

The CONGREGATIONAL CHRONICLE

Volume 42, No. 6

United Church of Christ

June 2018

Moderator's View

Where Are They Now?

In the past two months, we have lost the physical presence of four beloved members: Alice Dacuba, Charlie Hofacker, Jere Smith, and Roger Smith.

In an attempt to find solace, I searched the Internet for “What is heaven?” “What is the soul?” and “What is death?” I wanted to hear that at least a part of each dear friend had gone to a safe, tranquil place untouched by disease, pain, or age. A place where they would commune with our Creator, with Jesus, and with the spark of divinity inside every other person who had ever passed; the part of us made in God’s image.

Fortunately, each web entry included multiple references to Scripture, which I should have thought of first. The way to learn about death is through the Word of God, who gave us life.

In the New Testament, Jesus raises three people from the dead, demonstrating in the physical realm the everlasting life only He can give in the realm of the spirit:

- ◆ The widow’s son in Nain (Luke 7:11–17)
- ◆ Jairus’ daughter (Luke 8:52–56)
- ◆ Lazarus of Bethany (John 11:1–44)

Continued on next page

In particular, His well-known words from the story of Lazarus give me comfort and hope:

Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die."

I believe that Alice, Charlie, Jere, and Roger – and all of our family who preceded them – have been blessed with eternal life. They also live on in our hearts and minds. They have each of them touched each of us with their compassion, friendship, talents, and spirituality. And each has accepted God's will with incredible grace. We will miss them.

Nancy Keswani
Moderator

Please note that Pastor Mike is there for you if you are grieving and need support.

*Roger S. Smith
Memorial Service*

*Saturday, June 2
2:00 p.m.*

*Reception to follow
in the
Fellowship Hall*

Church Council Highlights

May 2018



- Melissa Melum presented a proposal for forming Health/Medical, Fire, and Security teams within the church. Melissa will coordinate the overall effort with support from other members. Council voted unanimously in favor of moving this plan forward.
- Bal Goleman described “Wear Orange Day in Hendersonville.” Saturday June 2, noon – 3, people will wear orange at a courthouse rally on gun violence. Our church’s name will appear on the event flier. Council approved unanimously to support this initiative.
- Stephanie Lowder proposed a budget for Compassionate Action. Council agreed to allocate \$1,000 of the current publicity budget to this team.
- Stephanie also shared a media plan and draft content for ads about the church that would run in the second half of 2018. Council voted to implement the campaign.
- Roger Woolsey reported that the Members and Associate Members lists have been updated.
- The “Why I Love Our Church” booklet, which includes quotes from members gathered during the stewardship campaign, is being finalized and printed.
- We are working with MCC Sacred Journey to update their rental agreement.
- Jeannie Stewart (Ministry of Members and Friends) said that the new Sunday school teacher is doing a great job and we have a larger number of children attending.
- John Parris (Ministry of Worship) described a prayer box that is being created as part of the Prayer Chaplain ministry.
- Sammye Whitney (Ministry of Larger Community) reported on the activities of the Compassionate Action group, especially around immigration. Sammye also distributed the Missions & Service minutes to demonstrate how active this group has been.
- Nancy Irving (Ministry of Physical Resources) let us know that her team is looking into a new or refurbished church sign. They are also revisiting our guidelines for use of church facilities.
- Ron Miller (Treasurer) shared that all expenditures to date are in line with the budget. Council voted to approve the housing allowance agreement for Pastor Mike.
- Pastor Mike provided an update on the transition process.

Submitted by:

Nancy Keswani, Moderator

WALTER E. ASHLEY MEMORIAL LECTURE SERIES

Be Inspired!

[Make your reservation now](#) to hear The Rev. Dr. Otis Moss III present:

A Handbook for a New America: Living Justly and Loving Powerfully in a Fractured World

June 8-9, Walter E. Ashley Memorial Lecture Series, First Congregational United Church of Christ, 1735 Fifth Avenue West, Hendersonville, NC 28739

Three lectures and lunch \$75; single lectures \$25.

[Click here](#) for times, updated lecture titles, and to reserve your place. Or, register at the door.

