



# The Good News from the Office of the Bishop

The Rt. Rev. Mark Lattime, 8th Bishop of Alaska

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## A Word from the Bishop

### Lent 2019

Ash Wednesday is March 6<sup>th</sup> and with it begins the season of Lent.

Lent is a 40-day season of penitence and fasting; of self-examination and repentance by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; by reading and meditating on God's holy Word. Lent is the season for the hard work of reconciliation, forgiveness, and restoration. The liturgy for Ash Wednesday in the Prayer Book describes the purpose of Lenten practices is to put the "the whole congregation [...in] mind of the message of pardon and absolution set forth in the Gospel of our Savior, and of the need which all Christians continually have to renew their repentance and faith (BCP pg.265 Ash Wednesday)."

Lent is a Good News season; and the Good News is the glorious invitation of pardon, transformation and new life in Jesus Christ—the invitation to Easter. In Lent we are encouraged to prepare to accept this invitation in its fullness.

Here's a fun fact: If you look at a calendar and count the calendar days from Ash Wednesday to Holy Saturday (the last day before Easter Day), you will count 46! 46 Days in Lent? Why, then, do I say above that Lent is a 40-day season? It is because Sundays are not part of the Season of Lent. Sundays are *always* feast days (Feasts of Our Lord). Every Sunday is a celebration of the Easter invitation—no matter the season, Easter never goes away. If you read carefully the title of the Collects for Lent you will note that each bears the title *Nth Sunday in* Lent, not *of* Lent. You could compare this with the Collects for Advent where the title of each Collect is the *Nth Sunday of* Advent. The Sundays in Lent do not count as part of the Lenten season of penitence and fasting. Nevertheless, it certainly would do us no harm to maintain our Lenten disciplines on Sundays in Lent. And, this Sunday in Lent exception notwithstanding, it is the practice of our Church to observe a few Lenten traditions and rules at the liturgies of Sundays in Lent.

One liturgical rule for the season of Lent, including the Sundays in Lent, is that the “Gloria in Excelsis” (Glory to God in the highest and peace to his people on earth...), or the hymn used in place of it, is NOT used. This is a specific rule found in the Additional Directions on page 406 of the BCP. Instead, the Kyries (Lord, have mercy...) or the Trisagion (Holy God, Holy and mighty...) are said. Additionally, some will say that there is a general ban on the use of ‘alleluia’ during the season of Lent and the Sundays in Lent. Technically, this is true. However, there is no rubric (rule) written in the BCP that states a general ban on ‘alleluias’ like the rule against the use of the Gloria. Instead, where an ‘alleluia’ is provided as an option in the liturgy (for example the fraction anthem: [Alleluia] Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us....), it is clearly stated in the directions that “[in] Lent, Alleluia is omitted, and may be omitted at other times except during the Easter Season.” That direction pertains to that specific use of Alleluia and not *all* Alleluias; but, more importantly, while it does ban the use Alleluia at the fraction in Lent, including Sundays in Lent, it asserts strongly that this Alleluia may not be omitted in Easter Season.

Which invites another fun fact. Alleluia is our Easter song! It is our triumphant shout of joy for the hope, love, and new life that is ours in Jesus our risen Lord. For this reason, the Prayer Book prescribes its use in the season of Easter and limits its use at all other times—especially Lent\*. But there is one place in the Prayer Book liturgies where Alleluia is said regardless of the season or day. It is also the only place in the liturgies of the BCP where Alleluia is said three times! Can you guess where, which liturgy? It is at the Commendation in the Burial Rites (pgs.483/499): “[Even] at the grave we make our song: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.” Easter is our hope, even in shadow of death; and Easter is always faithful.

