

# The N O R T H E R N Light



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

January 2020

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## Moderator's Message

*-Louise Smith, Moderator*

This is the beginning of a new year and many changes in our lives need some adjustments. We need to remove doubt, hate, greed and many other things from our lives. These are just a few ways you can help start the new year right:

1. Add more spirituality to your life; Read the Bible
2. Take a look at your physical environment
3. Tell one person each week you love them
4. Spend time with your best friend
5. Care for others that need support
6. Take a TV break
7. Read a good book
8. Find a volunteer opportunity
9. Develop an attitude of gratitude

Above all brighten some else's life with a smile.  
Wishing each of you and your family peace, love, health and happiness.

# From Your Worship Ministry

-Chair, Claudia Kniefel

## Lessons Learned

2019 was an interesting year.

We had some great successes: we came together to help the homeless when they needed us; our wellness group has formed a ride sharing program for anyone finding they need transportation. They also have provided us with packets so we can safely dispose of unused drugs; our Creating Liturgia group has provided the church with seasonal decorations, created blankets for the NICU and comfort caps for cancer patients, they even put on a fairly successful last minute Christmas bazaar; a group formed to plan a new worship service to provide options of both time and worship style; we're doing more to involve the congregation in the worship service; Jim Walker has worked tirelessly to clear land and plant experimental berries and he and Jacob have begun working with King Tech to continue this project. These are just a few of our successes.

It has to be admitted, however, that there were one or two epic failures. Who can forget that communion service where we forgot it was communion Sunday and then found out we were out of wine and couldn't find the cloths for the bread and wine, etc., etc. And how great was Jacob in pulling a children's learning moment out of what could have been a disaster! And then there are the chairs - a really great idea - except they need to have arms. The idea is that would be easier for those with disabilities to sit in, but nobody uses them because they're not easy to get up out of and because no one else wants to sit there. So we're looking into other options. And who can forget the great luminary in a blizzard incident? Did you know they make snow and wind proof luminaries? We do now!

It's 2020! We have a bright shiny year ahead of us with lots of exciting adventures ahead of us. Jacob has been with us almost three years now and we will celebrate our 60th anniversary as well as the 400th anniversary of the Pilgrims coming to America. We also have some really exciting programs in the hopper, and we'll work on our successes and, hopefully, learn from our mistakes.

### **Opportunity to Serve Food at Bean's Cafe**

The Outreach Ministry is putting together a list of people willing to volunteer their time serving lunch at Bean's Café every now and then. All that serving lunch there requires is that you be one of 6-7 people, standing in the serving line together behind a counter, dishing up already prepared food for about 2 hours (11:15-1:15) on the chosen date. Various people from FCC already volunteer to do this on their own or have done so in the past, but we would like to try to have a group from FCC. Right now, we are asking interested people to give us their names. Once we have a list of potential volunteers, we will send out an email with possible dates, mostly likely Tuesday, Wednesday or Friday, to firm up a first date. We will try to carpool if possible. Please contact the church office to let us know of your interest at your earliest convenience. You can contact Lynn Barber for more information.

## From Your Fellowship Ministry

-Chair, Kate O'Dell

The Fellowship Ministry met on Wednesday, December 18, 2019. Our actions included the following:

### *New Business*

- Asking Krystal to now create two calendars.
  - One for the ministries will have all of the use-of-space entries.
  - One for the public, which has only the activities that everyone needs to know about, will go into the Bulletin and be posted to the website.

### *Calendar Review:*

- December
  - Friday Food and Fun, December 27, 6:00 pm
  - Lynn will pick a place and let Krystal know
- January
  - Family Game Night – Friday, 1/10/20
    - Discussion about having it be hosted in a home
    - We'll add this to the January meeting agenda to continue discussing.
  - Potluck on 1/26 – Hosts: Stewardship Ministry
  - Friday Food and Fun 1/31/20
    - Lynn Barber will pick a place and let Krystal know.
    - If people have suggestions, they need to contact Lynn.
- February
  - Family Game Night – February 14
  - Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper – February 25
    - We'll reserve the space in Cary Mead Hall and the kitchen from 4:30 to 7:00 pm.
    - At the January Fellowship Meeting, we'll plan who's bringing what.