Coming in October 2018: Tod Linafelt

With the unavailability of Dr. Brueggemann, in the fall we will be hosting Dr. Tod Linafelt, an accomplished biblical scholar, who was a protegee of Walter Brueggemann, one of the world's foremost biblical scholars. Dr. Linafelt co-wrote a textbook, *Introduction to the New Testament*, with Brueggemann and teaches at Georgetown University. He will be speaking on the relevance of the Bible for us today.

[Learn more.](#)

MUSINGS FROM PASTOR MIKE

My heart is heavy these days. It happens every time I turn on my phone in the morning and check the news feed. More stories of violence around the world and gun violence in particular here in the U.S. “Thoughts and prayers” are promised and surely given but I wonder what kind of thoughts? What kind of prayers? Or does this phrase too often mean I need to say something soothing and then rush on with my life? When certain leaders make affirmations at an N.R.A. meeting and then two weeks later send thoughts and prayers for Santa Fe High School, it makes one wonder.

But we all get busy and, because we feel we don’t have the time, we post “thoughts and prayers” on Facebook. But is that enough? I am guilty of that myself. Our business and sense of order often delay or prevent us from acting as prophetically as we should. Martin Luther King, Jr. writes in *Letter from a Birmingham Jail*, “Is organized religion too inextricably bound to the status quo to save our nation and the world”? He writes about civil rights but he would also be discussing gun violence. The two are inextricably linked.

The UCC has produced a document entitled *Faith vs. Fear: A Faith Response to Gun Violence* for times like these. It is a good resource. A good **prayer** can be found within Matthew 26:51-52 “put your sword back in its place; for all who take the sword will perish by the sword.” Carla Bailey, Senior Minister of Plymouth Congregational Church in Minneapolis, MN provides good **thoughts**: “*I wonder what it will take for us to transcend the individual experience to a more community-based approach. I wonder how we will ever rise above the individual entitlement to bear arms to a cultural concern for the safety of others. I wonder when we stopped heeding Jesus’ command to stop! Put away your sword! Yes, Jesus, I will stop. Amen.*”

This at least is a place to start.

Focus on Forum

June 2018



JUNE 3 – PRE – Distinguished Lecturer

Larry Anderson

This spring's Distinguished Lecturer, Rev. Dr. Otis Moss III, is part of a new generation of ministers committed to preaching a prophetic message of love and justice, which he believes are inseparable companions that form the foundation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Senior pastor of Trinity United Church of Christ in Chicago, Dr. Moss has built his ministry on community advancement and social justice activism, preaching a theology that unapologetically calls attention to the problems of mass incarceration, environmental injustice, and economic inequality.

As is customary, our own Larry Anderson, retired minister and former psychologist, will prepare us for our Distinguished Lecturer who will speak on June 8 and 9.

JUNE 10 – The Message of Rev. Dr. Otis Moss III

Larry Anderson

Our own Larry Anderson will lead us through a summary of the Message that Rev. Dr. Otis Moss III expounded here at our church on June 8th and 9th and a “Where Do We Go From Here?” discussion for the future.

JUNE 17 – Riding The Second Wave

Dr. Jessica Heriot

When the second wave of feminist activism hit the shore in 1968, women's lives were changed forever. Women in the mental health professions began to question traditional theories about women's psychology and the psychotherapy that was meant to heal them. This Forum will discuss what theories were questioned and what new ideas about women's psychology and psychotherapy emerged.

Jessica Heriot, Ph.D. was a psychotherapist for 34 years. An adjunct professor at the University of Maryland School of Social Work and a founding member of a feminist counseling center in Baltimore. She has recently published a book, Riding the Second Wave: How Feminism Changed Women's Psychology and Mine. The book will be available for sale.

JUNE 24 – Subtle and Active Activism

Diane Swift

Some argue that is not important to hold marches and rallies, believing that prayers and being the change we want to see is enough. Some who believe this do not even see a need to vote! Others, tired of hearing about thoughts and prayers, dismiss the consciousness-raisers and believe only in a hands-on approach to change.

Diane believes both are needed. What do you think? She will give a brief talk with lots of time for discussion.

Diane Swift was a psychotherapist for nearly 40 years. For most of that time she has been a spiritual teacher and political activist. She facilitates the Oneness Blessing group in Hendersonville and is a prayer chaplain at both Unity of the Blue Ridge and First Congregational. She also is a prayer chaplain trainer.

