

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF ANAHEIM
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The Call

First Congregational Church of Anaheim

“To Discover and Grow in God’s Grace and Love”

Vol. 378 No. 2 Published Monthly February 1, 2026



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Guy Gardner, Astronaut
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www.fcca.org

A Letter from Pastor Jim



New Things Are Happening!

*“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come:
The old has gone, the new is here!” -2 Corinthians 5:17*

Rooted in Christ and guided by the Spirit, our church family is stepping into a season marked by new beginnings, restored hope, and exciting ministry opportunities.

One of the exciting new spiritual growth opportunities in our church is a study based on Max Lucado’s book, *How Happiness Happens*. This study focuses on the powerful **“One Another”** passages of Scripture—those verses that call us to love one another, encourage one another, forgive one another, bear one another’s burdens, and serve one another.. As we explore God’s Word and Lucado’s insights, we will learn practical ways to live out authentic community and experience the deep joy that flows from walking closely with Jesus and each other. (Continued on Page 7)

Connect

Sunday Morning Worship
Sunday, 10:45 a.m.

Sunday School for Kids
Children are welcome to leave with the teachers before the sermon, and meet in the first room of the Griffith House. .

Staff
Dr. Jim Schibsted — Senior Pastor
Rev. Emily Raasch — Assoc. Pastor
Susan Fraker — Office Assistant
Tyler Robinson — Music Director
Angella Kissoon — Accountant
Linda Freud — Missions
Chuck Pennington — J.O.G.
Sandy Costa — Montessori Dir.

Other Ways to Connect
Facebook: Anaheim Chapel at First Congregational Church of Anaheim.

YouTube:
First Congregational Church of Anaheim

Instagram: FCCAnaheim

Website: www.fcca.org

FCCA email:
fccaoifice@gmail.com

FCCA Office Phone:
714-776-0960

Women’s Lunch
Monday, February 2nd
11:30 am-1:00 pm
Bev Aye’s Home
Please contact the church at fccaoffice@gmail.com to RSVP and for more info.

JOG: Just Ordinary Guys
Monday, February 9th, 2026
12-1:30 pm (See page 5)

MomCo
2nd and 4th Tuesdays
10:30am-12pm
**Babies welcome, No childcare.*
MomCo exists to nurture the heart and soul of moms.
Registration: \$37, Scholarships available

Letter Continued... (Cont. from page 2)

One of the encouraging new ministries here is **MomCo**, an opportunity for moms to build community and tackle motherhood together. MomCo provides a welcoming place where women can be honest, supported, and strengthened as they navigate the many joys and challenges of raising children. Conversations and gatherings center on real-life topics such as parenting, relationships, finances, and spiritual growth.

This past year has also been a tender one for our **JOG – Just Ordinary Guys** ministry. In 2025, the group lost several key men. We continue to grieve their passing, give thanks for their legacy, and honor the way they lived out their faith. At the same time, God is doing something new. In recent months, new men have stepped forward into leadership roles. They are bringing fresh energy and a desire to serve. JOG continues to be a place where men grow in Christ and support one another.

Adding to this season of renewal, our church is privileged to hear the upcoming testimony of **guest speaker Astronaut Guy Gardner**. His life story is remarkable: a fighter pilot who flew 177 combat missions in Vietnam, an astronaut who flew on two space shuttle missions, later he was a teacher, an advocate for underprivileged youth, and college president. Guy Gardner’s story is one of perseverance, humility, and a sincere commitment to honor God in every chapter of life. From the cockpit to the classroom to outer space, his journey reflects a faith lived out daily.

Scripture tells us that God is always making things new. New studies, new ministries, new leaders, renewed hearts, and fresh vision are signs that the Spirit is active among us. We are grateful for what God has done and are excited about what He is doing. May we continue to open our hearts to His work and step forward together into the new things God is unfolding in our church family.

February Birthdays

- **1-Feb** **Rolf Rolnicki**
- **7-Feb** **Ronda Rolnicki**
- **12-Feb** **Laura Doeschot**
- **14-Feb** **Luis Zavala**
- **16-Feb** **David Rider**
- **17-Feb** **Lori Rider**
- **18-Feb** **Miranda Brunson**

FCCA Updates

Women’s Lunch

Monday, February 2nd; 11:30am-1pm

Location: Bev’s Home; RSVP at fccaoffice@gmail.com for more information

Join women from the church for lunch, fellowship, a devotion and always a fun activity.

Small Group Study: How Happiness Happens by Max Lucado

6-Week Study on Wednesdays from 6:30-8pm in person or via Zoom

Wednesday, February 18th-Wednesday, March 25th

“In a world searching for happiness, bestselling author Max Lucado provides a personal plan for a life filled with lasting and fulfilling joy, supported by Jesus' teaching and modern research.

Worldwide, people profess that happiness is their most cherished goal. Marketers get this. "Want to be happy?" they ask. Eat at this restaurant, drive this car, wear this dress. Happiness happens when you lose the weight, get the date, find the mate, or discover your fate. It's wide, this way to happiness. Yet, for all its promise, it delivers a fragile joy; here one day, tomorrow scattered by the winds of comparison, disappointment, or unmet expectations.

