Beloved,

I have just returned from a whirlwind overnight trip to New York City, to celebrate the retirement of my mentor and teacher and advisor at Union Theological Seminary, in a happening entitled “From This To That” at James Memorial Chapel. The evening was filled with singing and dancing, prayers and poetry, thank you’s and blessings, visual art and puppets and love.

James Chapel is the cradle in which many aspiring clergy, passionate social justice workers, and famous theologians preached their first sermons and prayed their first public prayers. A Gothic style sanctuary with no fixed pews or pulpit and soaring ceilings, it becomes a different setting for daily worship for the seminary. Students are encouraged to think outside of the box, to consider how the use of flowing fabrics, objects, words, silence, music, art and scripture will engage all of the senses to order to create embodied worship experiences for the gathered community of seekers, skeptics, and saints. Spirit dances praise and lament and healing and challenge every day from 12:00-12:30 pm in James Chapel—all in a little bit of this, and a little bit of that. It’s extraordinary, really. Actually, in the truest sense of that word~~it is extra-ordinary, because the ordinary is lifted up, highlighted, reimagined so much so that ordinary becomes more of its own created good self~~extra-ordinary—which then inspires curiosity and connection among the congregation. All with a little bit of this, and a little bit of that.

I think of our church community as a little bit of this, and a little bit of that. We all have something ordinary which is amazing to give to one another, to this world, and our community. We are poets and prayers, givers and receivers, we cook and garden and read and write, we talk and meet and accomplish and walk and love. May we continue to discover and highlight all of what is extra-ordinary in one another, so that Spirit can live and move freely and joyfully, in all of our this-ness and that-ness.

Love,
Karla
The Ministries of First Congregational or
WHAT DO ALL THOSE GROUPS DO? (Part 2)

Last month, Dawn Kucera told us about the work of the Ministry of Worship. This month, Mindy Myers tells us about the activities of the Ministry of Physical Resources – where there is some sort of activity for everyone to join. Read on!

Thanks,
Phil Taylor, Moderator

Second up – Mindy Myers tells us about the Ministry of Physical Resources:

MINISTRY OF PHYSICAL RESOURCE

Calling all volunteers to join our lively MPR team! You don’t have to be a gardener, carpenter, electrician, plumber, organizer, building manager, construction or kitchen expert. Enjoy the outdoors or stay inside out of the sun or rain. We have no requirements or set schedules; join us for as little or as much joyful time as you choose. The team will show you how to help us maintain our building & grounds any season of the year. Help us to be faithful stewards of God’s grace. Sound intriguing? Check out these MPR opportunities:

● Plant, weed & maintain our FCC vegetable garden that yielded 1047 pounds of produce for the Interfaith Assistance Ministry food bank last year. Though our garden is not organic, we try to avoid insecticides & practice environmentally safe methods.
● Maintain our FCC Memorial Garden & Labyrinth.
● Decorate our building’s interior, including our local artwork.
● Maintain our church kitchen, keeping it well organized, clean & safe to support all the fellowship activities that revolve around our FCC kitchen.
● Conduct repairs within our skill sets & help select contractors for major projects.
● Monitor contracts for our mechanical equipment & landscaping.
● Maintain & operate our sound systems.

The Ministry of Physical Resources meets every 3rd Wednesday at 10:00AM in our Library. All members & friends are welcome to attend anytime! For more information, please contact MPR Facilitator, Mindy Myers - mindy7myers@gmail.com or 919-491-1004 (cell/text).
Sunday School Monthly Report
March, 2019

Ginger Fisher, Sunday School Teacher
Dede Walton, Nursery Teacher

March Theme: Helping Our Environment

This month the children learned about the importance of protecting our environment through personal and community action. We started preparations for playing the Carbon Footprint Game, a congregation-wide project to raise awareness and foster personal and community-wide earth-friendly behaviors. Ginger and Dede spoke to the Church Council about implementing the Carbon Footprint Game project after Easter.

The children also learned about the meaning of Lent and how to make a personal commitment to “give back” to those in their lives during this season of preparation for Easter.

