

Interior Deanery Mtg Minutes

May 5, 2023

Commenced at 9:40 with prayers by Rev Dr Anna Frank

Introduction of Exec Committee present: Bessie Titus, Lorraine Pavlick, Debbie Tritt-Kendi

Village Reports, including guests:

Judy Gau - Tanana, St James

3-12 attend, church every week, got funds to design a ramp, Lutheran person in Tanana first 2 weeks of June

Paul Williams, Jr - Beaver, St Matthew's Mission

Doors open, everyone welcome, services through winter. Lord's Prayer and Songs in Koyukon and Gwich'in

Prayers to support church and surrounding villages. Need more young people in worship.

Thank God for freedom to do this.

Irene Roberts - Fairbanks/Circle, St Matthews/ Holy Trinity

Travels to Circle with Rev Susan on highway. Will spend 2 weeks in Circle this summer. Goes to try and start confirmation class. Please pray for me.

Linda Demientieff - St Matthew's, Fairbanks

In person service now. Good to see people from villages. On vestry. Always keep villagers in mind. Lots of projects - ceilings. Good to have everyone here.

Mary Jane Derendoff - St Matthew's, Fairbanks

Very pleased to be at the deanery. Everyone coming back. Church full. Villages coming in. A good from Covid is 1) learned how to do services online and 2) Mass in the Grass. Joanne has a big project with altar cloths.

Gary Shields - St Marks, Nenana

It's exciting to see lots of kids in church. More age 10 and under than adults recently. 18-25 every Sunday. The Parish Hall was refurbished and is open to AA and other groups. There's a volunteer to start Sunday School for kids.

Lawrence Williams- St John's in the Wilderness, Allakaket

3-4 faithful church goers. Funerals and one wedding.

Jeanette Dementi - St Luke's, Shageluk

Never know who or how many will show up. There could be 15-20 or 1. Most like to read the lessons or from the BCP, so we often have readers of all ages and songs selected by and for children. Friday afternoon program for kids at the school but will end for the summer.

Consistency is an issue, since there currently isn't anyone who will lead services when I travel,

so I'm working on that. The church building is in bad shape, so services are held in the tribal hall. There was some discussion about looking for funds to build a new church with local labor.

John Holtz - St Jude's, North Pole

Attendance not back from Covid. Less than half. The roof leaked for 2 weeks at breakup. Need someone to look at the roof. Can't find water source. Still doing Food Bank and food sacks for 25 kids for weekends.

Debbie Tritt-Kendri - Bishop Rowe Chapel, Arctic Village

Haven't had service. Deteriorating log building with leaking roof and old windows. Cousin Hilda Johnson leads revivals. Wilbur says blessing at school lunch and talks to kids about Jesus and God. Some want to build a new church.

Wilbur Kendri - Bishop Rowe Chapel, Arctic Village

I work with kids and music. Back to how we used to listen. We need music. It's a losing battle because people don't listen. With music, it's fun and people listen. Also, language. Don't give up, battle goes on, but it seems like we give up without elders and music. Bring music back to church, children! Never give up!!

Bishop Mark Lattime – DOA, for St. Stephen's Fort Yukon

Went to Ft Yukon for Easter and had lots of fun. Noticed many doing God's work. Several confirmations, and baptisms. The confirmed committed to leadership and service. Mary Nathaniel comes at least once per month. There were 75 on Easter Day and a well-attended Easter Vigil.

Lorraine Pavlick - St Paul's, Huslia

Sunday services 80+ for Easter. Young lady volunteers. Prayers for Marian Bifelt in last days. Hard to come, but I did.

*Mary Jane thanked Huslia for services for her brother.

Suzanne Krull - Diocese of AK

Pearl Chanar leads Episcopal services at ANMC Hospital. Policy changes allow just 2 leaders with Zoom to rooms. Going to discontinue.

Lee Davis - St Matthew's, Fairbanks

Thank you for prayers during heart surgery. I'm doing really well.

Bishop's Response: Bishop Mark was "Grateful and filled with joy" listening to village reports and hearing Good News about what we're doing to live our faith and share the love of Jesus. He spoke of being faithful to trainings, commitment to growth, and Holy Communion on Sundays. Bishop Mark noted the difference between Holy Communion with laity receiving and sharing the gifts, and Eucharist with an ordained person representing the church and blessing the sacrament. Huslia was recognized as the fastest growing church.