In this book Max shares the unexpected path to a lasting happiness, one that produces reliable joy in any season of life. Based on the teachings of Jesus and backed by modern research, How Happiness Happens presents a surprising but practical way of living that will change you from the inside out.”

Suggested donation for the book and the study guide: \$25

MomCo

2nd and 4th Tuesdays from 10:30am-12pm

***Babies welcome, no childcare**

We are excited to have launched a MomCo group here at the church! MomCo exists to nurture the hearts and souls of mothers and to connect them with a mom community. Moms of children ages 0-18 welcome. We are also very grateful to have a couple of Mentor Moms attending.

At a MomCo Meetup, you can link arms with other moms to tackle this motherhood thing together!

Join Our Mom Community!

2nd and 4th Tuesdays
10:30 AM - 12 PM @ First Congregational Church of Anaheim
*Babies Welcome, No Childcare

From topics around raising kids to relationship, finances, spiritual life and more, mothers receive the support they need at MomCo. MomCo is creating space for moms to discover their true purpose and fulfillment.

\$37 to Register, Scholarships Available

Registration Code on MomCo Website: 16AP

More Info: Contact Emily at fccaoffice@gmail.com

Mission Corner

For this month’s Mission Corner, I am sharing excerpts from emails received in early January, but were too late for The Call. One is from Andrew Bush and Karen Bush. It gives an update on the plight of Christians in Gaza. Also, I am excited to report that Andrew and Karen will be visiting our church in March. He will speak at church on Sunday the 8th and at JOG on Monday the 9th. The second is from Chona Domingo thanking us for an end of the year gift and telling us that she is planning a visit to the United States in the fall of 2026. I hope you will enjoy their messages.

In God’s love, Linda Freud and your Mission Board

*Your support for the beleaguered Christians in Gaza is so encouraging. The Christians that remain in Gaza – about 400 – either have no route to leave or have decided to stay regardless of their fate. There has been a Christian community in Gaza since the first century. As a result of your generosity, we have sent about **\$12,000 in relief** through Bethlehem Bible College. Wow! Thank you! We will follow up with further reports on the Gaza Christians.*



Shireen Awwad Hilal (pictured) leads the college's relief program called The Shepherd's Society. She has extended Christian family members living in Gaza. In 2024, a missile struck the church in which her family was sheltering, killing her aunt and others.

Shireen embodies the Palestinian trait of sumud, resilience. Her faith has not been shaken. “We thank God for your support for the Christians in Gaza who remain. Food is scarce and expensive, as are medications and water. Your support is a lifeline to these precious sisters and brothers of all ages.”

Karen and I are grateful as we consider all the promise of this new year. Karen and I will travel to Bethlehem in the spring to lead a peacemaking program. Also, we continue to lead the Hebron Road International Church (online).

With love and appreciation always, Andrew and Karen

(Cont. on Page 4)

Below is an excerpt from Mission Ministries Philippines:

Philippians 3:10

“That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection...”

This verse is God’s New Year verse for me—a confirmation that 2026 is a year to personally experience the power of His resurrection. I am excited to see the Lord’s miraculous work unfold, both in my personal life and in Mission Ministries Philippines (MMP). This also affirms my life verse, Philippians 2:13, that it is God who works in and through us for His good pleasure.

Today marks our first working day for MMP this year, and reading the financial report this morning was truly encouraging—a clear reminder of God’s continuing power. Thank you for being among the Lord’s faithful instruments through your consistent prayers and generosity. Every cent given to MMP is deeply appreciated and continually lifted in prayer.

On behalf of MMP, thank you very much for your generous donation of \$1,050.00. We are truly grateful. Later this year, I will be traveling to the U.S., together with one of our staff, for our biennial fundraising. Our planned visits include California, Arizona, and Waco, Texas, sometime between October and November 2026. I would be honored to have the opportunity to formally thank your church for continually embracing MMP as one of your mission partners and to once again share opportunities to bless MMP through giving.

Thank you again for your faithful prayers and continued support.

With gratitude and prayers,

Chona, Mission Ministries Philippines (MMP)



JOG: Just Ordinary Guys (& Gals)

Meet Guy Gardner, Astronaut



Guy Gardner’s life reflects courage, discipline, and a deep sense of purpose. Raised in Altavista, Virginia, he pursued a lifelong dream of flight, becoming an Air Force fighter and test pilot who flew 177 combat missions in Vietnam before being selected as a NASA astronaut. Guy piloted two Space Shuttle missions and later held key leadership roles, including directing the Shuttle-Mir program and serving in aviation safety for the FAA. Throughout his career, he has been known as a steady leader, mentor, and servant to others.

After his government service, Guy devoted himself to education, serving as a teacher, school leader, and college president. He and his wife Linda have been married for over 50 years and raised three children, and he remains actively involved in church and community life as a Sunday school teacher, youth leader, and speaker. Guy’s story is one of faith lived out through perseverance, humility, and a commitment to honoring God in every season of life.

When: Monday, February 9th, 2026

12:00 pm – 1:30 pm

Where: McKenzie Hall

Cost: \$12

Enjoy the music, as well as the humor from the football coach, Tom Meiss. We will have an excellent meal planned with tables always filled with good fellowship.

Please RSVP via email at chuck@penningtons-inc.com
or call Chuck at 714-350-8983.