

The Northern Light

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

August 2017

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Minister's Message

First Impressions and Paying Attention

There is a fair amount of cliché connected with first impressions. Fortunately and unfortunately the results of the moment can impact interactions for a long time. However, there is often less paying attention going on than we would like to believe when we first meet someone. The way someone looks, how their voice sounds, the clothing they wear, who they partner with, and so on, are easy markers, but seeing these surface markers does not necessarily mean that we are paying attention.

There are two aspects of better paying attention that I believe are crucially important for Christians to reflect upon. The renowned Religious Educator and Professor, Jack Seymour, says that "paying attention is a form of interpretation."¹ He then connects this interpretation to "looking for and following the realm of God."² Paying attention to each other is at a basic sense the interpretation of relationships. It requires time and commitment to allowing each person to reveal themselves as trust is built.

But paying attention as interpretation is not just observation. It involves the purposeful prayer for one another, the working



¹ Jack Seymour, "Pay Attention: Educating for Redemptive Communities," in *Educating for Redemptive Community: Essays in Honor of Jack Seymour and Margaret Ann Crain* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2015), 10-28.

² Ibid.

together to address personal and societal challenges each other is facing. And maybe most fundamental, paying attention is the act of seeking and recognizing the realm of God, the very image of God, present in all of us. It is nothing short of beholding the presence of God.

I have only been with you all for but a brief moment, not nearly enough time to know you well. I am doing good if I know your first name at this point, and maybe a few tidbits about your families and personal interests. But I know that over time these connections will grow and trust will be built and rebuilt. What I can promise at the outset is that I will strive in my work and time with you to see the realm of God among us, to call on the Spirit to gather us into community, and discern ways that we might seek to recognize together the realm of God present around us.

My request is that we do this work together. May the redemptive work of Christ be known to us, and may we be transformed in ways we never would have expected. Amen

Along the Way of Christ,
Rev. Poindexter



Moderator's Message

We bid a final farewell to Rev Johnathan for his leadership and guidance through the past year. Our love and prayers go with him on his next life experience.

A warm welcome to our new Senior Minister Jacob Poindexter and his family.

Rev. Jacob is getting familiar with our church and meeting our family. We are looking forward to his leadership here at First Congregational. His installation will take place on September 17th.

Our money-making garage sale is August 19. Dig in the closets and see what you can find that you don't need. All of us have those items taking up space.

Many of you have apologized for not being here on a Sunday because you were going fishing. I have told them God provided us food, but we have to work for it. I don't know whose quote this is, but I felt it appropriate. "Time is like a river. You cannot touch the same water twice, because the flow that has passed will never pass again. Enjoy every moment of your life."

From Your Worship Ministry

Sandra Skaggs, Chairperson

Our Ministry has had a busy month of planning and saying "Hello" and "Welcome" to our incoming Senior Minister Reverend Jacob Poindexter, and "Goodbye" and "till we meet again" to our outgoing Interim Minister Reverend Johnathan Jones.

We've also made significant inroads in the organization of ushering for the coming year. You can become part of an ushering team by contacting Paul Wasko at 907-782-7753.

If you take a peek in the closet (to the right in the foyer) as you enter the Church, you will find it has a new look. Some busy bees – Claudia Kniefel, Susan Faith, and Sandy Skaggs – have completely cleaned and reorganized this area.

Our next endeavor is sending out invitations to clergy of the Anchorage area and members of the Interfaith Council to attend the Installation service for Reverend Jacob Poindexter. All of our church family is encouraged to join us on Sunday, September 17th for this special service and the reception following.

Last, but not least, we are pleased to see so many church members attending our summer Sunday services. We look forward to seeing you this Sunday (July 30) at Reverend JJ's farewell.

Save the Date

First Congregational Christian Church of Anchorage requests the pleasure of your company at the Service of Welcome for our new Senior Minister

Rev. Jacob L. Poindexter

Sunday, September 17, 2017
3:00 pm

Reception to follow in Cary Mead Hall

Clergy wishing to attend are asked to
R. S. V. P. to the Church and may robe
if they wish.



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From Your Stewardship Ministry

Deborah Stauffer, Chairperson

The Stewardship Ministry (Trustees) met July 11 and the following summarizes their actions:

1. Reviewed the major maintenance and upgrade plan the congregation approved in April and determined that the items listed for the 2017 budget year are on hold for now until we have a better understanding of the budget status for the year. The Trustees are exploring payment methods and options in order to proceed with the projected plan.
2. To date, only one \$30,000 bid for the sound system was received. Trustees are pursuing more alternatives.
3. Virus and hacking protection is adequate and current for church computer system.
4. Discussed Hospice insurance response to the water repairs. No claim funds have been received to date. [One reason why the budget is strained.]
5. Approved an administration line item "Minister's Discretionary Fund" starting in the 2018 fiscal year.

6. FCC is partnering with Alaska Sound Celebration to hold a garage sale on August 19, from 8:30 – 4:00. We will also sell baked goods and lunch between 11:00 and 1:00. The Stewardship Ministry meets the second Tuesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. in the Board Room. The meeting usually lasts 1.5 to 2 hours. All are encouraged to attend.

