

News and  
Stories from  
the people of  
FCC of  
Anchorage

June 2020

# The Northern Light

First Congregational Church of Anchorage

## Inside this issue:

Outreach  
Ministry 2

Stewardship  
Ministry 2

Life &  
Learning 2

Worship  
Ministry 3

NACCC  
News 3

The Sound-  
ing Board 4

Welcome to  
the Left  
Coast: Pho-  
tos of Who  
We Are 5

Welcome to  
the Left  
Coast: Pho-  
tos of Who  
We Are 6

Welcome to  
the Left  
Coast: Pho-  
tos of Who  
We Are 7

FCC  
Information 8

## Message from the Moderator

### Moderating Moderation

In this time of the virus, we have different options for future actions, going from one extreme (running screaming out of our houses into the street, throwing off our masks and hugging someone, anyone) to another extreme (hiding, quaking, under the covers, with our masks on, slathered in hand-sanitizer). What should we as individuals, and we as the church do? We all want to go back to “normal”, but I think normal is gone. If we only continue to meet in Zoom rooms, however, I think we risk gradually becoming less of who we are, sort of like crispy cereal turning soggy in milk, as we huddle in our homes, separate from each other. Will our energy drain away without experiencing our once taken-for-granted revitalizing in-person contacts?

Until now I never thought much about the title of “Moderator”. Now it seems to have taken on more meaning to me. But it’s not just me. Maybe we all really need to be moderators, moderating our behavior, gradually doing something but only what seems most wise to do. It’s just that it’s so difficult to figure out what that is.

There many possible options for us to consider as we try to step out of our homes in some sort of controlled manner. Maybe we can have FCC parking

lot singathons (for those of us who desperately miss singing hymns together), or socially distanced porch picnics (a few have already happened), or spread out non-singing shorter in-church services, or instead, maybe we continue everything, or nearly everything on Zoom alone until a miracle or a vaccine occurs. Who knows?

The FCC Church Council is going to be meeting regularly to try to figure out our next steps as spring turns to summer, and time goes on. The next such meeting is Sunday, June 7<sup>th</sup> after church (on Zoom, of course). Do you have ideas for us to consider? Please, please, step up to let us know, before or during or after this meeting. Join us. Pray for us all.

No matter what we as a church do, let us each rejoice that we have each other, and that we have the church, no matter how remote things seem right now. We can still communicate with each other, by Zoom of course, but also by phone, email, postal service mail, or text, and with our masks on and at least 6 feet apart, in person. We can see each other and be together, even in a Zoom room.

*-Lynn Barber, Moderator*

## Outreach Ministry

Outreach shared information of ways the congregation can continue to help several of the local agencies that we sponsor with information in the bulletin about drop-off times and places for The Children's Lunchbox, F.I.S.H., and Bean's Café.

There are recordings available about the Open and Affirming trainings from the church office.

We recently received a letter from the PanAmerican Institute relating their efforts to continue the education of their students. As in Anchorage, the school is closed, but teachers are sending out lessons by WhatsApp to parents' cell phones. However, there is limited internet and available computers, and families are struggling helping children when they have multiple children in different grade levels. They are requesting prayers.

*-Chris Walker, Chair*

### Value Village Fundraiser Reminder:

The date is July 7, 2020.

Please review the list of accepted items. If you have questions, email the church or contact Sharon Higgins.

## Stewardship Ministry

After an inspection of our elevator, the municipality informed us of several items that needed attention. Because the cost was over the amount budgeted for elevator maintenance, a special congregational meeting was convened. A motion to cover the necessary repairs and updates was presented to the congregation and passed. The work will be completed before the opening of the church.

Pledges and donations can be mailed or dropped off in the mail slot of the church. You can also donate on line.

*-Sharon Higgins, Chair*

## Life & Learning

After a Quarantide Youth Sunday service, I think the kids and the Life and Learning ministry are looking forward to things getting back to normal. If you missed the 5/17 service, you can still enjoy it from the worship archives at <https://www.fccak.org/worship-archive/>. For our next activity, the youth will be working in their raised garden. We don't usually meet over the summer due to busy family plans, but in this unusual year we will try to plan a few PF gatherings or outings before school starts to make up for missing out the past few months. Wishing everyone a sunny and safe summer!

