

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

January 2021

The Northern Light

First Congregational Church of Anchorage

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Message from the Moderator

In contemplating writing this article for the January 2021 FCC newsletter, the only things I can think of are that 2020 is nearly over, the pandemic is still here, and for 2021 I should think of New Year's resolutions. For some reason my thoughts came out in the following doggerel:

New Year's resolutions? How silly it seems.
What can I plan for? What's in my dreams?
My own little world is encompassed by Zoom.
Outside of Zoom boxes is left little room
For imagining what I might endeavor to be,
If ever from Covid my life is set free.
I know in the future something "normal" will rise.
Until then 'midst all of world's sorrows and cries,
I'll try to be better, be kinder, more nice.
As for future control, it's a roll of the dice.
Yet I'm hopeful in rather the optimist's way,
That life will be better – 'twill be a new day.
Every day is precious, no matter the date-
My new resolution – to celebrate!

Happy New Year!!

-Lynn Barber, Moderator

PS. For an amazingly humorous summary of 2020, check out Dave Barry's column that ran in the December 27, 2020 Anchorage Daily News (and I'm sure in many other papers).



Life & Learning Ministry



2020 was a different kind of year in many ways, especially for the youth of the church. The 2020 Christmas Pageant was no exception, as Zoom does not always work to do things in ways we are accustomed to doing them. The Christmas Pageant was presented as a radio– drama, which *did* work well on Zoom, with an intergenerational cast that came ready to have fun! If you haven't had a chance to view the Pageant yet, or want to watch it again, be sure to go to FCC's YouTube channel to watch—https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCS-WikBUdov4G4IC-B_FmVA

The Pageant is on the December 13th Sunday Worship video—<https://youtu.be/rqCmlyoSgao>

“I encourage you to take advantage of all the opportunities to meet and connect with each other on Zoom”

Worship Ministry

We made it to a new year, and for me it felt more like Good Riddance to 2020 than Happy New Year to 2021. Many times, I felt like there was little hope that things would get better, as each month more coronavirus cases grew and deaths increased. We could not relax our social distancing and mask wearing without risk of getting the disease or infecting others. And many of us were getting weary of the isolation and lack of freedom to interact with our friends and loved ones, especially going to church services and church meetings.

But we have persevered, and we are doing ok. We now have vaccines that may slow down the rates of transmission and severity of symptoms. We have figured out how to Zoom our services and gotten more creative with them, thanks to the competence and leadership of Krystal and Jacob Poindexter. Our choir and bell choir has continued to meet via Zoom and provide music for the services, thanks to the leadership of Lori Wasko and Caroline Valentine. We still do not know when we will resume in-person services, but in the meantime our church is adapting and staying together through technology. It is so important to stay connected. I encourage you to take advantage of all the opportunities to meet and connect with each other on Zoom, through Sunday morning worship, Tuesday morning lectio divina, Tuesday evening Roots of Joy, Wednesday afternoon Tea Time, Wednesday evening bell choir and choir meetings, Thursday morning Creating Liturgia ("Soup Group"), and/or Friday Tea Time. And as always, if you have needs or worries, please let us know. Happy New Year!

-Your Worship Ministry

Outreach Ministry



Outreach is gearing up for making comfort caps and scarves for infants in the NICU and cancer patients.

One of our Pilgrim Fellowship members

wrote a long letter to Luis, the student that we sponsored at the Panamerican Institute, describing a realist life in Alaska with photos!

Outreach was given an anonymous gift of \$1000 which needed to be used before Christmas. We voted to give \$200 of the funds to Bean's Cafe, Children's Lunch Box, FISH, Clare House, and Hospice.

All members of Outreach have partnered with the Worship Ministry to call all folks that we have in our church directory to see how they are doing and if anyone needs assistance. People generally appreciated that calls!

-Chris Walker, Chair

Stewardship Ministry

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL!

