



SEPTEMBER 2025

The Chronicle

STAY IN THE LOOP WITH UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS!

**A Note from the Pastor,
Rev. Karla Miller**

Hurray for September and all things Fall!

Please read this Chronicle carefully, because there is, as our Moderator, Bob McClendon notes, “ a LOT going on.”

I am especially happy to roll out our Fall & Winter Pilgrimage plans for Forum, Worship, and Friendship activities.

For our September sermon series, Mark and I have decided to focus on the theme of “Life of the Beloved” based on a book of the same title by Henri Nouwen. Starting September 7, Mark will lead Forum to provide an introduction to this extraordinary writer, priest, spiritual wisdom teacher and social activist. Then, in worship, he will preach on the first theme in the book, “Taken” which which refers to the fundamental truth that each person is chosen, noticed, and loved by God.

Enjoy!

Big Love + Deep Peace,

Karla

A Lot Is Happening!



by Moderator Bob McLendon

This is a vibrant time in the life of our church, and it is exciting to see how we are growing and strengthening our ministry within and outside of our walls. Here are just a few of the things that are percolating:

- The Finance Ministry and Council has approved live streaming for our services. Expenses for this service are being funded by the Memorial Fund for Cary Battle and the Property Maintenance Fund. Our sincere thanks to Bob Battle, his family and all who contributed to the Memorial.
- We have interior designs (thanks to Mark Mitchell) to expand and renovate our Sunday School area.
- We have architectural plans completed (thanks to Ken Harkin) for much needed renovation to our restrooms.
- Our By-Laws Committee chaired by Bill Shaffer has completed its work and presented updates recommended to Council on August 26th. In September, Council will vote on the updates and then the updated by-laws will be presented for a congregational vote in October
- New signage has been designed by Stephanie Lowder for the parking lot and entrance to church. You will see these signs slowly rolling out around our campus.
- Our garden team, led by Milton Stewart has provided close to 2,000 pounds of fresh produce to IAM and other food ministries in Henderson County.
- Phil Taylor our Treasurer reports that as of 7/31/2025 our Church Operating Fund is \$29,637 better than budgeted and our Heritage Fund year to date has gained \$39,639 and the total is \$668,978,

We are indeed blessed as a church family!

In Christ,

Bob



Worship Attendance in August:

August 3 - 137
August 10 - 228
August 17 - 146
August 24 - 146
August 31 - 152

Our September Birthdays:

Karla Miller 9/3	Betsey Parker 9/13
Jairo Aguilar 9/4	Lorrie Wilson 9/14
Carolyn Maloy 9/5	Nolleen Kelly 9/15
Richard Howe 9/5	Richard Vickers 9/17
Kay Davis 9/8	Marjorie Richards 9/21
Rob Monks 9/9	Alice Tenold 9/22
Maureen Mitchell 9/10	Al Diaz 9/25



Celebrating Milton and the Garden Crew!

At the worship service on Sunday, August 31st, the congregation honored Milton Stewart for his dedication to working in the FCCH Garden which provides fresh produce for food pantries in Henderson County. He conceived the idea many years ago, and worked to making it happen. Over the years, he realized his dream, always supported by a strong network. Karla unveiled the "Milton's Garden" sign, and Milton was given a long standing-ovation by the congregation and choir. And if that wasn't enough, it was his birthday! Of course we sang to him. (Photo credit to Dawn Kucera.)



FCCH Fall & Winter Pilgrimage 2025

Sunday Worship 10:30 AM

SEPTEMBER: LIFE OF THE BELOVED

Exploring our belovedness with “Life of the Beloved” by Henri Nouwen.

September 7	Taken
September 14	Blessed
September 21	Broken
September 28	Given

OCTOBER: DINNER WITH JESUS

Jesus loved breaking bread with people, feeding people, and telling stories about eating together. Let’s have dinner with Jesus!

October 5	World Communion Sunday: Feeding of the 5,000
October 12	Dinner With a Holy Woman
October 19	Open Eyes at Emmaus
October 26	Cookout on the Beach

NOVEMBER: STEWARDSHIP: I LOVE THIS PLACE!

Let’s consider what we love about our church.

November 2	All Saints Sunday: Heart Space, Love Place
November 9	A Place for Everyone
November 16	Your Place In the Story
November 23	Rev. Brian Combs, guest preacher

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS: WHAT DO YOU FEAR?

