

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### The Buddy K Big Band Spring Concert is coming in May!

Mark your calendars and invite your friends and neighbors to see the premiere big band in Western NC perform on Sunday, May 17, at 3 pm, in the church Fellowship Hall. Come tap your toes, dance if you wish, and enjoy!

### Happening at FCCH this week:

Mon, 4/27 10:00 am: Community Coffee Hour, Fellowship Hall  
2:00 pm: Lake Pointe Landing Small Group

Tues, 4/28 1:00 pm: Social Justice Team, Zoom Meeting  
4:00 pm: Community Meditation, Parlor

Wed, 4/29 10:00 am: Sit & Stitch, Library  
3:15 pm: Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary

Thurs, 4/30 1:30 pm: Crone Talk, Parlor  
7:00 pm: Buddy K Rehearsal, Fellowship Hall

### Save these Future Dates:

May 17: Spring Concert by the Buddy K Big Band, 3 pm, Fellowship Hall

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

June 7: PRIDE Sunday

June 28: Rev. Brian Combs speaks in Forum and worship

August 23: John Pavlovitz speaks at 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.

**Altar Artist:** Nolleen Kelly

**Acolyte:** Nolleen Kelly

**Cover art:** Photo by Keith Hardy from Unsplash.com

## PRAYER CONCERNS

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

- Ray Heaton, Dawn Kucera's brother, begins recovery from major surgery.
- Sympathy to family & friends of George Cox, founder of the Hendersonville Rescue Mission, who died on April 12.
- Sympathy to family & friends of Nate Brooks who died unexpectedly on April 7.
- Prayers of Celebration for Jeannie & Milton Stewart's nephew and new niece, Jimmy Carpenter and Dani Gonzales, who were married this week.
- Sympathy to the family and friends of Bev Ward, a long-time church staff member, who died March 18 in Missouri.
- Linda Laderach had knee replacement surgery last week and is now in rehab at Carolina Village before going home next week.
- Mindy Myers is dealing with health issues and treatments.
- René Hodges, mother of Jenn Kirby, has continued health, mobility and independence concerns.
- Romella Hart-O'Keefe is dealing with health issues.
- Kay Davis is dealing with health issues.
- Dody Schultz-Pratt had knee surgery and is now recuperating at Carolina Village.
- Julius Pratt is dealing with serious heart illness.
- 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.

### Our Birthdays this week:

Annie Haberkorn	4/30
Fred Yopps	4/30
Carolyn Schmalz	5/2

### MINISTERS

#### All of the Congregation

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

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

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

**First Congregational United Church of Christ**  
1735 5th Avenue West, Hendersonville, NC. 28739  
828.692.8630 / [www.fcchendersonville.org](http://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 belong here and are welcome just as you are.



**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL  
CHURCH • HENDERSONVILLE**

**April 26, 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 of Centering

### Voluntary

Wonderful Words of Life  
Wayne Kerr

### Opening Words

Young and old and middle-aged, individuals, couples and families, soft-spoken and outspoken,

### We gather to join together in the rainbow of love.

Gay, straight, transgender, and all expressions of gender identity,

### We gather to join together in the rainbow of love.

Jews and Christians, Buddhists and Muslims, atheists and agnostics, persons of deep faith and persons with no faith,

### We gather to join together in the rainbow of love.

This house of worship is open to all. Come, let us worship together.

### \*Hymn

There Is Room In God's Great Welcome

**There is room in God's great welcome; See! The doors are open wide! Here on earth as in God's heaven, hear the call to come inside! There is so much room for difference — every heart in every place. In God's love, the rooms are countless, but there is no room for hate.**

**There is room beyond all borders if we stand on justice-ground. God has made a good creation; colors, cultures all abound. Welcome, neighbor! Welcome, stranger! All those yearning to breathe free! There is room for one another but no room for bigotry.**

**There is room in loving churches for the wounded and oppressed: People who've been told they're worthless, refugees who feel distressed, Immigrants who fear the future, people scorned and pushed and shoved. God, may we seek what you treasure: may we all make room for love.**

## Welcoming of New Members

### Response

Draw the Circle Wide  
Mark Miller

**Draw the circle, draw the circle wide.  
Draw the circle, draw the circle wide.  
No one stands alone, we'll stand side by side.  
Draw the circle, draw the circle wide.**

### First Reading

John 10:1-10

Kay Davis

### Second Reading

The Lion  
Megan Snyder-Camp

Since kindergarten  
my son's class has practiced  
for when a lion

wild in the hall.  
Races up the stairs.  
When the lion

enters the building.  
They have a safe wall  
they crouch against.

is at the door  
they are taught  
to think of emptiness.

A closet some of the children  
fit into.  
The lion roams

Darkness.  
A real lion not  
some yellow-furred animal.

### Anthem

Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel  
Spiritual, arranged Roger Emerson

FCCH Choir

Didn't my Lord deliver Daniel, then why not every one. God delivered Daniel from the lion's den, Jonah from the belly of the whale, and the Hebrew children from the fiery furnace, then why not every one? I set my foot on the Gospel ship, and the ship began to sail, it landed me over on Canaan's shore, and I'll never come back no more.

### Sermon

Sheep, Lions, Empires and Kin-doms

Karla Miller

### A Time for Reflection

### Prayers of the People

Loving God, **hear our prayer.**

### Congregational Prayer

**Loving God, You who breathe life into weary hearts, we come before you with all that we carry — our worries, our griefs, our questions, and our hopes. When the world feels heavy and the road uncertain, may we live with resilience. Where there is despair, help us to kindle hope. Where there is fear, help us to grow in our trust that all will be well. May we also be bearers of hope, builders of peace, and friends to all. In the spirit of love that holds us, amen.**

## Response

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

### Offertory

My Faith Has Found a Resting Place  
Brant Adams  
Joel Helfand, soloist

### \*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

God Is Present

**Darkest night with fear around them, stones were sealed and hope seemed gone; Daniel breathed a quiet sentence, trusting Love would hold him fast. Among lions, God was present, breath of peace in danger's den; no wild force could ever destroy him— presence stronger more than fear.**

**When we face our own deep trials, names of loss and doubt and pain, we are cast in shadowed valleys, wondering if some hope remains. Yet the Holy breath beside us whispers courage through the dark; every den becomes a doorway, every spark a guiding mark.**

**God is not a distant spirit, standing far from human cry; God is with us in the struggle, sharing breath and standing by. In each cage of grief or danger, love remains our steady friend; even here, a sacred promise: God is present in the den.**

## Intentions and Benediction

### Closing Song

This Little Light of Mine

**This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine (3 times)  
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.**

**Everywhere I go, I'm gonna let it shine (3 times)  
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.**

**Deep down in my soul, I'm gonna let it shine (3 times)  
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.**

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

\*Please rise in body or spirit