
leap with delight!
How doves, released from their cages,
clatter away, splashed with sunlight.
But the donkey, tied to a tree as usual, waited.
Then he let himself be led away.
Then he let the stranger mount.
Never had he seen such crowds!
And I wonder if he at all imagined what was to happen.
Still, he was what he had always been: small, dark, obedient.
I hope, finally, he felt brave.
I hope, finally, he loved the man who rode so lightly upon him,
as he lifted one dusty hoof and stepped, as he had to, forward.

May we all step forward together into Holy Week, Easter, and Spring . . .

Big Love + Deep Peace,
Karla

Treasurer's Highlights:

- Total General Operating Fund income YTD was \$6,263 **more** than budgeted.
- Total General Operating Fund expenses YTD were \$413 **less** than budgeted.
- Net result of General Operating Fund YTD was \$6,676 **better** than budgeted.
- Heritage Fund balance as of 2/28/2026: \$778,545

The next Church Council meeting is Tuesday, April 14, at 4 pm in the Fellowship Hall. All are welcome to attend. Contact Bill Shaffer or Linda Laderach if you have questions.

Did you know?

Each week Sunday's sermon is posted to FCCH's website. Unless we have a guest preacher, check the website each Monday for the latest sermon!

(From Landing page → Home → Sermons)

Worship Attendance

March 1	154
March 8	116
March 15	158
March 22	179
March 29	155

A Note from Our Moderator, Bill Shaffer

In March, in lieu of a Council meeting, we had, if not the first ever, then the first in a long time, a Council retreat. Between McFarlans' sweet rolls and Publix box lunches we spent time getting to know each other a bit better. We also started to try and see what it will mean to be a Council that acts as, in Mark's terms, a Wisdom Circle.

First Congregational is at a wonderful point in the life of a church – with a lovely sanctuary and a financially stable treasury, with an active and generous congregation (even if we are mostly older and retired) and blessed with a smart, funny and thoughtful pastor. Like most everything, FCC won't stay the same, but will continue to change. Maybe in small ways or maybe in large leaps. Our task as a Council is to guide this change without losing what makes First Congregational Church so special. At our retreat we talked about what makes our church unique and what it means to each of us. We thought about how it could become even more of a positive presence in our lives, in your lives and in the life of our community. We're excited to be on this journey with you.

Service & Giving Highlights from March 2026

At our March meeting, Carolyn Maloy spoke on the respected MemoryCare organization, a community-based non-profit that relies on charitable donations to provide its services. MemoryCare focuses on dementia and assistance to caregivers. These valuable resources are available to everyone. Carolyn asked we consider donating to this organization. Information can be found at MemoryCare.org. We will add this organization to the list of Matching agencies.

The Migrant Supply Drive was a great success again this year. Our congregation collected almost \$1,000.00 in cash donations and filled nine boxes with shirts, hats, socks and hydration kits. Two volunteer opportunities are available to you to fill welcome bags for the migrant workers at Dana Center, 2879 Upward Rd., Flat Rock. Wednesday, April 8, and Thursday, April 9, beginning at 9:30 until "done".

We discussed the calendar year and opportunities for our church to be involved in relevant sponsorships and community events. S&G approved a sponsorship to the Literacy Connection Luncheon on April 23rd. (Two tickets are available to congregation for this event. Contact Dede Walton.)

Approval was also given for sponsorship of the Henderson County Education Foundation Dinner, also on April 23rd, and sponsorship of Hendersonville Pride on June 6th. Additionally, we approved a sponsorship for Planned Parenthood's Standing Strong event on April 22nd. Participation in these events assists the agencies and helps make the community aware of the values and support of FCC.

We reviewed our Matching Fund donations and were delighted in the generosity of our church members and the success of this drive to support area non-profit agencies. Next October we will be selecting agencies for the 2026 Matching Funds Opportunity and sharing an explanation of each.

If you are looking for productive ways to help others, please check out the Volunteer Opportunities Directory in the Members section of our website, www.fcchendersonville.org.

Everyone is welcome to join Service & Giving. Our next meeting will be April 9th at 10:00 am in the Choir Room.

-Submitted by Pat Argue

**First Congregational
Church Hendersonville
ASHLEY LECTURE SERIES**

with

Becca Stevens

Priest, Author, Entrepreneur, Founder of Thistle Farms



SATURDAY APRIL 11

7:00pm: Talk & Conversation

SUNDAY April 12

9:00 am: Forum

10:30 am: Worship

FREE! ALL are WELCOME!

Becca Stevens is a nonprofit leader, entrepreneur, priest, survivor, and founder and President of Thistle Farms. She has founded 13 nonprofits and justice enterprises, mentored another 70, and has raised over \$90 million to support them. Becca has authored 12 books and has served as chaplain at St. Augustine's Chapel on Vanderbilt's campus for almost 30 years. Becca has been featured on PBS NewsHour, The Today Show, CNN, ABC World News, named a CNN Hero, and White House Champion of Change, and holds seven honorary doctorates. Drawn from 30 years of leadership in mission-driven work, Becca leads important conversations across the country with an inspiring message that love is the strongest force for change in the world.



