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BISHOP SEARCH

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MISSION STATEMENT

The following mission statement was approved at the 1995 Diocesan Convention in Sitka, Alaska.

The Episcopal Diocese of Alaska is a unique and diverse body of Christians spread over a vast geographical area. For a century we have worked to bring the Good News of God in Christ to Alaska. Our Bishop is a symbol of our unity and is the chief spokesperson of our church.

We are committed to respecting the customs, values, and dignity of our many cultures.

We listen and respond to the concerns of one another.

We are a voice for those who are powerless or unable to speak for themselves.

We celebrate our evolving Anglican tradition through varied styles of worship rooted in the Holy Scriptures and Book of Common Prayer.

We embrace reason and open-mindedness.

We respect learning and questioning. We seek spiritual growth, and strive to be good stewards of change.

We expect justice and work for peace. We proclaim the GOOD NEWS of God in Christ.

We seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving our neighbors as our selves.

We endeavor to develop and support the ministries of all baptized persons.

We care for each other and for God's creation, ministering to both through the love of Christ.

Anti-Racism Prayer

God, Creator of all things, we come broken with a heart that has been torn like Jesus on the cross, the cross that draws together your children of many colors.

You know our suffering, We ask in Jesus' name that you heal your people.

Where there has been unearned advantage because of the color of our skin, give us courage to repent and to fight the injustice and sin of racism.

Holy God, who created all colors of people, allow us to honor your light in every soul.

Help us to see you in one another, to hear your voice in all people, and to work to end racism in our church, our communities, and the world. Amen.

Anti-Racism Team 2005 Episcopal Diocese of Alaska



The Episcopal Diocese of Alaska is divided into four regions called "deaneries." Each region is unique and presents its own challenges. The map below gives you an indication of the location of each deanery.

Arctic Coast

- 1. Barrow ·
- 2. Point Lay +
- 3. Point Hope +
- 4. Kivalina +
- 5. Noatak ·
- 6. Kotzebue +

Interior

- 7. Allakaket +
- 8. Hughes ·
- 9. Huslia +
- 10. Tanana +
- 11. Rampart ·
- 12. Stevens Village -
- 13. Beaver +
- 14. Venetie +
- 15. Arctic Village +
- 16. Fort Yukon +
- 17. Chalkyitsik +
- 18. Circle +
- 19. Eagle +
- 20. Manley ·à
- 21. Nenana +
- 22. Minto +
- 23. Fairbanks +
- 24. Tanacross +
- 25. Grayling +
- 26. Anvik +
- 27. Shageluk +
- 28. Evansville ·
- 29. North Pole +
- 30. Birch Creek +

+ PARISHES AND MISSIONS

- · OTHER CONGREGATIONS
- à CAMPS AND CONFERENCE CENTERS

South Central

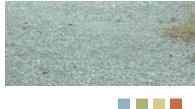
- 31. Palmer +
- 32. Anchorage ++++
- 33. Seward +
- 34. Kenai +
- 35. Homer +
- 36. Kodiak +
- 37. Valdez +
- 38. Cordova +
- 39. Wasilla +à
- 40. Talkeetna +
- 41. Eagle River +

Southeast

- 42. Juneau ++
- 43. Sitka +
- 44. Petersburg +
- 45. Wrangell +
- 46. Ketchikan +
- 47. Haines +
- 48. Skagway ·









A HISTORY OF THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF ALASKA

The roots of the Episcopal Diocese of Alaska are grounded in the work of Anglican missionaries from the Church of England who made the first missionary visit to the Upper Yukon in 1861. In 1862, Robert MacDonald began work among the Indians at Fort Yukon. He traveled extensively along the Yukon and its tributaries. evangelizing the Indians. He translated the Bible, Prayer Book and Hymnal into the Indian language.

Even after the U.S. purchased Alaska from Russian in 1867. English Church work in the Yukon Valley under Bishop Bompas of the Diocese of Selkirk continued with clergy at Fort Yukon, the Tanana area and along the Porcupine River.

In July 1886, under urging from Sheldon Jackson, Presbyterian missionary and Territorial General Agent for Education in Alaska, the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Episcopal Church contracted with the U.S. Bureau of Education to provide a teacher for a school in the Yukon Valley. (Jackson had summoned Christian organizations and worked out informal working agreements to allot specific regions to specific organizations. Natives of the Alaska Interior were left to the Episcopal Church because of the work of the Church of England along the Yukon River.) The Rev.

Octavius Parker came to Alaska in 1886. He established a mission at Anvik, several hundred miles up the Yukon, in 1887. A second mission at the coastal Eskimo village of Point Hope above the Arctic Circle began in 1890 under a contract similar to the one at Anvik. In 1891 the church sent a missionary to Nuchalawaya (later Tanana) to relieve the Anglican missionary serving there.

The 1895 General Convocation of the Episcopal Church, after much struggle, passed a motion to elect a Bishop for Alaska, and elected Peter Trimble Rowe of Michigan. In 1896, Rowe made his first visit to Alaska and traveled the Chilkoot Trail en route to Circle City, two years before the Klondike gold rush. At Circle City he held the first public worship service and formed plans for permanent work including a hospital. Rowe found the Indians at Circle City all baptized, with many familiar with their Native Prayer Books, hymnals and Bibles, all eager to attend Divine Service.