Five Ts:

Tell - How are we sharing and expressing our faith with others?

Prayer, inviting, tell about faith in Jesus and what Jesus does in your life

Teach - What opportunities are there for trainings?

Bible Study, Confirmation Prep, Sunday School (Ask for resources), trainings and remote education opportunities

Tend - How do we take care of human suffering in our communities?

Feed people, attract youth with outreach ministry that addresses human suffering. What does the community need?

Roots and Wings healing from emotional stress and Trauma, Mary Nathaniel's program, Buddy VanDyke wants to do a recovery retreat in AK. Invite more men.

Transform - How can we help change adverse structures?

Put us 'out there' to change adverse structures. Starts at home. What policies don't reflect God's love? Look for those who don't have a voice. Be an agent of transformation.

Treasure - How do we treasure good gifts from God, and encourage others to so?

All of creation and all we have is a gift from God.

*Wilbur noted that if you organize yourself, then people will listen to you.

The Rev. Dr. Brad Hauff on Zoom

Indigenous Ministries in The Episcopal Church

Winter Talk - the annual January conference

Held in person & remote but with technical difficulties.

Attendees included Presiding Bishop Michael Curry and President Julia Harris and VP Rachel Taber-Hamilton, both of the House of Deputies and others.

Boarding Schools - panel discussion; resolutions to investigate the legacy and fact find; promote advocacy and moving forward; two committees formed by resolution

Episcopal Youth Event - registration closed

It's All About Love - A Festival for the Jesus Movement

July 9-12, 2023 in Baltimore. Can still register, scholarship for attendance available through Brad's office

Church Pension Group CREDO Conference

Includes Indigenous Clergy or serving in Indigenous areas

Mary Crist - ITEC, TEC

Two new ways to provide leadership training:

MAP MDiv - Mentor Assessed Path to the Masters of Divinity at Bexley Seabury in Chicago. Serving Lay or Ordained with some college background.

Two Plus Two Program, a four-year program to provide extensive leadership training to individuals without a college background.

Indigenous Ministries Advisory Council - Look at what's happening - stories, news, problems??

There is an assistance fund with money for emergency repairs. Also funding for ministry projected. Alaska has received some.

*Bessie said "We" (people) want to be involved in selection of representatives from AK.

*Bessie - a lot of Native people are in Fairbanks and have difficulty with cemetery needs. Where can we get assistance to help people at the cemetery?

Interior Deanery Executive Committee Report

Bessie (Chair) - read to stimulate thoughts/ no discussion:

How do you reach local people, city and village, to develop trust?

Itinerant Lay leader to hold service and _____

Need confirmation classes

Want trained lay leader in air banks for funerals

Silent auction

Assimilation practices - why send Native to seminary?

Encourage priests to come to AK for the summer

Where are the youth?

Why invite Baptist and keep Episcopal away?

Lorraine - discussion on how things are going in the villages. 7+ Bishop and staff. It's nice working together. Confirmations, Bishop 2 times per year.

Debbie - concentrate on village community. Help each other and change the bylaws. Keep church going even when it's hard. God is with us! Replace negative with positive. When you work with the church, be equal. We talk and try to fix things up. (Manly Hot Springs) Face to face or teleconference. Would be nice if Bishop came to village. It's a learning experience being on the committee. I love it.

Bernice - I'm new. We're getting organized coming out of Covid. Want Sunday School.

Bessie - Interior Deanery has 3 areas, and there are 2 reps from each. What's reps to report what's going on in each village. "I need to do better." Wants better track record for us! How many confirmations? Covid - talk about budget but no go or do. Challenge - villages not represented at this meeting.

Judith Lethin/ Roots and Wings

*Anna Frank - "We need a women's retreat to deal with boarding school trauma"

Trip to Wrangel to visit school brought tears and stories. (Bonfire of Inupiaq clothing, No one talked with the children) If we don't have healing it stays the same. I remember suitcases went in plane, but I don't remember friends getting in plane. I blocked it out. The plane took off with friends and life was over. We didn't all go to Wrangel, but we've had trauma. No matter who you are, you need healing.

