

# The N O R T H E R N Light

*Featuring the people and events of First Congregational Christian Church of Anchorage*

**December 2019**

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## **Minister's Message**

**Where is that damn tree?**

It amazes me how difficult it is to remember where Christmas decoration are stored from last year. The church has all sorts of little decorations, wreaths, nativity scenes, candles in all sorts of places. It is easy to think that we will remember where we stored everything the year before, but it never is.

We also have a Christmas tree that was stored up on the walkway on top of and behind the reredos. If you are not sure what a reredos is, it is a screen of sorts. Most of the time it has decorative carvings or paintings and is behind the communion table (alter in some traditions) in a sanctuary. I do not remember putting the Christmas tree up there last year. I would have never found it.

I also can't believe this article is going to be about the Christmas tree! A couple of years ago there was an ongoing (infinitely long in my memory) discussion of replacing the Christmas tree. The old one was in pretty bad shape and difficult to setup and decorate. It was finally decided to be rid of it and a wonderful friendly elf bought a new tree and it is lovely. Even in retirement the old tree was a hassle. Somebody wanted it, then they didn't, then they did again, then it was too late because over a year had passed it was already gone. I say good riddance old tree!

Like many traditions or practices that happen only once a year, it is so easy to forget what it was like last year, or where you stored something. A year isn't that long after-all, but I forget. Then I am reminded again. That is what Advent is for the church year. A year seems just long enough to discover anew something long but infrequently practiced.

So we remember the birth of Jesus, not because we forgot that he was born at some point, but because we need a yearly reminder. What does it mean for Jesus to be born? What does it mean for Mary to be the bearer of joy and holy disruption? What does it mean for us to find courage and comfort in the birthing and being born of the story?

Sometimes the tree is right where you left it a year ago and that is a surprise. I hope Advent is that way for you. Be ready to be surprised by old stories and familiar sights and sounds. Be ready, for you never know where the Spirit of God will be found.

Blessed Advent,  
Rev. Jacob Poindexter

## Moderator's Message

*-Kathy Means, Vice Moderator*



Hallelujah! We finally have snow and cold Alaskan weather. It seems like the wait was endless this year, as the nights grew longer and darker, and at times my outlook. Fortunately for our church, there are many daytime and evening activities to get me out the door and fellowship.

The Lectio Divinie (Bible study) class on Tuesday mornings is something I look forward to each week. We read, ponder and discuss the upcoming lectionary readings, and relate them to our own lives. Oftentimes we come across readings that are the inspiration for Handel's Messiah or Sunday School songs.

And now on Tuesday evenings we can attend a special service using creative worship songs, readings and activities. It is intimate and informal and very moving.

Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays... our calendar is full of activities. And then on Sunday we join in fellowship, worship with music and hear Rev. Jacob's inspiring messages. Don't let the winter isolate you. Come to church!

## From Your Fellowship Ministry

-Chair, Kate O'Dell



### Ryan's Host the Annual "Holiday Potluck and Singalong"

Pat and Mark Ryan are inviting everyone to their home on Friday, December 13, from 6:00 pm until the last Christmas carol has been sung. They will provide Mark's wonderful Irish Stew. Please bring a dish to share, your musical instrument, and your merry voices. Please RSVP to the church office to let them know how many people to expect.

## Old-Fashioned Christmas Bazaar Planned

By Claudia Kniefel

Our congregation is going to have an old-fashioned Christmas bazaar on Saturday, December 7<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 to 4:00 featuring crafts, books, baked goods, and a soup lunch.

Our Creating Liturgia Group is working hard to make items to sell. So far we have some wonderful Christmas ornaments, microwave bowl cozies, wooden ornaments, quilted boxes, and pillows, and we're just getting started. Do you have any crafts (knitting, quilting, embroidery, etc.) that you would like to contribute? Call Louise Smith at 227-6881 or Claudia Kniefel at 240-7049 or better still, join us Thursday's at 10:00. (We even provide lunch!)

What would a First Congregational bazaar be without a book sale. Barb Widtfeldt and Liese Munter are heading that part. You can call Barb if you have books to donate or if you would like to help with the book sale. Her number is 223-9943. Suffice it to say, there will be a huge selection of topics to choose from.

Need some Christmas goodies but hate to bake? Love to bake but don't need the temptation? Then this sale will be for you! We also need donations of homemade goodies (cookies, candies, cupcakes, muffins, preserves, etc.). Call Kathy Means at 441-7127 if you can contribute or would like to help out.

One last thing, we know this congregation travels on its stomach, so we will also serve a soup lunch from 11 am to 2 pm. Sharon Higgins has agreed to host this part of the bazaar. Plan to drop by for lunch and/or call Sharon at 250-5760 if you can make a pot of soup or a loaf of bread.

