OUR DOORS ARE OPEN!
~ ~ Whether outside or inside, you are loved ~ ~
WELCOME HOME!!
Dear FCCH Friends and Family,

August blessings to you. As I write this, I am aware that we are in a new phase of the pandemic rather than at the “end” of the pandemic, which is where I WISH we were. The number of infections are growing as the Delta variant spreads, and while our community has a high rate of vaccination, many of us still have higher risk because of our age or being immuno-compromised. All that is to say we aren’t out of the woods yet.

We have learned, however, to be flexible in these past 18 months, and we will continue to do so. And, we will live in the moment and plan for the future as best we can. To that end, I invite you to sign up for a Reconnecting Small Group during the month of August. These small groups will give us the opportunity to get to know our newer members better, to talk about the joys and challenges we are facing, and what FCCH means to us in the midst of these times.

[CLICK HERE TO SIGN UP] for a small group.

I’ve been listening to a podcast hosted by author Glennon Doyle entitled “We Can Do Hard Things.” Each week, Doyle and her sister tackle the hard things we face in life—because life is both brutal and beautiful, or “brutiful” as Doyle has coined.

I believe our journey as followers of Jesus has a lot of wisdom to share in facing the brutiful hard things that come our way as a community and as individuals. I will be preaching on those “Brutiful Hard Things” the month of August. I hope you can join us in worship—either virtually or in-person.

With love and hope,

Karla
Dear Members and Friends of First Congregational Church,

First, I want to say how great it is to be back in the sanctuary for our worship services! How wonderful to see so many people - I know many of us are seeing old friends for the first time in a very long time. The atmosphere has been warm and vibrant - the Spirit is moving among us.

However, we recognize that COVID is not done yet. The Re-opening Task Force continues to monitor the local situation, and consider other elements of our church life, such as when to resume singing, coffee hour, and other activities. We encourage you to continue safety precautions, both at the church and in your personal lives. Meanwhile, small groups are meeting at the church, and the building is happy to have them back.

I want to take a moment to look to the future. We have come through a difficult period in the life of our church. Now, let’s look forward, keeping tight hold of our values and cherished traditions, but realizing we’ll also need to consider changes in the way we operate as an organization and new ways of “doing church” in the post-pandemic world.

To that end, the Reconciliation and Renewal Team (RRT) has proposed six suggestions to church Council for consideration - they are briefly described in a report from the RRT elsewhere in this Chronicle. The RRT presented three documents to Council:

1. A cover letter that briefly describes the six suggestions;
2. A more detailed document that explains their thinking;
3. A compilation of all the official documents they sent to the congregation.

These were sent by Constant Contact in July, but if you would like a paper copy, let me know. With these submissions, the RRT’s work is complete. On behalf of Council and the congregation, I applaud and appreciate all their work on this very difficult task.

Finally, let me assure you that we’ll keep you fully informed as we work through these ideas. And more importantly, we will want, and need, vigorous congregation involvement.

We still live in uncertain times - I urge you to continue to be safe and most especially, as Karla says every week, be kinder than necessary.

Phil Taylor
Moderator
This will be the final report from the R&R Team. As our final actions, we have focused on the “Renewal” part of our team name. We visioned this as trying to define some important steps that might be beneficial for First Congregational to consider as we move forward. To this end, the Team developed six “suggestions for consideration” that we submitted to Council.

The July Council meeting was devoted to this topic, and all the Team members attended the meeting to participate in the discussion and answer any questions. Recently, a Constant Contact message was sent to the membership, with detailed information about these suggestions. Below is a brief listing.

1. Begin planning FCUCC’s potential transition from a pastoral to programmatic church.
2. Institute an educational program on what it means to be a Congregational Church.
3. Examine the scope, roles and responsibilities of the church’s Ministries.
4. Design a service of Reconciliation, Healing, and Renewal.
5. Develop a covenant of commitment and communication between and among the church’s leadership and members.
6. Develop an outline for boundaries between the congregation and departed clergy for the future.

It has been our honor and privilege to have participated in this important work, and we greatly appreciate all the support we’ve been given in doing it.

The Reconciliation and Renewal Team,

Ann Allen
Ed Argue
Dawn Kucera
Linda Laderach
Bob McLendon (Chair)
Karla Miller
Phil Taylor
HIGHLIGHTS
June & July, 2021

June 2021 - We met in person in the Fellowship Hall!