2021 brings us new hopes, new expectations and a new budget. It is very important to look at the budget at each Ministry meeting.

Repair issues in the parsonage will be taken care of as well as the replacement of the remaining old lights in the church.

Fundraising is always a topic of discussion. We are looking forward to a time when we can once again meet in person and share our space with the community.

Our next meeting is January 12th 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

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BY GREG EVANS

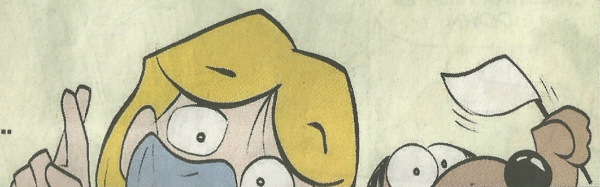
A POEM TO 2020

We welcomed you with fireworks
What a perfect year!
A twenty/twenty vision
Of the future, finally here!
But wow, you really messed up
You blew it from Day One
You filled our lives with misery -
We're so relieved you're done!
Now we greet another year
Remembering what we lost
Let's ring in 2021

And keep our fingers crossed...

GREG 12-27

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Fellowship Ministry

April of 2021 will mark 60 years since The Saturday Evening Post published Norman Rockwell's cover with this timeless evocation of "The Golden Rule." As Diana Butler Bass observed in a recent email, all religions and spiritualities include some way of expressing this principle that draws us back from the darker side of our human impulses.

We need to remember: That we are one, all human beings, with mutual responsibility to care for each other, and in caring for each other, to care for our planet. We are in this together. We need to teach it, preach it, sing it, shout it, pray it, practice it, live it. And not be shy or reticent about it.

What if we make 2021 the Year of the Golden Rule?

That's the only New Year's resolution for which I hope and dream — that we can imagine, commit, and to work toward a world of neighborly love. We humans may share the sad tendency toward self-centeredness, but we also share the luminous wisdom of the Golden Rule. And the latter is the antidote to the former.

May 2021 be the year we rise in its light. And may the shadows of 2020 recede, cast out by love of neighbor. (The Cottage, December 31, 2020)

As we think about how we can strengthen the bonds of fellowship in the new year, whether we're still gathering virtually or, finally, able to be together in person, we will be guided also by words from Paul's letter to the Philippians: "Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others" (Phil. 2:3-4). We invite you to share your ideas of how the Fellowship Ministry can make 2021 the year of the Golden Rule for First Congregational Church of Anchorage, Alaska. You can send your thoughts to the Church (OFFICE@fccak.org).

-Kate O'Dell, Chair



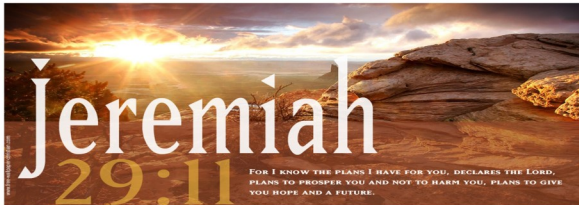
NACCC International Mission Partner

Happy Happenings!

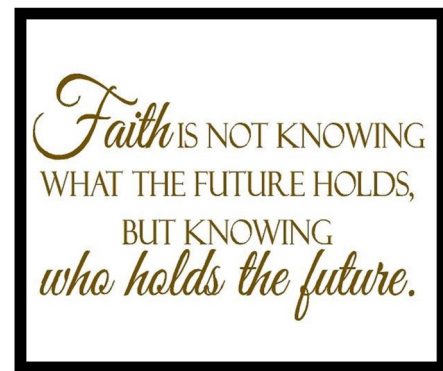


The Happy Life Mission is bustling with activity! You will be on the front lines with "Happy Happenings!"

Happy New Year! Happy Happenings #12



2021



A Happy Happenings update from Pastor Peter and Faith Ndungu:

LINK: <https://youtu.be/rlnvS3JoUIk>

Happy Happenings Contact Information:

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



Member of the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches

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