We think this will be a fun day and a good little fundraiser. Hope you'll join us and help out.

**Saturday  
DECEMBER  
07**

**OLDE- FASHIONED  
CHRISTMAS BAZAAR,  
BOOK & BAKE SALE**

**First Congregational Church  
10am-4pm**

- ▶ Soup and bread lunch served from 11am-2pm
- ▶ Handmade items such as ornaments, crafts, and gifts
- ▶ Homemade baked breads, cookies, and cakes
- ▶ Jams, jellies, and candies
- ▶ Books—Books—Books!

**2610 E. NORTHERN LIGHTS BLVD.**  
Just east of Lake Otis on Northern Lights

## From Your Life and Learning Ministry

-Chair, Erin Binek

The Christmas pageant will be held on December 15th during the service. Please come and support our small but mighty group of young Congregationalists!

PF raised over \$300 for Heifer International through anniversary T-shirt sales. Thank you to everyone who ordered a t-shirt.

During the November potluck, PF created a large stack of Christmas cards for the seniors at Pioneer Home. We hope these cards will bring a little bit of joy to those that receive them.

## NACCC Missions and Outreach Ministry Update

Note from our NACCC Year-round Delegate Sharon Higgins



### Missions Christmas Needs



Many NACCC Missions have extra needs at Christmas time such as providing food baskets, hygiene items, toys for children and for other needs.

In order for assistance to get to our missions in time for Christmas, donations must be sent to the NACCC by November 15, 2019.

If you wish to help, please send a note with your check suggesting that the funds go to the Mission Christmas Needs.

Send donations to:  
NACCC  
PO Box 288  
Oak Creek, WI 53154

*Thank you so much!*

# FCC December 2019 Calendar

## Weekly Recurring Events

### Sundays

- 10:30 am Worship
- 11:30 am Fellowship Hour
- 11:45 am Intergenerational Bell Choir practice

### Mondays

- 6:00 pm Anchorage Community Bell Choir practice

### Tuesdays

- 10:00 am Lectio Divina
- 7:00 pm Roots of Joy

### Wednesdays

- 5:15 pm Bell Choir Practice
- 6:30 pm Choir Practice

### Thursdays

- 10:00 am Creating Liturgia Group

## Other Events and Meetings

### December 7 (Saturday)

- 10:00 am-4:00 pm – Craft Bazaar, Book and Bake Sale
- 4:00 pm – Irish Cooking Class and Holiday Tea

### December 8 (Sunday)

- 12:15 pm – Outreach Meeting

### December 10 (Tuesday)

- 3:30 pm – Stewardship Meeting

### December 13 (Friday)

- 6:00 pm – Holiday Potluck and Singalong @ the Ryan's

### December 14 (Saturday)

- 10:00 am - Grandfamilies Brunch

### December 15 (Sunday) Pageant Sunday

- 12:15 pm – FCC Council meeting

### December 18 (Wednesday)

- 3:30 pm – Fellowship Ministry meeting

### December 19 (Thursday)

- 6:30 pm – Worship Meeting

### December 24 (Tuesday) Christmas Eve

- 7:00 pm – Candlelight Service

### December 25 (Wednesday) Christmas Day

- Office Closed

## *FCC People*

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Board of Directors

***Serving the PNACCC***

Kate O'Dell,  
Year-Round Delegate

## **Make Our Days Count**

*But you must return to your God; maintain love and justice, and wait for your God always.—Hosea 12:6*

When I was seven years old, at around mid-November, I once asked my mother, "When will Christmas get here?" She replied, "honey, it will get here when it gets here. Here, help me clean the rooms."

That story may help us as we go through this season of Advent as all so many of us start getting antsy (let's admit it!) and wonder, "when will Christmas get here?" – even though we "know better." Don't just wait. Clean our rooms! Live the faith!

Hosea addressed his people as they were going through challenging times to keep preparing for God's coming and returning to God and living faithful lives,

The boxer and "theologian," Mohammad Ali, once said, "Don't count the days. Make the day count." That may put it as simply as possible.

Don't just impatiently do the holiday countdown and exhaust ourselves and our wallets. Instead, live these days of Advent with love, charity, devotion, and helpfulness—thereby positively anticipating our celebrating Christmas by receiving anew Christ into our hearts and minds and deeds.

Make the days of Advent count! Live the faith! Clean our rooms!

Prayer: O God, help us to make our days count during this season of Advent as we positively prepare to make welcome Christ again in liturgy and in truth. Amen.

Rev. Dr. Larry Allen Sansoucie, Staff Chaplain  
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