

Announcements:

One time only! Sign up today! This Wednesday, September 23 at 1:00 pm, Pastor’s Book Discussion: Joanna Stern's *I Am Not a Robot: My Year Using AI to Do (Almost) Everything* recounts one journalist's year letting artificial intelligence make her decisions, do her chores, and shape her relationships. It raises questions central to faith: what does it mean to be made in the image of God among machines that mimic us? What do we owe our attention, our discernment, our neighbor, when so much can be delegated? Please contact the office if you plan to attend office@fcchendersonville.org or 828/692-8630. The size of the group will determine the location of the discussion.

You are invited to two of our members’ memorial services later this month: On Sunday, September 27, we honor Jean Glasgow-Hawkins at 2:30 pm in the Sanctuary with a reception to follow in the Fellowship Hall. Then on Saturday, October 3, at 10:30 am, we will memorialize Carolyn Schmalz with a service in our Memorial Garden, also with a reception to follow. Your presence is a gift to these families and our beloved friends.

Our friend Fran Cooper collects adult clothing, towels, blankets for the unhoused in Hendersonville for a clothes closet at a local church for whom she volunteers. If you have gently used items to donate, please contact Fran at 786-271-0224. The items will be much appreciated.

Happening at FCCH this week:

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|-------------|-----------|---|
| Mon, 9/21 | 10:00 am: | Community Coffee Hour, Fellowship Hall |
| | 10:00 am: | Blooms of Kindness, Choir Room |
| Tues, 9/22 | 4:00 pm: | Community Meditation, Library |
| Wed, 9/23 | 10:00 am: | Sit & Stitch, Library |
| | 1:00 pm: | Pastor's Book Discussion, Library |
| | 3:15 pm: | Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary |
| Thurs, 9/24 | 11:00 am: | LWV HOT Meeting, Library |
| | 1:30 pm: | Crone Talk, Fellowship Hall |
| | 4:00 pm: | Pisgah Chpt Trout Un'lt Board Mtg, Choir Room |

Next Sunday, 9/27, for Forum: Decluttering with Downsizing in Mind - Jill Hart, professional organizer. This talk goes somewhere different - it's about the open loops quietly weighing on you: the boxes you haven't opened because you're not ready to, the conversations with your kids you keep putting off, the questions about "what happens to this" that nobody's answered yet. Join us for an honest, refreshingly different look at downsizing — one that addresses the physical clutter, yes, but also the mental clutter and the emotional clutter. Come for practical guidance. Leave with a lighter mind — not just a lighter attic.

Save These Dates:

- Oct 11 – Blessing of the Animals, Laurel Green Park
- Oct 20 -- Friendship Dinner, Fellowship Hall
- Oct 25 – Congregational Lunch after Worship, Fellowship Hall
- Nov 15 -- Brian Combs, preaching, Sanctuary
- Nov 20 – Transgender Day of Remembrance Vigil, Sanctuary
- Nov 26 -- Thanksgiving Potluck Feast, Fellowship Hall
- Dec 13 -- Christmas Music Special, Sanctuary

PRAYER CONCERNS

Please remember these people in your prayers this week

- Angie Yates and family as they mourn the passing of her mother, Barbara, age 89. Also pray for Angie as she awaits hip replacement surgery on Sept 28.
- Arna Campbell, friend of Trisha LaGrange, has ongoing health challenges.
- Frosty Sinclair had knee replacement surgery last week and is home recovering.
- Liz Brennan, long-time member of FCCH, died last week.
- Debra Miller, Karla's sister, is in a Denver hospital recovering from medical complications and issues.
- For Dody & Sharon Schultz-Pratt, whose niece who died because of a terrible car accident recently.
- Hilarie Glasgow-Hawkins and family of Jean Glasgow-Hawkins, her wife, who died last month.
- Kay Davis is receiving chemotherapy in Florida.
- Ericka Fagerlin continues PT at home.
- Mindy Myers is continuing to heal.

Birthdays this week:

- | | |
|-------------------|------|
| Marjorie Richards | 9/21 |
| Alice Tenold | 9/22 |
| Al Diaz | 9/25 |

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
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Mr. Mark Acker
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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**

September 20, 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

Kol Nidre

Jewish melody for the beginning of Yom Kippur

Joel Helfand, soloist

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

God of Many Names

God, Creator, Source of Being, breath of life in earth and sky,
loving presence, never leaving, closer than our heartbeat sigh.
God of justice, God of mercy, wisdom deeper than the sea,
still you call us into courage, shaping what the world can be.

Christ, our teacher, friend, and healer, breaking chains of fear
and shame, tender shepherd, liberator, still you know us each by
name. Living word and hope eternal, light no darkness can contain,
through compassion, truth, and service, love arises once again.

Spirit moving through creation, wind of comfort, fire of grace,
sacred rhythm of communion, binding all in one embrace.
God, the many-named and nameless, ever ancient, ever new,
may our lives become a blessing, filled with love forever true.

First Reading	Psalm 91 as paraphrased from the First Nations Version of the Bible	Connie Knight
Second Reading	This Here Flesh Cole Arthur Riley	
My first prayer was into a purple plastic toy megaphone. I even went into the closet to do it in case God was shy like me. Isn't it something that in Genesis, God makes a home for things before God makes the thing? Not the fish first but the sea. Not the bird first but the sky. Not the human first but the garden. I like to think of God hunched over in the garden, fingernails hugging the brown soil, mighty hands cradling mud like it's the last flame in a windstorm. A God who says, Not out of my own womb but out of this here dust will I make you. Place has always been the thing that made us. We cannot escape being formed by it.		
Anthem	Know That God Is Good South African song	FCCH Choir
Know that God is good. Hallelujah. Mungu nimwema.		
Sermon	On "Place" in Our Journeys	Karla Miller
A Time for Reflection		
Prayers of the People		
Loving God, hear our prayer.		
Congregational Prayer		
Loving God, Source of Life, Breath of Compassion, and Spirit of Justice, we gather in gratitude for your presence among us. You are wisdom that guides, mercy that restores, and love that welcomes all. Open our hearts to one another and to the work of peace, healing, and hope in the world. May we reflect your kindness, seek your truth, and walk together in courage and grace. 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	Joshua Fit de Battle of Jerico Spiritual, arranged Mary McDonald
*Doxology	Halle, halle, halle-lu-jah. Halle, halle, halle-lu-jah. Halle, halle, hall-lu-jah. Halle-lu-jah, hallelujah.
*Prayer of Blessing	
*Hymn	○ God, May We Hold On to Love
O God, may we hold on to love — and in the times when love is lost, send down your mercy like a flood and show us love is worth the cost.	
When righteous anger fills our plate and harms us — body, mind and soul — may we forgive and so create a feast that makes the wounded whole.	
May we push back at all the fear that, like a storm, is raging round. May we work hard for justice here till walls of hate come tumbling down.	
God, give us grace to set aside the things that hurt and tear apart, till we find love has opened wide a path to life, a whole new start.	
Intentions and Benediction	
Closing Song	Hebrew Melody Joel Helfand, soloist
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, and will be posted on our website tomorrow.	
Altar Artist:	Teresa Ramer
Acolyte:	Joe Streer
Cover art: “Liturgy: Praying with This Here Flesh” by Cathy Mia Kowley	