ANNOUNCEMENTS

Registration open for Progressive Theology Book Group, meeting each Wednesday during October at 5 pm. The group will discuss the book Our Lives Matter: A Womanist Queer Theology by Pamela Lightsey. Please sign up today if you wish to sign up for this important discussion on inclusion: office@fcchendersonville.org or 828/692-8630.

Please join us for the Blessing of the Animals on Laurel Park Green, next Sunday, October 11, from 2 - 3 pm. We will bless your pets, pictures of your pets that can't make it, stuffies and more. It's always a wonderful celebration!

Coffee Angels needed! Every Sunday, we have coffee angels that sneak into the church kitchen around 8:30 am to get our coffee started for Fellowship Hour. They finish in time to attend Forum, and then help serve coffee during Fellowship time, and sometimes help with clean-up. You will definitely get on the job training with Helen Vennard. YOU KNOW YOU WANT SOME CAFFEINE ANGEL WINGS, so hurry to contact Krista Kaufmann at kristakaufman41@gmail.com, because they are in high demand.

Two Fun Fellowship events happening this week and next: this Thursday is Game Night at 6 pm in the Fellowship Hall; and next Monday, 10/12, we meet at McConnell Farms for another Ice Cream Trail meet-up. Bring a friend, meet some people, have a laugh!

Happening at FCCH this week:

Mon, 10/5	10:00 am:	Coffee & Conversation, Fellowship Hall
	1:30 pm:	Carolina Village Small Group, CV Chapel
Tues, 10/6	10:00 am:	Prayer Shawl Ministry, Library
	4:00 pm:	Community Meditation, Library
	6:00 pm:	PFLAG Meeting, Fellowship Hall
Wed, 10/7	10:00 am:	Sit & Stitch, Library
	10:00 am:	Physical Resources Committee, Choir Room
	3:15 pm:	Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
	5:00 pm:	Progressive Theology Book Group, Library
Thurs, 10/8	10:00 am:	Service & Giving Committee, Choir Room
	1:30 pm:	Crone Talk, Fellowship Hall
	6:00 pm:	Game Night, Fellowship Hall

Next Sunday, 10/11, Forum: Writers Roundtable with Darcy. Calling all writers! Memoir, fiction, nonfiction, prose, poetry... Everyone is welcome. Four minutes to read their own work. We want to hear your voice. Wait! There's more. A short writing prompt with the option of reading what you just wrote. Listeners, we need you, too. Please join us for a lively hour.

Save these Future Dates:

Oct 11 – Blessing of the Animals, Laurel Green Park
Oct 20 – Friendship Dinner, Fellowship Hall
Oct 25 – Congregational Lunch after Worship, Fellowship Hall
Nov 14 – Drum Circle, Sanctuary
Nov 15 – Brian Combs, preaching, Sanctuary
Nov 20 – Transgender Day of Remembrance Vigil, Sanctuary
Nov 26 – Thanksgiving Potluck Feast, Fellowship Hall
Dec 13 – Christmas Music Special, Sanctuary

PRAYER CONCERNS

Please remember these people in your prayers this week

-Mary Brown who is recuperating from heart surgery.
-Roger Haagenson who is hospitalized in Florida.
-For the family of long-time FCCH member, Louise Vier, who died earlier this month.
-Cathy Sadler as she heals from fall-related injuries and corrective surgeries.
-Angie Yates and family as they mourn the passing of her mother, Barbara, age 89. Also pray for Angie as she had hip replacement surgery on Monday and is now home to heal.
-Arna Campbell, friend of Trisha LaGrange, has ongoing health challenges.
-A good friend of Nancy Kaczor and Becky Rowland has been diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer and is working to find her best path forward.
-Frosty Sinclair had knee replacement surgery and is home recovering.
-Debra Miller, Karla's sister, is in a Denver rehab facility recovering from serious medical problems.
-For Dody & Sharon Schultz-Pratt, whose niece who died because of a terrible car accident recently.
-Kay Davis is receiving chemotherapy in Florida.

Our Birthdays this Week:

Angie Yates	10/5
Stephanie Lowder	10/6
Kirsten Cone Howard	10/7
Steve Villanti	10/7

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. We also hold a "Tell Me More" periodically, which provides the opportunity to talk with Karla about our church.