When the Klondike gold rush

came, Circle City was almost abandoned. Settlements sprang up near gold discoveries only to be abandoned a short time later. When Rowe became Bishop, he expected to work primarily among the Native people. He often commented on the stability of the work among the Natives: "White men come and go, but the Natives remain..."

Rowe traveled extensively by boat, foot and dog team. As communities sprang up near the gold discoveries, he raised money from the miners and merchants and started hospitals as well as churches and reading rooms. By the century's close, the Church was well established on the Coast and in the Interior with 13 missions and a number of dependent stations.

Rowe recruited Hudson Stuck as Archdeacon of the Yukon. Stuck traveled extensively to nearby mining camps, Native fish camps, and settlements along the Yukon River and its tributaries. In 1904, Stuck began a series of winter journeys, each covering about 1,500 to 2,000 miles along the populated parts of the Yukon River basin. He also visited the entire Arctic coast. Stuck founded St. John's-in-the-Wilderness at Allakaket, a unique mission serving two distinct races - Indians and Eskimos. Both Rowe and Stuck became champions of Native rights and welfare. Stuck preferred to

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BISHOP ROWE

emphasize missionary work among the Natives, while Rowe felt it was necessary to serve both Natives and the increasing numbers of non-Natives coming to Alaska.

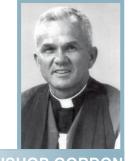
The Tanana Valley missions and Prince William Sound missions continued the pattern of establishing free reading rooms. Extensive magazine distributions went out from the main missions to scattered mining settlements. In 1907, Annie Farthing, one of several church women who served many years in Alaska, started a church Native boarding school in Nenana.

Hudson Stuck's book, "The Alaskan Missions of the Episcopal Church," notes "As regards the Native work, there are today, broadly speaking, no unbaptized Natives left in Alaska."



BISHOP BENTLEY

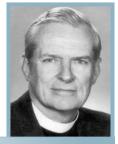
Rowe continued as Bishop until his death in 1942. Bishop John Bentley, consecrated suffragan bishop in 1931, succeeded him. Bentley began his Alaska service in 1921, assisting in Anvik. As Archdeacon of the Yukon, he traveled by dog team in the winter and on the mission boat in the summer. As suffragan, he assisted Rowe, during the majority of visitations in Alaska. Elected vice president of the National Council of the Episcopal Church in 1947, Bentley left Alaska to head overseas work for the National Church.



BISHOP GORDON

William Gordon, priest at Point Hope, was consecrated third Bishop of Alaska in 1948, days after attaining the minimum age of 30. Known as the "Flying Bishop," Gordon initially continued the pattern of summer visitations along the Yukon and its tributaries, piloting the diocesan boat. Frustrated by the inefficiency of using commercial air travel, he learned to fly in 1949. This greatly enhanced his ability to cover his vast terrain and to transport items on his remote visitations. On trips outside Alaska he spoke extensively about Alaska, gathering finances for special projects. His plane, the "Blue Box," was obtained through money raised from United Thank Offerings. He developed a personal relationship with the people of his diocese, and his strong, caring personality left a void when he retired, especially in the Bush communities with which his ministry was so closely interwoven.

Bishop Gordon recruited many missionaries. But, as Alaska moved from being a missionary district to a diocese and suffered decreases in funding from the National Church, Bishop Gordon faced hard decisions. Although Natives were trained as lay leaders, few attended seminary. He encouraged candidates for the clergy in both village and urban areas, training them for ordination without attending seminary under Canon 8 of the National Church. He also began encouraging the ministry of the laity and the whole congregation. Seminary-trained clergy were stationed at points to oversee a number of villages. Bishop Gordon ordained the first women deacons in Alaska - missionary nurse Jean Dementi and Athabascan Indian Anna Frank.



BISHOP COCHRAN

David R. Cochran, the fourth Bishop of Alaska, was consecrated in 1974. At 59, he was three years older than retiring Bishop Gordon and viewed himself as a transition bishop. Focusing on moving Alaska from a missionary district to a diocese, he promoted participation, grass roots decision making and financial responsibility. Cochran, not a pilot, continued



the "Episcopal Air Force" through diocesan airplanes and with clergy and volunteer pilots, while using improved commercial air service.

Cochran worked on education about the mission of the Church in Alaska, stewardship and the program budget process, and he involved the laity in these activities. Much energy and resources were channeled into Network, the diocesan program focusing on pastoral and educational support services to Bush areas. The Education for Ministry Program from Sewanee began and continues in the Diocese. The role of deaneries was strengthened. Camps and conference programs saw major development at Meier Lake in South central Alaska and Emmaus Center in Southeast Alaska. During his episcopacy, several new missions formed in urban areas. He ordained women priests in Alaska and welcomed women clergy into the Diocese. Lay movements such as Cursillo and Marriage Encounter started here with his support during his tenure.



BISHOP HARRIS

In 1981, George C. Harris was consecrated as fifth Bishop of Alaska. His emphasis on the ministry of the laity has found much commitment, especially in urban areas. He strengthened the role of the deaneries, which are now very important in South central and Southeast Alaska, in program areas such as Christian education, clergy support and administrative tasks, and increasingly so in the Interior and Arctic Coast deaneries. His ability to enable people inspired them to do more than many dreamed they could. Harris encouraged and modeled continuing education of clergy and laity alike. He fostered communication within the Diocese by strengthening the monthly Diocesan newsletter and continuing the Alaskan Epiphany (formerly, the Alaskan Churchman).