In some ways, our entire life is a season to prepare for the coming of Easter. Our entire life is a season of Lent. Not a time to wallow in sorrow, self-pity, and shame, or to spend all our days neglecting the hope, faith, and love that is our calling in Jesus; but all our days are a season to keep in mind the message of pardon and absolution set forth in the Gospel of our Savior, and of the need which all Christians continually have to renew their repentance and faith.” We are pilgrims: walking together through this wilderness of life in the way of Jesus towards the dawning of that new and wonderful resurrection day.

May Lent, and all your days, be for you a renewal in hope, forgiveness, reconciliation and holy living. And may you be ready with boldness and faith to greet Easter morning with Alleluia as your song.

\*As with the season of Lent and the Sundays in Lent, the Gloria in excelsis is not to be used in the Season of Advent. However, nowhere does it say that the Alleluia at the fraction cannot be used in Advent\*

Bishop Lattime

Follow these links for Lenten study resources offered by the Episcopal Church

[https://www.episcopalchurch.org/files/documents/way\\_of\\_love\\_lent\\_curriculum\\_0.pdf](https://www.episcopalchurch.org/files/documents/way_of_love_lent_curriculum_0.pdf)

[https://www.episcopalchurch.org/files/documents/way\\_of\\_love\\_quiet\\_day\\_curriculum.pdf](https://www.episcopalchurch.org/files/documents/way_of_love_quiet_day_curriculum.pdf)

## Pledge for the Care of Creation

Concern for the life and health of this good earth, “our island home,” was a prominent theme at the Episcopal Church General Convention in Austin, TX. As the bishop of Alaska, where the effects of climate change are being experienced dramatically, I was assigned to the Legislative Committee on Environmental Stewardship and Care of Creation. As a committee we were assigned nearly two dozen resolutions to consider. Our task was to hold hearings on the resolutions, debate the merits of the resolutions, to pray, to listen, and, ultimately, to discern which resolutions would be considered by the Convention and in what form. In the end, the committee sent 18 resolutions to the General Convention for consideration. 16 were adopted.

Compared with other Committees, like the committees for Prayer book, Liturgy and Music, or Constitution and Canons, 18 resolutions is not a lot. Nevertheless, it was clear that there was a strong interest by the General Convention for the Episcopal Church to further develop its theology and understanding of the stewardship of Creation, and to develop opportunities for individuals, congregations, and dioceses to engage the work of stewardship of creation and environmental justice.

Following General Convention, the Presiding Bishop, Michael Curry, assigned me to serve on The Task Force on Care of Creation and Environmental Racism—a Task Force created by the work of General Convention and populated by representatives from both the House of Bishops and the House Deputies, as well as other individuals who the presiding officers of General Convention believe bring expertise to the work of the Task Force. I was delighted that Bernadette Demientieff, Executive Director of the Gwich’in Steering Committee was also named to this task force (Bernadette was a special guest and presenter to the General Convention). The Task Force has been working to determine and develop ways the Resolutions passed by General Convention might be addressed or, in some cases, achieved. One of the first fruits of this work is the “Pledge for the Care of Creation.”

The Pledge for the Care of Creation is attached in this edition of the Good News. I invite and encourage everyone to read it and pray about what concrete steps or actions you are willing to take in response to the Presiding Bishop’s vision of Loving, Liberating, and Life-giving as the way of living faithfully and witnessing to the Good News of Jesus. While the document does provide some suggestions, these are intending only to encourage your own thinking about actions that would be right for you.

As I think about ways I can “live more simply, humbly, and gently on the earth,” a reasonable goal for me, personally, would be to increase the use of my bicycle as a means of transportation and to walk more. Thinking about my love and concern for the earth, I would share the story of the deeply spiritual experience of standing on top of a hill looking out over the Minto Flats with my son, Jack. We were on our first ever moose hunt, and we were overwhelmed by the beauty of what we saw and the honor we had to be in that place, on the land, and in relationship with the animals. We talked about how sacred and important it was to honor God by respecting this gift. For us this means listening to and learning about the land; behaving respectfully towards the animals; hunting ethically and not wastefully; and taking care to leave as little trace of our presence as possible.