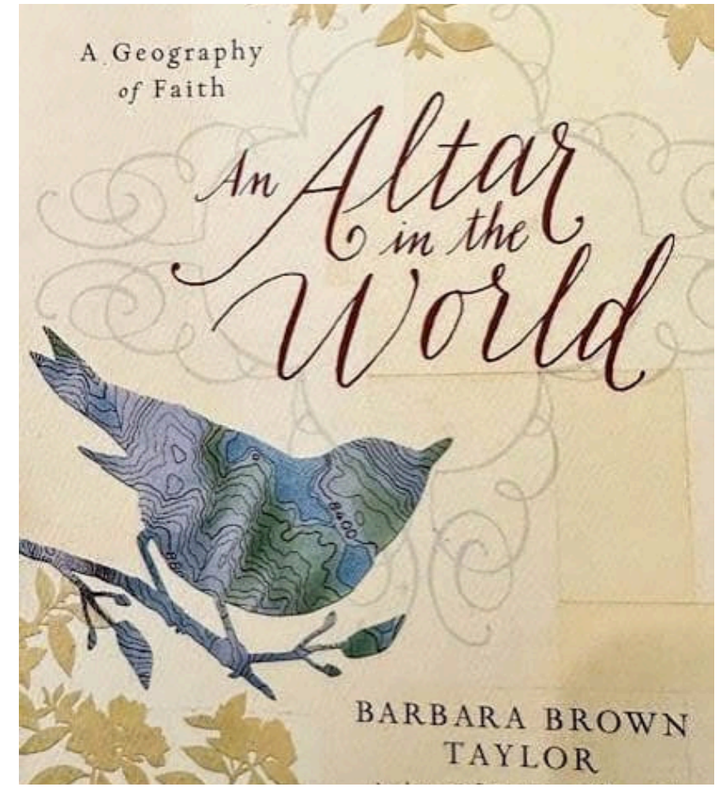
MINISTERS
All of the Congregation

Rev. Karla Miller
Pastor
karla@fcchendersonville.org

Mr. Mark Acker
Minister of Music
& Pastoral Associate
mark@fcchendersonville.org

Ms. Jennifer Austin-Janssen
Church Administrator
office@fcchendersonville.org

First Congregational United Church of Christ
1735 5th Avenue West, Hendersonville, NC. 28739
828.692.8630 / www.fcchendersonville.org



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

October 4, 2026

Justice*Compassion*Belonging

Order of Worship

Welcome 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 for Centering

Voluntary Michele Skeele, native flute

Opening Words

God of the journey, we come together from different places.

We come seeking a community of siblings and to find companionship for the journey.

We yearn to live fully, and to celebrate the diversity of God's human family and the unity of our call to love and justice.

May our journey help us to reconnect to the Holy so that we may be vessels of love for all creation.

***Hymn** God of Love

God of love, may we in worship welcome all diversity.
May we reach in trust and friendship to the poor and refugee.
May we seek Christ in the stranger, breaking bonds of hate and fear.
By your Spirit, may we offer glimpses of your kin-dom here.

God of hope, you daily nurture those who seek to follow you. You're not bound by any culture; you love rich and poor ones, too.
In an ever-changing nation, may your churches welcome in
Every child of your creation, giving hope to all again.

God of peace, you send your spirit each and every day for all.
You give life and say to share it, all as one, within your love.
May we see your wondrous blessing when your people everywhere
Work together, all proclaiming love that binds us, peace to share.

First Reading Psalm 27: 1-8, 13-14 Carol Austin-Janssen

Second Reading An Altar in the World: A Geography of Faith
Barbara Brown Taylor

I am not in charge of this House, and never will be.
I have no say about who is in and who is out.
I do not get to make the rules.
Like Job, I was nowhere when God laid the foundations of the earth.
I cannot bind the chains of the Pleiades or loose the cords of Orion.
I do not even know when the mountain goats give birth, much less the ordinances of the heavens.
I am a guest here, charged with serving other guests—even those who present themselves as my enemies.
I am allowed to resist them, but as long as I trust in one God who made us all,
I cannot act as if they are no kin to me.
There is only one House. Human beings will either learn to live in it together
or we will not survive to hear its sigh of relief when our numbered days are done.

Sermon Altars in the House Karla Miller

A Time for Reflection

Prayers of the People

Loving God, **hear our prayer.**

Response

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

Invitation to Offering

Offertory The Day Is Coming FCCH Choir
Mark Miller

The lands in longing call out your name; the tongues are different, the prayer the same. With humble spirits can we believe that love is bigger than we conceive? The day is coming and God will move with the hand of justice and the heart of love. The will of heaven on this earth be done; the day is coming, oh let it come. With willing spirits God let us dare to kneel with strangers and join in prayer. Grant in your mercy the hope that heals, the law of love your hope reveals. A barren wasteland we must reclaim, with hearts for bearing each other's pain. Give us the courage to make a place to plant tomorrow's seeds of peace.

***Doxology**

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

***Prayer of Blessing**

Celebration of Holy Communion

All are welcome at our table. The bread is gluten free. We celebrate communion by intinction. Please come to the table by the center aisle. You are invited to take a piece of bread from the plate, and dip it into the cup. If your bread falls in the cup, please take a new piece of bread to dip. Then return to your seat by the outer aisle.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

God of love, we give you thanks for this shared meal. Send us from here to share love in the world. Inspire in us the passion to do justice, love kindness, and to walk humbly with You. Amen.

***Hymn** For Everyone Born

For everyone born, a place at the table, for everyone born, clean water and bread, a shelter, a space, a safe place for growing; for everyone born, a star overhead.

Chorus:
And God will delight when we are creators of justice and joy, compassion and peace; Yes, God wil delight when we are creators of justice, justice and joy!

For everyone born, a place at the table, to live without fear, and simply to be, to work, to speak out, to witness and worship; for everyone born, the right to be free.

Intentions and Benediction

Postlude Voluntary on "Kum ba yah"
John Behnke

The light of Christ is carried into the world.

*Please rise in body or spirit

Worship Notes

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. Paper hearts are provided on which you may write your prayer and attach it to the wall.

Copies of today's sermon are available in the narthex and on the front pew.

Acolyte: Dawn Kucera

Cover art: cover of book by Barbara Brown Taylor by illustrator, Melanie Cataldo