Date: Attendance: Substitutes:
March 3 5
March 10 2
March 17 6
March 24 7 Nora Novak for Dede Walton
March 31 5 Alice Pfirrmann for Dede Walton

THE WRITERS ROUNDTABLE

Writers—whether members of the church or not—who would like to read from their work (any genre) at a Writers’ Roundtable, are invited to register with Rand Bishop (697-0090 or randbishop33@gmail.com). Listeners are also welcome. The Writers’ Roundtable meets on the fourth Thursday of every month in the Church Parlor at 11:30 am. If you’re reading, please bring 5-6 duplicates of your work to share. Check with Rand for details. The next meeting time is Thursday, May 23 at 11:30.
Council approved a request from Compassionate Action that FCUCC become an official sponsor of Wear Orange Day – a gun-safety initiative – which is taking place June 8.

Ron Miller reported that church income is higher than expected while expenses are lower, putting us in excellent financial shape. He also shared that our investment account has almost recovered from last year’s losses.

The Ministry of Physical Resources has disengaged from Limeberry Roofing, which we’d hired to replace a portion of the church roof, due to their lack of responsiveness. Three new vendors are being evaluated.

The church retreat will be held on November 9 at St. John’s in the Wilderness.

Several ideas were considered for welcoming our new members into church activities, including assigning each a mentor, creating a booklet describing each Ministry, and holding a Ministry Fair at an upcoming coffee hour.

The church is sending flowers to JoAnn Ashley’s funeral service. She will be greatly missed.

Karla reported that 20 small-group meetings have been held and that they have proved to be very valuable to her.

Karel Bodamer is now facilitating the mental health social-justice group.

Hunger Walk planning is underway.

The Ministry to Members and Friends is seeking a volunteer to facilitate Fellowship Suppers. If you are interested, please contact John Bodamer.

A group outing to an upcoming Asheville Tourists baseball game is being planned. Keep an eye on the bulletin board and the Chronicle for details.

The vegetable garden has been plowed and the irrigation system repaired. Planting will begin soon.
WALTER ASHLEY LECTURE SERIES  
May 31, - June 2, 2019

It’s coming up fast!!!

Reverend Bacon says “The Golden Thread of energy connecting us all is love; in that Loving Energy each of us is a unique gift from God”.

Here is a link to a brief video of Rev. Bacon talking about his book 8 Habits of Love  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZyHr6v1VEq8

Also, here is a link to Reverend Bacon giving advice to a single father  https://youtu.be/4AiWWbI2AD0

For additional information or to make reservations, please visit the Ashley Lecture Series page on our website (fcchendersonville.org).

Look! Peace Poles at FCUCC!!

The new peace poles are located at each entrance to the church and are a gift from Becky Rowland and Nancy Kaczor.

Thank you Nancy and Becky!!
May 5 - How To Die Young....As Late As Possible

Bob and Fran German, healthy-lifestyle advocates and authors, will help you discover the path to reversing your age and leading a more healthy, happy, purposeful and youthful life…starting now! This lively program includes a short video, a presentation of Bob & Fran’s, The Ten Strategies To Be Young At Any Age, and an interactive discussion. Learn how to stay young in mind, body, heart and spirit. Don’t miss this enlightening forum!

Bob and Fran German are an inspirational couple who are healthy-lifestyle proponents and mentors. They believe that getting older does not have to mean getting sicker! In their presentation, they share their knowledge based on years of wellness research, meeting wisdom teachers while traveling to more than 75 countries, and personal experiences, including overcoming life-threatening diseases. (Bob and Fran are not licensed health professionals and they advise everyone to get their doctor’s approval before starting any new lifestyle regimen.)

May 12 - The Doctrine of Discovery - Unmasking the Domination Code

Ben and Joanna Coonrod

Columbus and other colonizers laid claim to the lands of the original nations of the Americas and elsewhere on the basis of the idea that Christians had a biblical right to discover and dominate non-Christian lands. This doctrine, supported by papal edicts, continues to serve as the conceptual foundation of the political and legal system of the United States and elsewhere in the world for their dominion over original nations.

Ben and Joanna Coonrod are members of this church and were married here. They have a rich background in spiritual growth matters and serve as Prayer Chaplains. Ben is very involved in The Mankind Project.

May 19 - Mental Health Survey

Fe Anam Avis and Panel

May is Mental Health Month and today is Mental Health Sunday at First Congregational Church. As part of that emphasis, the Mental Health group is conducting a Forum seeking to better understand the needs of members and our community by sharing our own stories. In preparation for the forum, please reflect on these questions: continued next page.....
1) When you hear the phrase “mental health” what experience does that help you remember? The experience could be that of a friend, family member, or your own personal story.

