

*News and
Stories
from the
people of
FCC of
Anchorage*

December 2020

The Northern Light

First Congregational Church of Anchorage

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2020 Christmas Pageant

This year's Christmas pageant will be performed on **Sunday, December 13th** during the worship service on Zoom. The pageant will be performed like a radio-drama with images shown depicting the storyline and several Christmas songs to sing along with. Several people from the congregation have signed up for speaking parts, and it should be a great time. You won't want to miss it!

Outreach Ministry

If anyone is looking for a project to keep them busy this winter, Outreach ministry is starting to collect Comfort Caps for chemo patients. If you'd like to help make comfort caps, there is a binder in the Board Room with the pattern and yarn on the shelf to choose from. If you'd like the office to mail or email a copy of the pattern, let Krystal know and she can send a copy to you.

Any complete caps and scarves can be left in the Narthex—a box will be added soon to put them in.





Message from the Moderator

Thankful Always?

Thanksgiving is past. At Thanksgiving time, everyone everywhere talked about gratitude, about giving thanks. But now we are done with that. We are on to Christmas stuff.

Wait! We are always to told *in everything* to give thanks. Not just at Thanksgiving. How's that working for you? It's so hard to remember to give thanks, regularly, when it's not even Thanksgiving, or even to think that there might be something to be thankful for, every day.

A couple of years ago a small group of us read and journaled about and discussed Grounded by Diana Butler Bass, with Kate O'Dell as our leader. My journal entry on September 27, 2018: "Kate talked about the value of journaling our gratefulness daily." Something in the idea of doing this every day caught my attention. The suggestion was to write only 5 items per day. How hard could that be? I already had a notebook. Since that day, I have filled up two notebooks and recently started another with my daily gratitude list.

I have a few suggestions if you want to try it. First, find a notebook that makes you want to write in it, the paper, the cover, something about it, a notebook that is easily packed if you are going to be away from home, a notebook that you might want to look back at someday to see what you wrote. Then put the notebook on the kitchen table or somewhere you are at least once every day, with a pen next to it. I do mine about breakfast time, sometimes while eating my cereal. I write down the date and time, and begin with "I am grateful..." and after that do my daily list. Of course, you can do your journal any way that you like. There probably is nothing magical about 5 items; it's just few enough to be doable and many enough to get you thinking.

What you write is between you and the journal, unless you decide to share something from it with others. I find that my list usually includes predictable, possibly trivial-seeming things, and just a word or two conveys my thanks for these, sometimes the same word, day after day. Maybe that is what the whole list is like some days. Other days there is something wonderful that is surrounding me that begs to be thanked, sometimes in multiple sentences or paragraphs. Most days, most items are somewhere in between. I usually look out the window – are the mountains especially beautiful, is there a sunrise happening, are there stars or fog or snow or a cute neighbor dog or child that I might mention? I think about my life's journey right now – what happened yesterday, or might happen today, or tomorrow or... that I can be thankful for? Am I reading or have I read a good book, or seen an inspiring interview or quote or photograph, or spoken to someone I especially value? I have even, when pressed for ideas, given thanks for my gratefulness journal. Sometimes, especially when I am in a hurry, I am just grateful to think of anything to put in my daily entry.

What happens if I stare right past my journal in the morning and forget to write? I write later in the day. What if I forget a whole day? I "force" myself to write 10 items the next day. So far I haven't missed two days in a row.

I know it sounds like I'm a bit obsessive about it (as with many things). As my mother always said when I confessed to her my obsession about watching birds, "At least it's not hurting anyone." And for me, it (usually) lightens my days to begin with being thankful. I recommend it!

Note #1: One of today's journal entries is: I am grateful for having thought of something to write about for my Moderator's Message in the December FCC newsletter.

Note #2: Thank you Kate!

-Lynn Barber, Moderator

Note from the Financial Secretary

These past eight months have been a challenge as we've tried to safely deal with the COVID-19 virus and our inability to meet in-house at our beloved church building. However, as the saying goes, "When life gives you lemons, make lemonade," and through the genius abilities of Rev. Poindexter, Krystal Poindexter, Caroline Valentine, Lori Wasko and so many others, sweet lemonade has been made over and over. That team has brought us together through Zoom and the Acapella app each Sunday and other meeting days, and thank goodness for each of them and their ability to do that!