Bishop Harris continued his predecessors' involvement in the ecumenical Alaska Christian Conference by taking a leadership role there. In the National Church, his was an effective voice in interpreting Native Ministry issues and evolving new patterns of ministry in the Commission on Ministry in Province 8 and Coalition 14.



BISHOP CHARLESTON

Steve Charleston was consecrated Alaska's sixth Bishop in March 1991. He asked people

who had no clergy presence in their villages and towns to "have at least one person open the church on Sunday morning, turn on the lights, start a fire and say a praver." Out of his desire to see each congregation healthy and whole, he developed the "mission wheel." The four areas he believed critical for a healthy church community were evangelism, stewardship, Christian learning and leadership development. Bishop Charleston's five years of Alaska ministry centered on these basic ideas and drove him to some very innovative, creative approaches to accomplish the goals.

To increase stewardship in the villages and towns without clergy, he designed yellow offering cans, similar in concept to the "Blue Box," resulting in a noticeable increase in the funds contributed to the Diocese from small churches. He developed the initial body of work for the "Paths to Service" program, which simplified the steps involved in being ordained a Canon 9 deacon or priest. During his tenure the highly successful "Faith Into Tomorrow" program built up the fiscal resources of the Diocese for the future. Bishop Charleston also promoted the concept of a Christian Learning Library, where materials for spiritual development could be made accessible to anyone in Alaska. He instituted two spiritually oriented groups, the Society of Mary, devoted to veneration of the Virgin Mary, and the Society of St. Simeon and St. Anna, an honorary



society for elders within the Church.

Bishop Charleston himself carried the strong message of evangelism through his eloquent preaching and teaching. His ability to touch the hearts and souls of those he spoke to was one of his greatest gifts to the Diocese of Alaska. He preached passionately about the love of God, not dwelling as much on theological theories as on life situations and the day-today burdens of his congregations. He transformed words into images that people never forgot, such as the vision of the single light burning in each church in Alaska, showing the world that the church was indeed alive, open and ready to receive others into its sanctuary. His spontaneous prayers for those he confirmed were a unique hallmark of his ministry. Many Alaskan Church men and women experienced incredible

transformation and renewal through the insights of this charismatic leader.

Bishop Charleston could be considered the "bishop of firsts" Alaska's first Native American bishop – the first Alaska bishop to wear a cope and mitre - the first bishop to support an endowment fund that will ensure funds for future ministry in Alaska. And, sadly, he was the first bishop to resign his charge early in his career because of the needs of his family. It is because of his resignation that we in Alaska are re-evaluating our expectations of what a single individual should do for a community of faith as large as the Diocese of Alaska.

Alaska is a huge, diverse state. The Diocese of Alaska shares the problems, strengths and challenges of the large society, redeemed by the vital faith planted here more than a century ago. A committed laity has assumed increasingly prominent roles in the Church's life. Opportunities for ordained and lay ministry are many and are encouraged with educational and renewal opportunities at the deanery and diocesan levels. The Episcopal Church in Alaska is blessed with many dedicated and faithful Christians whose faith will creatively engage the challenges of the future.

Nicki J. Nielsen January 29, 1990 Updated by Carol Philips July 1996



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The Search Committee asked the Rev. Ginny Doctor, Canon to the Ordinary to reflect on Bishop Macdonald's ministry.



BISHOP MACDONALD

Mark MacDonald came to Alaska in the early 1990's as part of the David Oakerhater Evangelism Team that traveled down the Yukon River and up the Tanana River. He visited many villages, helping to bring the sacraments to Alaska Native Villages that hadn't had such in months, sometimes years. And, of course, he packed his guitar and delighted folks with his picking and strumming of those good old Gospel hymns.

He became Bishop of Alaska on September 13, 1997. One of the first things he decided that needed to be done was to increase the number of Eucharists in the Alaska Native communities. Everywhere he went he would entice outside priests and bishops to come and help bring the sacraments to Alaska. Mark wanted every Episcopal Church in Alaska to have the sacraments, particularly on the "Feasts of the Incarnate." There is a village that never had a priest for Christmas Eve services until several years ago. He instilled in his staff the importance of taking the sacraments to our remote places.

Gospel Based Discipleship (GBD), developed first in Minnesota by Bishop MacDonald and other colleagues is perhaps the foremost legacy for Alaska. His staff was resistant to GBD: they thought it was a waste of time. But, he insisted and made it a way of life. When he went away on a trip, one of the first things he would do was to check the Church Service Book to see if the staff had been faithful to GBD. Sometimes he wasn't pleased with the blank space! The staff finally caught on and came out of the "Duh" Zone and put on their "Gospel Eyes." GBD has a big impact on how things get done, what gets done and when it gets done. Everywhere he went in Alaska he would gather folks, sometimes only two or three and engage the Gospel. It kindled for a while but now there is a strong, gently fire burning in many of our churches.

Another important legacy is Bishop Mark's theological teaching and focus on leadership development. Under his tenure, the Father David Salmon School of Ministry was launched. This Alaska seminary without walls has provided pertinent training to both lay and ordained. Mark ordained the most Native Alaskans since the Bishop Gordon days. Mark traveled to many places inside and outside of Alaska both as teacher and preacher. Also an excellent writer, he wrote numerous articles and edited "Liturgical Studies IV, The Chant of Life."