2) In what ways can the church be more helpful to you in dealing with mental health issues, either in your life, or in the lives of those you care about?

3) On which mental health issues in the community does the church need to focus more resources?

An author and church consultant, Fe has long been interested in mental health matters. He is the founder of Soul Shop, a national movement. Among his published books are *A Second Day: A Hopeful Journey Out of Suicidal Thinking* and *Life, Death and Resurrection: The Gift of the Impossibly Messed-Up Life*.

Fe and his wife, Shawn, recently joined our church.

**May 26 - Preparing for Ashley Lecturer, Rev. Ed Bacon**

Larry Anderson

We prepare to welcome Rev. Ed Bacon, our guest lecturer next weekend, with ease and good humor. Rev. Bacon will present a vision of progressive hopes, ideas and actions for contemporary churches. He is recently retired from many years as Rector of All Souls Pasadena where he and his congregation of riskers and explorers built a safe and welcoming fellowship. Rev. Bacon has said that the word GOD can lead us far away from anything like a fully human experience of the “divine” and has written that LOVE is the better way of expressing and exploring the “divine” in modern life.

Larry Anderson will invite us to an hour of conversation to peak our interest and which may open some doors into our growing LOVE. Larry is a frequent Forum presenter and plays the guitar on our Communion Sundays.

**June 2 - Ashley Lecturer, Rev. Ed Bacon**

This Forum will be held in the church sanctuary.

**June 9 - Following Ashley Lecturer, Rev. Ed Bacon**

Larry Anderson

We invite a conversation about the gifts and challenges of our weekend together with Rev. Ed Bacon.
Memories from 90’s + Luncheon
COME TO THE WELL

Self Care

“In many shamanic societies, if you came to a medicine person complaining of being disheartened, dispirited, or depressed, they would ask-‘When did you stop dancing?  When did you stop singing?  When did you stop being enchanted by stories?  When did you stop being comforted by the sweet territory of silence?’”  Gabrielle Roth

I have danced in our sanctuary.  I sing in our choir.  Our parlor has been home to my Guided Autobiography classes where we share our stories, laugh, cry and knit ourselves together. Spirituality is the art of homecoming and a church that feels like “home” is a gift. Having a loving fellowship that offers belonging and diversity with wisdom is a spiritual mecca.

John O’Donohue, the Irish poet, author and former priest, speaks to me about the power of stillness, solitude and silence. It is a profound and challenging journey to sort through the fragmented state of politics, climate, the natural world and what can feel like a Missing the Mark Contest at home and abroad; a spiritually dehydrating atmosphere. I crave stillness, solitude and silence to fill what feels draining.

We need to be “prayed up” as Romella and Ed say. I’ve trained to be a prayer chaplain with these two amazing souls and several others of us. I’ve been reflecting on what keeps my faith-fire kindled. Self care, they call it.

Awe and Nature-Quiet Belonging
Moving Beyond Judgement to Compassion: Prayer is a thoroughfare to compassion.
Service and Deep Hospitality: Welcome the stranger and friends who drop by while I am “busy”.
Spend Time in the Right Brain: Honor mysteries. Thrill into simple things, like breathing and photosynthesis.
Being Around Children and Animals are my best guides through the needle to the kingdom.
Stretch: Understand discomfort and loss as a classroom.
Develop resurrection skills: If life nails me, it is my work to get back to grace- the Olympic workout for a buff soul is trusting through the darkness, crisis and hollow places into new life.

I know there is much more but this is my nutshell. On June 23, several of us prayer chaplains will present at the Adult Forum. We will share our experiences with prayer and will make our role and availability within the church more clear. Be well and may you feel “prayed up”.

Diane Rhoades, Prayer Chaplain
Wow! We already knew for sure that FCUCC congregants volunteer to serve our community neighbors in myriad ways – the 33 responses to our request for details confirmed that knowledge. Thanks to you all not only for the work you do, but also for the information you shared, which will help in the revision of our Volunteer Opportunities Directory.

At our April meeting, Melissa Melum updated us about the recently-reactivated Environmental Stewardship team, and shared some of the MANY resources for study and action. These include The Union of Concerned Scientists (ucsusa.org), Green America (greenamerica.org), the Natural Resources Defense Council (nrdc.org), and 350.org, “building a global grassroots movement to solve the climate crisis”. FCUCC will soon launch an “Adopt-A-Stream” project with Mountain True (mountaintrue.org). Look for details soon as to how you can be involved!

