

# FCCH Congregational Chronicle July 2024



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## Note from Mark

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the July issue of the Chronicle! Inside this issue, you will find lots of information about what has happened and will be happening at our church.

June was a fantastic month that included Pride Sunday, with John Pavlovitz speaking to a packed Forum and preaching a powerful sermon in worship. But, for me, the two amazing concerts by the Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus were among the strongest mountain-top experiences of my life--musically, spiritually, and emotionally. The concerts featured fantastic music sung by the Chorus, and moving stories told by transgender members of the Choir. I keep hearing of how people who attended were educated and moved to their core by these concerts. Ben Coonrod, a member of our church, wrote this poem that expresses what many of us experienced at the concerts:

### **A Veil Lifted: Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus June 15, 2024**

Last night I felt there was no veil between us.

Sometimes there is a thin place  
Where I can be close to that place  
where Love lives in joy.

But last night when I heard you sing and speak about your lives  
I was not only close to Love but in it,  
All of us together in communion,  
In joy, in sadness, in gratitude,  
In grace.

Thank you for being there to sing from your hearts into mine  
A grace that I will carry in my heart all of my life.

Thank you, Ben! And thank you to Maralee McMillan and all those who helped with the logistics and financial support of these concerts that we offer to our community.

I'm grateful for all the ways that we experienced the presence of the Spirit in June. The rest of the summer also holds additional opportunities for worship, fellowship and service - all of which are places through which we will experience Spirit as we continue our summer pilgrimage.

Lastly, please continue to hold our pastor, Karla Miller, in your prayers during her sabbatical pilgrimage, and may we also hold each other in our prayers as we each travel our individual journeys.

With love,  
Mark

## Pilgrimage Hike Rhododendron Nature Park 06.09.24



28 people + 2 canine  
“people” participated in the  
1st Pilgrimage Walk led by  
Jan & John Caldemeyer at  
Rhododendron Lake Park

Article and pictures courtesy of Dawn Kucera  
[dawnkucera@mac.com](mailto:dawnkucera@mac.com)

## Carolina Village Visit June 3rd, 2024



Mark Acker and Lyn Stogner met with FCCH members who live at Carolina Village on June 3 for their monthly small group meeting. What a fantastic group of wonderful people!

Picture and text courtesy of Mark Acker  
mark@fcchendersonville.org

## Circle of Friends



“Our Family Circle”, Group # 6 in the Circle of Friends program.

We met at the Mills River restaurant today and had an absolutely wonderful meeting. Our topic of discussion was, “Describe one of your happiest memories and/or most significant events”.

*It was joyful, and I truly believe that each member of this group cherishes the opportunity that we have had to get to know one another on a deeper level.*

Picture & article courtesy Bruce Mills  
bmills514@yahoo.com

## Garden Update

One potato, two potato, three potato, four....Just the other day, the garden crew dug up 160 **pounds** of potatoes for IAM!!



*This is a yellow/brown potato plant that looks like it's diseased or dead. Don't be fooled! That is exactly what we eagerly wait for because it's a sign that the potatoes are ready to be harvested. You might remember in a previous article that we planted about 150 lbs of seed potatoes a couple of months ago. Many more pounds will be ready to harvest in the next few weeks so, all told, we'll have a great return from our initial planting.*



Remember those turnip seeds glued to strips of toilet tissue? So far, 12 pounds of turnips have been harvested and not a scrap of toilet tissue in sight! Along with the potatoes and turnips, we have harvested 40 pounds of onions. That brings the total poundage we have taken to IAM so far this summer to 173 pounds!

As good as our harvest has been so far, we have had a few challenges in the last couple of months.... a four-legged critter has taken up residency in the garden who likes to dine on the tender shoots of our bush green beans (However, as you can see, the bean plants are still producing blossoms which will soon develop into nice healthy green beans).



The bush beans will be ready to harvest in a few weeks. On the other hand, the pole beans which are growing up the 15-foot vertical frame are not included on the critter's menu because they are not within reach. This is definitely a benefit of vertical planting! The pole bean plants are thriving and will be a heavy producer of beans to take to IAM.

All in all, the garden crew is very happy with the harvest so far and look forward to taking more produce to IAM in the coming weeks.

As always, if you have the time, please stop by the garden to say hello, or honk your car horn as you drive by to acknowledge their dedication to providing fresh produce to those who do not have access to fresh, healthy food.

