

## Announcements:

**Summer Small Group Study – “Progressive Christianity 101”**  
led by Karla Miller, Wednesdays, at 11 am or 5 pm (May 27, June 3, 10, 17); Join Karla in a study on what it means to be a progressive Christian. We will talk about the Bible seriously, all things theology and more. Please contact Jennifer in the church office to sign up for one of these small groups at 828-692-8630 or [office@fcchenderonville.org](mailto:office@fcchenderonville.org).

**Next Sunday, May 31, after worship: Tell Me More!** If you are interested in learning more about our church, the UCC, or becoming a member, please join us in the Parlor (just off the Sanctuary) for information from Rev. Karla.

**On Sunday, June 14, we will have another “Join-from-the-Pew” New Member Sunday!** We treasure welcoming each and every soul into our FCCH church family! If you are interested in joining the church or would like to speak to Karla before doing so, please contact Jennifer in the church office at [office@fcchenderonville.org](mailto:office@fcchenderonville.org) or by calling 828-692-8630.

## Happening at FCCH this week:

- Mon, 5/25 Church Closed in Observance of Memorial Day
- Tues, 5/26 1:00 pm: Social Justice Team Mtg, Zoom  
4:00 pm: Community Meditation, Parlor
- Wed, 5/27 10:00 am: Sit & Stitch, Library  
11:00 am: Progressive Christianity 101, TBD  
3:15 pm: Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary  
5:00 pm: Progressive Christianity 101, TBD
- Thurs, 5/28 1:30 pm: Crone Talk, Park location  
4:00 pm: Pisgah Cht Trout Un’ltd Board Mtg, Choir Room
- Sat, 5/30 3:30 pm: Atlanta Gay Men’s Chorus Concert, Trinity Presbyterian  
7:00 pm: Atlanta Gay Men’s Chorus Concert, Trinity Presbyterian

## Save these Future Dates:

- June 6 – Hendersonville PRIDE Festival, Jackson Park  
June 7 – PRIDE Sunday at FCCH  
June 28: Rev. Brian Combs speaks in Forum and worship  
August 23: John Pavlovitz speaks in Forum and worship

## Prayer Concerns:

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

- Aubrey Cain, daughter of Anne Cain, is recovering from a cardiac health event. Pray for all and for full recovery.
- Dede Walton requests prayers for her daughter, Rebecca Baiet, having surgery.
- Marcus Howard, fiancé of Kirsten Cone, asks for prayers as his niece, Chelsea, died from cardiac arrest at age 35 recently. Prayers for Marcus, his brother Jace and his nephew Josh are needed.
- Sharon and Dody Pratt-Schultz are both recovering from recent health treatments and are home gaining strength.
- Kay Davis has begun treatments for her health issues.
- Debbie Hyslop, friend of Kristin Jordan, who is undergoing cancer treatments. Pray for peace, comfort and wisdom.
- 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.

## Our Birthdays this week :

Lee Nichols	5/24
Sharon Johnson	5/25
Ann Cain	5/26
Mike Berndt	5/26
Ariel Marsh	5/30
David Conard	5/30
Gracen Duffield	5/30
David Kelly	5/31

