



# The Good News From the Office of the Bishop

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

November 2017

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### Thanksgiving

As I look forward to the national celebration of Thanksgiving Day, November 23, my list of gratitude grows longer with each day. Indeed, I am grateful for the Episcopal spiritual practice of daily thanksgiving; there simply isn't enough time to express the depths of my gratitude on a single day, especially when a good portion of that day is spent in a gluttonous stupor napping on the couch. Episcopalians are formed to be Eucharistic people: people of the Great Thanksgiving. It is our tradition to offer our thanks and praise always and everywhere. On my list this season are many events that have happened in this Diocese that are both praiseworthy and that make me thankful:

I am grateful for the growing commitment of people willing to take leadership in their communities. This year we offered the first diocesan training programs for licensing Worship Leaders and Eucharistic Visitors. The first was in Kotzebue at the end of July, and the second was in Fairbanks in October. I am proud to say that nearly 30 people attended these programs and are now licensed to serve the worship leadership needs of our villages. I am thankful for the work and witness of **Mary Nathaniel** and **Marian Nickleson** who created the initial curriculum; for **Dawn Allen-Herron** for assisting with the training and with revisions to the curriculum; for **Suzanne Krull** for organizing and "producing" the training events; and for the assistance of **Bishop Carol Gallagher** and the support of the **Bishops Native Collaborative**.

September was busy. The Diocese of Alaska hosted **the Fall House of Bishops' meeting** in Fairbanks and held the Diocesan Convention immediately following. The HOB was truly an historic event. It was the first time that the House of Bishops has ever meet in Alaska. Over 125 bishops attended and left Alaska with a much deeper appreciation of the strength and spirit of our people; the Episcopal Church's life and witness to Christ here; and the power and beauty and agency of the land. I continue to receive cards and notes from my colleagues with expressions of deep gratitude for the experiences they had while visiting. Many have even said it was the "The best House of Bishop's ever."

I am grateful to all of you in the Diocese. You all share in what makes this Diocese extraordinary. Unfortunately, the HOB schedule was limited. It was important to me that the House of Bishops experience, if only briefly, life in our villages. The reality of the schedule was that we had only a day to make these visits. Therefore, we were limited to places where a group could arrive and spend a reasonable amount of time and return to Fairbanks before 6 o'clock. As important and desirable as it was to have bishops experience the fullness of this Diocese, it was simply logistically impossible to get bishops to our Arctic Coast communities, or even to South Central or Southeast in a day. Nevertheless, the Presiding Bishop left with the promise that he will return. Next time he will be going to the Arctic Coast.

Thank you to the villages of **Eagle; Ft. Yukon; Venetie; Arctic Village; Beaver; Tanana; Allakaket; and Huslia** for your extraordinary hospitality given to the visiting bishops. Thank you to **St. Matthew's, Fairbanks**. Thank you, **St. Jude's, North Pole**. And thank you to **St. Mark's, Nenana** and to **Minto** and for all who worked so hard and gave so generously to the Potlatch in Nenana. I join my colleagues in saying that it was the best House of Bishops meeting EVER, and a great blessing to all who were part of it. I give thanks for all who participated in the Blessing of the Land service in your various places and corners of Alaska. It was truly a day of blessing.

Following immediately on the footsteps of the House of Bishops (and by "immediately," I mean the next day) Diocesan Convention started. I always enjoy the annual family reunion that we call Diocesan Convention; but this year seemed especially joyful. Convention was well attended. We included in the Diocesan Budget extra funds from last year to cover the full cost of one Delegate from every parish. This removed one of the barriers to participation that many communities face, and may have been one of the contributing factors for the better than average attendance.