At the May 21st Fellowship Supper we will learn about the work of the Henderson County United Way from Executive Director Denise Long. Be sure to sign up; invite a friend!

**Note:** If you haven’t yet volunteered for the United Way May 10 & 11 Days of Caring, you can do so at liveunitedhc.galaxydigital.com or call 828-692-1636.

Next **SERVICE AND GIVING** meeting: Thursday, May 9, 10 a.m. Hope to see you there!
At the May 21st Fellowship Supper we will learn about the work of the Henderson County United Way from Executive Director Denise Long. Be sure to sign up; invite a friend!

Social time begins at 5:30. Dinner will start at 6:00 and the program will begin at 6:45. Sign up to attend with a choice of food you will bring after church service before the 19th. Remember to bring a dinner plate, utensils, and mug for coffee or tea.
EASTER MEMORIES
PRAYER LIST

Family of JoAnn Ashley
Lynne Cigal
David Conner (friend of Anne Cain)
Barbara Dexter (mother of Angie Yates)
Sue Easton
Marcia Farrell
Anna Frawley (Friend of Tierney’s)
Mildred Gardner
Donna Gross
Jim Jolly
Trisha LaGrange
Patsy McCurry
Jeannie Myers (friend of Diaz’s)
Betsey Parker
Joady Perrett
Ingrid Perry
Ileana Ross
John Sams
Victoria Tatum
Eve Teerlinck
Gary Walsworth

Thank you for letting us know of people who need to be added to our prayer list as well as those that are ready to be taken off.

The FCUCC Bookclub will meet at 2:00 on Tuesday, May 14th at 2:00 in the church library to go “Into the Magic Shop” with James Doty. Part memoir, part science, part inspiration, and part practical instruction, Dr. Doty, a Neurosurgeon, shows us in the Magic Shop how we can fundamentally change our lives by first changing our brains and our hearts. Art Willey will lead us on this adventure. Come join us!
### May Birthdays

1: Maryett Carl  
2: Carolyn Schmalz  
5: Diane Swift  
6: Karel Bodamer  
9: Zachary Cone  
13: Connie Knight  
23: Jon Arthur  
25: Annie Fritschner  
26: Anne Cain  
28: Posy Jackson  
29: Sherry Haagenson  
31: David Kelly

### May Anniversaries

1: Craig & Lin Stogner  
6: Greg & Jen McKinley  
7: Bob & Dorothy Koopman  
9: Matt & Mandy Henderly  
14: Bob & Susan Palmer  
16: Al & Joan Diaz  
18: Jon & Joan Nobling  
23: Gary & Judy Cyphers  
24: Hank & Pamela Federlein  
25: Ray & Rachel Stone

The next Chronicle will be a double issue for June & July.  
Deadline is May 22, 2019.
May Lectionary

Third Sunday of Easter
May 5
Acts 9:1-6, (7-20)
Ps 30
Rev 5:11-14
John 21:1-19

The Way Forward

Fourth Sunday of Easter
May 12
Acts 9:36-43
Ps 23
Rev 7:9-17
John 10:22-30

Life-giving Acts

Fifth Sunday of Easter
May 19
Acts 11:1-18
Ps 148
Rev 21:1-6
John 13:31-35

Imagine

Sixth Sunday of Easter
May 26
Acts 16:9-15
Ps 67
Rev 21:10, 22-22:5
John 14:23-29 or John 5:1-9

Disciples together

ATTENDANCE

Children’s
Worship Sunday School
04/07 - 150 5
04/14 - 183 7
Maundy Thursday - 87
04/21 - 206 (Easter) 18
04/28 - 160 8

Average Worship Attendance: 175

The Congregational Chronicle
is published monthly,
except for December/January and
June/July issues,
by First Congregational UCC
1735 Fifth Ave. West
Hendersonville NC 28739-4013
Phone: 828.692.8630
E-mail: fccinfo@hendersonville.org
Website: www.fcchendersonville.org

Rev. Karla Miller, Pastor
(karla@fcchendersonville.org)
Mark Acker, Minister of Music
(mark@fcchendersonville.org)
Sheryl Tellier, Administrator
(sheryl@fcchendersonville.org)
Dora & Charles Littleton, Custodians
Rev. David G. Kelly, Jr., Pastor Emeritus

Next Chronicle deadline
May 22, 2019
for combined Jun/Jul issue!