

News and
Stories
from the
people of
FCC of
Anchorage

September 2020

The Northern Light

First Congregational Church of Anchorage

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Message from the Moderator

TEA ANYONE?

I would like to invite each of you to tea. Not at my house, of course. Not now anyway. What I am talking about is FCC's twice weekly "Afternoon Tea" at 3:00 pm on Wednesdays and Fridays. No reservations are necessary. No tea is even necessary, but it is nice to have something to sip as you chat with whoever else has shown up for tea time.

All you do to join the afternoon tea is go to a recent FCC Daily Update during the 3-4 pm afternoon hour on Wednesday or Friday. Click on "Gathering Room" in the green box, enter the password (the church phone number), and then click on "Join with Video" and "Join with Computer Audio" (or words to that effect), and you are in FCC's afternoon tea. Anyone who has the time can stop by anytime between 3:00 and 4:00 to chat with

whoever else has stopped by at the FCC afternoon tea.

Of course, tea time can be anytime. And you don't have to drink tea, or anything at all, to enjoy talking with friends. Are you thinking you'd like to talk to someone at FCC at a different time of the day or week? Or talk to and see the face of someone who does not come to the 3:00 teas. The Gathering Room is available to any of us at any time, so long as there is not a meeting of a Ministry or other FCC group that is scheduled at that time. You can check the church calendar to minimize the chances of the Gathering Room being busy, and then exchange emails with someone (or multiple people) to set up a time to chat in the FCC Gathering Room. The worst that can happen is that you go to the room and someone else is already there chatting, and you have to try again for

a time when no one else is there.

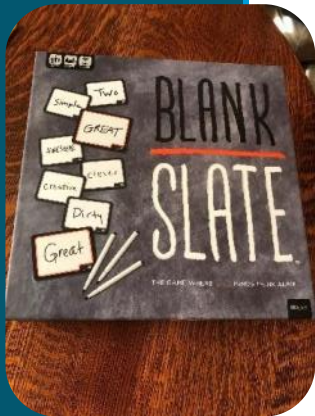
Are there projects you once worked on, or would like to work on, with others? It's amazing how much can be done on Zoom, in spite of the unsatisfactory nature of being locked in a Zoom virtual world. You might try the FCC Gathering Room to get together on a project, or do planning of something, or get to know someone better.

Just seeing the faces and hearing the voices of people you once enjoyed seeing and hearing in-person can brighten your day, as well as help you keep up on what others are doing to get through in the pandemic world (and maybe gossip a bit of course).

Let's meet for tea soon!

-Lynn Barber, Moderator

Fellowship Ministry



In times like these...

“Laughter is the best medicine.” It’s a cliché, but like all well-worn adages, it’s so old it’s new now that we’re in a pandemic. Five of your FCC friends felt the soothing effects of spending a lighthearted hour together on Friday for this month’s Family Game Night. We began the evening with Farkle, throwing six dice to come up with poker-type scores. That sounds like it’s all luck, but it actually involves strategy because the player can choose to roll her/his dice three times for a better score as long as at least one is a counter. If the roll contains no counter, that’s Farkle, and any points rolled so far are lost. We even learned that “Farkle” has a meaning beyond throwing losing dice in the game.

After Bob Kniefel won the Farkle game, we switched to “Blank Slate.” We discovered that sometimes playing this game with people who have large vocabularies can be challenging. Lynn Barber won this one after she, Dave Barber, and Bob Kniefel traded the lead several times.

We’ll be in the FCC Gathering Room again at 6:00 pm on Friday, September 25th for another Family Game Night. Meanwhile, the Fellowship Ministry will be searching for a new game we can play in a Zoom room. So, if you have something that would work, please email the Church Office (OFFICE@fccak.org).

-Kate O’Dell, Chair

Planning Our 2021 Journey

It’s time to build the 2021 church calendar! The planning will happen virtually on Zoom this year on **Saturday, September 12, 2020** in the Gathering Room link. Each ministry will need to bring their plans so that the calendar can be built without conflicting dates. Of course, we don’t know what 2021 will look like yet, but plans must be made and we will continue to be flexible!

Everyone is invited to come and help plan, you don’t have to be on a ministry in order to attend! We hope that this sort of community commitment will encourage every person to add their talents to at least one activity or event, and that the work of this Church will truly be a collaborative effort by all, not just the dedication of a very few.

Watch future Daily Updates for more details, including the time. Fellowship Ministry is also working on plans to have an outdoor picnic to celebrate Rally Sunday, more details will be shared as they are confirmed.

Outreach Ministry

Update from the Pan-American Institute:

Due to COVID-19 pandemic, our school's activities had been overwhelming and challenging affecting our contact with you. I plan to resume our correspondence and keep you informed of your adopted student.

All schooling is done on line, making it hard, at the moment, to send you pictures or letters written by students, but with the aid of our school's counselor I will keep you informed of school's progress or student's needs.