From Your Life and Learning Ministry

Marcie Errico, Chairperson

It is back-to-school time again, and FCC will be shaking things up a bit this year by starting Sunday School on 8/21, the day before ASD's first day of school. We're really excited about this year and are looking forward to seeing all the children back in church again. Rally Sunday will still be the first Sunday after Labor Day, but we want to get an earlier start for our lessons. The Life and Learning Ministry will be holding their fall planning meeting on Sunday, August 6, after the fellowship hour in the corner classroom downstairs.



We're Having a Garage Sale!

On Saturday, August 19, FCC and Alaska Sound Celebration are teaming up for a giant "Garage Sale" from 8:30 am to 4 pm in our upper parking lot and Cary Mead Hall. If you have gently-used items you've excavated from your spring cleaning or because you've moved (or are moving), contact Sharon Higgins to chat (smhalaska@gmail.com, or call/text 250-5760).

For our part of the event, we're opening the FCC Café again to sell baked goodies and beverages as well as a soup and bread lunch. If you're able to contribute Café items, contact Kate O'Dell (fcc@gcil.net, 272-8363). We'll also have a bake sale, and you can bring donations for that.

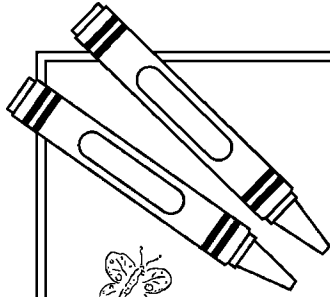
You'll find sign-up sheets to volunteer on the Narthex table. If you aren't able to staff the sale on Saturday, please consider helping us set everything up starting at 10:00 am on Friday, August 18. Remember, this is the type of event that works best if everyone pitches in to take responsibility for one task but we have a "small army" to make it all come together. Plan to spend your day earning a little cash for the church while you're having fun with your friends and neighbors.

Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success.

Henry Ford



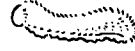
Remember, for the current Calendar, go to the Church web site (www.fccak.org) or let Kate know you need an email attachment or a paper copy.



Just for KIDS



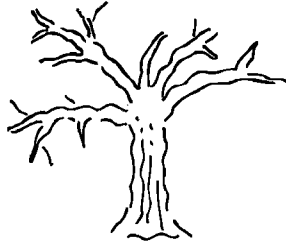
Changes



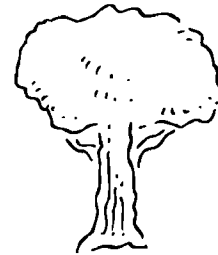
Everyone experiences changes in life.
Sometimes they make us happy - sometimes not!
What does the Bible say about this?



Find Ecclesiastes 3:1 below.
Change some letters - then read the verse.



Change:	W's to N's
L's to T's	Z's to O's
J's to E's	P's to H's
Q's to I's	X's to R's
K's to S's	B's to A's



“
 L P J X J Q S B
 L Q M J F Z X
 J V J X Y L P Q W G' B W D
 B K J B K Z W F Z X
 J V J X Y B C L Q V Q L Y
 U W D J X P J B V J W”

Puzzle answers on p. 6 of this newsletter.

FCC People

Interim Minister

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Director, Northern Lights
Ringers

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Barbara Widtfeldt 377-1673

Serving the NACCC
Sharon Higgins,
Year-Round Delegate

Serving the PNACCC
Claudia Kniefel
2017 Delegate

Puzzle Answer:

"There is a time for
everything, and a season for
every activity under heaven."



Help for Teens in a medium they'll use...

From SNOPEs:

In September 2015, an image began circulating via social media, stating that teens could text **741741** and speak with a crisis counselor. Many viewers were skeptical about the putative program, however, since the organization behind it was not identified in the image. [So SNOPEs responded to queries about whether it was true or not.]

Nonetheless, 741741 is indeed the number for the Crisis Text Hotline (<http://www.crisistextline.org>) though the hotline is only available in the United States, not anywhere in the world. Although the image specified "teens," the number is available to anyone in crisis.

The Crisis Text Hotline also notes in their FAQ <http://www.crisistextline.org/faq> that all text messages are anonymous and free, although charges may apply with carriers other than AT&T, T-Mobile, Sprint, or Verizon.

In a June 2015 article published by the *Chicago Tribune* (<http://chicagotribune.com/business/columnists/ct-harris-crisis-text-line-0628-biz-20150626-column.html>), Nancy Lublin, the CEO of DoSomething.org, explained why she founded the Crisis Text Line.

The text message to a DoSomething.org staffer read: "He won't stop raping me. He told me not to tell anyone."

These words quickly made their way to Nancy Lublin, the CEO of the New York City-based youth empowerment group, which runs do-good campaigns by text, like initiatives for gender-neutral bathrooms and sharing tips to prevent texting while driving.

Lublin's staff had received a few messages – concerns about bullying and the like – unrelated to their campaigns, but "that one message stopped me in my tracks," Lublin said. "It was like being punched in the stomach. The first rule of marketing and sales is Go where demand is. People want this by text. We should be supplying crisis counseling by text."

That week, Lublin started building Crisis Text Line, a national 24/7 text number – 741741 – available to everyone but mostly used by teens. It went live two years later in Chicago and El Paso, Texas. Chicago was chosen because of the influence of an early funder, the Chicago-based MacArthur Foundation. El Paso was a data-driven decision based on its large Latino population.

Within four months, the line had been contacted by cellphones from every area code in America. The organization is expected to surpass 7 million messages by July of 2017, and Lublin is now in need of more counselors.