1. Treasurer Ron Miller reported that we are operating within budget, although regular giving is trending down. We'll probably need to take the usual 5% from the Heritage Fund + an additional $70K. Investments are doing very well - growth is covering the shortfalls.

2. The Reconciliation and Renewal Team is drafting some “suggestions for consideration” by the Council. Expect to have them ready for the July meeting.

3. The Technical Team Task Force is researching options for live streaming, as well as updating the sound system.

4. Reopening the Sanctuary for Worship. Plan is to start in-door worship on 27 June. We discussed and agreed on the safety measures that should be in place. We'll send ample notification to the congregation. Council will continue to make all the decisions related to reopening the building and worship.

5. Karla’s Report. She is on an ecumenical council comprised of eight area churches, who are working on issues related to what church will be like in a post-pandemic world.

We’ve started interring pet ashes in the Pet Memorial Garden in the atrium. She will be on vacation 15-25 June.

6. LiB Shore is stepping away from being the Facilitator of the Members and Friends Ministry.

July 2021
The July Council meeting was unusual. The Reconciliation and Renewal Team had sent their documents with six “suggestions for consideration” for the Council to review - one was a summary cover letter, the other a longer document explaining the thinking.

Moderator Phil Taylor suspended all other usual business, so Council could direct its focus to this important topic. The entire R and R Team attended as guests, to answer questions and provide additional information as needed.

The documents describing the suggestions are included in the Minutes of the July Council meeting. In addition, they were sent to the congregation in a Constant Contact message. Anyone wishing a paper copy please contact our administrator, Sheryl Tellier (sheryl@fcchendersonville.org).

A brief summary of the suggestions are in a report from the Reconciliation and Renewal Team elsewhere in this edition of the Chronicle.

Dawn Kucera
Clerk

A REMINDER: Council Meetings are open to all congregation members and visitors are welcome
Saturday, **June 12**, despite the drizzle, was a successful Baby Supplies drive for the Children & Family Resource Center (ChildrenandFamily.org). On **August 14** will be School Supplies drive-thru and **October 2** will be a Food Drive. Rain dates will be the next days, Sundays from 12-2. Be sure to see the “School Supplies” flyer in this issue and the weekly bulletins to learn all the needed items.

Speaking of needed items, the Migrant Workers agencies report that “Our season is finally in full swing! Since the beginning of June, we have delivered approximately 300 hygiene kits to workers. These have been received so well by the workers that we’re about to run out! The box fans were a huge success, too. We have also been able to purchase rain ponchos for workers with your gift card donations. The staff and recipients are very grateful to us.

At June’s meeting, Healthcare agencies were discussed and in July, Education was the topic. Both topic agencies were allocated amounts recommended by their evaluators. A new Initiative “Grow Your Own Teachers of Color,” will be supported this year. Once again this year, the Hunger Walk in September will be virtual and we will be a sponsor.

Now that our world is opening up a bit, we know folks are looking for productive ways to help others. Everyone should remember the volunteer opportunities directory in the Members section of our website, [www.fcchendersonville.org](http://www.fcchendersonville.org), which is now being updated by Sheila Clendenning and Catherine Lynch. The Henderson County United Way also has a good directory, [https://liveunitedhc.galaxydigital.com/](https://liveunitedhc.galaxydigital.com/).

For more information about the Service & Giving team, for which new members are always welcome, contact co-facilitators Linda Laderach, [lladerac@mtholyoke.edu](mailto:lladerac@mtholyoke.edu) or Bill Shaffer, [wdsii333@gmail.com](mailto:wdsii333@gmail.com). Next meeting is **August 12 at 10** via Zoom.

Written by:

Pat Argue, Secretary
Guardians ad Litem—Make a Difference in the Life of a Child

Guardians ad Litem (GAL) are volunteers in our community appointed by a judge to gather information to speak on behalf of children, alongside an attorney advocate in court. For many years, children who experienced abuse and neglect in their homes had no one to represent them to a judge.

The primary focus of the Guardian ad Litem program is to make sure children find a safe and permanent home in the shortest time possible. GALs meet with child clients monthly to build a relationship with the children they serve. In June of 2021, the Henderson County GAL program serves 192 children, with 45 active GALS. There are 48 children without a Guardian ad Litem. Please consider being a voice for a child in our community!