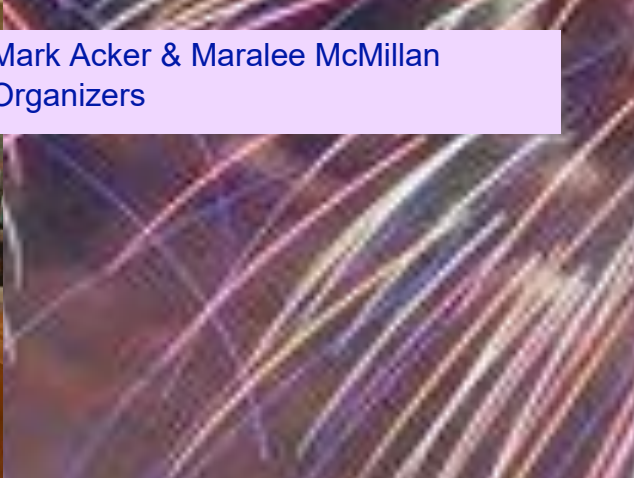
**NEWS FLASH:** Just before the chronicle was published, 63 more pounds of a combination of pole beans and potatoes were taken to IAM. NOW the total comes up to (drum roll)....236 pounds!

Article and pictures courtesy of Caroline Wilson (from Nova Scotia) & Jeannie Stewart  
cwilson7816@gmail.com & greenbriar13@gmail.com

# Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus 06.15.24



Mark Acker & Maralee McMillan  
Organizers



Pictures courtesy of Dawn Kucera  
[dawnkucera@mac.com](mailto:dawnkucera@mac.com)



Atlanta Gay Men's Choir with our own  
Dell Orr & David Vandre looking on

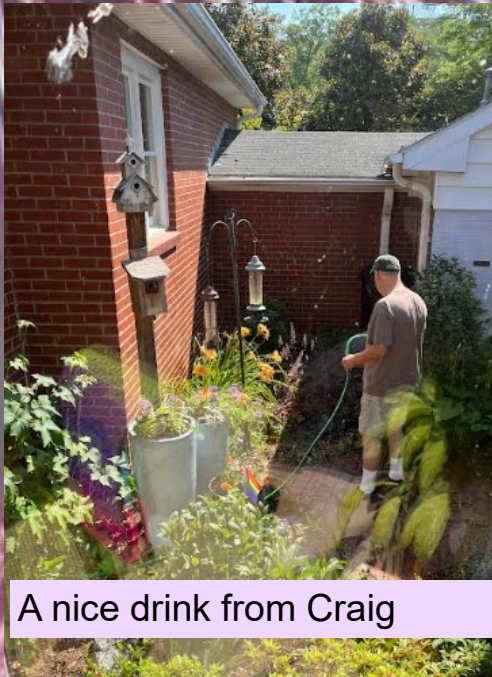
# Our Atrium



Pots dressed up for Pride Month



Alter Lilies rescue from 4 years ago



A nice drink from Craig

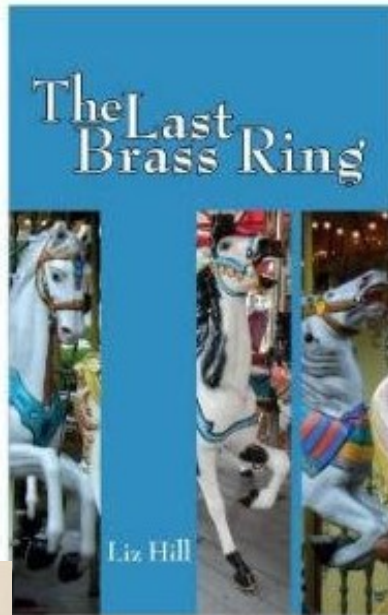
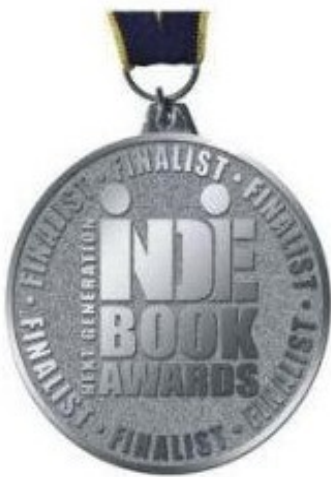
A new pot replaced the cracked one, and Angelonia, Petite Petunias, Dusty Miller, and Lantana decorate the pots.