**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC
1735 FIFTH AVENUE WEST
HENDERSONVILLE NC 28739**

April Forums

Sundays, 9:00 AM

Every Sunday at 9 am we have a "learning" hour called Forum on a range of topics. Join us!

April 12 -Becca Stevens, Ashley Lecture Speaker

April 19- Angie Buchanan, therapist - Let's Be Elephants - the importance of community, encircling, protecting, remembering and truth telling.

April 26 - JoAnn Miner - Safe Zones
Safe Zone training is an educational program designed to increase awareness, understanding, and allyship for the LGBTQ+ community. These workshops teach participants about sexual orientation, gender identity, and expression, helping to foster inclusive, respectful environments in workplaces and schools, often signified by a Safe Zone sticker.

Our April Birthdays!

Krista Kaufman	4/1	Paige Ashley	4/17
Mark Leshner	4/3	Amy Dahan	4/19
George Evans	4/5	Bruce Jayne	4/19
Jan Aplin	4/5	Isabel Cutler	4/19
Richard Howe	4/5	Matthew Carlin	4/20
Jim Jolly	4/8	Glenn Gross	4/23
Carol Austin-Janssen	4/9	Phillip Carlin	4/25
Mark Fagerlin	4/11	Annie Haberkorn	4/30
Jon Nobling	4/13	Fred Yopps	4/30
Dale Brotherton	4/16		
Dottie Culver	4/16		
Joan Diaz	4/16		



Sunday School Fun...



Photo credits in this issue go to Dawn Kucera, Ginger Zemp and Sheila Clendenning.

Enriching Our Communities with Our Presence



At Forum on 22 March, Bal Goleman shared stories about her teaching journey and some of the lessons she's learned along the way. Her talk was by turns, inspirational, emotional, and just downright funny.



On Tuesday, 24 March, First Congregational Church had the honor of hosting a Quilts of Valor presentation. Quilts of Valor presents quilts to veterans who have served honorably in the military. To date, the group has presented over 400,000 quilts. All the quilts are made by volunteers. The local chapter operates out of the Western North Carolina Quilt Guild, which meets at FCCH.



PROJECT LINUS RUMMAGE SALE!

Friday, April 17, Noon - 4 PM &

Saturday, April 18, 9 AM - 2 PM

The sale has something for everyone! Especially home goods, decor and personal accessories – Just too much to list! All proceeds go to benefit Project Linus of Western North Carolina.

Clean your closets, attic and garages! We will accept donations of sale items Thursday, April 16, from Noon - 4 pm, and Friday morning, April 17.

We need volunteers to help set up, run the sale, make cookies for volunteers, and break down everything after the sale. Please email Romella to ask questions or sign up to volunteer at edrookeefe@gmail.com.



HENDERSON COUNTY
**EDUCATION
FOUNDATION**

The heart of a great community

The Service & Giving team has 2 tickets to the April 23rd "Education Hall of Fame" dinner and would like to give them to someone in the congregation.

Please see Sheila Clendenning or Dede Walton if you are interested in attending. (Tickets are available to the dinner if the free ones are already taken!)

<https://hcefnc.org/events/education-celebration-promotion-page/>

We Didn't Vote For Dirty Air or Dirty Water

*An Earth Day Program featuring
Alyson Merlin & Patrick Hunter from
the Southern Environmental Law Center*

Wednesday 4/22 4:30-6:00 PM
Hedrick-Rhodes VFW Building, Hendersonville



Hosted by

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS'
OF HENDERSON COUNTY

POSTCARD PARTY & SOCIAL TIME

"APRIL IS THE CRUELEST MONTH" T.S. Elliot

Every day of this regime is so **TAXING!**

TAXATION WITHOUT REPRESENTATION



WHERE WE WANT OUR TAXES TO GO:

Public education * health care * Social Security & other safety net programs
* veterans' benefits * PBS, NPR, CDC, NOAA, etc. *
prosecution of grifters, pedophiles and oath-breakers ...

WHERE WE DON'T WANT OUR TAXES TO GO:

Obscene, bloated military spending * tax breaks for billionaires *
violent abuse & overreach by DHS, ICE, CBP * vanity projects, golfing trips,
lavish spending sprees * public promotion of evangelical religious viewpoints

FRIDAY, APRIL 17th

4:30-6:00pm at Trailside Brewing
874 Lenox Park Dr. (off S. Whitted St)

We provide postcards, suggestion sheets & addresses
Donations welcome

Parking can be tricky- consider carpooling, walking or biking

OUR NEXT NEW MEMBER SUNDAY IS April 26!

If you would like to join our church on April 26, please contact our pastor, Karla at karla@fcchendersonville.org. The next "Tell Me More" Informational meeting is April 19, after worship. Come ask ALL the questions!

NOTARY AVAILABLE AFTER WORSHIP

Mary Rather, church member, will be available after worship at the reception desk outside the Fellowship Hall to notarize any and all 5 Wishes documents from the earlier March Forum regarding preparation for our wishes and planning before death. Instead of charging a notary fee, Mary has graciously decided to forego her fee for a donation to the church's "pave the parking lot" fund. Make checks payable to FCCH. Mary will be available each Sunday of April after Easter.



FCC SHOWS UP FOR NO KINGS RALLY III