His most important legacy is that of hospitality. Mark would often volunteer to "pick up" visitors at the airport, take folks to dinner and visit with anyone who walked through the door and wanted to "see the Bishop." His love for people, no matter who they are or what they say about him, is simply amazing. Mark may be a "casual" person but there is nothing casual about his thinking and his mission to make disciples.

The Rev. Ginny Doctor 2007 Canon to the Ordinary



The Search Committee prayed intensely about how to introduce the Diocese of Alaska to candidates for the VIIIth Bishop of Alaska. How could such a diverse community of believers introduce themselves in a single document? Each congregation and deanery was asked a few questions. Their responses are distilled in the lines that follow. We hope that by God's grace they will give the readers of this profile a sense of how the Spirit of God is working among us in this place, and that the same Spirit leads us into what God intends for our diocese.



majority of residents of many

villages will claim connection with the Episcopal Church. Throughout the Diocese the rich and vibrant history of the early missions in Alaska can be felt. Even in South East and South Central, many congregations are well over 100 years old. New congregations are born among us, too. From Pt. Lay to Eagle to Big Lake we have celebrated several new ministries springing to life in recent years.



Arctic Coast

Living above the Arctic Circle, we are Inupiat people. We live off the land, ocean and birds for our survival. We are a traditional

people. None of our villages are on the road system. We travel by boats, airplanes, snowmachines and on foot when necessary. We are the villages of Barrow, Kivalina, Kotzebue, Noatak, Point Lay and Point Hope. We are children of God. We are the carriers of our traditions and our Christian beliefs by living off the land and ocean, living the Christian lifestyle, teaching the Ten Commandments. and teaching the Nicene Creed. We tell our young people to follow their ancestors in living their lives according to the Word of the Bible, to share their catch of animals for food and clothing, to look after the widows and children and to respect their elders.

Our elders respect other churches that come into our community, as long as they teach the Word of the Lord through Scriptures. We accept testimonies in church.



The Interior

We are elders, adults, parents, young people and children. We live surrounded by wilderness along the river systems of the Interior of Alaska and in the second largest city in the state, Fairbanks. The Interior stretches from the Arctic Circle where it is crossed by the Upper Yukon River, down to the Lower Yukon where it meets the ocean. Athabascans are the people native to this region and

We are a huge Diocese

(570,374 square miles) consisting of four unique deaneries. We

are urban and rural; coastal and

dwelling along rivers miles from

the sea; inhabitants of rainforests,

live according to a cash economy,

others according to subsistence.

the reverberations of conflicts in

the Episcopal Church. We are all

Episcopalians today. Some of us

are recently received, while others

of us can trace our faith back

through the generations to the

ancestors that heard the Gospel

in the Arctic and the Interior, the

first from celebrated Anglican and Episcopal missionaries. Especially

All of us have been pained by

boreal forests and tundra. Many

of us depend on the land and waters to survive. Some of us

WHO ARE WE?

among us at least 5 different languages are spoken. In the larger villages and in the urban area we enjoy a unique relationship between ethnic groups, especially in the larger communities where we congregate: Caucasian, Native Indian and Eskimo, African American and a number of peoples from along the Pacific Rim are representative of the diverse cultures found in the Interior.

Most city and town dwellers live according to a cash economy pursuing careers related to education (The University of Alaska Fairbanks is the flagship campus of the UA system), health care (Fairbanks Memorial Hospital is the premier health care facility in the Interior) the military (Eielson Airforce Base and Ft. Wainwright Army Base are both on the outskirts of Fairbanks) and provide an economic engine for the region; oil companies provide an increasingly larger percentage of employment with mining jobs a close second. Many of the rest of us subsist on the abundant life the rivers provide, eating moose, caribou, fish and other animals. Our 24 Native villages range in size from 10 people to 800. Eight of the 24 are accessible by the road system. Others are reachable by plane and boat. Fifteen of these villages are without any clergy, yet some lay-led congregations still describe themselves as "small but thriving". Most of the 9 remaining churches with clergy are led by dedicated priests and deacons who have served for years without any pay. Churches in villages are a symbol of faith. They are important to the health and balance of the community as well as cultural and generational sharing. So too is

historic St. Matthew's Church in downtown Fairbanks which many village dwellers consider to be their home church as well.

We prize the wisdom of our elders and the rich spirituality that flows from the interaction of cultures we find in the Interior. We are faith communities where cultures blend through faith in the Word of God. Early Missionaries first reached this area in the 1800's and the power of their adventurous faith still fills us. We believe in faith, and love one another and are kind to one another in the name of the Lord.



South Central

We are a spiritual people, committed to living the truth of the Gospel. Our landscape is dominated by the Alaska Mountain Range and the Gulf of Alaska. Our most remote congregation is on Kodiak Island. Our four parishes in Anchorage, the largest city in Alaska, bear the closest resemblance to churches in "the lower 48". However, we describe ourselves as rugged individualists. We come from a diversity of backgrounds, ethnicity, income and theology, bringing the Gospel to each group in its context. We value children and take their Christian formation seriously. We offer different styles of worship. We are large and small, urban and rural congregations – including the largest congregation in the state. Many of our urban dwellers are unfamiliar with life in the Alaskan









Bush. Most of our communities are easily accessible by road except for Kodiak and Cordova.

