THE BEING THE CHURCH IN THESE COVID-19 TIMES

There are three events coming up that I hope you will be a part of.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 8, 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. (Rain date is Sunday, August 9, 9:00 to 11:00 am) SCHOOL SUPPLIES COLLECTION – Suggested items to include are listed elsewhere in this Chronicle. Your generosity will make a BIG difference in the lives of many families!

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. DRIVE BY COMMUNION. We will have special communion “kits” for safety. You can drive by and you will be given the communion in your car, or you can come to the table and receive the communion “kit.” And we will have a special area in which you can visit with others (bring your own coffee and chair!), at appropriate social distance.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19 – 10:00 a.m. to noon. HUNGER WALK JUBILEE. If you want to be a “virtual” runner, and secure contributions from neighbors, friends and other church members, sign up on the Henderson County Hunger Coalition website (www.hendersoncountyhungercoalition.org). If you want to make a donation to the hunger walk, you can also do that on the website. On Saturday, September 19, you can bring your checks and see your FCC friends on this special morning!

Thank you, church family, for continuing to make a difference in the lives of many people! We look forward to seeing YOU at one, or all of these special events!

Love,

Karla
In a recent sermon, Mark Acker said we are all riding the “corona-coaster.” Some days the news is encouraging, and other days it is discouraging. So I thought I would offer a few thoughts on the ups and downs of living with COVID-19, as I see this as the most important concern for all of us right now.

On the down side:

• North Carolina continues in Phase II through at least August 7th. That means a maximum of 10 people together inside and 25 people outside.
• Henderson County has an average of 25 new cases per day, and 75% of those are not in long-term care, but in the general population, which calls for extreme caution whenever you are out.
• Mask wearing has become politicized, which is not helping.

On the up side:

• Vaccine development looks promising, and one candidate has entered Phase 3 trials.
• Our church is still open, just not our building. Sunday worship videos, Zoom coffee hour, Zoom Salon, and Zoom meetings of Compassionate Action and Service & Giving groups continue.
• On August 8th, Service and Giving will host a drive-by drop-off for school supplies. Check out the details elsewhere in this issue of the Chronicle.
• Ministry of Worship is planning a drive-by/stop-by communion on September 6th. More information will be available soon.
• The Reopening and Moving Forward Task Force is developing another survey that will reassess the congregation’s sense of safety, seek feedback on our current activities, and gauge interest in a variety of potential activities.
• We are also working on how we might hold outside “mini-worship” services in different locations once we can have 25 people meet safely. (Hint – local case numbers need to steadily decline for this to happen.)

My longer-term view is that this situation will be with us for perhaps, or at least, another year. Vaccine development is encouraging, but there are challenges with distributing it, with those who are not willing or able to be vaccinated, and with its the effectiveness level. This means we may be wearing masks and practicing physical distancing for a long time yet. Please stay safe, be well, and especially, be kind.

Phil Taylor, Moderator
Council held a special meeting to consider proposals from two conflict mediation organizations to address our on-going conflict around the revised personnel policy for departing pastors. The proposal from the Center for Congregational Health was accepted. All congregants are encouraged to participate in the mediation process.

More information on how to do that will be provided soon.

NEED TO TALK?

If your church can help you in any way, whether through providing a listening ear or picking up a prescription, we are here for you.

Please contact Karla at karla@fcchendersonville.org or
Mark at mark@fcchendersonville.org

CHILDREN & FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER
www.childrenandfamily.org

Diaper Drive-Thru: Diapers, wipes & formula
– donations accepted & disbursed –
At CFRC, 851 Case St. Hendersonville, NC 28792
August 7 and September 4, 11am-1pm
August 18 and September 15, 5:30-7:30 pm
About four years ago, Jayne Miller was asked to take over the care of the Memorial Garden. She found that it was very overgrown with weeds, poison ivy, small trees growing out of the shrubbery and general neglect. The angel and concrete benches were covered in mold.

