Announcements:

The Year-End Matching Gifts Campaign is underway! Take advantage of this joyous, generous time by giving to our local charities! Pick up a flyer or see the flyer in the weekend newsletter for more information! Campaign ends Sunday, 12/13/26.

Advent calendars are available in the Narthex, Holy Hallway and at the reception desk.

Sponsor the Christmas Poinsettias! Honor or memorialize a loved one/entity by completing a form and submitting to the church office along with $10 by December 8th! Forms at sanctuary doors and at reception desk outside Fellowship Hall.

The Quinleys have donated twenty of John's new book, *Letters from Docent* - an informal journey through the passions, poetry, and legacy of Carl Sandburg. Copies will be available at the coffee hour after today's service. Suggested donation $10 to $20. All proceeds go to FCCH social justice efforts. Also look for a performance of the play 'The Many Lives of Carl Sandburg' in spring 2027.

A Celebration of Life for Ericka Fagerlin will be held at 1:00 pm next Sunday, December 6th, in our sanctuary. You are invited to attend this sacred Memorial service with Ericka's husband, Mark, their family and friends. Your presence is a gift to the family and our beloved friend.

Coffee Hour on December 20 is one of our favorite times of the year! Christmas Cookie Exchange! Bring a plate or assortment of your favorite Christmas Cookie receipes to share in Coffe Hour. Then take home baggies of cookies for some holiday treats at home! We are gonna need LOTS of cookies (gluten-free cookies, too!)

Happening at FCCH this week:

Mon, 11/30	10:00 am:	Community Coffee Hour, Fellowship Hall
Tues, 12/1	10:00 am:	Prayer Shawl Group, Parlor
	4:00 pm:	Community Meditation, Parlor
	6:00 pm:	PFLAG Meeting, Fellowship Hall
Wed, 12/2	10:00 am:	Sit & Stitch, Library
	10:00 am:	Physical Resources Committee, Choir Room
	3:00 pm:	Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
Thurs, 12/3	11:00 am:	LWV HOT Meeting, Choir Room
	1:30 pm:	Crone Talk, Parlor
	7:00 pm:	Buddy K Rehearsal, Fellowship Hall
Sat, 12/5	9:00 am:	Land of Sky Garden Club's Christmas Bizaare, Fellowship Hall - fundraiser

Next Sunday, 12/6/26: Karen Luke Jackson, *You First: A Love That Will Not Let Me Go*. Have you or someone you know had a mystical experience? What associations do you have with the word mystic? Karen Luke Jackson will read from her newest book *You First*, written during her journey to better understand such occurrences in her life and those in the lives of fellow seekers. Karen will read some poems in the book related to Advent. Her book has been described as the intersection of contemplative poetry, spiritual memoir, interfaith exploration, and nature mysticism. There will be time for questions and sharing some of our own stories. Books will be available for $10.

PRAYER CONCERNS

Please remember these people in your prayers this week

-Al Diaz is in hospice care. Prayers for his wife Joan and son Greg as they are with him, and for E.J. Wilson who is supporting them.
-George Sepcic, friend of Trisha LaGrange, has been diagnosed with cancer.
-David Acker and family, brother of Mark Acker, whose wife, Margie, died this week.
-Sheila Clendenning is at Hendersonville Health & Rehab, healing from a fractured hip. (No visitors, please.)
-Frances Yoder is having surgery this week to repair a fractured wrist.
-For the Cincinnati Zoo caregivers of Fiona the hippo, and all who loved her.
-Jenn and Ray Kirby, and their family in the death of Ray's mother.
-Suzanne Morrow, friend of Patti Clay, had a shoulder replacement as a result of a fall, and she and her family could certainly use our prayers.
-Alice Pfirrmann is in the Med Center at Carolina Village for rehabilitation.
-Gary Perry, nephew of Trisha LaGrange, is recovering from a stroke.
-For 16-yr old Gabe, and his family who are friends of Karla's, who is in hospice care.
-Roger Haagenson who is now in hospice care in Florida.
-Kay Davis is receiving chemotherapy in Florida.

Birthdays this week:

Jeannie Stewart	11/29
Susan Cowardin	11/29
Trisha LaGrange	11/30
Estelle Taylor	11/30
Roddy Crum	12/1
Nancy Wood	12/2
Roberta Wright	12/3
Carol Inman	12/3
Nicolas Aguilar	12/4

Save these Future Dates:

Dec 13 – Christmas Music Sunday, Sanctuary; and Special Music Reception afterwards in the Fellowship Hall
Dec 24 – Service of Candlelight and Carols, FCCH Sanctuary

To Our Visitors and Guests:

We are so glad you are here today! If you are interested in learning more about our congregation, denomination or membership, Karla or Mark would love to talk with you.

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Welcome Home

First Congregational Church welcomes persons of all ages, races, gender identities, sexual orientations, theological beliefs, and those living with mental challenges. In our diversity, we find strength and a way to understand the inclusiveness of God. No matter where you've been, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome and needed here.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH • HENDERSONVILLE

November 29, 2026

Justice*Compassion*Belonging

Order of Worship

Welcome Rev. Karla Miller

Gathering Song

Blessed are you who hunger, blessed are you who thirst.
Blessed are you who mourn and feel no power on this earth.
Blessed are you who are poor in spirit and don't know what to do,
Oh child of God, blessed are you. Blessed are you,
Oh blessed are you, Oh child of God, blessed are you.

