

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Easter Flowers order forms** are located at each entrance to Sanctuary and at reception desk outside the Fellowship Hall. Flower orders will be accepted until March 18. An assortment of potted Spring flowers will beautify our Sanctuary on Easter as we honor and memorialize loved ones in our lives. Please return your completed form, with payment attached, in the collection plates, or to the church office, by March 18.

**One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS)** is a special offering of the UCC used to support partners worldwide in direct aid, education & disaster response. Use the OGHS envelopes in the pew or FCCH online to our secure PayPal online giving system and make note that your donation is for "OGHS." Our "final" giving date will be March 15th.

**Singing Resistance Teach-In, Thursday, March 12, 6:30 pm in our Sanctuary.** All are welcome to an evening of singing songs of solidarity & protest, led by leaders of the Sing Resistance Movement in Asheville.

**Blue Ridge Classical Guitar Orchestra Concert** - Please join us for a wonderful free concert on Sunday, March 15, at 3:00 pm. The program will include music by classical composers as well as arrangements of Celtic, Latin and American traditional favorites. The Blue Ridge Classical Guitar Orchestra is an inclusive community group of classical guitarists, and includes members from all over Western North Carolina. Best of all, our own Larry Anderson is a part of this group. Please invite your friends to attend this great concert.

### Happening at FCCH this week:

Mon, 3/9 10:00 am: Community Coffee Hour, Fellowship Hall

Tues, 3/10 11:00 am: Story Feast Group 1, Library  
11:00 am: Finance Committee Mtg, Choir Room  
4:00 pm: Story Feast Group 2, Library  
4:00 pm: Community Meditation, Parlor

Wed, 3/11 10:00 am: Sit & Stitch Small Group, Library  
Noon: Labyrinth Walk  
3:15 pm: Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary

Thrs, 3/12 10:00 am: Service & Giving Committee Mtg, Choir Room  
1:30 pm: Crone Talk, Parlor  
6:30 pm: Singing Resistance Teach-In, Sanctuary

### Save these Future Dates:

April 2: Maundy Thursday Communion and Tenebrae Service, 6 pm

April 5: Easter Sunrise Service, Jump Off Rock, 7 am

April 11-12: Ashley Lecture Series, Becca Stevens, Founder of Thistle Farms, Priest, Social Entrepreneur, and Author of Practically Divine. Saturday evening 7 pm and Sunday for Forum at 9 am and Worship at 10:30 am

May 30: Roger Smith Concert Series, Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus concerts at Trinity Presbyterian Church at 3 pm and 7 pm.

## PRAYER CONCERNS

### Please remember these people in your prayers this week

- Linda Simpson is recovering from a cardio ablation she had this week.
- Patty Houk is recovering from recent knee replacement surgery.
- For Craig and Lin Stogner, their daughter Sunshine, and grandchildren Michael and Dakota, in the sudden death of their son-in-law Michael Moore.
- Sky Conard is recovering at home from significant orthopedic repair surgery.
- Jeanne Wilson asks that we pray for EJ, her husband, as he drives to Florida to care for his brother.
- Linda Yopps had exploratory heart catheterization Wednesday.
- Adam Sheinsohn, Lillian and Roger Dashner's son, who needs to find a job.
- Ivy Thomas, friend of Trisha LaGrange, begins a trial for treatment of his blood cancer in Charlotte in early March.
- Kelly Owens, Janet Slimak's daughter, grieving the loss of her son, Forest Slimak.
- Prayers for Sherry and Chris Carmichael are needed, as Sherry has returned home for palliative care.
- Brian Rhinehart, son of Phyllis Rhinehart, recovering from liver transplant surgery.
- Prayers for the people of Iran and Lebanon experiencing the damage and ravages of war.
- Prayers for our military who may be experiencing mixed feelings, prayers for safety.

### Birthdays this week:

Rich Stewart – 3/3 whose birthday was missed last week  
Cheryl Roberts 3/11  
James Carlin 3/12

### 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" meeting on the first Sunday of each month, which provides the opportunity to talk with Karla about our church.