With the help of her husband, Ron (aka FCCH Treasurer extraordinaire), they started a summer-long process of trying to get the Memorial Garden back to a manageable area. Fortunately, being outside and gardening is Jayne’s “happy place”, so it didn’t take long for them to see the bigger picture and “dig in”!

Their hard work shows in these pictures taken by Dawn Kucera! Jayne says: “We intend to keep it a special place of beauty and spirituality to be enjoyed by everyone.”
Children's Sunday School

I wish that I had grown up in the kind of Sunday School that our church offers! Since the time that we could no longer meet in person, Karla and I have had the special privilege of attending the weekly children's Sunday School on Zoom. Each Sunday at 10 am, usually 6 children, our two Sunday School teachers, Dede Walton and Ginger Zemp, along with Karla and me, meet for Sunday School. There has been amazing consistency in attendance! Each week we go around the group with each person sharing their Wow (good) of the week, and their Pow (difficult thing) of the week.

Then our teachers lead us in a wonderful lesson. We have talked about prayer for several weeks, and we have talked about living our faith, and we have talked about honoring and learning from other world religions.

Our children participate and help all of us to learn. It's an amazing time each week. We end the time with learning about our "person of the week" and now we are doing "pet of the week." And we end by saying together our Unity prayer.

Children in our Sunday School are given individual attention, they are affirmed as God's beloved child, and they are encouraged to live out their faith each day. I am so grateful for what our children are given each week, and our church can be so proud of this offering of First Congregational Church.

Mark Acker

Sunday School Monthly Report

Ginger Zemp, Sunday School Teacher
Dede Walton, Nursery Teacher

Monthly Theme: Learning About Faith

In July the Sunday School children discussed their faith and understanding of God. They are building a deeper knowledge of Christianity, and preparing to explore other faiths as well. Their insights into their relationship with God is expanding and they have brought excellent questions and comments to our weekly discussions. We are also interviewing the children’s pets, and everyone is enjoying a light-hearted introduction to the special animal friends that mean so much to our youngest church members. We are learning what intelligent, funny, and loyal friends our pets can be!
The July meeting was centered on orchestrating logistics for the next project.

On Saturday, August 8, from 9-11 am (rain date August 9, 9-11), we will have a contact-free school supplies drive benefiting county students.

Needed supplies are: backpacks, pencils, pens, crayons, markers, paper (lined & unlined), glue (sticks & bottles), tissues, wipes, & hand sanitizers, earbuds/headphones, scissors, batteries, face masks. New athletic shoes, socks and underwear (sizes 4-adult) are also needed. Buying these supplies for one or more children severely impacts a family’s income which is now already stretched to the limit. Filling a backpack with many of these items can cost over fifty dollars. Please help fill a half, full or more backpacks.

For donors wishing to provide financial support, which goes further than tangible items with the schools’ purchasing power, checks should be payable to “First Congregational Church” with “School Supplies” on the memo line.

Participants should drop off items in the church parking lot, wear masks and practice social distancing. All donated items will be sorted and delivered by our members. Any people wishing to assist at drive are welcome and should contact lladerac@mtholyoke.edu or wdsiii333@gmail.com. Everyone’s support is critical and much appreciated.

While most of the meeting was devoted to planning, we also reveled in the success of the food drive, with almost 2,000 pounds of food and over $6,000 contributed by members and friends of the church. Thank you to everyone who contributed!! We also split the $3500 monthly allocation between IAM to keep people in their homes and the Community Foundation Relief Fund for COVID-19.

Making Children’s Masks. At our School Supply Drive on Saturday, August 8, we will also be collecting kids’ sized masks. If you would like to make masks, here is a link with directions: www.craftpassion.com. For more information, please contact Sheila Clendenning (bsheila.nc@gmail.com).
God’s blessings are alive in this year’s vegetable garden! The faithful volunteers have been spending countless hours planting, weeding, water and harvesting, plus building a new structure to house the donated tractor, courtesy of Dr. John Caldemeyer.

There are a few new beds this year to help increase our crop that includes strawberries, 4 kinds of green beans, at least 6 varieties of tomatoes, cucumbers, okra, green & yellow zucchini, yellow crookneck squash, sweet potatoes & white potatoes.