A Time of Centering

Voluntary O Come, O Come Emmanuel
Plainchant, arranged Mark Hayes
Linda Laderach, violin

Lighting the Advent Candle

Each week in Advent, we light a candle to name our longing and to welcome the Holy among us once more. We light these flames not to chase away the dark, but to remind ourselves that even in the dark, God is here—offering a hand of hope, the fire of peace, the song of joy, and the steadfast call of love. These small lights mark our journey toward Bethlehem, where the sacred meets the ordinary, and where fear gives way—again and again—to the radiant possibility of God-with-us.

Leader: In the beginning was trembling and wonder. Even now, when shadows lengthen and fear closes in, God extends a hand of hope.

People: We reach out, not certain, but trusting.

Leader: Hope is not the absence of fear—it is the choice to walk forward anyway, hand in hand with the Holy.

People: We light this candle for hope: fragile, flickering, and fierce.

Leader: May its flame remind us that God's hand is steady even when ours shake.

People: Come, Emmanuel—be born again in our trembling hope.

***Hymn** Come, O Hope Beyond All Measure

Come, O Hope beyond all measure, born to set all people free;
From our fear and all oppression, birth the world we long to see.
Justice-Child, who dwells among us, come and make the broken whole; Guide our hands toward liberation, breathe your peace in every soul.

Born in every act of kindness, born where mercy dares to rise,
Born wherever tears are welcomed, born where Love restores our lives. By your Spirit, lead us forward, into realms of grace untold;
Dream of God forever dawning, into hearts both brave and bold.

First Reading Isaiah 64: 1-4 Ken Harkins

Anthem I Shall Know Him When He Comes FCCH Choir
Douglas Wagner

I shall know him when he comes, not with sound of pipe or drum, but by the holy harmony which his coming makes in me. He shall wear no royal robe or a crown of precious gold, but He my Lord, my love shall be always, ever there for me. He shall not in castle warm, live in splendor safe from harm. But in a manger, crude He'll sleep, warmed by the breath of cows and sheep. Come, Lord Jesus, tarry not. Find in me a resting spot. My heart is open, come dwell within. Let life be born in me again. By the holy harmony which His coming makes in me, I shall know Him when He comes.

Second Reading Primary Wonder
Denise Levertov

Days pass when I forget the mystery. Problems insoluble and problems offering their own ignored solutions jostle for my attention, they crowd its antechamber along with a host of diversions, my courtiers, wearing their colored clothes; cap and bells.
And then once more the quiet mystery is present to me, the throng's clamor recedes: the mystery that there is anything, anything at all, let alone cosmos, joy, memory, everything, rather than void: and that, O Lord, Creator, Hallowed One, You still, hour by hour sustain it.

Sermon Tell It! Karla Miller

A Time for Reflection

Prayers of the People

Loving God, **hear our prayer.**

A Congregational Prayer

Holy God, in this season of waiting, You see the fear that rattles our spirits, the worries that keep us awake, and the unrest that touches our homes, our communities, and our world. Yet into our fear, You speak: "Do not be afraid." Into our turmoil, You breathe Your calming Spirit. Into our wandering, You send the Prince of Peace. May we be people who trust Your presence in all things, who carry Your peace into places of conflict, who speak hope where despair has taken root. Amen.

Response

All shall be well. All shall be well. All manner of things shall be well. All shall be well.

Invitation to Giving

Offertory Rise Up Shepherd and Follow
arr. Mark Hayes

***Doxology**

Halle, halle, halle-lu-jah. Halle, halle, halle-lu-jah.
Halle, halle, hall-lu-jah. Halle-lu-jah, hallelujah.

***Prayer of Blessing**

God of all creation, we offer these gifts so that your love may be magnified. Amen.

***Hymn** Go, Tell It on the Mountain!

***Refrain:* Go, tell it on the mountain, Over the hills and everywhere.**
Go, tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born.

While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night,
Behold thru-out the heavens there shone a holy light. *Refrain*

The shepherds feared and trembled when lo! above the earth
Rang out the angel chorus that hailed our Savior's birth. *Refrain*

Down in a lowly manger the humble Christ was born,
God sent to us the Christ child that blessed Christmas morn. *Refrain*

Intentions and Benediction

Postlude Voluntary on "Comfort, Comfort Ye My People"
Louis Bourgeois

The light of Christ is carried into the world.

*Please rise in body or spirit

Opportunities for Prayer

Prayer cards are in the pew racks; completed cards may be placed in the offering plate or at the candle table.

You are invited to light a candle at the candle table.

The Prayer Wall hangs on the lectern. Circular paper is provided on which you ay write your prayer and attach it to the wall.

Altar Artist: Diane Rose and Nolleen Kelly **Acolyte:** Joe Streer

Cover art: "In Too Deep" by Nicolette Faison, www.sanctifiedart.org