In addition, many thanks to all of you who supported our church with your generous donations throughout the year and also "thank you" to those of you who have submitted and forwarded your 2021 pledges. Without these pledges, planning next year's budget would have been extremely difficult if not impossible, so thank you again for your generosity.

Stay safe and healthy and may God bless each of you.

-Sue Hanas, Financial Secretary

Fellowship Ministry

We won't be able to get together with the Irish Club of Alaska for a Holiday Tea like the one we enjoyed last year. So, ICA is inviting everyone to join them for a new event that they hope will wrap us in some of the same warm, festive spirit. As you can see in the flyer (on the next page), you're invited to contribute to the program, if you wish.

Tell us your story, sing us your song!

You can register for this new holiday gathering by going to the Eventbrite link below. It's free but you do need to fill out the form.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-irish-club-of-alaska-presents-fruitcakes-and-nuts-tickets-130351204963>

Let Dawn Berg know what you'll be contributing to the festivities by sending an email to akirishcommunication@gmail.com

This is definitely "the more the merrier," so contact Dawn today.

-Kate O'Dell, Fellowship Chair

Stewardship Ministry

November's meeting consisted of good news and bad news.

Good news: 1. Pledge cards and donations are on tract. 2. The remainder of the lights will soon be replaced by LED's. A proposal presented to the congregation by Stewardship will provide the necessary funds. This was approved at the Fall Semi Annual Meeting.

Bad news: Needed repairs at the parsonage. Mold and water damage will need to be addressed immediately. We will be in partnership with Hospice to take care of the issues.

Fundraising is always a topic for discussion. We are looking forward to a more normal time when we can once again invite the entire community into our space. For the moment all plans are on hold.

Our next meeting is December 8th at 3:30pm. We will be on zoom in the gathering room. As always, the meeting is open to all. If you have something to present at the meeting, please email the office or Sharon Higgins.

-Sharon Higgins, Chair

*The Irish Club of Alaska
Presents
Fruitcakes and Nuts!
A Virtual Irish-Alaskan Holiday Treat!*



December 12th, 2020

7 PM

*Reilly's Virtual Irish Pub
at www.irishalaska.org*

To register go to

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-irish-club-of-alaska-presents-fruitcakes-and-nuts-tickets-130351204963>

Join the Irish Club of Alaska to share your own favorite Holiday Tradition: song, tune, poem, recipe, story, or memory in our virtual Reilly's Irish Pub Zoom Session. This can be Irish, Christmas, Yule, New Year, Thankfulness or Family themed. Kick off your holiday with some fun, some tradition and some friends!

Alaska Chamber Singers Continuing Our Home - But Not Alone Virtual Concert Series

Christmas with Alaska Chamber Singers—December 18th at 7 p.m.

Our annual holiday celebration may be online this year, yet you will still find holiday favorites, classical gems, and much more! Find our past programs by clicking on the red icon in the upper left of the page. Link for the holiday program will be available December 18th at 7 p.m.

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram for current information and links, and subscribe to our YouTube channel. You may be at home for the holidays, but you won't be alone! We are still here - singing for you!



Alaska Chamber Singers

DAVID HAGEN, Conductor



2020 - 2021 SEASON

*Home
but not alone*

Join us virtually as we bring you mini-performances you can watch from the comfort of your home. We will feature creative videos, solos, small ensembles, conductor and singer interviews, and past ACS performances! You can find our programs by going to our website or finding us on YouTube. Follow us on Facebook or Instagram for updates, and links will be posted shortly before the program begins.

You may be home this concert season, but you won't be alone! We are still here - singing for you!



*Be sure to join our
email list (on our
website) and follow
us on Facebook
and Instagram to
be notified when
we post new
performances!*



alaskachambersingers.org

Alaska Chamber Singers is funded, in part, by the Municipality of Anchorage, the Anchorage Assembly, the Alstead Foundation, the Cox Foundation, the Hesterman Foundation, the Hesterman Charitable Trust and through the generosity of many individuals and corporate community leaders.



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