Only St. Mary's and All Saints in Anchorage have full time rectors. The remaining 12 congregations do enjoy, however, a high concentration of part-time and non-stipendary clergy. We are primarily employed in careers relating to a cash economy including education, military, government, industry, tourism, mining, airlines and oil production, to name a few. Ten to fifteen thousand people of Native ancestry live in Anchorage, giving it the highest population of Native inhabitants in the state. There is also a growing Asian population as well as a thriving Filipino community.

Some of us are theologically progressive, and consider The Gospel open to and welcoming of all seekers regardless of sexual orientation. Others of us hold fast to scriptural traditions taught to us by our elders and seek to maintain an orthodoxy in concert with the Windsor Report. All of us would agree that we desire to seek Christ in the midst of our differences.



Southeast

We are grateful, resourceful, independent Christians living in resource-based coastal and island communities. The Tongass National Rainforest provides a breathtaking greenness to our surroundings. While our climate is considered more temperate than much of the rest of our state, there are those who find it damp. We depend primarily on the abundance of the sea. The Native people of this region include the Tlingit, Haida and Tsimpsians. We are road-less and depend entirely on airplanes, boats and the state ferry system to travel. Most health crises needing a specialist require travel to Seattle, which is actually the closest large city to us, only a few hours away by Alaska Airlines.

While our churches are steeped in the missionary history of this region, we remain open to the new. One of our number called us "socially liberal and liturgically traditional". There is certain to be another among us who would claim the reverse, though. We have been known to be a non-conformist bunch. We come from diverse religious backgrounds, but are knit together in close communities. Fishing, both commercial and subsistence, is a way of life for many. All our communities are visited heavily in the summer months by tourists traveling on cruise ships and other means of transportation. This ebb and flow of tourists is both a blessing and a challenge for our churches. Our populations fluctuate from season to season and we have learned to live in an unpredictable economy. Juneau is the state capital and is the only town in Southeast with two Episcopal congregations. Other communities have one church, some of which refer to themselves as "small but mighty". We are family friendly, hospitable people, willing to question even our faith, secure in the trust that the God of the abundant seas will provide answers for us.

HOW ARE WE UNIQUELY BLESSED?

Arctic Coast

We have a deep respect for our church. We were taught by our ancestors to practice great respect in our church and we learned from them to meditate in holiness. In church we listen to the Word of God. Our elders taught us to practice that same respect in church. They remembered how their elders used to go behind the church before services on Sunday. Much later they learned that their elders were leaving their cigarettes and tobacco back there because they didn't want to even bring them into the House of God. That's the kind of respect we have for our church. We teach our young people with our actions. They watch and they learn.

Interior

We are blessed with our many languages. We are blessed by the Gospel teams that travel throughout the Interior to bring singing and revival to our villages. We have the David Salmon School of Ministry to train our church leaders. We experience a wide variety of expressions of the Christian faith through our ecumenical experiences and we give thanks always for the wisdom of our elders and the deep spirituality we can experience by following their guidance. Our faith is woven into our culture; they are not separate from each other. Our faith is our way of life: our center of gravity.

South Central

We feel blessed to have the option of experiencing true urban living as well as access to pristine wilderness. We have many choices in travel, health care and even worship style that other Alaskans do not. We are blessed to welcome others into our midst, and by the gifts they bring. Because of the socio-economic power available here in the hub of the state, our churches are in a position to really make a difference in the diocese as a whole. We are soundly positioned for urban ministries and some of us have strong ties to the homeless community.

Southeast

Our isolation has made us innovative. The sea has fed us. We have an abundance of clergy in this deanery - some retired, some home grown and some otherwise employed but still available to us. This is not true everywhere in the diocese. We revere the knowledge of those who have lived here for generations. We value the close relationships we have been able to forge with other churches and faiths in our communities. We count ourselves particularly fortunate in the number of strong relationships our churches have formed with the 12-step and recovery groups in our communities.







WHAT IS OUR GREATEST CHALLENGE?

When our clergy responded to these questions at a clergy conference, they had only two words to answer the questions, "How Are You Uniquely Blessed?" "Our Faith," they replied! When asked, "What is Your Biggest Challenge?" They answered with only one, "Money." Certainly many of the issues we face in all our deaneries might be helped by increased funding to combat our many challenges. Most deaneries agreed on several core issues that challenge us all:

Evangelism appeared in every challenge list. How can we attract people – young people, new people, and people unlike ourselves – to our churches? How can we keep the ones we have? Are we being welcoming, or are we unknowingly turning people away with our unexamined preconceptions? Every church in the Diocese wishes to grow. How to do so with our unique challenges is a question we all ask.

Volunteer Burn-Out happens whether we are in small towns with only a few people in leadership roles "doing everything" or in towns and cities where "busy-ness" is the norm and people are too over extended to participate in ministry.

Geographical Isolation from one another in the church, from needed services which are often available elsewhere and limited travel budgets challenge us all. There seems little doubt that if we had more money for travel, we might get to see our bishop more, gather for training more often, and offer encouragement, revival, pastoral and sacramental care and promote justice for more people in more places.

Challenging Weather goes hand in hand with geographical isolation to make our gathering and traveling a more frequent impossibility. Extreme dark and cold in the north and cloudiness and rain elsewhere can lead to depression for many and should not be discounted as an occasional problem at best.