You may decide to share with others or simply use the exercise as an opportunity for your own personal reflection and commitment to action.

### **A Prayer for Our Time and for the Earth**

Dear God, Creator of the earth, this sacred home we share;

Give us new eyes to see the beauty all around and to protect the wonders of creation.

Give us new arms to embrace the strangers among us and to know them as family.

Give us new ears to hear and understand those who live off the land

and to hear and understand those who extract its resources.

Give us new hearts to recognize the brokenness in our communities

and to heal the wounds we have inflicted.

Give us new hands to serve the earth and its people

and to shape beloved community.

For you are the One who seeks the lost,

binds our wounds and sets us free,

and it is in the name of Jesus the Christ we pray.

Amen.

(From the House of Bishop's "Word to the Church." September 2017, Fairbanks, AK)



## Pledge for the Care of Creation

As the Episcopal branch of the Jesus Movement and as people who live the Way of Love,  
we long to grow LOVING, LIBERATING, LIFE-GIVING relationship with God's Creation.

In this urgent moment, we pledge to protect and renew this good Earth and all who call it home.  
Together, we commit to specific actions, trusting we can do more as a body than any one could alone.

**LOVING:** We will share our stories of love and concern for the Earth and link with others  
who care about protecting the sacred web of life.

Because I want to share my strong love of God and God's Creation, I will ...

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Sample Commitments (more ideas in the vision document that follows)

- Record a 1-minute video answering the questions "When have you experienced wonder in God's Creation? What is your commitment to protect what you love?" Stretch yourself and post to social media networks or to [creation@episcopalchurch.org](mailto:creation@episcopalchurch.org).
- Form a Care of Creation group in your congregation or diocese, or connect with a group in your local community. Stretch yourself and organize your group to apply for a Creation Care Grant.

\* \* \*

**LIBERATING:** We will stand with those most vulnerable to the harmful effects of  
environmental degradation and climate change – women, children, poor people and  
communities of color, refugees, migrants.

Because I want to stand in solidarity with my sisters and brothers, especially those being  
harmed by environmental degradation and climate change, I will ...

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Sample Commitments (more ideas in the vision document that follows)

- Sign on for alerts from the Episcopal Public Policy Network at <https://advocacy.episcopalchurch.org>. Stretch yourself and engage in advocacy around an environmental justice issue close to your heart.
- Learn more about a specific way that climate change or environmental degradation affects people near you. Stretch yourself and listen to the stories of hurting neighbors, and find ways to ally with them.

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**LIFE-GIVING:** We will change our habits and choices in order to live more simply, humbly  
and gently on the Earth.

Because I want to change my own life so that my flourishing is woven together with the  
flourishing of the Earth, I will ...

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Sample Commitments (more ideas in the vision document that follows)

- Personally use the carbon tracker at [www.sustainislandhome.org](http://www.sustainislandhome.org). Stretch yourself and organize your whole congregation to sign up and track their carbon footprint.
- Change your eating habits by consuming less meat and reducing the amount of food your family wastes. Stretch yourself by committing to a goal, like one meatless meal per day.

## An Episcopal Vision for Care of Creation

The Jesus Movement is the ongoing community of people whose lives are centered on Jesus of Nazareth. We follow him into loving, liberating, life-giving relationship with God, with each other and with Creation.

As a whole church, we have promised to place the care of God's Creation at the heart of our common life.

Together, we have taken up church-wide action in order to safeguard the integrity of Creation and to sustain and renew the life of the Earth. Learn more at [www.episcopalchurch.org/creation](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/creation).

Below are goals and a vision for Care of Creation, developed by the Presiding Bishop's Office and leaders of the Advisory Council on Stewardship of Creation and in alignment with actions by the 79th General Convention (concurrent resolutions indicated with titles like A013 or C008). Search for the resolutions at <https://www.generalconvention.org/legislative-information-gc2018>.