Insisting on Hope this Advent

November 30	When You’re Afraid, Give Me Your Hand
December 7	Let Fear Fuel Your Fire
December 14	Christmas Music Sunday
December 21	Fear Doesn’t Stop Us
December 24	CHRISTMAS Eve Candlelight 5:00 pm
December 28	Pilgrimage Stories from our FCCH Family

Sunday Forums 9:00 AM

SEPTEMBER

September 7	Mark Acker	The Amazing Life of Henri Nouwen
September 14	Karla Miller	A Good Death
September 21	Barbara Volk	Mayor of Hendersonville
September 28	Fe Avis	Quantum Physics for the Spiritually Curious

OCTOBER

October 5	Marko Rodriguez	Love & Respect Community
October 12	NO FORUM	ALL CHURCH LUNCH
October 19	Kirsten Cone	Citizenship Model: An approach to positive & empowering aging services
October 26	Cantor Ted Labow	Agudas Israel Congregation

NOVEMBER

November 2	Anne Ogburn	“What Is Forest Therapy?”
November 9	Richard Morgan	Poetry and Art
November 16	Fe Avis	Jesus and Ageism
November 23	Brian Combs	Haywood Street Church, Asheville
November 30	Mark Acker	Story Feast: MOTH Stories, FCCH Style

DECEMBER

December 7	Karla Miller	Advent Workshop
December 14	NO FORUM	
December 21	Larry Anderson	The Christmas Story
December 28	NO FORUM	

Tell Me More & New Member Sundays

Learn more about FCCH at a “Tell Me More” session and consider officially joining the church on a New Member Sunday.
Tell Me More: 11:45 AM Church Parlor

September 14, October 5, November 2

New Member Sundays:
September 28, October 26, November 30

And there is more...

PILGRIMAGE WALKS

Saturday, September 13
Ecusta Trail with Jan and John Caldemeyer

Saturday October 11
Living Waters, Balsam Grove, NC with Jan and John Caldemeyer

Saturday, November 8
Forest Therapy at Flat Rock Park with Anne Ogburn

BREAKING BREAD TOGETHER

Tuesday, September 16. Friendship Potluck Dinner
Gather at 5 PM; eat at 5:30 PM

Sunday, October 12 11:30 AM. FCCH Family Lunch (\$5)
Karla speaks: “Everything I Learned in 25 Years of Ministry”

Thanksgiving Day, Potluck Feast, Thursday, November 27
Gather at NOON; eat at 12:30 PM

FALL BOOK GROUP “THE FIFTH SEASON” BY MARK NEPO

Led by Mark and Karla
WEDNESDAYS at 1:45 PM or 5:00 PM
October 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

COMMUNITY WIDE TRANSGENDER DAY OF REMEMBRANCE THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20 6:00 PM

Please join us as we gather with our transgender siblings and families for a holy time of remembrance, grief, and hope.



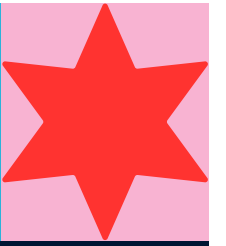
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC
1735 5TH AVE WEST
HENDERSONVILLE, NC 28739
WWW.FCCHENDERSONVILLE.ORG

PHOTO CREDITS: ANNE OGBURN



FCCH Fall & Winter
Pilgrimage 2025

Service & Giving Update



Highlights – August 2025

At the August 14 Service & Giving (S&G) meeting, the team allocated funds to seven 'inclusivity' agencies and we welcome all to our September 11 meeting where we will discuss funding for food-insecure and homeless groups.

The team discussed the successful **school supplies** drive for Upward Elementary. The entire school staff was overwhelmed and appreciative.

The **Hunger Walk, September 20**, details were reported on. Donation envelopes will be available each Sunday. Donations may be made from non-walkers, not just participants.

The team discussed the **Circles USA** program and agreed more information on this possible new non-profit is necessary.

Save a Life Day is scheduled for **September 25** at Jackson Park Shelter 1, also known as **Free Naloxone Day**, and is a day to bring awareness to overdose and how harm reduction techniques such as Naloxone can help reduce overdose deaths in our community.

Revised **Church Bylaws** are being finalized and will be voted on by congregation in September. Soon all of our services will be live streamed. The environmental work (retention pond and stream) is moving forward.