I'm grateful for the presence and extraordinary gift of having **Canon Stephanie Spellers** join us as our Keynote speaker. Her teaching on evangelism and becoming blessed community certainly contributed to the joy and success of Convention. St. Matthew's provided exceptional hospitality for Convention. I am grateful for the hard work of the committee and all who organized and provided housing, meals, transportation, and took care of our needs. Risking the exclusion of many whose efforts I deeply appreciate, I will mention the

wonderful work of **Jessica Ives, Charlene Marth, Diana Childs, and Bruce Gadwah**. And I am deeply grateful for the work of **Lynnette Winfrey Frank** and **Suzanne Krull**. Which brings me to another thanksgiving. In August, **Ginia Love**, Executive Assistant to the Bishop, Diocesan Secretary, and "Voice of the Diocese of Alaska," announced her family's plan to relocate to Nevada to be closer to extended family. I know this was a difficult decision for Ginia and her husband, Bryon. Alaska has been their home for many years, and Ginia has been a cherished member of our Diocesan family. I know perhaps better than most the deep love, respect, and affection she has for the people of this Diocese - even those that drive us crazy maybe especially those who drive us crazy (you know who you are). I am grateful for her work and care for us and with us. I am even more grateful for her support of my ministry, my leadership, and my self-care. Ginia always had my back, and her dedication to my success is certainly a good part of any success I might claim. I give thanks to God for Ginia Love, and wish her, Bryon, and their children only the best.

Finally, I give thanks to all of you for your witness to the Gospel, for your willingness to walk the way of Jesus, for your faithfulness to Jesus' body the Church, and for your hope that doing the hard work the Gospel calls us to engage will produce fruits of transformation. With deep gratitude I see the light of God's Kingdom shine into the darkness wherever I travel or visit in this Diocese through the loving, life-giving, and reconciling work you do. God bless you, and I give God thanks for you.

### **Licensed Worship Leaders/Eucharistic Visitors: what are they and what can they do?**

The Special Ministry of Worship Leader/Eucharistic Visitor in the Diocese of Alaska:

As mentioned in a previous article in this Good News, we are expanding Licensed Ministries in the Diocese of Alaska. Recently, I have authorized Licensed Worship Leaders who are also Licensed Eucharistic Visitors (the individual must hold both licenses) to take consecrated bread and wine from a celebration of Holy Eucharist that they attend within the Diocese for distribution in their home community. I recognize that this is a broad interpretation of my "discretion" as a bishop and a broader still interpretation of the ministry of Eucharistic Visitors (and why I require both Worship Leader and Eucharistic Visitor licenses). However, I believe it is faithful to our common life and the sacrament of Christ's reconciling love given in his own body and blood.

(A Licensed Eucharistic Visitor, as before, may take the sacrament to homebound parishioners directly from their parish celebration of Holy Eucharist. This ministry, taking Holy Communion directly to a home or facility, does not require the additional Worship Leader license). Licensed Worship Leader/Eucharistic Visitors have been instructed to contact the Priest-in-charge/Rector of a parish where they will attend a regular Eucharist to arrange for receiving the sacrament to take with them. Worship Leaders should provide appropriate vessels or containers for carrying the sacrament. "Appropriate," however, should not be interpreted as expensive or purchased from a catalog. Plasticware, attractively assembled and in a dignified carrying case, will serve.

When a Worship Leader/Eucharistic Visitor is to take the sacrament for distribution, I ask that the church community to which they will go be included in the Prayers of the People, and that the 'Eucharistic parish' (the church where the Eucharist is being celebrated) send the minister forth from the altar. This can be done before the Post Communion Prayer by presenting the Licensed Minister with the Sacrament in the "appropriate" container and saying: "We send you forth bearing these holy gifts so that *The name of the church and village* to whom you go may share with us in the Body and Blood of Christ." The Congregation responding: "We who are many are one body for we all share the one bread, one cup" (or similar words, see the Book of Occasional Services).

Recognizing that this concession may be beyond the sacramental boundaries of some clergy or parish standards of discipline, parishes and clergy are NOT required to participate. Let me know and I will make other arrangements. *This concession is intended for communities that do not have access to Holy Communion at least once a quarter*. It is NOT intended for communities that can access a supply priest. Nor should it be used for Sundays when the parish Priest is on vacation, sick, or unable to make it to worship; or for mid-week services. I do NOT envision or authorize villages with a supply of reserved sacrament for weekly, or even regular, distribution by licensed ministers. However, I have agreed that villages with a resident Licensed Worship Leader/Eucharistic Visitor (an individual holding both certificates) may reserve a small amount of the sacrament, kept safe and regularly refreshed, for the purpose of administering Communion at the time of death.