*Mary Crist - 'Doctrine of Discovery'

Epigenetics - what comes down through generations

Tend to community members in kind and loving ways to bring healing.

The Body Keeps the Score - Brain, Mind and Body in the Healing of Trauma by Bessel Van Der Kolk, MD

What My Bones Know - a Memoir of Healing from Complex Trauma by Stephanie Foo
(Repeated childhood trauma)

from Ginny Doctor:

Cultural Strength - Roots

Christian Spirituality - Wings

We have to do something with our bodies. Sing!

Connect so we can take care of our families and become Beloved Community and begin to create that kind of Christianity in our villages.

Where do you feel close to God?

Vulnerability builds community.

Boundaries build a safe place to be vulnerable.

Who are the people who clap for you? Who will I clap for?

What do I need right now to feel more supported in church and community, in communication?

Young people by design. Financial backing. Travel funds.

In the asking of a question, we become more connected.

"The body keeps the score."

Pray with Anglican Prayer Beads - many ways to use. A reminder of what happens when you base life on prayer, virtues, and gifts of the Holy Spirit. Helps bring forgiveness, joy, peace.

*Anna - talk about values. Use Humor - laugh at yourself first

Make salves- spruce pitch, willow, plantain, etc, medicine from the land. It's fun!

Boreal Herbal - Beverly Gray

Walk of Atonement - What happened? What can I do to make it better?

Rev Dr Mary Crist -Indigenous Theological Educational Coordinator for The Episcopal Church
Dr Julie Lytle, Bexley Seabury Seminary (Helping to be responsive to need.)

Two years ago, only 1 Indigenous seminary student in the US and 2 in Vancouver.

Want to honor Native values and build skills in leadership and theology. "We CAN be both Native AND Christian!"

Our Goal - Culturally responsive training for leadership in The Episcopal Church

Two Plus Two - grant from Trinity Wallstreet, recognizing the need is great. Grant-funded remote learning.

Years 1 & 2 at Bexley Seabury Seminary- Indigenous and Diocese policies and practical classes that include ministry licenses.

Years 3 & 4 at Sitting Bull College - Applied Theology based on years 1&2. If desired, students may finish with an Associates Degree.

Youth are encouraged to apply!!

Contacts, for more information and to apply:

Mary Crist (949) 337-0722

Julie Lytle (617) 669-8411

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BexleySeabury.edu (website)

"Partnership for Indigenous Ministry" (link)

Pathways for Baptismal Living - a continuum of theological education. Start where you are.

Fundamentals of our faith. Start thinking theologically.

Pathways discernment class can help find your path - lay or ordained? MDiv or 2+2?

MAP MDiv - Learn in your context for your context. Self-paced. Start where you are. MDiv offers portability - diocese to diocese. Not everybody needs an MDiv for ordination. Not everyone who gets an MDiv is getting ordained.

*Wilbur noted that he'd like Judith to come to Arctic Village. He's also excited about the Bexley Seabury opportunity.

Interior Deanery Mtg Minutes

May 6, 2023

9am Morning Prayer led by Julie Lytle

Bishop Mark - The Bishop responded to the idea of Itinerant Lay Leaders enthusiastically. Licenses are good throughout the diocese. An itinerant could also take Holy Communion to offer in another village.

In answer to the question of why priests are paid in town, it's because the congregation pays. Small Mission Clergy Program can help pay clergy. It can be tough for a small church to come up with the required contribution.

Every church should have a committee to collect and keep track of money. How much money the church has, where it is, and how it'll be spent. Ok if not formally elected if there are no bylaws. Bylaws are to help organize, not to prevent ministry. Bylaws can be informal, but must take notes and document. Do business as it comes up, but so schedule mtgs (4Xper year) and let people know. Be transparent. People want to know what's being done with the money.

*Anna - visiting clergy should leave half of the money in the village for expenses. Leave a report that tells what's happening. Church record book should record how much sent to DOA. Reports provide protection.

*Suzanne - Be honest and open so everyone knows what money goes in and out and the process of how it's handled.

