



The Good news from the Office of the Bishop

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

December 2018

A Word from the Bishop *Advent 2018*

Immanuel

The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness--
on them light has shined.
(Isaiah 9:2)

The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.
(John 1:9)

As an adult, and more so after my ordination, I have always struggled against the cultural norm to start celebrating Christmas the day after Thanksgiving (I would never have thought the struggle would eventually begin the day after Halloween!). I've always preached the importance of honoring Advent.

Prepare ye the way!

As an "Adventophile" (I just made-up that word), I have always asserted that preparing for Christmas did NOT mean putting up Christmas Trees, or decking the halls, or fa-la-la-la-laing. Indeed, in my way of thinking, Advent should be just the opposite and marked by an ascetic restraint from all festivities anticipating Christmas Day. In fact, I had always harbored thoughts of not putting up the Christmas Tree until Christmas Eve. Becoming a parish priest with Christmas Eve worship responsibilities that did not get me home until well after 1 o'clock Christmas Morning, disabused me of that little bit of "Adventodox" fantasy. Nevertheless, in my estimation, Advent is supposed to be DARK! Broodingly so.

Advent is a Purple season.

Maybe it's age; maybe it's living in Alaska and entering into my 8th winter; or maybe it is my hope that we as the bearers of the Light of Christ become more and more people of that Light--Communities of Recovery that shine light into the darkness that hangs around so persistently in this world and in people's lives; but I am starting to see that LIGHT is what every season is about—even, or especially, the season of Advent.

Sure, if you turn off all the lights and brood in darkness and despair, any light, even the weakest little flame, will hit your eyes like the brightest flash. But Christmas isn't about a weak little flame. Christmas is the light of the world! The brightest and best of the stars of the morning! The dawn from on high! The Light of God incarnate: God with us!

A little light is adequate in the dark. Growing light, Holy light, is much better.

Advent is a season to prepare for the dawning of the true light. And while I'm still not ready to give-up entirely my vain claims of "Adventodoxy" (I did it again) and my resistance to getting caught-up in the sweep of the world's pre-Christmas hype, nevertheless, I do see the light that shines through all of it. Light is a good thing in darkness. And if I am to truly claim the light of Christ as my own, it makes much better sense to spread light rather than to grieve or give honor to the of darkness.

Better to spend Advent being converted to light.

Howard Thurman described conversion as an act of loyalty. What one is loyal to converts that person into a "living for instance" of one's loyalty. Even in Advent, and most brightly at Christmas, I pray that your loyalty to Christ will convert you and make you a living for instance of the Light of the Gospel. Prepare for the Light by being light, even if only a flickering flame. Trust me, there's enough darkness out there that yours will not be missed. Embrace the light of Christ in this and every season and send the darkness fumbling away.

"Kindle Thy light within me, O God, that Thy glow may be spread over all of my life; yea indeed, that Thy glow may be spread over all of my life. More and more, may Thy light give radiance to my flickering candle, fresh vigor to my struggling intent, and renewal to my flagging spirit. Without Thy light within me, I must spend my years fumbling in my darkness. Kindle Thy light within me, O God!" (Excerpt from: Thurman, Howard. "Meditations of the Heart." New York: Harper, 1953)

I bid you and yours a Blessed Advent, a Merry Christmas, and a New Year full of Light.

Bishop Lattime



Convention 2018 — With Cannon Suzanne Krull

A huge, THANK YOU, to the people at St. George's in the Arctic, Kotzebue! Their hospitality and generosity in hosting the 43rd Diocesan Convention was superb. The work that goes into hosting convention is full of blessings and challenges and St. George's took care of us with grace and kindness. Thank you.

Our theme was Finding Strength to be Free, "So encourage each other and give each other strength, just as you are doing now." NCV 1 Thessalonians 5:11. Bishop Mark shared with us, in his address, his dream for every congregation in the Diocese of Alaska to Become Communities of Recovery. In his Pastoral Letter after convention he wrote "I want us to focus on how we as communities of the Good News of Jesus and his life-giving, reconciling, love, can be active and engaged in the work of Recovery."

This year we were blessed to have The Rt. Rev. David Bailey, Bishop of Navajoland, and his wife Ann Bailey with us for clergy conference and Convention. Bishop Bailey helped us explore the dream Bishop Mark set before us. Bishop Bailey shared with us stories of recovery and talked about embracing healing as communities of faith. The basic essentials of a healing community are, place, opportunity and education. He said we need to let the wider community know that "we are a place of healing".

