



May 2026 Chronicle

First Congregational UCC Hendersonville



On April 5, Easter Sunday, our Sanctuary altar was adorned with Spring flowers that congregants sponsored in honoring or memorializing loved ones. The Choir offered special music for the holiday and we had a full house during worship!

FORUMS IN MAY – 9 AM Fellowship Hall

May 3 - John Quinley. "Carl Sandburg and Social Justice." This is a three person theatrical talk based on dramatic readings from Sandburg, as well as songs from his "American Songbag." Carl Sandburg was passionate about the social justice issues of his time, and his words are relevant to our world today.

May 10 - Dr. Erich Junger. "How to Avoid Scams." Erich is an officer in the Laurel Park police department. Dr. Junger will discuss common scams, particularly those related to senior citizens, and how to avoid being taken advantage of by phone and internet scams.

May 17 - Bill Schaffer. "Upcoming projects at FCCH." Bill is our moderator, and he will be discussing major projects coming up, including renovations to our bathrooms and children's Sunday School area, and the completion of the parking lot and retention pond.

May 24 - Karla Miller - "Prayer Beads." Learn about and make your own prayer beads on the holiday weekend.

May 31 - Sara Cole. "The Work of Safelight." Sara is the Community Relations Director of Safelight. Safelight provides not only short-term help to children and adults in crisis, but they also help survivors of violence or abuse work towards long term solutions, including housing, job training, mental health services, and legal support services.

Ahhhh, Spring!

Beloved,

May is designated as Mental Health Awareness month by NAMI (National Alliance of Mental Illness). NAMI's focus this year is on sharing our stories with the theme "Turning Silence Into Connection." At www.nami.org, there is an invitation to share your story either by video or writing. The belief is that "by sharing our lived experiences, learning from each other's experience, and building strong community connections, we can challenge stigma and create spaces where people are supported, understood, and find healing. Every story turns silence into connection, and connection into healing." I encourage you to check the stories out--they are moving and clarifying.

Many of you know that I have clinical depression that is managed fairly well through therapy, community, and medication. I still have my days, absolutely. The best thing I can do on "those days" is to share about it with a trusted friend and beloved community. Trust me, the people around you care and want to know. Your church wants to be a source of support, too. We are HERE FOR YOU.

Big Love + Deep Peace,
Karla



A Letter from Our Moderator, Bill Shaffer

At our Council meeting in April, we reviewed our existing policies about allowing other groups to use our church facilities. In addition to our wonderfully paved parking lot, we have a fully equipped kitchen and the Fellowship Hall. Part of our engagement with the larger community in Hendersonville is letting other groups use these facilities. Groups need to be non-profits, non-partisan and generally align with purpose and mission of FCC. Several organizations currently meet in our building, but we certainly have opportunities for more. If you're part of an appropriate non-profit that has a need, please contact the church office.

We also looked at some major projects on our campus that we've been discussing for a while and developed a plan for implementing them over the next 18 months. Since we approved the paving of our parking lot, we've been planning to do some associated environmental work at the East end of the lot where Wash Creek borders our property. We've also been looking at remodeling the restrooms in the Fellowship Hall to make them more accommodating and welcoming. Lastly, we're looking at renovating our children's Sunday school area. Because the cost of each of these projects is outside our normal operating budget, they will require you, the congregation, to approve spending the money. During May we'll have some talks and a forum to explain each project in detail along with the proposed time line. We'll also have plans for the environmental work and the Fellowship Hall projects on bulletin boards in the holy hallway. Throughout the year, we'll bring each project to you at a Congregational Meeting for your discussion and approval of the funding.

Lastly, we looked at gathering all the information about future directions for our church and your involvement – the green sheets you've completed, the Imagine Together ideas you provided last year and the thoughts from our Council retreat last month. We're looking at how we want to move forward throughout the coming year. Because we are a Congregational church, what we do will depend on you, the Congregation. On the green sheet surveys many of you expressed interests in various activities. You should be hearing from one of your Council members about your interests and soon we'll start putting all of us all to work.