JULY 1 – Writers' Forum

Rand Bishop, Coordinator

Four times a year we devote a Forum to this church's many talented writers and writer-friends who read from their work in various styles – prose, poetry, essays, etc. – on various subjects. If you would like to read from your original work, contact our Writers' coordinator, Rand Bishop, at randbishop33@gmail.com or call 697-0090.

Come and help us celebrate our creativity!

The Forum, an informal adult education feature of our church, is held from 9:00 to 10:15 on Sunday mornings in the Fellowship Hall (before the 10:30 service). All are welcome to attend. Contact the coordinators, Romella or Ed O'Keefe, (edrookeefe@att.net) if you would like to present a topic or recommend a speaker. Remember: all points of view are welcome...No correct doctrine required!

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 meet 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.



First Congregational Book Group

Love to read? Join us!

The FCUUC Bookclub will meet on Tuesday, June 12th at 2:00 pm in the Church Library to discuss “White Trash: The 400-Year Untold History of Class in America” by Nancy Isenberg. The author details the genesis of white underclass, challenging the idealistic notion that for poor whites thrift, hard work, and morality beget class mobility. As the wealth gap grows ever wider between rich and poor Americans, this detailed history gives insight into how this influenced the 2016 election. Come join us for this interesting discussion led by Pete Tittle.

Wear Orange Day-2018

June 1st is National Gun Violence Awareness Day. More than 300 cities, including Hendersonville, will join in spreading orange (the color of safety).

Church members are invited to participate in the local Wear Orange Day on **Saturday, June 2nd from noon to 3:00 in front of the Historic Court House on Main Street.** Information on reducing gun violence and activities for families and children will be available. See Bob Miles for more information.

Fellowship Supper

Tuesday, June 19

5:30 pm



On June 19th, Elizabeth Moss, Executive Director of Interfaith Assistance Ministry (IAM) will be the speaker at our Fellowship Supper. IAM is a nonprofit that provides emergency relief to Henderson County residents in financial crisis by offering food, clothing, funds and guidance. IAM began in 1984 and Ms. Moss will be the 4th Director of this very worthwhile organization.

Elizabeth Moss was an award winning reporter and editor in Florida and Boston and, after moving to Flat Rock nineteen years ago, was first employed by the Times-News. She then served as a fundraiser for the Pardee Hospital Foundation, before moving into her role as Director of Community Affairs and Outreach for Pardee UNC Health Care. Moss has served this community in many roles and now she said she will be “honored to serve our community by helping IAM continue its vital ministry.”

Come to the Fellowship Supper in June and bring a food item for IAM. Social time begins at 5:30 followed by a potluck supper at 6:00 and the program at 6:45. **Bring a dish to share plus your own place setting, including plate, utensils and a cup for coffee or tea.**

Four Seasons Compassion for Life needs volunteers—for the Hospice Home Store, for occasional “office” help at headquarters, for baking for special events, and, of course, for patient and family support. This last can happen in patients’ homes, in the hospital, or in assisted living and skilled nursing facilities. Can you help?

There will be a volunteer orientation session from 12:30 to 4:30 PM on June 12 at Greatrex House (the building next to Elizabeth House). If you can provide time in any of these areas that orientation will tell you what you need to know as an overview. If you wish to be involved with direct patient care, there is further training necessary. That training will be held, again at Greatrex, on June 14, from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. If you attend the June 12th orientation you are committed to nothing, but if you are interested in volunteering at Four Seasons, you can ask questions and find your niche.

If you wish to attend the June 12 meeting, please call Lauren Purdy @ 233-0385 (lpurdy@fourseasonscfl.org.) If you’d like to talk with someone near at hand either Jeannie Stewart or Howard Carl are current volunteers and would be glad to discuss the organization and various responsibilities with you.

COME TO THE WELL: The Light of God

As a prayer chaplain, I have been taught to drop my awareness approximately 18 inches from my head to my heart that is, and to listen with my heart.

The Oneness blessing is a process whereby after a short guided meditation, blessing givers go around to those who are gathered, standing in front of each individual, placing their hands on the person's head and sending a transmission of Divine Energy. This is such an important practice as it feels wonderful to be blessed. And for many who are not touched very much, it also allows them to be gently touched.

Recently our Oneness blessing group held its service at the Blue Ridge Rehabilitation Center, where First Congregational church member, Betsey Parker, currently resides. She is also a Blessing Giver and part of our group. I had some apprehension about holding the group there but knew it would mean a lot to Betsey. I was concerned that the residents would be too out of it or that some might find the concept of Oneness Blessing to be in conflict with their religious beliefs.