Depression, Substance Abuse and Related Problems follow behind the darkness. The problem of alcoholism belongs to no single ethnic group. All of our congregations have faced tragic losses because of the abuse of drugs and alcohol. They prey on the young and on those already oppressed by racial and economic injustice.

Economic Insecurity takes different forms in different regions. But the bottom line is that if the whale harvest is poor, the salmon don't run in their usual numbers, the oil industry goes bust or the unemployment rate goes boom, many Alaskans cannot state with any certainty what their income might be in the coming year. This makes planning, pledging and trusting in God's providence a challenge that is real.

Leadership, Discernment and Formation. The Diocese has not managed to develop and maintain a coherent systematic and consistent process for helping individuals prepare for their baptismal ministries, much less to provide them with continuing education support.



WHAT IS OUR HOPE FOR THE DIOCESE OF ALASKA?

We pray for a bishop whose faith, love and leadership can not only reach us all, but also unite us one with another.

Father David Salmon of Chalkvitsik died this fall, at the age of 95 after a ministry of over 50 years. He was a Gwitch'in Athabascan, schooled in the art and craft of his traditional way of life by his elders. He was trained for ministry in Alaska and Michigan. He was a born leader and a teacher to many of us here in the Diocese of Alaska. The David Salmon School of Ministry is named after him. Father David developed a teaching on the five gifts of ministry outlined in Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 4:11 "And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers."

He would hold up his hand and assign each ministry to a finger. The smallest finger was the teacher because it was what he called the nerve finger. When you lose it, all the other fingers curl and are useless. The ring finger, where the wedding band goes, was the pastor, who "keeps the family together". The middle finger was the evangelist, who "goes the farthest" and the index finger was the prophet, "Who points the way". The thumb was always last to be assigned in Father David's teaching. "The apostle is the bishop." He would say, passing his thumb along the tip of each of the other "ministers". "He touches them all," he would say.

In all the survey groups we collected data from; it was this function of our new bishop that resonated most deeply. We are far flung. We are culturally and ethnically diverse. We yearn to be connected to each other in the diocese, but distance, weather and strained finances keep us apart. Conflict in the broader Anglican community causes dissension. Even our own failure to understand how life is in other cultures and parts of the state divides us. Our clergy are often isolated from one another as they minister, touching us all, like the apostle in Father Salmon's teaching. We are richly blessed in ministry in this diocese. We need a bishop whose faith, love and leadership can not only reach us all, but also unite us one with another







WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FOR IN OUR NEW BISHOP?

We love this land and the waters in and around it and are grateful for its beauty and bounty. We all are challenged by our weather, the economy of the times, and by substance abuse. Everybody wants the Bishop to visit more often. Every deanery wants a Bishop who will "be fluent" in all the cultures represented in their deanery. We also yearn to have a Bishop who understands the unique way our cultures come into communion and conflict. Every parish group, though they expressed it in varied and beautiful ways, loves the Lord, yearns to share what they have found with others and is willing to join with the new Bishop to do just that.

We pray that the Holy Spirit will lead us into ministry with a Bishop who is:

- Centered in a profound prayer life, formed by Scripture and on fire with the Gospel Message.
- Keenly aware of and knowledgeable about the many different cultures and ways of life represented in the Dioceses – if not already an Alaskan, somebody committed to becoming one.
- Willing to work with us to call at least one suffragan bishop whose ministry will ensure that all the parishes of this diocese receive the Episcopal attention they need to carry out their own ministries.

- An adventurous spirit, willing and ready to travel (good roads, bad roads and no roads at all, big boats and small boats, planes, small planes and smaller planes.)
- A creative thinker who is able to delegate and to work collaboratively to find innovative solutions to old problems with grace, humor and limited resources.
- An advocate for and a friend to children and youth.

- Committed to caring for and being a spiritual companion to the clergy of the diocese.
- Skilled in reconciliation.
- Prepared to join in fighting racism and all forms of bias in the church.
- Open to developing and using alternative routes to ordained ministry.
- Supported by the members of his/ her household in this ministry.



SO, WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THE INTERIM?

Since the departure of Bishop MacDonald, the staff has been busy continuing the projects and program initiated under his tenure. The Canon to the Ordinary stated: "That is what we know best, so that is what we will continue to do." However, the staff (consisting of the Canon to the Ordinary, the Administrator, the Native Missioner, Safe Church Coordinator. Administrative Assistant and the Clerk-Receptionist) continues to make plans for the interim that include some new and exciting endeavors

One of the most critical goals for the Standing Committee and the staff is to continue to improve the communication in the diocese and to the outside. To this end, we are committed to publishing the monthly Good News letter that reaches all of our congregations and to publishing at least one Alaskan Epiphany, the magazine of the diocese, per year. The Epiphany was once published quarterly but staff resignations precluded that schedule. Electronic alerts are also used to notify our congregations of important developments and concerns.

Under Bishop MacDonald, there was a movement to make the sacraments available to all of our congregations on a more regular basis. The staff is committed to deploying available clergy to do Eucharist, baptisms, funerals, weddings, etc., where needed. They continue to invite clergy from the "Outside" to come and lend a helping hand.