**LOVING** – Goal #1 – Create and sustain a network of Episcopalians dedicated to the care and protection of the whole Creation, especially by providing grants and cultivating circles for Story Sharing among practitioners in local and regional ministries.

- Introduce new staff position with special attention to Care of Creation (A013)
- Continue Care of Creation Grants program (A013, A008)
- Facilitate development of networks of practitioners, by state and/or affinity (A008)
- Link with Story Sharing work like Beloved Community Story Sharing Project, Called to Transformation, and Climate Reality to prepare to share stories of our love for God and Creation

**LIBERATING** – Goal #2 – Stand in solidarity with the most vulnerable victims of the impact of climate change – particularly women, poor people, and people of color – as part of seeking the liberation and flourishing of all God's people.

- Develop 2-3 eco-justice sites where the church invests significant energy and resources
- Oppose environmental racism, sexism, classism (A011, B027)
- Support advocacy and governmental engagement via the Office of Governmental Relations, the Episcopal Public Policy Network, and participation in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Conference of Parties (A018, C008)
- Advocate to protect vulnerable people/lands/species, especially in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (Resolution X023)
- Inhibit exploitative extraction practices (A011)

**LIFE-GIVING** – Goal #3 – Set climate mitigation benchmarks as individuals and as a church, in order to live more simply, humbly, and gently on the Earth.

- Develop, curate and distribute formation resources to support Episcopalians who wish to commit to simple, humble, gentle living on the Earth
- Support use of the carbon tracker at [www.sustainislandhome.org](http://www.sustainislandhome.org) (C008)
- Promote conscious food decisions and local, sustainable agriculture (C049)
- Support use of the carbon tax and carbon offsets (A014, C020)
- Ask diocesan officials to track energy use as part of the parochial report, and promote energy and water efficiency across the church (C039, A213)
- Adopt the Paris Accord at state, regional and local levels (A010)
- Work toward regenerative agriculture, biodiversity conservation, and habitat restoration (D053)
- Help communities to transition to clean energy economies and encourage stewardship of creation with church-owned lands (D081, D053)
- Promote ocean health and phase out use of bottled water in church-related facilities (C063)
- Incentivize renewable energy and track fossil fuel divestment/reinvestment (A020, C021)
- Learn about ocean health, watersheds, and water as a human right (B025, C063)

Suzanne Krull

## Deanery Meetings and Nominations

The deanery meetings are where we begin the nomination process for the diocesan committees/ commission positions that we will be elected at the 2019 Diocesan Convention, October 3-6, 2019 hosted by St. Mary's, Anchorage. The deanery meeting dates are **Arctic Coast Deanery, February 28- March 3; Interior Deanery, April 11-13; South Central Deanery, April 27; Southeast Deanery, May 2-5.**

Summary of the positions open for election/appointment:

Commission on Ministry:

Interior Clergy (appointed by Bishop)

South Central Lay (appointed by Bishop)

Southeast Lay (elected, deanery nomination required)

Standing Committee:

Seat #7 Arctic Coast Clergy (elected, deanery nomination required)

Seat #8 South Central Clergy (elected, deanery nomination required)

Seat #9 Interior Lay (elected, deanery nomination required)

Disciplinary Board:

Seat C Clergy (any deanery, fill vacancy)

FIT Committee (Faith Into Tomorrow Endowment):

Seat D Clergy (any deanery, elected)

General Convention Deputies

(4) Clergy Deputies (each deanery nominates, 2 clergy)

(4) Lay Deputies (each deanery nominates, 2 lay)

Please prayerful consider these positions and bring your nominations to your deanery meeting. We ask that a Nominee Profile Form be completed and submitted for each nominee. For more information and a copy of the Nominee Profile Form go to the diocesan web-site, [www.episcopalak.org](http://www.episcopalak.org) ,under the Convention & Clergy Conference section.

Listed below are brief descriptions of the committees with open seats and the commitment needed for each.