## 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.

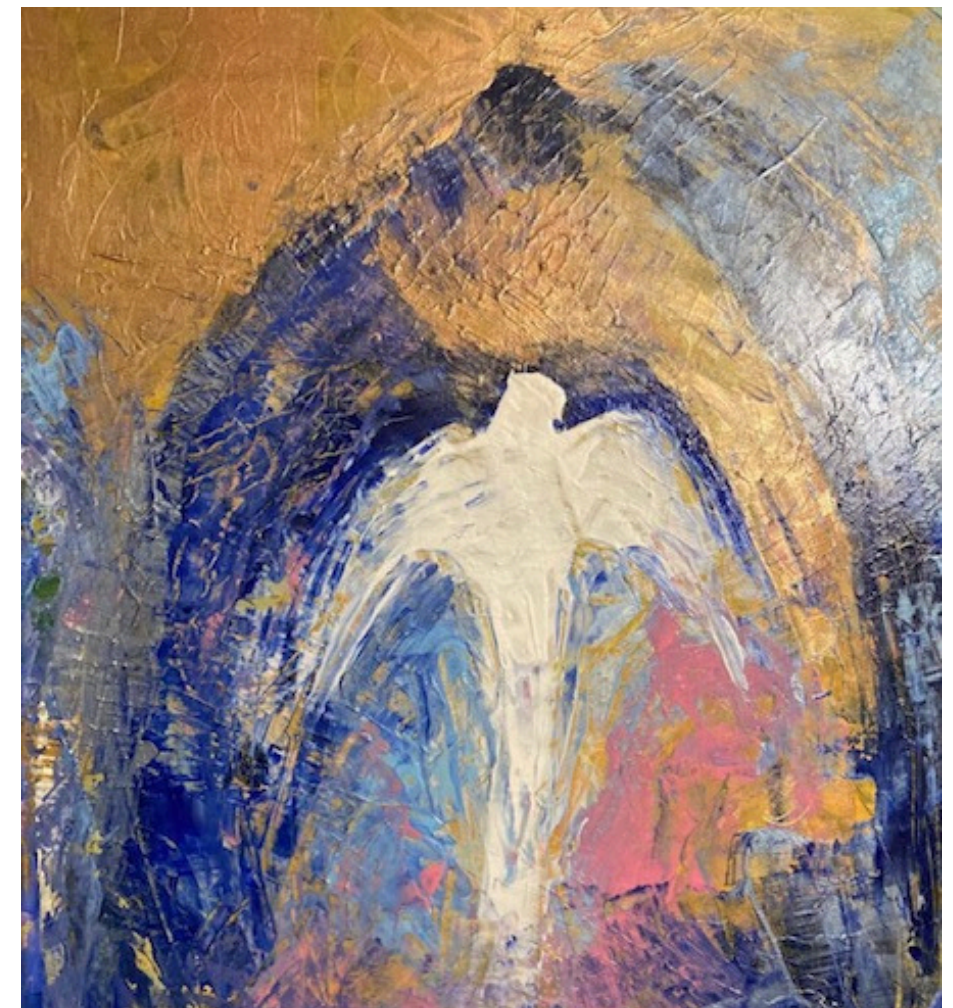
## MINISTERS All of the Congregation

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

**First Congregational United Church of Christ**  
1735 5th Avenue West, Hendersonville, NC. 28739  
828.692.8630 / [www.fcchenderonville.org](http://www.fcchenderonville.org)



## Welcome Home

First Congregational Church welcomes persons of all ages, races, gender identities, sexual orientations, theological beliefs, and mental health conditions. 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**

**May 24, 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

Let All Creation Dance  
*Michael Burkhardt*

## Opening Words

When the world divides us, **Come Holy Spirit, make us one.**

When the world calls us orphaned, **Come Holy Spirit, make us family.**

When the world leads us astray, **Come Holy Spirit, call us home.**

Come Holy Spirit, **Come and fill this place!**

## \*Hymn

Faithful God, You Sent Your Spirit

**Faithful God, you sent your Spirit long ago at Pentecost.  
You gave life and said to share it, all as one, within your love.  
May we see your wondrous blessing when your people everywhere  
Work together, all proclaiming love that binds us, love to share.**

**God of hope, you daily nurture those who seek to follow you.  
You're not bound by any culture; You love rich and poor ones, too.  
In an ever-changing nation, may your churches welcome in every  
child of your creation, giving hope to all again.**

**God of love, may we in worship welcome all diversity.  
May we reach in trust and friendship to the poor and refugee.  
May we seek Christ in the stranger, breaking bonds of hate and  
fear. By your Spirit, may we offer glimpses of your kingdom here.**

## First Reading

John 20: 19-23

Barbara Rathbun

## Second Reading

Go to the Limits of Your Longing  
*Rainer Maria Rilke*

God speaks to each of us as God makes us,  
then walks with us silently out of the night.

These are the words we dimly hear:  
You, sent out beyond your recall,  
go to the limits of your longing.

Embody me.

Flare up like a flame  
and make big shadows I can move in.

Let everything happen to you:  
beauty and terror.

Just keep going. No feeling is final.  
Don't let yourself lose me.  
Nearby is the country they call life.  
You will know it by its seriousness.  
Give me your hand.

## Anthem

Welcome the Spirit of Love  
*Allen Pote*  
Chip Coxe, trumpet

FCCH Choir

Welcome the spirit of love, a blessing to a hungry planet. Let the people sing, let the earth now rejoice. Let us praise God with one voice. Come, spirit come! God welcomes all to journey this day, in joy, in awe, in faith. God is in the midst of all peopl, in all the earth! welcome the old, welcome the new. Love will lead us. God is in all. We are God's song. We will celebrate God's presence all the day long! Come and behold the gifts of God's love, the awesome gifts of God. God is in the midst of all people, for all the earth.

## Sermon

On Fear, Breath and Peace

Karla Miller

## A Time for Reflection

## Prayers of the People

**Loving God**, hear our prayer.

## Congregational Prayer

**Loving God, May the spirit of love dwell among us, guiding our words and actions with kindness and compassion. May the spirit of hope rise within our hearts, giving us strength for today and faith for tomorrow. May the spirit of peace surround our lives, calm our worries, and unite us in understanding and grace. And may we carry this love, hope, and peace into the world, sharing it with all we meet. 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

Every Time I Feel the Spirit  
*Mark Patterson*

## \*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.**

## \*Hymn

As a Fire Is Meant for Burning

**As a fire is meant for burning with a bright and warming flame,  
so the church is meant for mission, giving goodness in God's  
name. Not to preach our creeds or customs, but to build a  
bridge of care, we join hands across the nations, finding  
neighbors everywhere.**

**We are learners; we are teachers; we are pilgrims on the way.  
We are seekers; we are givers; we are vessels made of clay.  
By our gentle, loving actions, we would show that Christ is light.  
In a humble, listening Spirit, we would live to God's delight.**

**As a green bud in the springtime is the sign of life renewed,  
so may we be signs of oneness 'mid earth's peoples, many hued.  
As a rainbow lights the heavens when a storm is past and gone,  
may our lives reflect the radiance of God's new and glorious  
dawn.**

## Intentions and Benediction

## Postlude

Voluntary on "Kum ba yah"  
*John Behnke*

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

\*Please rise in body or spirit

## 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:** Diane Rose      **Acolyte:** Kirsten Cone

**Cover art:** [The Holy Spirit](#) by Monika Bartová, Slovakia