Indeed some of the dozen residents seemed to be drowsing off. A puddle of urine appeared on the floor, but was quickly cleaned up and the leaky resident wheeled out to be cleaned up.

I explained briefly the concept as a transmission of energy or blessing from the Divine, that each person would be receiving from their own god whether their god is called God, Jesus or Buddha. I led them through a short guided meditation which described healing light traveling through their bodies, relaxing, healing and energizing them. We put some gentle Native American flute music on and the four Blessing givers went around standing in front of each person placing our hands on their heads. As I stood in front of each person, I would see that individual as the Light of the World to dispel any judgments and keep me in my heart space. Betsey gave the Blessing from her wheel chair. One resident even scooted around in her wheel chair giving us her blessing. After receiving their blessings residents had a chance to say their names and the names of loved ones so we could send them prayers. When Blessing Giver David Hoffman led us in singing "I'll Fly Away," several residents joined in. Light and peace filled the room. Mission Accomplished.

Diane Swift, Chaplain



We Want You!

The Prayer Chaplains' program is almost one year old and we want YOU to consider joining us for a second year! By deepening your own prayer life, you will learn ways to minister to others' spiritual needs.

A Prayer Chaplain learns to:

- recognize the four main types of prayer.
- hold spiritual space.
- lovingly listen.
- pray with others from the heart.
- keep in confidence what is shared.

The Prayer Chaplains' commitment to hold spiritual space with and for others is a one-year commitment. Training for new chaplains and those who may decide to continue for a second year will begin in September, 2018, with a week-end retreat at our UCC Conference center in Blowing Rock, NC, from Friday, September 7 at 4:00 PM through Sunday lunch, September 9. This is a 50 hour training program that continues at the church on Saturdays after the retreat for 6 weeks (skipping Saturday, October 20: Ashley Lecture) ending on October 27th. Cost for the entire training program, including the two night retreat, materials, and meals, is \$180.

If interested, please contact Ed and Romella O'Keefe for more information at 828-890-4889 or email them at edrookeefe@att.net. The deadline for the training sign-up commitment (with a \$50.00 deposit – made out to the church) is July 7.

A Message from Dawn Kucera about Worship Involvement

For most of us, as individuals and as a congregation, one of the centers of our spiritual life revolves around the weekly worship service. Have you ever noticed how many bits and pieces actually comprise the service? They include things like having correct banner and paraments in the chancel area, the palm leaves on Palm Sunday, the new acolyte ritual, smiling ushers always in place, and communion being ready on the first Sunday.

When I first joined First Congregational, I was attracted by the social justice ministry. And while I still support that ministry, I found myself drawn to the ministry of taking care of things "within the walls" of our church. I find it immensely fulfilling to watch the weekly service unfold and feel a part of having created it.

If this kind of service to the congregation appeals to you, I'd like to invite you to consider joining us. The things we do don't take a lot of time, and we will train you. If you would like more information, please contact me (828-696-0524), MOW facilitator, John Parris (828-489-1709), or Minister of Music Mark Acker (615-430-3506). We'd love to talk with you.

BE THE CHURCH

Protect the environment. Care for the poor.
Forgive often. *Reject racism.*
Fight for the powerless.
Share earthly and spiritual resources.
Embrace diversity. Love God. Enjoy this life.

On May 10, FCUCC Missions/Service Team members welcomed guests Jerry Miller and Josh Bledsoe, who updated us on Henderson County's local chapter of PFLAG ("Parents, families, friends and allies united with LGBTQ people to move equality forward!"). You can follow them on Facebook (pflaghendersonville), email them at pflaghendersonville@gmail.com, attend their June 4 social meeting, 6:30 p.m. at Sanctuary Brewery, **AND/OR** check our bulletin board across from Pastor Mike's office for more information.

This month's Missions allocations:

\$1,000 to Blue Ridge Health - Pat Argue, FCUCC liaison
(for general operating funds/gala sponsorship)

\$750 to Only Hope - Romella Hart O'Keefe (for general operating fund)

\$750 to Thrive/Homeward Bound - Romella (for Henderson County homelessness program)

\$750 for Homes for Youth - Connie Knight & Nancy Kaczor (for general operating fund)

On June 19, our Fellowship Supper speaker will be Elizabeth Moss, the new Interfaith Assistance Ministry (IAM) executive director. Hope to see you then! You're also welcome to join us at our June 14 Missions/Service meeting, 10 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall.