Please note that everyone is invited to attend the Fellowship Ministry meetings and/or volunteer to help with any of the activities described here. Since this Ministry's purpose is to strengthen our ties to one another through getting together as frequently as possible, all suggestions for gatherings or projects will be gratefully considered.

The Fellowship Ministry's next meeting will be Wednesday, January 15, 3:30 pm, in the Board Room.

***Stay tuned* for the next Friday Food and Fun! It will be on Friday, January 31, 2020. The location has not been set – if you have any suggestions, speak with Lynn Barber or the church office.**

## Why do we have Ministries, not boards?

-Kate O'Dell

When the members of First Congregational Christian Church of Anchorage ratified their *Bylaws* in 2011, they approved a document that expresses a relationship among themselves that we believe speaks more accurately and powerfully of the unique faith community we have created. Specifically, we changed the name of our working groups from “Boards” to “Ministries.” In doing this, we were guided in part by what’s considered the biblical definition of *ministry* – “an activity carried out by Christians to express their faith...carrying forth Christ’s mission in the world...indicating that it is conferred on each Christian in baptism.”

As Congregationalists, we believe that we accept the mantle of ministry when we, either by becoming a member or by faithful participation in the FCC community, enter into the covenantal relationship with each other and with Jesus. In our *Bylaws* therefore, we have chosen to describe the groups that are the visible and active expression of this relationship as having a purpose beyond conducting the church’s business, which is the function of a *board*. This change of name also speaks to the Senior Minister’s role. Rev. Jacob is *primus inter pares*, a first among equals, chosen by all of us to support and lead us in our respective ministries, just as we agree to do the same for him.

Looking ahead to our Spring Semi-annual Congregational Meeting in April, I’m writing this OpEd to encourage everyone’s consideration of her or his role as a minister in the FCC church family and think about how they can best take advantage of the opportunities for spiritual growth that presents. If each of us is a minister who is expected to express our faith by embodying Christ’s mission, one way to make sure our congregation is empowered to live this on a daily basis is for individual members to join their efforts with others’ by agreeing to be nominated for a ministry.

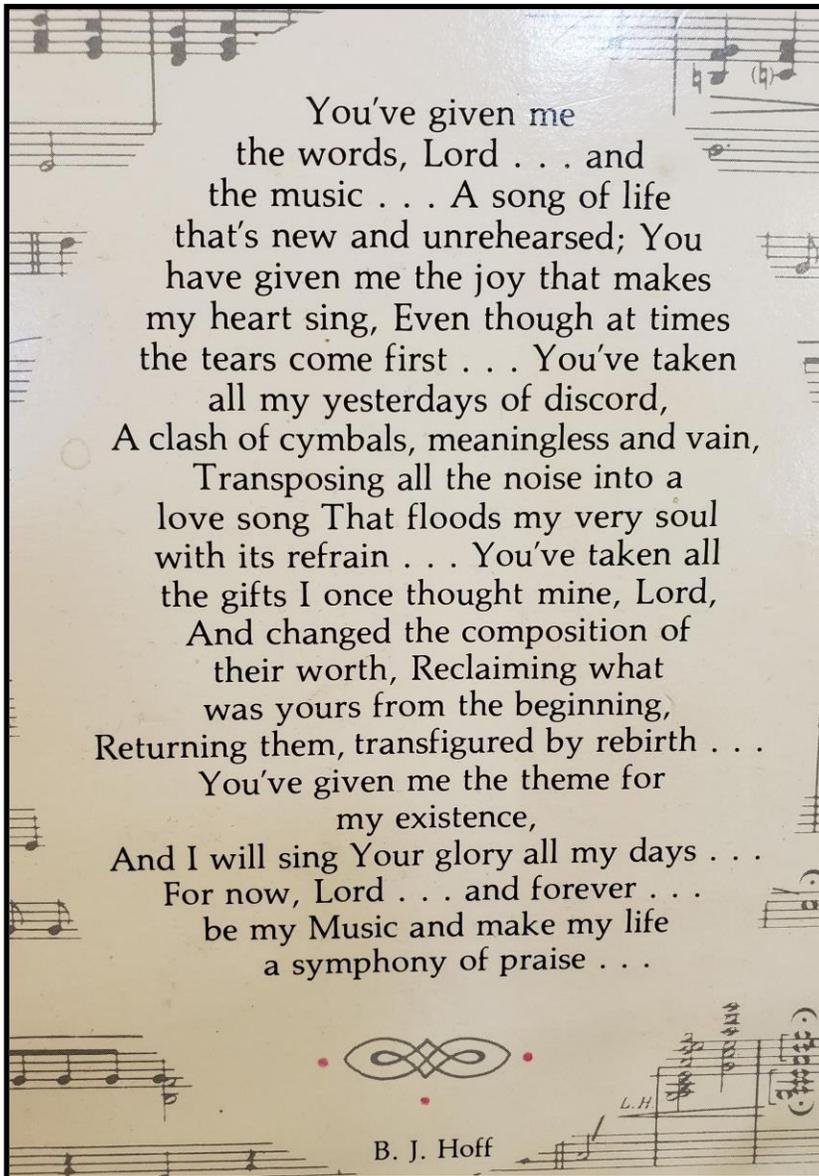
Please keep in mind that those of us who have been volunteering for many years are well aware of the need to honor people’s needs for flexible meeting schedules and, perhaps, alternative ways of meeting, such as Skype. Which is to say that, if you plan on traveling this year, you needn’t think that should keep you from agreeing to be nominated. I also encourage you to think about where your particular talents or passions lead you and let Jim Munter or Kathy Means know as they begin creating the slate for our April elections.