*-Marcie Errico, Chair*

## Worship Ministry

As we enter into the fourth month of the COVID-19 pandemic and the state and city have begun to relax restrictions on gatherings, we are wondering how will we make the transition back to "normal" for our church services. The council will meet June 7 to discuss whether we can safely reopen the church, including how to make it a meaningful service while observing social distancing. We are very concerned about keeping our congregation safe and healthy. We welcome your thoughts and concerns about the transition.

While your Worship Ministry is not able to be physically present during the services, please know that we are trying to meet your needs in other ways. We are so grateful to Rev. Jacob and Krystal for bringing the Sunday service to us online, through the Zoom app and over the phone. They get better and better as the kinks are worked out. Lori Wasko and Caroline Valentine are organizing choir and handbell choir pieces through the Acapella app so that we have musical offerings, and Caroline is playing the organ so we can sing along with hymns at home. Individuals are also encouraged to submit recorded pieces

of music, and we have enjoyed Barb Ross on the piano and Jenna and Nathan Amber on the guitar.

The 7 pm Tuesday Roots of Joy services are continuing online through Zoom, with a more intimate singing, sharing and discussion format. Please join us.

We are also reaching out to those who are in ill health or need spiritual support. Please contact the church office if you have any needs or know someone who does. We do not want anyone to go it alone.

We are heading into our summer mode and anything can happen. Right now we know that the NACCC meeting scheduled for June 27 in Portland, ME will now be held online, which means it is available to more people. We will provide more information about how to join the conference online as the date nears.

Take care, stay safe, and keep in touch.

-Kathy Means, Chair

***"Council will meet on June 7th to discuss whether we can safely reopen the church, including how to make it a meaningful service"***

## NACCC News

A virtual meeting of the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches will convene on June 27, 2020 at 11:00 A.M. Alaska time. Look for details for joining this meeting in a daily update. It will be sent out by mid-June.

-Sharon Higgins, Delegate



***“The FCC Sounding Board was created to give us all a way to air and talk out grievances before they escalate to a point of causing major upheavals and hurt feelings.”***

## **What Is The Sounding Board and Why Do We Need One?**

When First Congregational Church members ratified the amended Bylaws in 2016, they set up a new committee, The Standing Committee for Personnel and Administration (SCPA).

The Bylaws section on the Church Council states that their duties include: establish a Standing Committee for Personnel and Administration (SCPA). Members shall be appointed annually immediately after the Spring Semi-Annual Meeting. They shall have a one-year term but may be reappointed.

1. Members of the SCPA shall be the Moderator, the Vice Moderator, and three active Church members appointed by the Moderator and ratified by Council.
2. The SCPA as a whole shall:
  - a) serve an ombudsman role for the Church: receive questions, issues, complaints, and kudos from the congregation and staff; and
  - b) report to Council in Executive Session.

Not long after the SCPA was created, we decided that title wasn't very helpful in describing what this new committee would do. So, the Rules and Practices Committee invited suggestions for a title that would be more helpful and catch people's attention, and we now have "The Sounding Board."

The key to understanding The Sounding Board's role in our faith community is the word "ombudsman." This is an individual or, in our case, a group, that investigates individual complaints against other members of the community. They do not act but serve as a confidential listener for the complainant. In other words, the FCC Sounding Board was created to give us all a way to air and talk out grievances before they escalate to a point of causing major upheavals and hurt feelings. We decided that sometimes folks would like to have a way to pass along a compliment anonymously, too, so that's another reason to request a meeting.

If you need to meet with The Sounding Board about anything that you wish to talk over with non-judgmental listeners, you simply have to let our Moderator Lynn Barber know. She will work with you to set up the meeting, probably in a Zoom room these days. You can get Lynn's email address and phone number from the FCC Directory. If you would like to have an updated copy, contact Krystal in the FCC Office ([office@fccak.org](mailto:office@fccak.org), 907-272-8363).