Immigration News & Needs



We hope you will attend our third annual Immigrant Rights Sunday on June 3. Many thanks for supporting the third annual DREAM breakfast last month and continuing to provide household supplies for La Iglesia Bautista Getsemani. All recipients are truly worthy and grateful.

We need helpers for the La Capilla Summer Reading & Math Program which has been very successful for the last few years thanks to our volunteers and those from St. James and Holy Family Episcopal churches. The children and parents truly appreciate all the skill, caring and dedication of the volunteers. We hope many of you will assist again for as many or as few dates as you prefer. No knowledge of Spanish is required.

The program will take place:

- June 18th to July 11
- June 18th, 20th, 25th, 27th
- July 2nd, 9th, 11th (no class July 4th)
- Mondays and Wednesdays
- Reading: 9:30-11:30 am, Math: 12-2

There will be 5 small reading classes daily for grades 1-7 so we will need 5 mentors, one for each class, on the dates above. You help students with vocabulary, background information, and ask questions to check for reading comprehension. Possible math or computer volunteers should check with Mark Fagerlin.

We also need sandwich makers for lunches on the first three Mondays (the 18th, 25th & July 2). Only need to make & cut 15 sandwiches in halves, put them in snack bags in church refrigerator.

We need to remember that the La Capilla students and parents are going through unsettling times and that the continuation of our program brings them a sense of stability and security.

Thank you for considering this volunteer opportunity. Sign up sheets are on the bulletin board.

Also remember the monthly silent vigil at 5:00pm on the **last Friday of every month** at the Old Courthouse on Main Street. We'll even provide the signs and it only takes half an hour!

Any questions, please ask us, 891-4521 or pkargue@gmail.com.

Pat & Ed Argue

Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays - June 2018

- 1: Ed O'Keefe
- 3: Janet Bostwick
- 4: Jan Kelly
- 6: Sheryl Tellier
- 8: Barbara Rathbun
- 10: H Clay Eddleman
- 12: Evelyn Teerlinck
- 16: Joan Nobling
- 19: Melissa Fleig
- 24: Betty Johnson
- 25: Gary Cypher
- 28: Barbara Major

Anniversaries - June 2018

- 6: Joel & Anna Helfand
- 8: Ken & Phyllis Whitney
- 12: Howard & Maryett Carl
- 16: Ed O'Keefe &
Romella Hart-O'Keefe
- 21: Art & Clare Willey
- 23: Bill & Jacqueline Green
- 29: John & Janice Walters



IMPORTANT EMAIL ADDRESS CHANGES

As we transition to our new Interim Pastor and Administrator, we took the opportunity to assign more consistent email addresses to each staff member. Please begin using these immediately.

- Mark Acker: mark@fcchendersonville.org
- Mike Cleland: mike@fcchendersonville.org
- Sheryl Tellier: sheryl@fcchendersonville.org



June Lectionary

Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time

June 3

1 Sam 3:1-10 * Ps 139:1-6, 13-18 or

Deut 5:12-15 * Ps 81:1-10

2 Cor 4:5-12

Mk 2:23-3:6

Stretch Out Your Hand

Tenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

June 10

1 Sam 8:4-11, 16-20 * Ps 138 or

Gen 3:8-15 * Ps 130

2 Cor 4:13-5:1

Mk 3:20-35

The Will of God

Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

June 17

1 Sam 15:34-16:13 * Ps 20 or

Ezek 17:22-24 * Ps 92:1-4, 12-15

2 Cor 5:6-10, (11-13), 14-17 or

2 Cor 5:6-17

Mk 4:26-34

Flourishing

Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time

June 24

1 Sam 17:(1a,4-11, 19-23), 32-49 * Ps

9:9-20 or

Job 38:1-11 * Ps 107:1-3, 23-32

2 Cor 6:1-13

Mk 4:35-41

In the Boat Together

ATTENDANCE

May 6: 145

13: 138

20: 147

27: 147

Average Sunday Attendance:

144

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Next Chronicle deadline is June 22

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An Open and Affirming Congregation