### Commission on Ministry:

Summary of Responsibilities: Assist the bishop in matters pertaining to the needs for the Ordained Ministry including enlistment and selection of persons for the Ministry, and in the guidance and pastoral care of all Postulants and Candidates for Holy Orders, Deacons and Priests, administering examinations required by Canon for Ordination and continuing education. Assist the bishop in challenging, training, and providing continuing education of the Laity for its ministry.

Commitment needed: attend regular teleconference (10-12 annually), receive and disburse documents (preferably electronically), meet face to face for a 2-3 day meeting at least once a year.

### Standing Committee:

Summary of Responsibilities: Serve as a Council of Advice to the Bishop. Exercise Ecclesiastical Authority in the absence or disability of the Bishop. Act as the reviewing body in the selection, examination, and ordination of persons for Holy Orders. Advise and consent to the purchase, construction, encumbrance, and disposition of real property of the Diocese. Implement actions assigned by the Convention of the Diocese, including the regular review and oversight of the budget.

Commitment needed: attend regular teleconference (6-8 annually), receive and disburse documents (preferably electronically), meet face to face for a 2-3 day meeting at least twice a year.

### Disciplinary Board:

Summary of Responsibilities: The Disciplinary Board handles complaints and cases of clergy misconduct and other matters set forth in Title IV of the Canons of the Episcopal Church including the Trial of any Priest or Deacon of the Diocese.

Commitment needed: Be available to meet via teleconference and/or in person should a case/need present itself. Unless there is an active case this committee typically does not meet.

### FIT (Faith Into Tomorrow Endowment) Committee:

Summary of Responsibilities: Oversee the on-going grants and operating budget funding provided by the FIT Endowment. Manage the granting process including distributing, advertising, and evaluating annual grant applications for the multiple grant cases. Review the spending allocation annually and make recommendations for approval to the Standing Committee.

Commitment needed: attend regular teleconference (4-6 annually) , receive and disburse documents (preferably electronically), meet face to face for a 2-3 day meeting at least once a year.



### General Convention Deputies:

Summary of Responsibilities: Provide representation for the Episcopal Diocese of Alaska to the General Convention of The Episcopal Church. General Convention is held once every 3 years, with a gathering of deputies and bishops throughout the Episcopal Church. Each diocese is entitled to a deputation of 4 Clergy and 4 Lay. Deputies are voting members of the House of Deputies. They discuss, debate, pray and vote on matters, including resolutions, motions, canonical changes and other such issues brought before the House of Deputies.

Commitment needed: attend regular teleconferences prior to General Convention, review all pre-convention material, join the Deputy email list serve (optional), travel to and attend General Convention which is held at a site in the lower 48 in the summer for 12-14 days once every 3 years. In 2021 it will be in Baltimore, Maryland July 2021. Specifics dates have not yet been set. Typically it is early July (often including the 4th of July holiday).

### St. Simeon/St. Anna Society Nominees

Deanery meetings are also the time & place to bring your nominee(s) for Society of St. Simeon and St. Anna. As your congregation prepares for this year's deanery meeting please take some time to select the nominee(s) you may have for the Society of St. Simeon and St. Anna. A list of current members of the Society and a nomination form can be found on the diocesan web-site [www.episcopalak.org](http://www.episcopalak.org), under directory.

Please complete one nomination form for each elder you wish to nominate and bring it to your deanery meeting. . (Arctic Coast 2/28-3/3 (tentative); Interior 4/11-13; South Central 4/27; South East 5/2-5). It is very important that we have the information on the form, especially the address and signature of the nominee. The Deans will forward them on to the Bishop's Office.

The eligibility for nomination to the Society of St. Simeon and St. Anna are:

1. Membership in the Society is open to all Elders in Alaska who have been active in the Episcopal Diocese for at least 15 years and who are 60 years of age or older.
2. Nomination by Parish Vestry, Parish Council, Church Committee, or comparable body.
3. Affirmation by the Deanery through prayer at their annual meeting.
4. Elders are nominated for the Society of St. Simeon and St. Anna by the local congregation. It is resolved as a way to show support for the nominee(s), each congregation will be responsible for the cost (\$25) of the St. Simeon and St. Anna cross.