FCC of Anchorage's donation of \$420 received in January "adopted" Luis Alberto López on his first year with us, which ended last June. Now he is attending his second year at PAI and with your support (we received your \$200 donation, designated for computers, on August 5th) he received a laptop to start classes online. Now we are trying to get another one for his sister who also attends PAI on her third year and cannot share one laptop since classes are at the same time.

Best wishes of health for everyone and our heartfelt gratitude for your longtime support.

Bendiciones,
Juana Santos

Books for Shungnak



Shungnak School is a has a pre K-12 population of about 85 students, most of whom are Alaskan Native (Inupiat), located north of the Arctic Circle in the Northwest Arctic Borough. While most teachers have books in their classroom, there is no school or community-wide library.

During the 2018-2019 school year, the Outreach Ministry gathered and sent over 2000 books, early learning through adult levels. This allowed books for teachers to use in their classrooms and for students to take home. On state testing that spring, there was a major improvement in students' reading level. In the fall of the 2019-2020 school year, we sent over 1500 donated books. This allowed the school to host a Community Reading Event with lots of parents and older students helping out the little ones reading to each other and taking books home. Due to COVID 19, no state testing was done, but the books generated a lot of interest amount the community.

Outreach is again sponsoring this activity to include magazines such as National Geographic, Field and Stream, or others of interest to children or adults. To donate books or magazines, please drop them off at church. Jim Walker will be at church Wednesdays from 5:00 pm-6:00 pm. Scott McClure will be at church on Monday and Wednesdays from 10:00 am to 1:30 pm.

Also we need large boxes for shipping the books so we'd welcome any donations of that type.

2020 Weed Pick-Nik

On August 15th, several members came together at the church to take care of some landscaping and harvesting needs of the church. Flower beds were cleared of weeds and plants were deadheaded, currants and lingonberries were harvested, dead trees were cut down, sidewalk cracks were cleared of volunteer plants, and friends enjoyed their picnic lunches in the parking lot together. It was a beautiful day to be outside, and with all the volunteers present, the work was quick and enjoyable.



Plan Your Vote

For most of us, voting in a presidential-year election used to only involve taking an hour off from work or fitting it into our *To Do* list for the first Tuesday in November. You went to the location designated for your precinct and either filled out a paper ballot or used a machine. Then, you watched the 10:00 pm news for the latest election results. In those simpler times, we could learn who won most races before we went to bed. In 2020, for the election on November 3rd, you have more options but also some possible complications that require your attention beginning now.

I'm going to briefly discuss planning your vote in this article. However, I recommend you go to the website www.vote.org for complete, and up-to-the-minute information about voting that you can trust. This site has links to answer questions including how to vote during the COVID-19 pandemic and a guide that outlines your voting rights. Remember, you have the right to vote. If anyone tries to stop you, call the Election Protection Hotline at 1-866-687-8683.

1. Check your registration. In Alaska, go to <https://www.elections.alaska.gov> or call the Alaska Division of Elections at 907-465-4611 (Toll-Free: 866-952-8683). You can also go to a Division of Elections Office.

“The deadline to register is Sunday, October 4, 2020”

DO THIS NOW! The deadline is Sunday, October 4, 2020. If you are not registered, or you need to change your registration, you need to allow plenty of time for these processes to be completed. Keep in mind that the current slow-down in U.S. Postal Service delivery may mean delays that you otherwise wouldn't encounter.

2. Register to vote. Go to <https://www.voterregistration.alaska.gov> You will need your current Alaska driver's license or state ID. You can register there, or you can download/print a paper form to complete and sign. Send your completed form by mail, fax, or email attachment to a Regional Elections Office. You can also register to vote or update your registration in person at a Division of Elections Office.

Again, do this now, for the reasons mentioned above, but also because you will be issued a voter registration card that will be mailed to you. This may take up to four weeks to arrive. The last day to request an absentee ballot is 10 days before the election, but if the mail is still slow...

3. If you do not want to vote in person during the pandemic, or you will be traveling and unable to vote in your precinct location, you may request Absentee Voting.
 - a. Vote an absentee in person ballot beginning 15 days before November 3rd at an absentee voting location. You must apply for an absentee ballot. Apply online, apply using a fillable paper application, or contact the Division of Elections at the phone numbers in Step 1 above. **DO THIS NOW.** In person absentee voting will be available on October 19, 2020.
 - b. Vote by mail – apply for a mail-in ballot as described on the website <https://www.elections.alaska.gov>. The ballot will be mailed to you. Fill it out and either mail it in or turn it in to a Regional Elections Office as soon as possible. Make sure your vote is counted. Read the instructions very, very carefully. If you have questions, call the numbers in Step 1 above or go to the website.

We Alaskans have several ways to vote in the November 3rd election. We're fortunate that our Division of Elections has done the extra work to make sure our process is as safe and accurate as we humans can make it these days. However, taking advantage of the absentee and mail-in options requires each of us to put in a bit more effort than in bygone days. It is our right to vote, absolutely, but it is our responsibility to exercise care when we do so. And by the way, with more of us voting by mail, we need to have patience. We may not know the election results for several days after November 3rd.

-Kate O'Dell



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
Website: 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

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

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