

## Announcements:

**The church office will close on Monday, July 6, in observance of the Independence Day holiday.**

**This Saturday, July 11, at 9 am, we meet at Bullington Gardens for Forest Bathing with Anne Ogburn.** Bullington Gardens is off Howard Gap Rd on Zeb Corn Rd. If you would like to carpool with others, please meet at the church by 8:30 am. Wear good shoes and bring water to stay hydrated while we explore outdoors together!

## Happening at FCCH this week:

- Mon, 7/6 Church Office Closed for Independence Day
- Tues, 7/7 4:00 pm: Community Meditation, Parlor  
6:00 pm: PFLAG Meeting, Fellowship Hall
- Wed, 7/8 10:00 am: Sit & Stitch, Library
- Thurs, 7/9 1:30 pm: Crone Talk, Parlor
- Sat, 7/11 9:00 am: Bullington Gardens and Forest Bathing with Anne Ogburn

**Next Sunday, 7/12/26, Forum:** Join Marcia Walker, certified Unified Mindfulness Teacher/Trainer: Learn the difference between Mindfulness and Meditation and the benefits of both practices. "I will talk about how mindfulness practice can reduce suffering, increase fulfillment and help you get to know yourself better by developing three core skills; concentration, sensory clarity and equanimity. " We will briefly practice 6 simple basic mindfulness techniques during our session together using three sense gates: See, Hear and Feel.

## Save these Future Dates:

- July 11 - Bullington Gardens & Forest Bathing with Anne Ogburn  
July 12 - Celtic Creamery Ice Cream Trail Social  
August 23 – John Pavlovitz speaks in Forum and worship

## 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, and will be posted on our website tomorrow.

**Acolyte:** Becky Rowland

**Cover art:** Bananas! stock picture on iStock.com

## PRAYER CONCERNS

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

- Carol and Jennifer Austin-Janssen, on the death of Carol's dear sister, Lois Sanchez.
- Julius Pratt fell last weekend, broke his hip, had a hip replacement, and is now at Hendersonville Rehab for healing.
- Emory Gill has had multiple surgeries after a very bad fall, and having more surgery.
- Long-time congregant Carolyn Schmalz died last week. Please pray for her family.
- Virginia Gambill was hospitalized with pneumonia and now at Hendersonville Rehab.
- Jesse Pearson, son of Sharon Pearson and Richard Vickers, has been diagnosed with significant heart issues.
- Peggy Vickers, sister of Richard Vickers and Sharon Pearson, is newly diagnosed with breast cancer after being hospitalized after a fall.
- Ken Whitney is home after a hospitalization for a respiratory illness.
- Long-time congregant, Jon Walters, on the death of his wife, Jan.
- Prayers for LGBTQIA+ who feel unsafe or unwelcome because of religious trauma or world events and the social environment in which they live.
- The people of Cuba.
- Peggy Popham is recovering from a car accident and her daughter-in-law, Camilla Popham, recently had surgery for a brain tumor. Trisha LaGrange asks for prayers.
- Genie Murphy, sister of Ann Twigg, has been recently diagnosed with lung cancer.
- Arna Campbell, friend of Trisha LaGrange, is dealing with heart issues.
- Romella Hart-O'Keefe is home recuperating from a recent hospitalization.
- Kay Davis is receiving chemo treatments for her cancer.
- Mindy Myers is dealing with health issues and treatments.
- Ericka Fagerlin is dealing with various health issues.
- Prayers for the people of Iran and Lebanon experiencing the ravages of war.
- Prayers for our military who may be experiencing mixed feelings, prayers for safety.

## Birthdays this week:

Lydia Gossett	7/6
Mindy Myers	7/7
Ann Crisp	7/10
Jim Morse	7/11

## 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.

## MINISTERS All of the Congregation

**Rev. Karla Miller**  
Pastor  
karla@fcchenderonville.org

**Ms. Jennifer Austin-Janssen**  
Church Administrator  
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**Mr. Mark Acker**  
Minister of Music  
& Pastoral Associate  
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**First Congregational United Church of Christ**  
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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**

**July 5, 2026**

**Justice\*Compassion\*Belonging**

## Order of Worship

### Welcome

### 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

Simple Gifts  
*Shaker Tune, arranged Mark Hayes*  
Linda Laderach, violin

### Opening Words

This is a 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

In a Time of Great Reflection

**In this time of great reflection on two hundred fifty years,  
We remember, as a nation, times we've prospered, times of tears.  
"We shall be," the preacher told us, "as a city on a hill" —  
not to praise but to inspire us: We've a duty to fulfill.**

**Here is what holds us together: Mercy, love, community.  
We must seek to care for neighbors in a just society.  
If we fail to help the needy and to build a land that's just,  
we will simply be a by-word as the world looks on at us.**

**In this time, O God, restore us to the land we're called to be —  
where all people here among us know your blest community.  
May we seek to be that city, not with pride but as a prayer.  
May we love and serve you boldly, in our land and everywhere.**

### First Reading

Migration  
(for religious exiles and spiritual seekers)  
*Timothy Dale Jones*

Jim Jolly

What if you don't have to get it all figured out in order to be here?  
What if your journey is meant to be messy, muddled and confusing?  
What if your cup overflows with questions and doubt, but the Spirit says drink it  
like your life depends on it?  
What if grace is found on the altar of detour, limbo and interruption?  
What if there is no map of correct patterns because your route isn't supposed to  
resemble safety?  
What if the answers you seek require a fresh start?  
What if there are no tickets to punch or tokens to earn, but only unplanned  
pauses of life filled with simple, momentous presence?  
What if your wandering brings nourishment, and your curious movement is  
beckoned by something larger and more sacramental than just another place to  
land?

### Second Reading

Genesis 22: 1-18

### Music

Pie Jesu  
*Andrew Lloyd Webber*  
Virginia Erwin, soloist

Latin translation: "Merciful Jesus, who takes away the sins of the world, give us  
peace."

### Sermon

The Bible Is Bananas

Mark Acker

### A Time for Reflection

### Prayers of the People

### Invitation to Offering

### Offertory

One World  
*Geoffrey O'Hare*  
George Evans, soloist

FCCH Choir

One world built on a firm foundation; built on a firm foundation of peace. What  
a wondrous sight, freedom's flame alight, in a world where war shall cease. One  
world built on love and peace. When God smiled bright sunlight, flooded hills and  
plains, songbirds filled green valleys with their glad refrains. All things God  
created, God's great love to share, now let all the nations join and shout it  
everywhere: One world at peace for evermore.

### \*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.**

### 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

As you leave this place, go with love, hope, peace and wonder.

**May God bless us and keep us, every moment of every day.**

And remember, be kinder than necessary.

**Everyone we meet is fighting some kind of battle.**

Live simply, love generously, care deeply, and leave the rest.

**Amen.**

### \*Closing Song

Let There Be Peace On Earth

**Let there be peace on earth, And let it begin with me. Let there be  
peace on earth, The peace that was meant to be.  
With God as our creator, children all are we. Let me walk with  
each other in perfect harmony.  
Let peace begin with me, let this be the moment now. With every  
step I take, let this be my solemn vow:  
To take each moment, and live each moment, in peace eternally.  
Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me.  
Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me.**

*The light of Christ is carried into the world.*

\*Please rise in body or spirit