Leadership Development will continue as it has in the past. The Father David Salmon School for Ministry is the training vehicle for the whole diocese. The school will continue to provide both lay and ordained training for ministry. The Commission on Ministry will focus on methods for assessing proficiency and updating the handbooks for lay and ordained ministry. A plan to provide women's leadership training in all of the deaneries is also being developed. This new initiative will gather women in each deanery to provide Spiritual Wellness and Training (SWAT): to unite and equip women for ministry.

There are many partnerships that we need to keep and several that we need to continue to nurture. Alaska has had a long standing partnership with the Executive Council's Committee on Indigenous Ministry and Domestic Missionary Partnership. These are mutually beneficial partnerships that improve





the quality of our spiritual lives both inside and outside of Alaska. There has also been a partnership with the Native Ministries Program at Vancouver School of Theology. This program has trained many Alaskans through the Master of Divinity degree by extension. There are two important emerging partnerships, Navajoland and The Anglican **Council of Indigenous People** (ACIP). Both have great historic connotations. The Athabascans, a prominent tribe in Alaska, and the Navajo were once "one nation." The ACIP, a Canadian policy making organization for the Anglican Church of Canada, also has historic ties to Alaska as the first missionaries to Alaska were sent from Canada. Both these partnerships help our Native people see things differently in terms of self determination and taking responsibility for the ministry.

Several years ago our nonstipendiary clergy met in Anchorage. The meeting was supposed to include only paid clergy but Bishop MacDonald would not have that because the majority of the diocesan clergy were un-paid! So every clergy person was invited to this meeting sponsored by the Church Pension Fund. From that meeting came the idea of the "Abundance Clergy," formerly the non-stipendiary clergy. This name was chosen because they come out of God's abundance, not scarcity. When the Abundance Clergy retire they have no pension from the church even though most worked many years for our churches. This injustice needed to be corrected. Three years ago the Advent Appeal was launched and the donations were earmarked for the Abundance Clergy Fund. The goal is to raise \$100,000. We are getting close to reaching that goal, so now a plan needs to be developed with the Church Pension Fund so that we may provide a modest pension to our Abundance Clergy.

During the interim a plan will be developed to recruit and hire a Diocesan Youth Coordinator. The Commission on Youth and the Canon to the Ordinary will spearhead this plan. Our young people have been missing many opportunities due to lack of personnel. We can't afford to let this continue.

We must continue to do everything necessary to ensure the financial integrity of the diocese. This means that we will assist in the further development of the Major Gifts Campaign, continue to seek grant funds for our ministries and be wise stewards of God's money.

The bottom line plan is to continue to grow, to be in the hands of the Holy Spirit and to engage the Gospel to see what God is calling us to do!



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EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF ALASKA 2008 BUDGET

	Actual Incor	me/Expense		2007 Budget	vs Actual		
Accounts	2005	Estimated 12/31/06 Results	Estimated 6/30/07 Results	Projected 12/31/07 Results	Revised Transition Budget	(Over)/ Under	2008 Transition
	000.005	004.050	004.050	004.050	000.005		004.050
Full 25% Pledge	628,295	664,252	664,252	664,252	628,295	(35,957)	664,252
Allowance for Uncollectible Pledges	(298,644)	(316,669)	(505,319)	(303,947)	(263,195)	40,752	 (284,257)
Net Pledges	329,651	347,583	158,933	360,305	365,100	4,795	379,995
Investment Income, incl.FIT & NY Endown.	129,989	130,629	64,866	131,842	130,920	(922)	133,845
Episcopal Center Block Grant	312,062	312,062	176,863	353,726	353,729	3	353,729
Passthrough to expenses	38,912	38,475	400	43,000	43,000	0	0
Other	7,953	8,904	2,875	4,750	4,750	0	4,700
Carry forward from Previous Years	13	14,660	0	28,354	44,054	15,700	15,700
In God We Trust, Faith Offering	0	0	0	0	0	0	7,665
Total Income	818,580	852,313	403,937	921,977	941,553	19,576	895,634
Expenses by Account Grouping							
Program Staff	166,254	176,012	86,554	176,101	166,373	(9,728)	211,241
Committees & Commissions	9,658	10,733	10,073	31,585	32,330	745	29,180
Education & Training	14,075	24,406	8,133	29,530	29,500	(30)	30,460
Diocesan Convention	28,487	26,050	0	43,000	43,000	0	0
Safe Church Program	1,733	3,909	663	7,110	10,040	2,930	10,040
Extra-Diocesan	73,484	76,784	38,400	80,950	80,950	0	85,560
Congregation & Deanry Support	60,319	57,790	25,349	72,140	74,640	2,500	72,140
Episcopate	179,786	185,931	101,525	169,593	186,295	16,702	151,230
Administration	248,640	256,812	138,872	293,688	303,075	9,387	290,433
Reserves	36,144	33,886	15,350	18,280	15,350	(2,930)	15,350
Total Expense	818,580	852,313	424,919	921,977	941,553	19,576	895,634
Net Income	0	0	(20,983)	0	0	0	0





EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF ALASKA CONGREGATIONAL SUPPORT OF DIOCESAN OPERATING BUDGET PLEDGE INCOME