Missing from photos: our Lin who actually did the planting but doubled as a photographer. All with one hand tied behind her back!



Article and pictures courtesy of Lin Stogner  
alfandellie@gmail.com

## Author and Joyful Faces



**Congratulations, Liz Hill!**

Her latest book, "The Last Brass Ring" was recognized as one of the best books of 2024 in the Next Generation Indie Book Awards, where it was named a finalist in the Young New Adult (17 and up) category.

"It's a pretty big contest field, so needless to say, I was thrilled," reported Liz.



Pictures & article courtesy of Shella Clendenning  
[bsheila.nc@gmail.com](mailto:bsheila.nc@gmail.com)

## The Epitome of "Heart"

Romella O'Keefe & Bal Goleman - could they look any happier?



Dora Littleton with flowers from one of our meeting groups in thanks for a job well done



Picture courtesy of Dawn Kucera  
[dawnkucera@mac.com](mailto:dawnkucera@mac.com)



# Sweet Scenes from Sunday School



James creates a chalk art project in the gazebo.



2. CarolAnn and Matthew work on a Father's Day gift



CarolAnn and Matthew work on a Father's Day gift.



James, Roddy, and Matthew work on a craft project



Iris shows off her gratitude sunflower.



Aryella's gratitude sunflower has many petals.

Pictures & article courtesy of Ginger Zemp  
zempvirginia@gmail.com

## Upcoming July events of note at a glance

### July Sunday Forums and Sermons at a Glance

**July 7<sup>th</sup>**, 9:00 am Forum & 10:30 am service  
Rev. Brian Combs, pastor of Haywood Street Congregation, Asheville.



**July 14<sup>th</sup>**, 9:00 am Forum Maureen Graham, Executive Director of the Medical Loan Closet  
10:30 am service - Mark Acker

**July 21<sup>st</sup>**, 9:00 am Forum Kirsten Cone, Executive Director of Givens Estates, on the Civil Rights pilgrimage by residents of Givens Estates  
10:30 am service with Rev. Joan Saniuk, Metropolitan Community Church

**July 28<sup>th</sup>**, 9:00 am Forum & 10:30 am service - John Pavlovitz

### **Sunday, July 14<sup>th</sup>, 4:00 pm Pilgrimage Walk with Jan & John Caldemeyer**


Group Walk through Patton Park / Oklawaha Greenway, 114 East Clairmont Drive or 1730 Asheville Hwy, both in Hendersonville, NC 28791; both get you to Patton Park. If you want to carpool, meet at the church at 3:30 pm, or meet in Patton Park parking lot at 4 pm. Dogs allowed. Recommendations: water bottle, sunscreen, bug spray, walking stick. Contacts: Jan (828)606-4384 or John (828)674-3997.



## Upcoming July events of note at a glance





**Saturday, July 13th**, 2:00 pm Celebration of Life for Bob Koopman followed by reception  
<https://www.shulerfuneralhome.com/obituaries/Robert-T-Koopman?obId=31745582>





**ANOTHER WORLD IS POSSIBLE**  
TRAINING SERIES  
**DE-ESCALATION WORKSHOP**  
TUES JULY 9TH /6PM  
@ FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF HENDERSONVILLE

THIS TRAINING WILL TEACH WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS SKILLS IN DE-ESCALATION TECHNIQUES AS WELL AS BYSTANDER INTERVENTION. FROM TOPICS LIKE DEALING WITH COUNTER PROTESTORS, TO STEPPING IN TO INTERVENE IN HARASSMENT, THIS WORKSHOP WILL PROVIDE ATTENDEES WITH SAFETY STRATEGIES FOR THEMSELVES AND THEIR COMMUNITY.

RSVP 



OR VISIT:  
[BIT.LY/DE-ESCALATE2](https://bit.ly/de-escalate2)



## Upcoming events of note at a glance



# NAMI Family-to-Family

National Alliance on Mental Illness

**NAMI Family-to-Family** is a free, **online 8-session** education program for **family, friends and significant others of adults living with a mental health condition**. NAMI Family-to-Family provides information about anxiety, depressive disorders, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and other mental health conditions. Other topics covered include communication, problem solving, treatment and recovery.