*Bessie- mindset needs to change. To pay priests.

*Bishop Mark authorized all present to rise up and take leadership. Godparents and parents prepared ahead for the promises they will make for a child at Baptism. Confirmands prepared and willing to take leadership in the church. Apply to BCP p302, Baptism vows, the Apostles' Creed, The Lord's Prayer.

*Bessie - Need long term thinking. Prepare Native people to serve as Priest, Bishop, Presiding Bishop.

*Anna - Go back to Native Values, what the Elders taught, and you'll see we were taught in Christian Way.

*Mary Crist - came to AK for 13 years with husband Will, a priest, serving where "no clergy available" for Christmas and Easter. The boarding school movement took the heard out of leaders. People say, "We want to be leaders in the church in a way that includes Native Values." What was it like when missionaries came? 10,000 yrs vs 2000 yrs. Athabaskan values vs Beatitudes. Negative People have been doing Jesus' work 10,000 yrs. Anna, Bishop Mark, Mary C, all of us...saying same thing. We all have the Holy Spirit and have leadership in us. It's time for Indigenous voices to be heard again. Don't have to be found by boarding school anymore. You have Jesus!

*Julie Lytle - Grateful to listen, help, and learn best by being together sharing wherever you are. Challenge - an evolution. Where's the right place and commitment to help? What, when, what for? Talking together to figure out solutions for what's needed.

*Bessie - Dream into the future.

*Anna - About retirement - no age limit. Still use people! No rules about age.

*Bishop Mark - Resign vs Retire. Canons require resignation.

As Episcopalians, we exercise our faith within many traditions.

Within the Episcopal tradition, all ministry is from Baptism. Ordained ministry is from TEC.

Bishop Mark Teaching

- God gives everyone of us gifts. How you exercise those gifts is your ministry. We are baptized Christians, we have chosen to be Episcopal, we exercise our faith with a tradition – the Episcopal Tradition (we live in the tradition of the Episcopal Church), we are people who worship and follow the Book of Common, three-legged stool, Scripture, tradition, reason.
 - Ordination – take vows, make promises, take orders. Taken vows of the doctrine, traditions, and faith of the Episcopal Church. Ordained represent the church.
 - Want people to understand what they are “getting into”
- What it means to be the Church:
 - Looked at the Nicene Creed
 - Church is the people, the structure and the understanding
 - Holy Eucharist, Sacramental Act, Act of the whole church; in the Canons say priest cannot give communion to anyone who is not baptized – however, in BCP – gifts of God for the people of God. (Sports analogy). Church offering the gifts so celebrated by the officials of the Church (priest/bishop) so they are celebrants.
 - Holy Communion is the distribution of the gifts, officiating can be done by lay, with consecrated elements (consecrated by priest/bishop)
 - Offering of yourself, the Church is offering itself
 - Reverence – show honor/respect, The Reverend _____ - title of honor, the respected person of God, Archdeacon: Oversight position the Venerable, Dean The Very, Bishop The Right, Presiding Bishop The Most, Canon official of the Diocese
 - Priest – title for what is the called in BCB, presbyter (means elder), call priest because the preside at worship service
 - Tradition “Father” started b4 women could be ordained, priest serving a church is the spiritual “father”, challenge when women are ordained, some use “Mother”
 - Pastor – other denomination use for ordained, refers to the pastoral nature of the ordained
 - Preacher – anyone who preaches could be called a preacher, some denominations use Preacher for ordained, offering of the word is the most important
 - Ministers – exercising the Gift given by God for the Glory of God, all

- Difference between Anglican & Episcopal: After revolutionary war, still Church of England Churches (not very popular to be Church of England, so Episcopal Church was formed, continue to honor our roots so we can be part of the Anglican Community.
- How many times can we be forgiven? Christ died for us forgiveness of sin, as often as we repent and ask for forgiveness.

COMM Report: One postulancy, Interior Deanery in process: Judy, Jeanette & Helen, Firming up guidelines and procedures, may need mentor priest to help through process, Upcoming meeting this Thu, starting to use technology.

Standing Committee Report: Written report from the Chair, Judy just elected in October and learning. Mary Moses Edwin is also interested in being a part of the work in truth telling regarding Boarding Schools. Want Adam & Jake to be in touch with Interior Deanery.