	Actual Giving					
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
as a % of Operating Incom	е					
Total Pledge Income %	12.2%	12.6%	12.8%	12.4%	12.9%	12.8%
Arctic Coast Deanery %	11.3%	24.2%	24.8%	19.8%	15.1%	23.7%
Interior Deanery %	18.3%	18.1%	20.4%	20.5%	20.9%	20.0%
South Central Deanery %	11.7%	12.5%	11.9%	11.1%	12.2%	11.2%
South East Deanery %	9.7%	7.3%	8.9%	9.9%	10.3%	11.7%
in Dollars						
Total Pledge Income \$	\$ 299,513	\$ 321,646	\$ 320,688	\$ 314,183	\$ 329,652	\$ 347,583
Arctic Coast Deanery \$	\$ 12,380	\$ 23,504	\$ 22,803	\$ 17,105	\$ 10,280	\$ 16,728
Interior Deanery \$	66,451	70,773	67,282	69,885	67,315	72,275
South Central Deanery \$	164,330	183,398	176,977	166,954	185,373	176,568
South East Deanery \$	56,352	43,971	53,626	60,239	66,684	82,012

Giving guideline is 25% of Operating Income of the Deaneries



RESOLUTIONS FROM CONVENTION 2007

ACTION ON RESOLUTIONS OF THE 33RD CONVENTION OF THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF ALASKA

Resolution 2007-01 – Indigenous Suffragan

Therefore, be it resolved that the 33rd Convention of the Diocese of Alaska supports the Interior Deanery in calling upon the next Bishop of Alaska to call for the election of an Indigenous Suffragan Bishop to serve the Native peoples of Alaska within eighteen months of consecration.

Be it further resolved that the Indigenous Suffragan Bishop will provide pastoral and spiritual care for our Indigenous Congregations.

Action: Approved

Resolution 2007-02 – Suffragan Bishop Task Force

The 33rd Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Alaska encourages our next Diocesan Bishop to consider a Suffragan bishop for Indigenous Ministries.

Be it further resolved The 33rd Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Alaska establish immediately a Suffragan Bishop's Task Force to develop a plan for implementation of this resolution, to be acted upon by our newly elected Diocesan Bishop, within 12 months of his or her consecration.

Action: Approved

Resolution 2007-03 – Major Gifts Campaign

Be it resolved that from this day forward this campaign be known as the Rt. Rev. Mark MacDonald Major Gifts Campaign. And be it further resolved that the 2007 Convention adopt the following plan as its initial step toward the continuation and success of this Gifts Campaign.

(Please call office if you want a copy of the plan)

Action: Approved

Resolution 2007-04 – Anti-Racism

The 33rd Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Alaska add the following language to the canons of this diocese: All clergy members and lay members of diocesan bodies established by diocesan canon, resolution of the diocesan convention, or the Standing Committee, or the decision of the Bishop of Alaska shall have participated or will participate within six months following their election or appointment, in the diocese anti-racism training program or a similar program provided elsewhere in the Episcopal Church. All officers of the corporation shall meet these same requirements.

Action: Forward to the Committee on Constitution and Canons

SEARCH TIMELINE FOR THE 8TH BISHOP OF ALASKA

2009

March	13-15	Face-to-face organizational meeting (including S.C.)
April	17	Nominations open
July	31	Nominations close
August	15	All nominee packets due
October	8-10	Diocesan Convention
October		Background checks begin
November		On site visits to candidates

2010

January		BDC provide names to Standing Committee			
by February		Names published to Diocese Petition process opens (2 weeks only)			
Late February Early March	/	Fly about with candidates			
April	9-10	Electing Convention for the 8th Bishop of Alaska			

Consecration of the 8th Bishop of Alaska will be no later than October 2010 on a date to be determined by the Standing Committee.





Nomination Form for the Election of the 8th Bishop for the Diocese of Alaska

The Bishop Discernment Committee for the Diocese of Alaska will receive your suggestions for potential nominees for the position of Bishop of the Diocese of Alaska from April 17, to July 31, 2009.

The Bishop Discernment Committee encourages you to read the Diocesan Profile and then make your nomination suggestions. If you are interested in being considered, feel free to nominate yourself, using the relevant questions on this form. The profile may be accessed at www.alaskabishopsearch.org.

You may also submit this form electronically by visiting www.alaskabishopsearch.org and selecting "Nomination/Application".

Upon completion of this form please mail or fax to:

Bishop Discernment Committee, Diocese of Alaska Attention Linda Demientieff 1205 Denali Way Fairbanks, Alaska 99701 FAX: 907 456-6552

Contact information for your nominee:

Full Name:		
Cell (or preferred) phone #:		
		Zip Code:
Email:		
Present Position (title, parish, city):		
I have personally obtained consent	of the person I a	m nominating: YES 🗌
I believe this person should be consid	dered because: (be	specific, use reverse side if needed)
Submitted by:		Daytime Phone:
Submitted by: Address:		
		Email:







BISHOP DISCERNMENT COMMITTEE

Chair:	Daniel Hall, Juneau, Southeast
Secretary:	Stacy Thorpe, Eagle River, South Central
Treasurer:	Linda Demientieff, Fairbanks, Interior
Arctic Coast:	Martin Oktollik, Point Hope The Rev. Wilfred Lane, Kotzebue
Interior:	Clarence Bolden, Fairbanks
South Central:	The Rev. Ann Whitney, Wasilla
Southeast:	Deatrea Marciel, Haines
Search Consultant:	Betsy Greenman, Diocese of Olympia