In case you didn’t know, all the vegetables harvested are donated to local food security non-profits such as Interfaith Assistance Ministries and Hendersonville Rescue Mission. Donations are already over 400 pounds this summer! Thank you to all our dedicated volunteers! If you have a desire to help, stop by the garden any morning Monday through Thursday. No experience necessary!
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OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE! The Rescue Mission has returned to having volunteers serve meals with safety procedures in place. The procedures include plexiglass separating the servers from the patrons, everyone wearing masks in the kitchen and washing hands and wearing gloves.

First Congregational has started to serve again. We could use three more singles who would like to serve to balance the serving teams of three. Our church does the serving on the second Saturday and the third Sunday of each month including the fifth Tuesday when it occurs. The serving involves only serving the meals and requires being at the Rescue Mission from 5:20 PM to 6:20 PM.

For info, please contact Roger Woolsey, 828-989-9092 or marog20@gmail.com.
PRAYER LIST

Norma Daly (friend of Anne Cain)
Jackie Green
Joyce Heaton (mother of Dawn Kucera)
Michael Jayne (son of Bruce & Sarah Jayne)
Family of Melody Major (Barbara’s Major’s sister)
Ed & Romella O’Keefe
Joseph Orost (son of Jean Glasgow-Hawkins)
Johnny Ramsey (friend of Becky Rowland)
Lenore Schultz (friend of Becky Rowland)
Cathy Smith, Joanne Shenk, Family of Barbara Musy (friends of Al & Joan Diaz)
Judy Smith (friend of Dawn Kucera)
Family of Nadene Spear
Glory & Fred Stack (friend of Mills/Hollingsworth)
Victoria Tatum
Patsy Thurston (Liz Thurston & Karla Miller’s sister-in-law)
Richard Tyler
David Vandre
Family of Patti Woeppel (sister of Carol Woeppel)

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.
Please contact your Administrator (sheryl@fcchendersonville.org)

For words of encouragement, appreciation, hope, caring, gratitude and love, just take a breath, pick up the phone and call:

Ben Coonrod 828 284-0695      Diane Rhoades 828 696-9969
Helle Gylling 623 282 5528     Susan Huff 828 217-5944
Nancy Keswani 617 833-2819     Judith Nourse 828 606-2558
Ed O’Keefe 828 890-4889        Romella Hart-O’Keefe 828 890-4889
Joady Perrett 828 243-3337     Jim Rash 828 450-0986
Sammye Whitney 570 664-1141
**August Birthdays**

05: Elizabeth Kamis  
05: Nancy Kaczor  
05: Linda French  
05: Steve Byerly  
07: Suzie Edell  
08: Barry McMillion  
09: Diane Harrison  
10: Steve Hogenboom  
11: Joe Streer  
12: Linda Sanders  
12: Lester Vier  
14: Joyce Tierney  
16: Carl Schoendorfer  
16: Kevin Tierney  
16: Nadene Spear  
17: Virginia Craig  
17: Elaine Wiggen  
22: Janice Walters  
23: Sharon Stepp  
23: Robin Heckathorne  
24: Lori Cipot  
27: Fern Carter  
27: Milton Stewart  
29: Carol Woeppel  
31: Robert Gossett  
31: Bonnie Rash  
31: Wyatt Jackson Henderly

**August Anniversaries**

16: Rick Laws & Phillip Thomason  
21: Robin & Kathy Heckathorne  
24: Mark & Jane Raymond  
30: Powell & Beth Cotter
July 2020
Virtual Worship

Service  Zoom  YouTube Views  Sunday School
June 28:  299  3  
July  5:  271  Holiday  
12:  229  2  
19:  315  5  
26:  181  6

Did you know........
Sunday sermons are available to view to on our website. Go to fcchendersonville.org and click on Sunday Sermon or view from Home Page.

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Rev. David G. Kelly, Jr., Pastor Emeritus

Next Chronicle deadline August 26 2020
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Justice, Compassion, Inclusion