*Time to start thinking about.. April Aires!*

In just a few months more, we’ll be gathering for **April Aires**, on April 26<sup>th</sup>. So think about whether you might wish to sing a song, play a tune, read a poem, or...? See Co-chairs Caroline Valentine or Lynn Barber if you have questions or are ready to volunteer.

## In Celebration of the Season, a personal note:

-Sharon Higgins



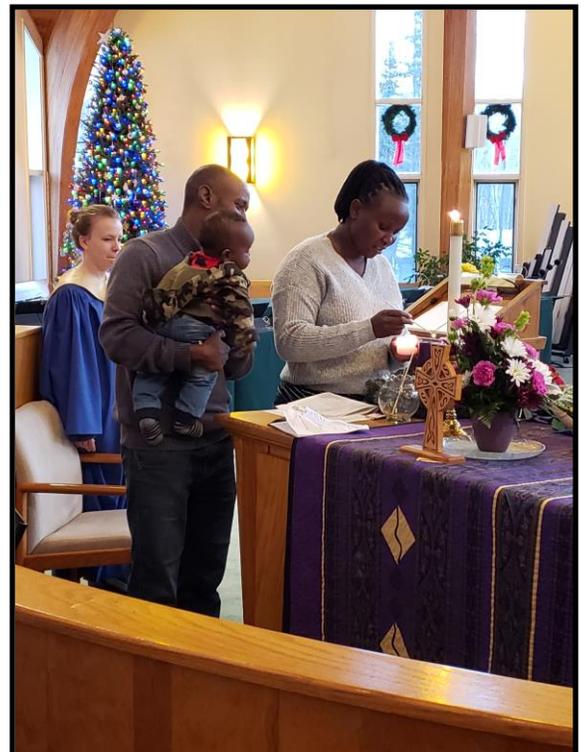
You've given me  
the words, Lord . . . and  
the music . . . A song of life  
that's new and unrehearsed; You  
have given me the joy that makes  
my heart sing, Even though at times  
the tears come first . . . You've taken  
all my yesterdays of discord,  
A clash of cymbals, meaningless and vain,  
Transposing all the noise into a  
love song That floods my very soul  
with its refrain . . . You've taken all  
the gifts I once thought mine, Lord,  
And changed the composition of  
their worth, Reclaiming what  
was yours from the beginning,  
Returning them, transfigured by rebirth . . .  
You've given me the theme for  
my existence,  
And I will sing Your glory all my days . . .  
For now, Lord . . . and forever . . .  
be my Music and make my life  
a symphony of praise . . .

B. J. Hoff

TEXT: You've given me the words,  
Lord...and the music... A song of life  
that's new and unrehearsed; You have  
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sing, Even though at times the tears  
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now, Lord... and forever... be my Music  
and make my life a symphony of  
praise...

