AK Child & Family Lenten Campaign

Rev. Lisa Smith Fiegel

Know someone who would make a good foster parent? Could that someone be you?

AK Child & Family, a ministry partner of the Alaska Synod, is [looking for new foster families](https://www.elcaalaska.net/uploads/2/4/9/1/24917993/help_us_grow_love_tfh_faith_flier_edit.pdf). The need for foster parents is even greater due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has impacted families’ ability and willingness to take in youth.

AK Child & Family provides residential psychiatric treatment, community-based services and therapeutic foster care to youth who have experienced trauma. Therapeutic foster care is more specialized care and foster parents receive training to help the youth.

Kelli Williams, director for the Spiritual Life department at AK Child & Family, said many foster families have come from congregations. People see it as a calling, not a job, Williams said.

This Lent, the agency is specifically inviting congregations to [help raise awareness](https://www.elcaalaska.net/uploads/2/4/9/1/24917993/lenten_letter.pdf) about the need for foster parents. Congregations can use [the publicity materials](https://www.elcaalaska.net/uploads/2/4/9/1/24917993/lent_church_bulletin_invite.pdf) in newsletters, fliers, bulletins and on social media. Materials have a Lenten theme and include a meditation and a social media meme for each of the six weeks in Lent. Please contact the synod office if you’d like these materials in a different format.

Prayers for the agency’s work are also requested, and monetary donations to the spiritual life department are greatly appreciated. You can give here: <https://www.akchild.org/join-us/donate/donate.html>

AK Child & Family was formed in the 1970s as a merger of three denominational-based children’s homes—Lutheran, Methodist and Baptist. A fourth denomination, Disciples of Christ, came on board later. At the merger, agency leadership chose to hold three seats on the board of directors for members of each founding denomination.

AK Child & Family offers a unique spiritual life program for a more holistic treatment plan. Religious programming is optional, though most youth choose to opt-in. Options include chapel, prayer, Bible study, sweat lodge, labyrinth, drum circles and more.

Alaska Synod representatives on the board of AK Child & Family include Pam Birch, Amazing Grace-Anchorage; Barb Belluomini, Christ-Soldotna and Lisa Smith Fiegel, synod director for evangelical mission.