Another exception is the Native Ministry at The Alaska Native Medical Center. The worship service at ANMC is clearly connected to a weekly local parish celebration of the Eucharist, and, therefore, is on a more frequent schedule. The sacrament (consecrated bread and wine) MUST be received, transported, and remain under the supervision and control of the licensed minister. I do not authorize the sacrament to be transported or delivered by anyone other than the licensed minister, nor do I authorize the sending of the sacrament by mail or cargo.

***Other opportunities for Worship Leaders and Eucharistic Visitors:***

Worship Leaders have received training in both Morning Prayer and the Ministry of the Word for Holy Eucharist. They are able and fully authorized to lead worship on Sundays, weekdays, and holidays. They are also able and authorized to lead the Burial Office. You may invite a Licensed Worship Leader to lead a Burial Service in your community if or when a priest or deacon is not available.

***Burials with Holy Communion led by a licensed Worship Leader/Eucharistic Visitor:***

Often a Burial in a village is preceded by a Funeral service in Fairbanks or Anchorage. If a Licensed Worship Leader/Eucharistic Visitor attends a funeral in town, and that service includes Eucharist, the Worship Leader/Eucharistic Visitor may take the sacrament from that celebration to the village to share as part of the Burial Service in the Village. However, there must be a direct connection between the Eucharist and the Burial service in the Village, in other words, the burial services must be for the same person.

***Liturgies for Christmas Celebrations by Worship Leaders or for Communities without Clergy***

Every congregation in the Diocese has the resources to celebrate Christmas Eve and Christmas Day with an appropriate worship service. Using the Book of Common Prayer, the community could follow the Ministry of the Word for Holy Communion through the Prayers of the People, concluding with the Peace, the Offertory, and the Lord's Prayer. However, the Diocese of Alaska has a special liturgy for Christmas that is available to be used by all lay leaders (including licensed Worship Leaders). This Prayer Service for Christmas is designed as "Lessons and Carols." It includes Bible readings and the singing of Christmas songs. It is available to download on the Diocesan Webpage and at this link: [http://s3.amazonaws.com/dfc\\_attachments/public/documents/3215804/Christmas\\_service\\_for\\_lay\\_leader\\_full\\_page.pdf](http://s3.amazonaws.com/dfc_attachments/public/documents/3215804/Christmas_service_for_lay_leader_full_page.pdf)

**Welcome Shannon Raines: Diocesan Office Clerical Assistant**

With the departure of Ginia Love from the Diocesan Office Staff, we are using a Temporary Service to cover our office clerical needs. We are happy to announce that **Shannon Raines** is now serving as the temporary Office Assistant. Shannon will be answering the phone and supporting the work of the Diocese. She has lived in Fairbanks for most of her life. Thank you for welcoming her.



**Convention Corner From Canon Suzanne Krull**

A huge, THANK YOU, to the people at St. Matthew's, Fairbanks! Their hospitality and generosity in hosting the 42<sup>nd</sup> Diocesan Convention was superb. The work that goes into hosting convention is full of blessings and challenges and St. Matthew's took care of us with grace and kindness. Thank you.

This year we were blessed to have The Rev. Canon Stephanie Spellers, Canon to the Presiding Bishop for Evangelism and Reconciliation with us for clergy conference and Convention. The Rev. Spellers described the Jesus Movement as the ongoing community of people centered on following Jesus every day into loving, liberating and life-giving relationship with God, with each other, and with creation. She led us in a discussion beginning with the Great Commandment to love God, love our neighbors as ourselves, and love creation. We do what Jesus did, remembering that it is not our movement but rather His movement. She identified three important tasks: Evangelism, Reconciliation & Creation care. Canon Spellers helped us "unpack" evangelism; encouraging us to see that the Episcopal flavor of evangelism is not about story-telling, but rather about story-sharing. She then gave us an interactive exercise, Cardboard Testimony, giving us an opportunity to experience sharing our own stories.

