FCCH Community,

The news these past weeks has been heart-wrenching and difficult. We weep for the misery and suffering of our impoverished Haitian neighbors, reeling from a stunning earthquake and tropical storms, in the midst of the political crisis. We are aghast at the upheaval and uncertainty in Afghanistan as the Taliban returns to control after the withdrawal of U.S. troops. We fear alongside women and girls who face unspeakable oppression and worry for others who face possible torture for working for US forces and agencies for the past twenty years. Here, in our own Beloved country, we are weighted with dismay over the rise of COVID cases due to lack of vaccinations and the strength of the Delta variant.

In the midst of so much heaviness, we must lift our prayers of sorrow and lament to God, who watches over all that happens in the world, who indeed weeps with us. It seems so little to pray, and yet our prayers connect us to Holy Presence within us and around us. We can’t fathom how the repair of the world can happen, and yet, we grab on to what scraps of hope we might find. For without hope, what do we have?

In the pages of this September Chronicle, it is my deepest prayer that you are lifted into glittering tatters of hope as you bear witness to how FCCH humbly works to repair the corner of the world we find ourselves in. I am so grateful for the mission and ministry of each of YOU, for you are the church, you are justice, compassion and promise.

Faithfully yours,

Karla
Dear Members and Friends,

This is Council Clerk Dawn Kucera writing to you, filling in for Moderator Phil Taylor. If you’re wondering why, I’m glad you asked. With his permission to pass this along… a couple of weeks ago he fell and broke his right wrist. As you might imagine, this had a serious impact on even his awesome typing prowess, so here I am. He had a day surgery to put in a plate, and in a few weeks, will begin physical therapy.

Let’s begin with the elephant in the room.

COVID, COVID, COVID. Sigh. Just when we thought we’d beaten it, it’s roaring back. And in an abundance of caution, we’ve once again closed the building for meetings and indoor worship. The Reopening Task Force continues to monitor the infection numbers, and Council will make changes as the numbers dictate.

However, even with the doors closed, we remain a vibrant, functioning congregation. Karla and Mark work extra to create the videos in addition to live services, Dora and Charles continue to clean and care for the facility. Lin Stogner faithfully keeps the atrium area looking beautiful, and Sheryl Tellier is the glue that binds it all together.

Our outreach to the community continues. Service and Giving has sponsored very successful drive-by donation drives every two months, benefitting various groups. The garden crew has produced over 1000 pounds of food for IAM, Rescue Mission and the Dandelion Café. Stay tuned for Hunger Walk information!

And above all, pastoring continues. We know these are hard times, and Karla and Mark want to hear from you - for any reason.

It’s challenging to keep a church going, never mind remaining healthy, when it’s been closed for 18 months. And yet we’ve done it so far. You can help out by plugging in - work with Service and Giving on the donation drives, or help with keeping the grounds tended. A number of people doing a little makes a huge difference. Contact Mindy Myers (mindy7myers@gmail.com) if you can help.

It’s also hard to stay in touch, so I want to close with this suggestion. I wish every person who reads this would reach out and contact one other church member with a phone call or an email. Connect.

Dawn Kucera
Clerk
HIGHLIGHTS
August, 2021

We met via Zoom

1. Treasurer Ron Miller reported that we are operating within budget, and he expects this to be the case for the rest of the year. Our investments continue to do well.

2. Live Streaming. The Tech Team has arranged for Selah Productions (highly recommended by the UCC Church in Boone) to be here on 24 August to discuss our needs and provide recommendations.

3. Building closure. COVID caseload numbers in Henderson County are skyrocketing, and in an abundance of caution, the building is again closed. Outdoor worship (weather permitting) will be at 10 am, no indoor meetings, and Sheryl will be working from home as much as possible. This will continue until the numbers drop back to a safe level. It will probably be awhile.

4. RRT Recommendations. Lengthy discussion on the 6 recommendations from the Reconciliation Team. They should be prioritized. We feel an urgency to move on them, but recognize the difficulty when we can’t meet as a congregation to discuss. That said, progress can be made. One way forward is to form a Steering Committee to develop teams for some of the recommendations and oversee those activities. Contact Phil Taylor if you would be interested in being involved.

5. Garden donations. The Garden Crew has donated 1000 pounds of fresh produce so far.

6. Karla travel. She will be gone for four days as the end of the month, visiting her mom in North Dakota.

Dawn Kucera, Clerk

REMINDER: Council Meetings are open to all congregation members and friends. Please notify Moderator, Phil Taylor (pntaylor1234@yahoo.com), if you would like to attend.
On a sweltering day on Saturday, August 14, from 10-12 am, we hosted a successful, contact-free school supplies drive benefitting county students and promoting the essential Guardian Ad Litem municipal service, so that topic was an important part of our meeting’s agenda.

Generous community members and congregants alike, braved the heat to provide for those less fortunate. Our lovely, handmade prayer shawls and blankets were also available at no cost to anyone wishing them. Three vans of the requested supplies were delivered to county schools, a neighborhood collection and the Boys & Girls Club. From donors wishing to provide financial support, which goes further than tangible items with the schools’ purchasing power, almost $2,000 was collected.

See Nancy Kaczor for more info on the GAL program. nancy.kaczor53@gmail.com

August’s financial meeting portion was a bit different than usual since the team has gone through our initial allocations to each agency category and is now starting to go back and catch up the agencies we had to postpone or only allocate part of what we want, like the Hunger Walk. This will also be discussed in September and October.

The update of our website’s Member’s Volunteer Directory by Sheila Clendenning, bsheila.nc@gmail.com, and Catherine Lynch, cjnc137@gmail.com is on hold pending return of inside services.