- B. J. Hoff

***We were so blessed this Advent and Christmas season to spend time with Amana's wife, Mary, and son, Daliso, visiting all the way from Tanzania! Hopefully Mary and Daliso can come again soon; their presence will surely be missed as they travel back to Tanzania.***



# ROOTS OF JOY

## ANCHORAGE, AK



Every week for about three months, there have been multiple announcements, notes, and sometimes additions to the sanctuary and regular Sunday service from this 'Roots of Joy' thing. I know I have had several people ask me about it, and the thing is, it is really hard to explain what has been happening on Tuesday nights when we gather together at 7 pm. Even the group of people that are doing the planning have struggled to define exactly what we are doing, even though we are doing it. Or at least have had trouble deciding what words and labels are the ones that are used when describing Roots of Joy to someone that hasn't seen it for themselves.

Is it worship? For some people, certainly. Others may prefer to call it something else.

Is it a safe place to share within a community? Yes, some people do experience it as a place that they can be open in discussions, unlike a typical Sunday service because the format is just different. Most people that have attended say they really appreciate having a time to share and chat in a constructive way.

What does the service look like? Well, that really does vary from week to week. We have been trying new things, muddling through some changes, and seeing what feels good or works well, and what helps us be more inclusive. There has been music, art, writing, readings, crafts, and food, among other activities.

The thing is, it has the ability to shift easily based on who is planning, and who shows up. The planning group really wants to create a flexible space where things can change as they need to, based on who is present and what people want or need. So really, Roots of Joy is about building community, connecting deeper to those around us, and exploring our faith in new and meaningful ways for the people present. And remember – anyone is welcome to join the planning or to come to a service.

If you want to know more, you can always talk to Rev. Jacob, or take a look at the Facebook or Instagram pages – [RootsofJoyFCCA](#) should get you there on either site. The new series is "Between," where we will focus on those in between times and liminal spaces in life—the times between what was, and what is next. Join us, and think about whether you know someone that is looking for something a little different in church but can't seem to find it; maybe Roots of Joy is the sort of sacred space they are seeking.

*-Krystal Poindexter*



# FCC January 2020 Calendar

## Weekly Recurring Events

### Sundays

- 10:30 am – Worship/Sunday School
- 11:30 am – Fellowship Hour

### Mondays

- 6:00 pm – Community Bell Choir

### Tuesdays

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

### Wednesdays

- 5:15 pm – Handbell Rehearsal
- 6:30 pm – Choir Rehearsal

### Thursdays

- 10:00 am – Creating Liturgia

## Other Events and Meetings

### January 10 (Friday)

- 6:00 pm – Family Game Night

### January 12 (Sunday)

- 12:15 pm – Outreach Meeting

### January 14 (Tuesday)

- 3:30 pm – Stewardship Meeting

### January 15 (Wednesday)

- 3:30 pm – Fellowship Meeting

### January 16 (Thursday)

- 6:00 pm – Worship Meeting

### January 19 (Sunday) **Communion Sunday**

- 12:15 pm – Council Meeting

### January 26 (Sunday) **Family Sunday**

- 11:30 am – Potluck: Stewardship hosts
- 12:15 pm – PF Activity

## People of FCC

### Senior Minister

Rev. Jacob L. Poindexter:  
907-272-8363 (work)  
jacob@revpoindexter.com

**Organist, Director,  
Northern Lights Ringers**  
Caroline Valentine

**Director, Chancel Choir**  
Lori Wasko

**Acolyte Attendant**  
Laney Hanas:

**Administrative Assistant**  
Krystal Poindexter 272-8363  
fcc@gci.net

**FCC Church Sexton**  
Scott McClure 272-8363

**Wedding Coordinator**  
Sandra Skaggs 622-1777

## Contacts

**Serving the NACCC**  
Sharon Higgins,  
Year-Round Delegate  
Claudia Kniefel,  
Board of Directors

**Serving the PNACCC**  
Kate O'Dell,  
Year-Round Delegate

“Even when light fades and darkness falls--as it does every single day, in every single life--God does not turn the world over to some other deity...Here is the testimony of faith; darkness is not dark to God; the night is as bright as the day.”

– Barbara Brown Taylor,  
**Learning to Walk in the Dark**