NAMI Western Carolina will host a **virtual** NAMI Family-to-Family class free of charge to participants, beginning **Tues. July 9, 2024**. The class will meet from 6:00 pm until 8:30 pm each Tuesday for 8 weeks and will conclude on Tues. Aug. 27, 2024. **Space is limited and registration is required**. Contact us at [info@namiwnc.org](mailto:info@namiwnc.org) or 828-505-7353.



### Participant Perspectives

*"This course overall was the single most, without a doubt, helpful and informative thing ever offered in all my years searching for answers...it has helped me to understand better and communicate more effectively with my brother."*

*"The course has helped me to realize that my son is still inside the body that is often times hidden by the mental illness and that I am not alone in this."*

**Contact us to register for the NAMI Family-to-Family class!**

You can also pick up a flyer at our Resource Center.

# Service & Giving Volunteer Agency of the Month - Bullington Gardens



Bullington Gardens, a 12-acre public botanical garden, not only demonstrates the beauty and value of native and ornamental plants through themed public gardens — it also provides hands-on education in horticulture and other sciences to students and adults. Through science-based horticultural education, Bullington connects children and adults with the natural world and works to enhance the life skills of those with physical or mental challenges.

**Horticultural Therapy (HT)** techniques are employed at Bullington to assist participants in learning new skills or regaining those that have been lost. These therapies help to improve memory, cognitive abilities, task initiation, language skills, and socialization — plus helping with physical rehabilitation to strengthen muscles and to improve coordination, balance, and endurance.

Bullington's (HT) program brings **Henderson County Public School students** with special needs — who otherwise would have difficulty joining in due to physical and mental disabilities — a weekly opportunity to connect with nature and to develop socialization skills, rehabilitation, and wellness. Based in the **therapy garden and greenhouse**, the program centers on plants-based activities where students tend their own gardens, create nature crafts, and enjoy exploring the gardens/grounds.

An additional horticultural therapy **pilot program to serve Seniors** in both independent and assisted living was introduced this past year.

*Observations from the Garden:* Increases self-esteem (over time) and socialization among often isolated groups, decreases anxiety, improves communication, creates connection to each other & the surrounding world.

**First Congregational of Hendersonville** is a community partner of the Horticultural Therapy program. To learn more please visit [www.bullingtongardens.org](http://www.bullingtongardens.org).

Pictures & article courtesy of Julie Spala & Stephanie Lowder  
[julie.spalla@gmail.com](mailto:julie.spalla@gmail.com) & [slowder@rarebirdcreative.com](mailto:slowder@rarebirdcreative.com)



# Council Meeting Notes

IMPORTANT NOTE: Council meetings are always open to all FCC Members and Friends.

Please notify Moderator, Bob McLendon, if you would like to attend.

- Treasurer's Report (Year-to-Date, through May 31, 2024, Financial Results)
  - o Total Income YTD was \$8,832 more than budgeted.
  - o Total Expenses YTD were \$1,876 more than budgeted.
  - o Net Result of the General Operating Fund YTD was \$6956 better than budgeted.
- We are awaiting a report and design documents from Robinson Design Engineering to obtain bids on environmental options for the new parking lot.
- Service and Giving coordinated our FCUCC activities at the Pride Picnic with great success!
- Coffee Hour volunteers are needed. Small Groups are encouraged to sign-up to host the event.
- We will be establishing a committee to review and update the Church's Bylaws, as required every five years. More to come.

Lin Stogner

Clerk

Pictures & article courtesy of Lin Stogner  
[alfandellie@gmail.com](mailto:alfandellie@gmail.com)