Elle Travis reported her progress on her brand new nonprofit “Caregivers for Mother Earth.” Our mission is to conduct educational programs for youth to engender a love and appreciation for Mother Earth. Children have the opportunity to read her Nature Connections stories and participate in week-long day. See Elle for more info at ElleTravis1@gmail.com

Anyone wishing to assist at a drive or on the Service & Giving team are welcome to any meeting & should contact lladerac@mtholyoke.edu or wdsiii333@gmail.com. Everyone’s support is critical and much appreciated.

Next meeting: is Thursday, September 9 at 10:00 with the usual Zoom login. CLICK HERE TO JOIN.

Written by:

Pat Argue, Secretary
We are at the end of our tomato harvest, which produced over 200 pounds of beautiful tomatoes. Along with the tomatoes, we delivered about 20 butternut squash, pounds of green beans, and some okra to IAM, the Rescue Mission, and Dandelion Café. So far, the total poundage for the summer is just over 1000 pounds.

In the past few weeks, we have planted kale, collard, and cabbage seedlings. Unfortunately, the chard and kale we planted by seed were washed out when tropical depression Fred paid us a visit. Over 5 inches of rain filled up the rain gauge, so we are hoping for a stretch of sunny days to dry out the ground, making it amenable to planting more turnip, chard, and green bean seeds.

We are eagerly awaiting the day when we can dig up the sweet potatoes, but that won’t be for another month or two. The butterfly garden continues to draw many butterflies and bees, along with an undesirable nest of yellow jackets, which Milton and Nick helped find a new home.

Thank you again for those of you who have contributed to the compost bin. It is greatly appreciated!
A SPECIAL MESSAGE FROM LYNX

“I love FCCH and all my good friends here”

Dining with Karla YUM

Training for Asst. Treasurer

This database can be exhausting!

I’m the first to welcome new members

I help Mark with his paperwork!

He is grateful!

Look at the big water bowl they got me!

Remember when the building was closed for sooooo long?!

I decided to go to Bora Bora....
I was welcomed back exhausted!

My impression of upside down cat

I love helping Physical Resources! There is so much to do!!

I think what I love most is worshiping with you.

Thank you, my friends!

I hope to see you soon!
Sunday School Monthly Report
Ginger Zemp, Sunday School Teacher
Dede Walton, Nursery Teacher

Monthly Theme: Celebrating Summer Blessings

The summer months are providing wonderful opportunities for the children to join the adults for the beginning of church services and to explore the garden and church property. They have observed the miracle of fruits and vegetables growing and watched minnows, tadpoles, and insects developing along the creek. They drew pictures that reflected the abundance of life around them, and wrote their own blessings to celebrate the beautiful season. They continue to enjoy walking the labyrinth and playing games of bocce ball on the grass.

We were fortunate to have congregation member and author, Elle Travis, read her new book to the children. Several young guests and a new Sunday School member joined us during this past month.
PRAYER LIST

Richard Tyler
Joanne Schenck (friend of Al & Joan Diaz)
Al & Joan Diaz
Betsey Parker
Esther Jillson (friend of Becky Rowland)
Sue Eastin (friend of Becky Rowland)
Yvonne Kyker
Trisha LaGrange
Carol Marra (friend of Joyce & Kevin Tierney)
Phillip Wiles (friend of Al & Joan Diaz)
Kathleen Martini (friend of Carol Woeppel)
Rob Kievit (son of Nancy Irving)
Becky Stepp (friend of Al & Joan Diaz)
Carolyn Schmalz
Dawn Szczepkowski (friend of Nancy Kaczor & Becky Rowland)
Mark Raymond
Amy Barksdale (friend of Becky Rowland)
John Brennan (Liz Brennan's brother)
Diane Anderson (friend of Jim Luzadder)
Andrea Ballard (friend of Elizabeth Toledo)
Dave Elias (friend of Ann Twiggs)
Joseph Orost (son of Jean Glasgow-Hawkins)
Becky Evans
Marja Nordman (relative of Romella Hart-O'Keefe)
Ed & Romella O'Keefe
Carol Woeppel
Jessica Lyn Carter (friend of Carol Woeppel & Carol Inman)
Phil Taylor
Dottie Culver

And for those who are struggling with aging and health issues and for those who are their caregivers.

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)
September Birthdays

01: Alice Pfirrmann
01: Heather Fitzwilliam
03: Karla Miller
04: Jairo Aguilar
04: Ian Santiago Anaya
04: Ann Allen
05: Lucy Johnson
06: Ingrid Perry
08: Marian Soss
08: Kay Davis
09: Yvonne Kyker
13: Betsey Parker
13: Nancy Pew
14: Dona Tyler
15: Nolleen Kelly
16: Jacqueline Green
18: Joel Matthews
19: Cathy Sadler
21: Marjorie Richards
22: Powell Cotter
23: Mandy Henderly
25: Al Diaz
26: Mildred Gardner
27: Susan Bon
28: Janice Bullard
29: Virginia Clare Willey

September Anniversaries

01: Connie Knight & Richard Johnson
09: Glenn & Donna Gross
11: Hilliard Staton & Suzie Edell
12: Bruce Mills & Jim Hollingsworth
16: Susan Bonk & Becky Evans
21: Phil & Estelle Taylor
30: Ben & Joanna Coonrod
August 2021

Worship

YouTube Views  Sunday School
& Worship

08/01    172    5
08/08    160    0
08/15    138    2
08/22    128    1
08/29

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@fcchendersonville.org
Website: www.fcchendersonville.org

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

Next Chronicle deadline
September 23, 2021
First Congregational UCC
1735 Fifth Avenue West
Hendersonville NC 28739-4013

First Congregational UCC, Hendersonville
WE STAND WITH YOU
Justice Compassion Inclusion