April Worship Attendance

April 5	225	Easter
April 12	134	Becca Stevens
April 19	135	
April 26	149	New Members

Treasurer's Report

Total General Operating Fund income YTD was \$4,224 **more** than budgeted.

Total General Operating Fund expenses YTD were \$ 743 **more** than budgeted.

Net result of General Operating Fund YTD was \$3,481 **better** than budgeted.

Heritage Fund balance as of 3/31/2026: \$725,343.

First Congregational Major Projects

Over the next year and a half, we have several major projects planned for our church building and grounds. The plan is to do the projects in phases and to bring each phase to the Congregation for your approval as we get ready to implement it. We're doing this in order to spread the costs over two years and because of the nature of some of the work. In order to understand the big picture, during May, we'll have a short talk at a Sunday service, a hand out of the costs and a more detailed discussion of the projects at one of our Forums.

One of the projects is the remodeling of portions of the Fellowship Hall Building. We've divided the remodeling into two parts – Phase 1 will be the remodeling of the restrooms and Phase 2 the renovation of the Sunday school area. We're looking at doing the restroom remodeling this summer. Phase 2 will happen during the summer of 2027. The second major project is the long-awaited environmental work at the East end of our parking lot. The first phase of this work will be the actual digging, grading and earth moving. We're aiming start this in early fall of this year. The area will then be stabilized over the winter by a planting of annual grass. In early spring of 2027, we'll do phase 2 – the final planting of the area and the last part of repaving of the parking lot.

These are big steps to make our church more accommodating and welcoming and to continue our Congregation's environmental commitment. Each phase of each of the projects will require your approval before anything begins. Stay tuned for detailed information in May.



Celebrating Our May Birthdays!

Carolyn Schmalz	5/2	Liz Hill	5/19
Dana Vannoy	5/7	Zuzu Stogner	5/22
Zachary Cone	5/9	Lee Nichols	5/24
Matt Henderly	5/9	Sharon Johnson	5/25
Jock Aplin	5/11	Mike Berndt	5/26
Connie Knight	5/13	Ann Cain	5/26
Bruce Mills	5/14	Gracen Duffield	5/30
Brandon Otis	5/14	Ariel Marsh	5/30
Marcella Leshar	5/16	David Kelly, Jr.	5/31

Roger Smith Concerts with the Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus!



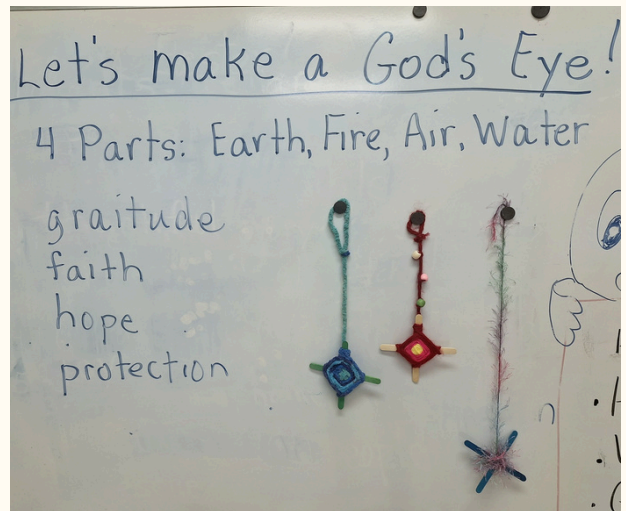
Tickets for the Roger Smith Concerts Series with the Atlanta Gay Mens Chorus are now available on our website! The concerts are at 3:30 pm and 7 pm on Saturday, May 30, at Trinity Presbyterian Church on Blythe Street. Tickets are free, but tickets are required so that we can manage attendance demands. A table for tickets to this concert will be set up in the Fellowship Hall after worship where you can get tickets, also. If you have trouble reserving tickets online, please contact Jennifer at 828-692-8630 or office@fcchendersonville.org.