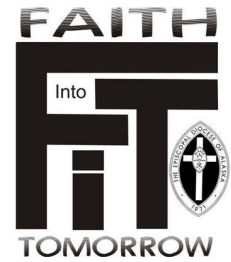
Also, thank you, for past service, to those who served on Diocesan committees; especially those whose terms were complete at convention. **Commission on Ministry:** The Rev. Gordon Blue, term expired (re-elected); The Rev. Gail Loken, term expired - **Standing Committee:** Peg Fisher, term expired (re-elected); Hunter Davis, term expired; Dan Hall (re-elected) - **Disciplinary Board:** Michael Lukshin, term expired - **FIT (Faith Into Tomorrow Endowment) Committee:** The Rev. Mary Norton, term expired (re-appointed); Ron Moore, 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. Gordon Blue, elected; Ella Lisbourne, appointed; The Rev. Dawn Allen-Herron, appointed - **Standing Committee:** Peg Fisher, elected; Bob Coghill, elected; Dan Hall, elected - **Disciplinary Board:** The Rev. Gayle Nauska, elected (3yr Term); Mary Alice McKeen, elected - **FIT (Faith Into Tomorrow Endowment) Committee:** Maggie McKay, elected; The Rev. Mary Norton, appointed - **Constitutions & Canons** elected: The Rev. Gordon Blue, The Rev. Mary Norton, Nancy (Rashmika) Paton; Sara Bergendahl; Robert Dirks; The Rev. Chip Mills; Robin Morehouse; The Rev. Margo Simple; Eric Wohlforth (ex-officio)

We pleased to announce that the Convention Offerings totaled \$965.15. 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.

The 2019 Budget was approved without change and a copy can be found on the diocesan web-site, www.episcopal ak.org. Once the minutes are reviewed and approved by the Standing Committee, they will also be posted on the diocesan web-site.

2018 Faith Into Tomorrow Endowment Fund Award Announcement— From Cannon Suzanne Krull



We are pleased to announce the results of the 2018 Faith Into Tomorrow Endowment Fund grant application process.

We had 11 applications between all three Cases; with a total funding request of \$20,117 for the \$15,173 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.

Case 4 – Youth Ministry		
Amount available - \$6,411		
Church or Group	Program Name	Amount Awarded
Christ Church, Anchorage	Youth Mission Trip to Kodiak	\$5,257

Case 5 – Caring for Victims of Poverty and Abuse		
Amount available - \$6,473		
Church or Group	Program Name	Amount Awarded
St. Philip’s, Wrangell	The Mailbox	\$600
St. John’s, Ketchikan	The Lord’s Table	\$1,000
St. James, Tanana	Warm hearts	\$1,000
Haven House, Juneau	Haven House	\$900
St. Peter’s by the Sea, Sitka	Sunday Manna Meal	\$1,973
Valley Interfaith Action, Palmer	Faith-based Community Organizing	\$1,000

Case 6 – Encouraging Spiritual Growth or Outreach		
Amount available - \$2,289		
Church or Group	Program Name	Amount Awarded
St. David’s, Wasilla	Wasilla July 4 Parade	\$525
St. James, Tanana	Healing Provider	\$1,300
Denali Episcopal, Talkeetna	Rack Cards & Web upgrade	\$464

Thanks to all those who applied. Congratulations to those listed above. The 2019 applications will be mailed out and available on the diocesan web-site in February 2019.

Parochial Reports—With Lynnette Winfrey-Frank

- ◆ Each congregation should have received their 2018 Parochial Report Forms and the deadline is March 1, 2019.
- ◆ All Parochial Reports should be filed online if you have access to the internet. If you do not have access to the internet please fill out the forms and send to the diocesan office and Lynnette Winfrey-Frank can enter the information here.
- ◆ To file your parochial report online or to download the pdf hard copies of the directions and forms go to the website <http://www.episcopalchurch.org/page/parochial-report>. Click on File Your Parochial Report and enter your user id and pin number. You should have a card with the parochial report packet mailed to each congregation with your user id and pin numbers.
- ◆ We are hoping for a 100% return. If you have any questions or need assistance [please email](#) or call Lynnette Winfrey-Frank at 1-800-478-3043

Notes on Standing Committee—With President, The Rev. Ann Whitney

During our most recent meeting of the Standing Committee we elected officers, reviewed the finances of the Diocese, and spent the majority of our time exploring thoughts on how best to support our congregations. The agenda for our upcoming teleconference includes :

- * one consent to an election of a Bishop,
- * a report from our Bishop,
- * a review of minutes from our Diocesan Convention.

Just a Note—Melissa Ward, Bishop's Assistant

- ⇒ Reminder that we have 2019 Calendars available. They are \$3.00 each. To place an order, you can call or email me.
- ⇒ I have only been here a short while, but I feel that I have been forever. I have been greeted with open arms by everyone with whom I have encountered. I am blessed to be part of such a wonderful family of people. Thank you
- ⇒ I can be reached at: 907-452-3040, alaskcopalians@gci.net, or by snail mail—1205 Denali Way, Fairbanks Alaska, 99701