*-Kate O'Dell, Clerk*



**Finding our Way  
in the Future**



**NACCC 2021  
Spokane, WA**

## **“Welcome to the Left Coast”**

If someone asked you to describe First Congregational Church of Anchorage, Alaska, do you have a photo or video clip that would show them even without your words? Every year, at the NACCC Annual Meeting and Conference, the hosts for the following year's meeting are featured at the final dinner so they can invite everyone to participate in the next gathering. For 2021, if we are able to be together in person again, the NACCC Annual Meeting and Conference will be in Spokane, WA. The hosts will be all of the member churches of the Pacific Northwest Association of Congregational Christian Churches (PNACCC). Rev. Ed Backell, Pastor of Warden Community Church, is the PNACCC representative on the national planning committee, and he is inviting us all to contribute our photos/video clips to a presentation he will put together that entices our sisters and brothers from all over the world to join us in Spokane. Here is a sampling of the photos we have chosen to send.



***FCC with the Chugach Mountains in the background***



***Acolytes bringing in the light to begin the***



***Christmas Eve Candlelight Service***



***Rev. Jacob with a musical Children's Moment-- learning to play a Celtic harp***



***Sunday Worship Service***



***Rev. Jacob Poindexter baptizing a child***





*For World Communion Sunday, our elements were tea and sticky rice balls*



*The Intergenerational Handbell Choir*



*Rev. Jacob with the newest member of our church family*



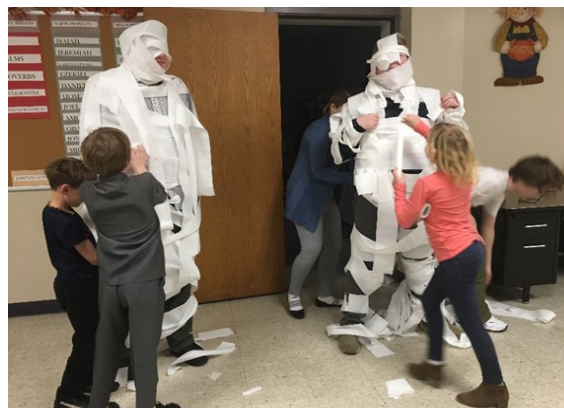
*Marilyn Lee and Eric Johnson wedding*



*A beautiful autumn parament created by a Church member*



*Irene Stewart, Claudia Kniefel, and Louise Smith updating the Church's history books*



*Sunday School students creating "monsters" for Halloween*





*Easter Sunrise Service with our Resurrection Moose  
Resurrection Moose seemed to enjoy the singing.*



*Rev. Jacob offers a prayer before everyone sets off for the CROP Walk to raise money for those who are hungry in our community and around the world.*



*We are beginning the process of converting our grounds to an edible landscape.  
Four varieties of lingonberries on an unusable steep slope & three varieties of currants where we used to have scrub brush.*



*Along with the edible plantings, we keep our front garden filled with flowers and ferns as a warm welcome to the church.*



*Creating a bed for Jerusalem artichokes*



*Building raised beds for summer vegetable crops*



## First Congregational Church of Anchorage

2610 E. Northern Lights Blvd.  
Anchorage, AK 99508

Phone: 907.272.8363

Fax: 907.272.5124

Email: [office@fccak.org](mailto:office@fccak.org)

Website: [www.fccak.org](http://www.fccak.org)

A service that explores other ways to engage our faith and spirituality together.



*Member of the National  
Association of  
Congregational Christian  
Churches*

## People of First Congregational Church

### Senior Minister

Rev. Jacob L. Poindexter  
907.272.8363  
[jacobp@fccak.org](mailto:jacobp@fccak.org)

### Organist; Director, Northern Lights Ringers

Caroline Valentine  
907.272.8363

### Director, Chancel Choir

Lori Wasko  
907.272.8363

### Administrative Assistant

Krystal Poindexter  
907.272.8363  
[office@fccak.org](mailto:office@fccak.org)

### FCC Sexton

Scott McClure  
907.272.8363

### Wedding Coordinator

Sandra Skaggs  
907.622.1777

### *Serving the NACCC*

#### **Year Round Delegate**

Sharon Higgins

#### **Board of Directors**

Claudia Kniefel

### *Serving the PNACCC*

#### **Year Round Delegate**

Kate O'Dell