Circle of Friends Small Groups Update



We are rapidly approaching the end of our 9 months with our current Circle of Friends groups. It was suggested that the groups meet from September to May and then take the summer off, but you certainly can continue to meet if your group members wish to do so. We will have a registration drive early in the summer with new groups being formed to begin meeting again in September.

Sunday School Fun... We're learning and creating!



Church Highlights from April

We Welcomed New Members!

Photo credits to Dawn Kucera



Roberta Wright



Mike & Andrea Berndt



Ruthie & Mark Rosauer



Daniel & Hannah Vindas

Our Easter Celebration



Photo credit to Dawn Kucera and Jennifer Austin-Janssen



Friendship Dinner



Photo credits to Ritch Yount



Crone Talk Members

The group has grown and grown with 18-20 women participating from week to week! Join us on Thursdays at 1:30 pm in the Parlor!



Sorting and Delivering Migrant Supplies

Lillian & Roger Dashner often help pack and sort after S&G sponsored drives at FCCH. In April, the Dashners and Theo Sharps took the haul for migrant workers.



Ashley Lecture Series hosted Becca Stevens and two women living and thriving from Thistle Farms on April 11-12



THISTLE FARMS

LOVE HEALS



Community Involvement

Thank YOU from Project Linus!

FCCH showed up in a big way and made for another successful Rummage Sale! Several members and friends helped with the sale, help set up and take down, and SHOPPED the sale! Thank you!

Community Support Center

Open Tuesdays from 1-4 pm
353 Banner Farm Rd.

Offering low cost cat & dog food and pet supplies.
Pet Helpline: 828-393-5832
pethelpline@blueridgehumane.org

Progressive Alliance
of Henderson County

POSTCARD PARTY & SOCIAL TIME
ERADICATE THE ROOTS OF EVIL

MAGA CAN'T SEE THE FOREST FOR THE TREES

Every branch of this government is being razed and savaged

FRIDAY, MAY 15th
4:30-6:00pm at Trailside Brewing
874 Lenox Park Dr. (off S. Whitted St)

We're writing to legislators to demand that our tax dollars be used to promote we the people, not to benefit the elite.

We provide suggestion sheets, postcards & addresses
Donations welcome

Parking can be tricky- consider carpooling, walking or biking

THE ABC's of the NC JUDICIARY

Let's find out how the NC judiciary works for us.
How is NC different from other states?

Athena Brooks, Speaker	Russ Burrell, Speaker	Justice Mullen, Moderator

5-6:30 pm on May 5, 2026

at Agudas Israel Synagogue,
505 Glasgow Lane,
Hendersonville, NC

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF HENDERSON COUNTY

June 6th

Hendersonville Pride Festival

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We're looking for volunteers for:

- Load-in & load-out
- Booth sitters
- Survey takers
- Friday morning (the 5th) booth placement & setup
- General event support

Hendersonvillepride.org

Presentation of this feature is co-sponsored by the Henderson County Social Justice Network and the Progressive Alliance of Henderson County

HANNAH ARENDT FACING TYRANNY

When
MAY 19, 2026
6:30-8:00PM
GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

The documentary explores the extraordinary life and work of one of the most influential and fearless political thinkers of the twentieth century. Arendt's philosophical writings emerged directly from her dramatic and often terrifying experiences, coming of age in Germany as Hitler rose to power, then finding her way to the United States. Through her bravery, Arendt transformed her time as a political prisoner, refugee and survivor in Europe with her observations of America during the McCarthy Era, the Vietnam War and the Watergate crisis into thoughtful and daring insights into the human condition, the refugee crisis, democracy and totalitarianism, which continue to resonate more than a half century later.



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC
1735 FIFTH AVENUE WEST
HENDERSONVILLE NC 28739

you are invited to

BUDDY KAY BIG BAND

Spring Concert
SUNDAY

MAY 17 at 3PM

First Congregational UCC
1735 5th Ave West, Hendersonville

FREE ADMISSION

**Baskets provided for donations to ongoing
community and immigrant assistance.**

Dancing, listening, join us for a fantastic
afternoon with one of WNC's best big bands.