The next S&G meeting is **Thursday, September 11** at **10 am** in the Choir Room. As ever, all are welcome.



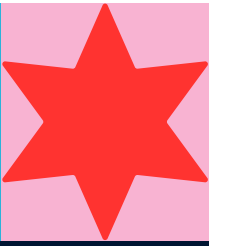
Thank you, JOHN PAVLOVITZ!

What a morning at First Congregational on August 10! Author, pastor, speaker, and compassionate human being John Pavlovitz led conversation during our morning Forum, then delivered the sermon in our worship service.

Some 200 people were in the Fellowship Hall for his inspiring talk. Within a series of questions, John asked us to figure out what our deepest pain point is in this moment. He conveyed that we don't have to - in fact we can't, work at maximum on all the many issues that pain us but suggested that we pick one, become an expert on that issue, and do good work to advance the common good there.



FCCH & the Henderson County Hunger Walk



Easy involvement with a HUGE impact!

This year's Hunger Walk will take place on Saturday, September 20, at a new location: the Trailside Brewery, on Lenox Park Drive in Hendersonville. This was to be the site for the event last year, but the hurricane changed all of that!

Our church has been very involved with this event in past years, and we certainly look to do the same again this year. Last year, we (FCCH) raised over \$15,000, and the Hunger Walk brought in a grand total of \$120,000! Clearly, we have been a major contributor to the success of this fundraising event, and we intend to do so again this year.

If you have joined our church in the past couple of years, or if you are not familiar with the Hunger Walk for whatever reason, we would encourage you to register for the event by going to hendersoncountyhungercoalition.com.

There is no registration fee for this event, and if you have pre-registered, you will receive a free event t-shirt. Start talking up the Hunger Walk with family and friends, neighbors and co-workers. Listen for updates about the event at our Sunday church service.

If you have any questions or need additional information, contact Dennis Maloy at 912-656-8858, or Ken Whitney at 828-708-1408.

Thank you so much!



hunger
coalition

Henderson County Hunger Coalition 43rd Annual Walk



An annual event to raise funds for food
insecure citizens of Henderson County

Lenox Station
441 S. Whitted Street
Saturday, September 20th
8 a.m.

Our talented church family!!!



From sharing our talents in Forum, to leading our Forum discussions, taking photographs of our church in action – we are very spoiled with all the talents from this church family!

Photo credits to Isabel Cutler



Liz Hill leading a Forum!



Dee Shuttlesworth showing her woodworking talents!



Karen Monks singing!



Jock Aplin strumming his banjo!



Mark Fagerlin and the wooden boxes he makes!



Emily Granger shows her photo collage!

Random Acts of Flowers



The crew gathers to make many arrangements from flower donations. These arrangements brighten the day of so many hospitalized and living in assisted communities!

Photo credit to Sheila Clendenning



In the Local Community and beyond



Find your niche, your passion . . . our world is full of opportunities and ways we can help each other!

AAUW Hosts Author Robert Morgan

Hendersonville: AAUW invites all to its special, complementary event featuring award-winning poet and novelist, **Robert Morgan** on **Tuesday, September 9 from 1:30 - 3:00** at the First Congregational Church Fellowship Hall, 1735 Fifth Avenue W and White Pine Drive.

Dr. Morgan will be discussing his works, especially ***The Truest Pleasure*** a novel about a married couple in Western North Carolina

· Born in Hendersonville, he attended the University of North Carolina at both Chapel Hill and Greensboro.

· Kappa Alpha Professor of English Emeritus: Taught at Cornell University since 1971, where he is Kappa Alpha Professor of English. At Cornell he has taught courses in American literature, modern poetry, autobiography, as well as poetry and fiction writing.

- Please reserve free seats by September 5 at mabents@verizon.net with your name and number of guests.



You're Invited to an Evening of Powerful Storytelling and Community Impact

Join us for a special screening of PBS NC short films that shine a light on our region's rivers and the people working to protect them. From hurricane recovery to restoring natural floodplains, these powerful stories follow the work of MountainTrue, Conserving Carolina, and Henderson County & Thermal Belt Habitat for Humanity. After the one-hour screening, stay for a 30-minute panel with representatives from each group, sharing how they're building a safer, more sustainable future for our communities.