IMAC (Indigenous Ministries Advisory Council). Judy Gau is the representative. Keep Interior Deanery informed, Bring up adding AK Native Languages to Parochial Reports.

2022 Annual Meeting Minutes: Accepted

Suzanne Krull, Canon for Finance & Administration Report

Went over Custodial Account; Deanery Block Grant \$21,600 for 2023; Pledge Reports; FIT Grants; Prison Ministry Grant

Elections:

Executive Board:

Yukon Koyukuk - Judy Gau

Yukon Flats - Debbie Tritt-Kendi

Tanana Valley - Bessie Titus

Standing Committee - John Holtze

Simeon & Anna - last minute application, Judy Gau and her sister - referred to Executive Committee to work on policy. (Needs to be re-evaluated, made up the age, our elders did this until they died. Need to be stricter.)

The Ven. Rev. Dr. Anna Frank Recognition: Gift given to The Ven. Rev. Dr. Anna Frank to honor her dedication and commitment and service to the Interior Deanery. Her advice, be careful what you do and what you say – you represent your village, listen with love. You are chiefs, think like one.

Gift given to The Rev. Dr. Mary Crist, beaded stole as a thank you for all she has done for Alaska.

Executive Committee Closing Comments:

Thank everyone for wonderful attendance, Thank you to St. Matthews, thank for the wonderful food, Thank for the upcoming training opportunities, Thank you to Bishop and Bishop's staff, safe travels

Thank everyone, this is a time we all gather together and brainstorm, be good example for our young people, our parents/grandparents did it with nothing it is our turn now, we have to do it, it is up to us.

Thank you for the good words and encouragement, as Executive Committee we deal with things as they come up and we make decisions for good of our communities

Thank you it was a good meeting, Thank you Mary, Julie and Anna for being here.

Letter from Florence Folger – Writing to say thank you. As my term ends it is bittersweet. I'm sorry to miss the presenters.

Thank Florence for her service and welcome Judy.

Closing Prayer offered by Judy Gau & Paul Williams, Jr.

Thank you all for sharing.

Adjourn 4:10pm

ADDENDUM to 2023 Interior Deanery Meeting Minutes

Questions from the Box (anonymous q's but in box)

- How do you reach local people (city or village) audience and develop trust, so they can start coming back to church?
- There should be Itinerant Lay Leaders that is willing to travel to villages to hold church services at request or on occasion.
- Need Confirmation classes in villages
- We want to have trained lay leaders in Fairbanks who can do funerals
- We need to have a silent auction please.
- Assimilation practice: Why do we have to send native people to seminary b4 they are ordained - this is like boarding school
- Encourage/Invite priest from lower 48 priest to come to villages for summer.
- Where are the youth?
- Why would they invite Baptist to the village and keep the episcopal away?
- Is there a process for conflict resolution in churches where there is no church committee?
- As a Licensed Lay reader, may I serve Holy Communion when I visit a village w/o a minister?
- Can we ordain more native people?
- Why do city priest get paid to do services, and village lay leaders & deacons & priest are expected to do it for free?
- In Alaska, we need to keep our retired priests involved, in the church, not throw them out with the bathwater. This is not the city. We are different, we need to honor our retired priest and keep them involved.
- Get the kids that are confirmed, to get involve in the church and they should be assigned a mentor.
- Since Betty has moved to Anchorage should we have a new representative on the Standing Committee from the Interior?
- Explain or all the same: preacher? Do we use? -Minister - Pastor
- Explain Reverence, priest, pastor, preacher, minister are they different stages in church teachings, teachers??
- I like this meeting; we need more like these.
- We need to have summer bible school, Sunday School
- How often does the Bishop travel to the villages, or visit the Interior congregations?
- In order to be in the Interior Deanery Comm. We need to communicate, so we can bring back report from our region. Zoom or teleconference. or phone calls. That's my big concern
- Does the Diocese own an airplane? Say something about that.
- Do we still have bishop church committee? And why did they have that before?
- May lay reader's perform baptism?
- How many times can God forgive you?
- We have one youth here, what is your advice to welcome her and get her involved?