We will have a table at the ‘Back to School’ drive thru if you would like to speak with a current Guardian ad Litem volunteer.

Melissa will also be at FCCH for our August 14th Drive-Thru School Supplies collection to answer any questions!

Please visit: www.volunteerforgal.org for more information, or you can speak to Melissa Evette, Henderson County GAL coordinator or by calling her at 828-694-4215.
Contact Free Drive-Thru Collection
at First Congregational United Church of Christ
1735 Fifth Avenue West in Hendersonville

Saturday, August 14, 2021
10:00 a.m. -- 12:00 noon
(Rain Date is Sunday August 15, 2021 -- same time)

Please Bring
backpacks
pencils, pens, crayons, markers, glue, paper clips, rulers,
scissors, notebooks, paper tablets
and Cash
(write checks to FCC with "school supplies"
in the memo line)

FCC will be working with:
The Boys & Girls Club and Henderson County Schools
to distribute donations

Thank you for your generous help to all our schools!

Website: fcchendersonville.org
WE'RE HARVESTING!!

By Carolyn Wilson

The garden crew (from left to right: Kinsey Jenkins, Milton Stewart, Carolyn Wilson, and John Caldemeyer. Nick Pence was away) has been keeping busy with harvesting, planting, and pulling weeds. To date, we have harvested 410 pounds of vegetables, including Yukon Gold potatoes (160 pounds), green beans, collards, and squash.

The tomatoes and butternut squash are close to ripe but the okra has another month or so before it is ready to pick and the sweet potatoes will be ready in 2-3 months. In addition to harvesting the vegetables, we will be planting turnip seeds, collards, and kale.

The perennial butterfly flower garden is growing in leaps and bounds: the lavender and butterfly bush are attracting many bees and butterflies and we have seen hummingbirds visit the red bee balm flowers (see photo). We are hopeful that the milkweed we planted by seed will continue to grow and eventually attract Monarch butterflies.
Volunteer Opportunities at Bruce Drysdale

The student population of Bruce Drysdale Elementary is 464, and the school serves K-5. The school's minority student enrollment is 55%. The student-teacher ratio is 13:1, which is better than that of the district. The school enrolls 69% economically disadvantaged students. There are 36 equivalent full-time teachers and 1 full-time school counselor.

In Henderson County Schools, 50% of students tested at or above the proficient level for reading, and 57% tested at or above that level for math. Compared with the district, the school scored lower in math and in reading. Only 40% of students scored at or above the proficient level for math, and 36% scored at or above that level for reading.

The teachers and staff are passionate about their desire to help their students do better! It goes without saying, our engagement with the school will give these students and teachers a boost – we can help make a difference in the lives of these young people! Please consider taking a few hours a week to help make that difference by volunteering there!

PTO President Amy Kilpatrick has prepared a list of possible volunteer jobs for volunteers. In order to volunteer, you must pass a background check. It involves filling out a form on line and another volunteer application form that you drop off at Bruce Drysdale School. Once approved, you will receive a volunteer ID card from Secure Volunteer which you will need to bring with you when volunteering. Contact Jan Partin at janpartin@hotmail.com for easy instructions.

Present volunteer opportunities include:

› Library- shelving books. This can be a weekly opportunity for a couple of hours.
› Library book fair-volunteers are needed to sort and keep shelves organized and stocked.
› Reading to Kindergarten classes.
› Serving/Set up for teacher lunches. We have about 5-6 teacher lunches a year.
› Some students need to sit separately to catch up on their class work if they get behind.
› We occasionally need ones to sit with them to help keep them focused on catching up.
› Escorting students to and from their classroom for hearing tests.
› Other opportunities will present themselves through the year and we can add those to this list.

Thank you in advance for your help in any of these areas! We look forward to working with all of you!

Racial Justice Group
Ministry of Physical Resources (MPR) members & several other volunteers did an amazing job of taking care of our Church home, gardens & landscaping during the Pandemic! THANK YOU‼️

Still, there is so much more work to be done and we have limited volunteers.

Please consider joining MPR and/or volunteering for the following:

- Adopt-a-Portion of the Church's landscape
- Help with weeding in our vegetable garden
- Meet maintenance companies at Church building
- Become part of our Parking Lot Planning Group

Hours & days for volunteering are very flexible -- work as little or as long as you want!