### MINISTERS All of the Congregation

**Rev. Karla Miller**  
Pastor  
[karla@fcchenderonville.org](mailto:karla@fcchenderonville.org)

**Ms. Jennifer Austin-Janssen**  
Church Administrator  
[office@fcchenderonville.org](mailto:office@fcchenderonville.org)

**Mr. Mark Acker**  
Minister of Music  
& Pastoral Associate  
[mark@fcchenderonville.org](mailto:mark@fcchenderonville.org)

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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**

**March 8, 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

Meditation  
*Craig Courtney*  
Linda Laderach, violin

### Opening Words

This is thin place where earth and heaven embrace.

**Where past interweaves with future, where we gather expectantly.**

This is a thin place where hopes are renewed,

**Where faith is restored, where peace is revived, where love is refreshed.**

This is a thin place.

**Love about us.**

Love beside us.

**And love within us.**

Grace revealed as we worship together.

### \*Hymn

Love Heals

**May we hear the music singing, may we find the heart of life.  
May we listen for your message, may we work to end all strife.  
Hear your love in all the cosmos, sing your love to every soul.  
Share your love with every creature, bring your love to make us whole.**

**May we pause to hear the beauty, may we see your loving light.  
May we hear your voice inviting, may we offer hope made bright.  
Hear your love in all the cosmos, sing your love in every soul.  
Share your love with every creature, bring your love to make us whole.**

**May we always share your laughter, may we share a love made bright.  
Find a path with joy and purpose, offer heart and awe and light.  
Hear your love in all the cosmos, sing your love to every soul.  
Share your love with every creature, bring your love to make us whole.**

### First Reading

paraphrase of John 4:5-42

Steve Matthews

### Second Reading

Carrying Our Words  
*Ofelia Zepeda*

We travel carrying our words.  
We arrive at the ocean.  
With our words we are able to speak  
of the sounds of thunderous waves.  
We speak of how majestic it is,  
of the ocean power that gifts us songs.  
We sing of our respect  
and call it our relative.

### Anthem

The Road Home  
*Stephen Paulus*

FCCH Choir

Tell me, where is the road I can call my own, That I left, that I lost so long ago?  
All these years I have wandered, oh when will I know there's a way, there's a  
road that will lead me home? After wind, after rain, when the dark is done, As I  
wake from a dream in the gold of day, through the air there's a calling from far  
away, there's a voice I can hear that will lead me home. Rise up, follow me,  
come away, is the call, with the love in your heart as the only song; there is no  
such beauty as where you belong; Rise up, follow me, I will lead you home.

### Sermon

Border Crossings, Love Healings

Karla Miller

### A Time for Reflection

### Prayers of the People

Loving God, **hear our prayer.**

### Congregational Prayer

**God of amazing mercy, we thank you for love that refuses to stay in the places we expect. You surprise us with grace spoken through unfamiliar voices, kindness offered by unlikely hands, and hope rising from corners we once overlooked. Open our eyes to see Your image in every neighbor. Open our hearts to welcome wisdom from those we have misunderstood. Open our lives to receive love from strangers, from the margins, from the least and the last. May we become a community that not only receives unexpected love, but embodies it— crossing boundaries, widening tables, and reflecting Your boundless grace in word and deed. In the name of the One who taught us that love is stronger than fear, Amen.**

### Response

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

### Invitation to Offering

### Offertory

Simple Gifts  
*Mark Hayes*

### \*Doxology

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

### \*Prayer of Dedication

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

### \*Hymn

O God, May We Hold On to Love

**O God, may we hold on to love — and in the times when love is lost, send down your mercy like a flood and show us love is worth the cost.**

**When righteous anger fills our plate and harms us — body, mind and soul — may we forgive and so create a feast that makes the wounded whole.**

**May we push back at all the fear that, like a storm, is raging round. May we work hard for justice here till walls of hate come tumbling down.**

**God, give us grace to set aside the things that hurt and tear apart, till we find love has opened wide a path to life, a whole new start.**

### Intentions and Benediction

### Postlude

Sent Forth By God's Blessing  
*John Behnke*

*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:** Phyllis Rhinehart

**Acolyte:** Marcella Leshner

**Cover art:** Senior African American Woman Hands Holding Rose Flower, photo by Spotmatik