Also, thank you, for past service, to those who served on Diocesan committees; especially those whose terms were complete at convention. **Commission on Ministry:** The Rev. Willard Neokok, term expired; Lorraine Pavlick, term expired (re-appointed); The Rev. Else Dehart, term expired (re-appointed). - **Standing Committee:** Austin Swan, Sr., term expired; The Rev. Anna Frank, term expired; The Rev. Caroline Malseed (re-elected) - **Disciplinary Board:** The Rev. Paul Smith, term expired; John Skidmore, term expired - **FIT (Faith Into Tomorrow Endowment) Committee:** Alice Holinger, term expired (re-appointed); The Rev. Lee Davis, term expired.

Congratulations to those who were elected/appointed to serve on a Diocesan Committee at this year's diocesan convention. .

**Commission on Ministry:** The Rev. Carrie Oktolik, appointed; Ella Lisbourne, elected; The Rev. Else Dehart, appointed - **Standing Committee:** The Rev. Bessie Titus, elected; Lucy Adams, elected; The Rev. Caroline Malseed, elected - **Disciplinary Board:** The Rev.

Dawn Allen-Herron, elected; Sky Stemmons, elected; The Rev. Chip Mills, elected - **FIT (Faith Into Tomorrow Endowment)**

**Committee:** Alice Holinger, appointed; The Rev. Wilson Valentine, elected. - **Constitutions & Canons** elected: The Rev. Gordon Blue, The Rev. Mary Norton, Nancy (Rashmika) Paton; Laura Bender; Eric Wohlforth (ex-officio)

We are pleased to announce that the Convention Offerings totaled \$971.90. Praise God for all our blessings! The offerings will be go toward the delegate assistance fund, which provides scholarship for those congregation that would otherwise not be able to send a delegate to Convention due to finances.

A couple other business items acted on at Convention, other than the above mentioned elections/appointments, are the approval of the 2018 Budget as presented and the approval of the Diocesan Canons, with minor changes, as presented by the Constitutions and Canons committee. Copies of both, along with the approved minutes, can be found on the diocesan web-site in the Convention & Clergy Conference section. The Canons are attachment #4 and the 2018 Budget is attachment #3 of the minutes. Please check out the convention area of the diocesan web-page; [www.episcopalak.org/convention.html](http://www.episcopalak.org/convention.html)

"Good News" 2017 award announcement

We are pleased to announce the results of the 2017 Faith Into Tomorrow Endowment Fund grant application process. We had 9 applications between all three Cases; with a total funding request of \$32,691.00 for the \$13,949.00 available. Although we are not able to fund every request, we want to assure everyone that the applications were all worthy.

The awards are listed below.

<b>Case 4 – Youth Ministry</b>		
Amount available - \$5,911		
<b>Church or Group</b>	<b>Program Name</b>	<b>Amount Awarded</b>
Good Shepherd, Huslia	Huslia Episcopal Youth Ministry	\$5,911.00

<b>Case 5 – Caring for Victims of Poverty and Abuse</b>		
Amount available - \$5,924		
<b>Church or Group</b>	<b>Program Name</b>	<b>Amount Awarded</b>
Good Shepherd, Venetie	Venetie Food Line	\$787.00
St. Christopher, Anchorage	Food Pantry	\$1,500.00
St. George's, Kotzebue	Community Kitchen	\$3,637.00

<b>Case 6 – Encouraging Spiritual Growth or Outreach</b>		
Amount available - \$1,917		
<b>Church or Group</b>	<b>Program Name</b>	<b>Amount Awarded</b>
Good Shepherd, Huslia	Growth through Gospel Music	\$2,114.00

Thanks to all those who applied. Congratulations to those listed above. The 2018 applications will be mailed out and available on the diocesan web-site in February 2018.

**The Good News is available on our website: [www.episcopalak.org](http://www.episcopalak.org)** If you have something you would like published in The Good News, please submit it to the Diocese office. If you would like to receive an email from our office letting you know when new additions are available as well as website update notifications and prayers From the Office of the Bishop, please send an email to; [alaskopalians@gci.net](mailto:alaskopalians@gci.net) asking to be added to our email list. To insure that you receive emails from us, please make sure to add us to your email contact/address list.