For questions about details and/or to volunteer, please contact:
Mindy Myers, MPR Facilitator
919-491-1004 (cell/text)
mindy7myers@gmail.com

Sunday School Monthly Report

Ginger Zemp, Sunday School Teacher
Dede Walton, Nursery Teacher

Monthly Theme: Celebrating Spring and Summer

June and July were exciting months for the children as they explored the creek and vegetable garden and participated in outdoor church services. They wrote comments for the church bulletin board and painted small rocks with colorful themes as gifts for Mother’s Day. All children were busy with their families on Father’s Day.

On July 4 Karla asked the children to think of a word that summed up their feelings about Independence Day, and their response was “acceptance”. We discussed this concept and the children noted that it is a goal that our citizens are still striving to reach. They drew pictures of their ideas about how acceptance feels, and we made a banner to display for the adults. This project gave the children a chance to show once again just how perceptive, insightful, and creative they are.

Church member Elle Travis gave the children copies of her book, “Spring Magic”. The older children read the stories to the younger, and a lively discussion followed. They wrote a thank you note to the author and invited her to come read other stories to them.
FROM THE DREAM SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

On behalf of the Dream Scholarship Committee, I would like to thank you for your generous donation to the Dream Scholarship fund.

The Dream Scholarship recipients have continued to work and study hard during this last difficult year. In the Fall they will move into a new school year with increased promise and hope.

Thanks to your support and the help of others, we are happy to be able to give scholarships to 9 students this year.

Thank you again,
Barbara Yates, Dream Scholarship Committee

Click on calendar below for up-to-date church calendar

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PRAYER LIST

Diane Anderson (friend of Jim Luzadder)
Andrea Ballard (friend of Elizabeth Toledo)
Amy Barksdale (friend of Becky Rowland)
Al & Joan Diaz
Sue Eastin (friend of Becky Rowland)
Dave Elias (friend of Ann Twiggs)
Bill Ellinger (friend of Linda Simpson)
Becky Evans
Meredith Glynn
Joy Greenfield (friend of Trisha LaGrange)
Esther Jillson (friend of Becky Rowland)
Jon and Bill Hedrick (sons of Romella Hart-O'Keefe)
Steve Kazmierski & family (Nancy Kaczor's brother-in-law)
Rob Kievit (son of Nancy Irving)
Yvonne Kyker
Trisha LaGrange
Carol Marra (friend of Kevin & Joyce Tierney)
Kathleen Martini (friend of Carol Woeppel)
Patsy McCurry
Marja Nordman (relative of Ed & Romella O'Keefe)
Ed & Romella O'Keefe
Joseph Orost (son of Jean Glasgow-Hawkins)
Betsey Parker
Pressley family (family of Charles & Dora Littleton)
Mark Raymond
Joanne Schenck (friends of Al & Joan Diaz)
Carolyn Schmalz
Becky Stepp (friend of Al & Joan Diaz)
Craig & Lin Stogner
Andrew Strobel (son of Carol Inman)
Dawn Szczepkowski (friend of Nancy Kaczor & Becky Rowland)
Richard Tyler
Janice von Shummer (Friend of Lynne Cigal)
Phillip Wiles (friend of Al & Joan Diaz)
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)
August Birthdays

01: Catherine Lynch
05: Nancy Kaczor
05: Elizabeth Kamis
07: Suzie Edell
08: Barry McMillion
09: Diane Harrison
11: Joe Streer
12: Linda Sanders
12: Lester Vier
14: Joyce Tierney
16: Kevin Tierney
17: Elaine Wiggen
20: Ruth Howe
22: Janice Walters
23: Robin Heckathorne
23: Sharon Stepp
24: Lori Cipot
27: Fern Carter
27: Milton Stewart
29: Carol Woeppel
31: Robert Gossett
31: Wyatt Jackson Henderly

August Anniversaries

21: Robin & Kathy Heckathorne
24: Mark & Jean Raymond
30: Powell & Beth Cotter
The Congregational Chronicle is published monthly, except for December/January and June/July issues, by First Congregational UCC.

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(mark@fcchendersonville.org)
Sheryl Tellier, Administrator
(sheryl@fcchendersonville.org)
Dora & Charles Littleton, Custodians
Rev. David G. Kelly, Jr., Pastor Emeritus

Next Chronicle deadline
August 20, 2021
First Congregational UCC, Hendersonville

WE STAND WITH YOU

Justice Compassion Inclusion