## Our Wonderful Groups

Facilitator	Group	Day	Contact
Barbara Rathbun	Bible Study: 1 Verse at a Time	2nd & 4th Thursdays, 4:00	<a href="mailto:bm Rathbun@bellsouth.net">bm Rathbun@bellsouth.net</a>
Karla Miller	Carolina Village	1st Mon, 1:30 pm	<a href="mailto:karla@fcchendersonville.org">karla@fcchendersonville.org</a>
Mark Acker	Choir Rehearsal	Every Wed 3:15 pm	<a href="mailto:Mark@fcchendersonville.org">Mark@fcchendersonville.org</a>
Bob McLendon	Church Council	2nd Tues 3:30	<a href="mailto:captainbob.bm@gmail.com">captainbob.bm@gmail.com</a>
Krista Kaufman	Circle of Friends - ongoing small groups	Each circle schedules	<a href="mailto:kristakaufman41@gmail.com">kristakaufman41@gmail.com</a>
Fe Avis	Elder Resources / PEAK (Parents of Estranged Adult Kids)	Saturday, beginning April 20th, 8:30 am - 9:45 a.m	<a href="mailto:fe@asecondday.com">fe@asecondday.com</a>
Mark Fagerlin	Ministry of Finance	2nd Tues of each month <b>b4 Council 11:00</b>	<a href="mailto:mfagerlin@gmail.com">mfagerlin@gmail.com</a>
Karla Miller	Sunday Forum	Sunday, 9:00 am	<a href="mailto:karla@fcchendersonville.org">karla@fcchendersonville.org</a>
Joyce Tierney & John Fuller	Meditation Group	Every Tuesday, 4:00 pm	<a href="mailto:joycie47@gmail.com">joycie47@gmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:fullerjohn@me.com">fullerjohn@me.com</a>
Stephanie Lowder	Service & Giving	2nd Thurs, 10 am	<a href="mailto:slowder@rarebirdcreative.com">slowder@rarebirdcreative.com</a>
Mindy Myers	Ministry of Physical Resources	3rd Wed, 10:00 am	<a href="mailto:mindy7myers@gmail.com">mindy7myers@gmail.com</a>
Linda Laderach	Ministry of Worship (acolytes, ushers, etc.)	Contact to volunteer	<a href="mailto:lladerac@mtholyoke.edu">lladerac@mtholyoke.edu</a>
Barbara Rathbun	Prayer Shawls	1st Tues, 10:00 am	<a href="mailto:bm Rathbun@bellsouth.net">bm Rathbun@bellsouth.net</a>
Patti Clay	Racial Justice Task Force	3rd Tues, 12:00 am	<a href="mailto:pclay51@gmail.com">pclay51@gmail.com</a>
Sukey Pratt	Stitchaway	Fridays at 10:00 am	<a href="mailto:sukeys@yahoo.com">sukeys@yahoo.com</a>
Patti Clay	Virtual Circle of Friends	Last Tues of the Month, 2:00 pm	<a href="mailto:pclay51@gmail.com">pclay51@gmail.com</a>

Please note: some groups may be on summer hiatus. Please check with the facilitator listed.

## June Attendance

June	Total	Sermon
2	114	Saniuk
9	160	Palovitz
16	121	Acker
23	113	Sharing
30	137	Sharing

## July Birthdays

Lydia Gossett	7/6
Mindy Myers	7/7
Dede Walton	7/12
Bal Goleman	7/13
Roger Dashner	7/14
Catherine Fairbanks	7/16
Bob McLendon	7/18
Louise Vier	7/19
Joan McKinney	7/21
Sharon Pearson	7/23
Phil Taylor	7/25
Fe Avis	7/26
Roger Woolsey	7/26
Lynn Conchado	7/28
Susan Huff	7/30
Scott Querin	7/31
Sharon Shultz Pratt	7/31

## To make you smile / Quote / Staff Resources

Someone I loved once gave me a box full of darkness.  
It took me years to understand that this, too, was a gift.



"I don't want a whole dessert;  
let's just get 2 spoons." - former  
friends of mine.

Do people who run know we're  
not food anymore?



My housemates are convinced our  
house is haunted.

I've lived here for 274 years and not  
noticed anything strange.

When you lie on your resume but still get the job...



First Congregational Church  
1735 Fifth Avenue West  
Hendersonville, NC 28739  
Phone: (828)692-8630  
Email: [office@fchhendersonville.org](mailto:office@fchhendersonville.org)

### Staff:

- ◆ Pastor: Reverend Karla Miller  
([karla@fchhendersonville.org](mailto:karla@fchhendersonville.org))
- ◆ Minister of Music / Pastoral Associate: Mark Acker  
([mark@fchhendersonville.org](mailto:mark@fchhendersonville.org))
- ◆ Administrator: Jo Freeman  
([office@fchhendersonville.org](mailto:office@fchhendersonville.org))
- ◆ Custodian: Dora Littleton