### **Last Year's Convention Minutes**

The 2018 Convention Minutes have been approved by the Standing Committee and are available on the diocesan web-site, [www.episcopalak.org](http://www.episcopalak.org), under the Convention & Clergy Conference section.

## FIT

The Faith Into Tomorrow (FIT) 2019 grant application packets were mailed to each congregation the in February. Below is a summary of the grants available in 2019.

**Case 4 – Youth Ministries.** This program has \$6,627 available for granting. The purpose this grant is to enrich our youth ministries. Examples of programs that this grant provides funding for are: activates that promote local congregational, deanery, or diocesan youth ministries; support for campus ministries; youth leadership training events and retreats; and youth attendance at Episcopal conferences, retreats, camps, and national events. Applications must be postmarked no later than **October 11, 2019**.

**Case 5 – Caring for Victims of Poverty and Abuse.** This program has \$6,661 available for granting. Examples of programs that this grant provides funding for are: food pantries, food banks, clothing, service to the homeless, shelters, soup kitchens, support of ministry to victims of substance abuse, victims of abuse, and prison ministries. Applications must be postmarked no later than **October 11, 2019**.

**Case 6 – Encouraging Spiritual Growth and Outreach.** This program has \$2,349 available for granting. Examples of programs that this grant provides funding for are: gatherings, retreats, workshops, conferences dedicated to enhancing spirituality; travel for the purpose of sharing Christian education, music, worship, resources; or the support of media programs (TV, radio, video, etc.) to reach out to people with the Good News of the Gospel. Applications must be postmarked no later than **October 11, 2019**.

**Case 2B – Traveling Work Team Support Grant.** This program will provide up to \$500 per year, per congregation for team of workers (2 or more people), from outside the congregation, to help build or repair churches, rectories, retreat centers, camps or diocesan centers. The annual cap for total distribution is \$3,000. Applications must be postmarked no later than **May 15, 2019** which is a different deadline than the above ministry grant programs. Grant awards will be made by June 15, 2019.

**CASE 2A – Facility Emergency Repair or Replacement.** This program has \$66,808 available for grants/loans. Maximum per applicant church is \$10,000. Case 2A provides funds for the immediate response to emergencies such as, but not limited to: fire, floods, wind, extreme cold, failed heating or plumbing fixtures or systems, sudden structural failure” ***These funds are to help pay for facility repair or replacement due to damage or destruction from an unexpected or suddenly occurring event.*** Applications must be received within 60 days from the date of the incident or event.

- 1) **EMERGENCY GRANT’S** are available to churches with an average Sunday attendance of 75 or less or diocesan facilities (non-congregational) whose operating income is less than \$100,000.00
- 2) **EMERGENCY NO INTEREST LOANS** are available to churches with an average Sunday attendance of 76 or greater or to facilities (non-congregational) whose operating income is more than \$100,000.00.

**\*\*Applications must be postmarked no later than deadline. \*\*** Applications are available on the diocesan web-site, [www.episcopalak.org](http://www.episcopalak.org) or through the Bishop’s Office by calling 1-800-478-3043.

Lynnette

## Parochial Reports

The Following Parishes have completed their 2018 Parochial Reports.

Allakaket—St. John's

Eagle River—Holy Spirit

Homer—St. Augustine's

Juneau—St. Brendan's

Kivalina—Epiphany

Minto— St. Barnabas

Petersburg—St. Andrew's

Sitka—St. Peter's by the Sea

Valdez—Epiphany Lutheran/Episcopal

Wasilla—St. David's

Wrangell—St. Phillip's

If you have not turned in your report, Please do so as soon as possible.