

## PRESBYTERY OF YUKON FALL 2013 STATED MEETING

Jewel Lake Parish, Anchorage, Alaska

October 11-12, 2013

*Above all, maintain constant love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins.  
Be hospitable to one another without complaining.  
Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God,  
serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.*

I Peter 4:8 - 10

### FRIDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2013

#### OPENING WORSHIP SERVICE

Presbytery opened with worship led by Rev. Curt Karns at 9:10 am in the Jewel Lake Parish sanctuary. Ruling Elder Richard Mauer delivered the message. Presbyters paired off to share joys and concerns with one another, and to address the question "What spoke to you from the I Peter scripture reading."

#### CONVENE

Moderator Rev. Duke Morrow convened the 2013 fall stated meeting at 9:30 am with prayer.

#### WELCOME

Jewel Lake Parish commissioned ruling elder Marjorie Poggas extended a warm welcome to Presbytery.

#### INTRODUCTIONS

Guests, first time ruling elder commissioners and teaching elders were introduced. Presbytery **VOTED** to grant voice to corresponding members and guests presenting reports or called upon to provide expertise.

#### ROLL

##### **Teaching elder members present:**

Linda Baggett – <i>co-interim, UCPC &amp; New Hope Church</i>	Trent Baggett – <i>co-interim, UCPC &amp; New Hope Church</i>
Leisa Carrick – <i>co-pastor, United Protestant Church</i>	Tim Carrick – <i>co-pastor, United Protestant Church</i>
Piper Cartland – <i>pastor, Eagle River PC</i>	Alice Green – <i>honorably retired</i>
Woo S. Jeong – <i>stated supply, Fairbanks Korean PC</i>	Ellen Johnson Price – <i>interim, Good Shepherd Lutheran</i>
Britt Johnston – <i>temporary supply, Anchor PC</i>	Luke Jones – <i>pastor, Jewel Lake Parish</i>
Curt Karns – <i>executive presbyter</i>	Dean Knapp – <i>validated ministry, AK Mountain Rescue</i>
Sig Kristiansen – <i>honorably retired</i>	Ian MacInnes-Green – <i>validated ministry, AK Child &amp; Family</i>
Kim MacInnes-Green – <i>member-at-large</i>	Duke Morrow – <i>pastor, Utqiagvik PC</i>
James Nageak – <i>honorably retired</i>	Israel Nelson – <i>honorably retired</i>
Matt Schultz – <i>pastor, First Anchorage PC</i>	Mary Ann Warden – <i>honorably retired</i>
Henry Woodall – <i>pastor, First Wasilla PC</i>	

##### **Commissioned ruling elders (CRE) present:**

Lucy Apatiki – <i>Gambell PC</i>	Leah Hathaway – <i>Jewel Lake Parish</i>
Virginia Kasak – <i>Kuukpik PC</i>	Marjorie Poggas – <i>Jewel Lake Parish</i>
Sandra Wagenius – <i>United Protestant</i>	

##### **Churches represented by ruling elder (RE) commissioner:**

Anchor – <i>Paul Merkouris</i>	Delta PC – <i>Ann Geise</i>
Eagle River PC – <i>Donna Davidson</i>	Fairbanks Korean – <i>Jae Maloney</i>
1 <sup>st</sup> Anchorage PC – <i>John Beard</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> Korean Anchorage – <i>Steve Bang (Fri), Sun Heo (Sat)</i>
1 <sup>st</sup> Wasilla PC – <i>Daulton Morock (Fri), Laurie Kari (Sat)</i>	Gambell PC – <i>Mike Apatiki</i>
Immanuel PC – <i>Joanne Potts</i>	Jewel Lake Parish – <i>Susan Woods</i>
Kaktovik PC – <i>Elizabeth Rexford</i>	Kuukpik PC – <i>Carolyn Ahkiviana</i>
New Hope Church – <i>Cathy Johnson</i>	Trinity PC – <i>Kirby Kauffman</i>

University Community PC – *Paula Long*  
United Protestant Church – *Beckie Behm*

Utqiagvik PC – *Edith Nageak*

**Other voting members present:**

RE Merle Apassingok – *Leadership Team*  
RE Mary Charlotte McCall – *Leadership Team*  
RE Shirley Novak – *Leadership Team*  
RE Molly Pederson – *Leadership Team*  
RE Fenton Rexford – *Leadership Team*

RE Arlayne Knox – *Leadership Team*  
RE Beulah Nowpakahok – *Leadership Team*  
RE Ida Olemaun – *Moderator, Nominating Committee*  
RE Sharon Rayt – *Stated Clerk*  
RE Mark Wartes – *Leadership Team*

**Teaching elder members excused:**

Isaac Akootchook – *honorably retired*  
Richard Carpenter – *honorably retired*  
Philip Gilbert – *honorably retired*  
Dan Ketchum – *honorably retired*  
Tammy Letts – *assoc. pastor, Trinity PC*  
Peter Loughman – *inactive*  
William Ng – *honorably retired*  
Youl Rhee – *honorably retired*  
Ken Smith – *honorably retired*

Patrick Bracken- *chaplain, Ft. Wainwright*  
Sandra Faison– *member-at-large*  
Henry Guinotte – *honorably retired*  
Susan Knight – *temporary supply, Immanuel PC*  
Tom Letts – *senior pastor, Trinity PC*  
Ted McGovern – *chaplain, U.S. Army Reserves*  
Dianne O’Connell – *honorably retired*  
Murray Richmond – *validated ministry, Presbyterian Hospitality House*

**Churches not represented by a ruling elder commissioner:**

Atqasuk Chapel  
Nome PC  
Savoonga PC

Chapel in the Mountains  
Olgonik PC

**Other voting members excused**

CRE George Agnasagga – *Olgonik PC*  
CRE LeeAnn Crumbley – *serving Presbytery*

CRE Paul Bodfish – *Atqasuk Chapel*  
RE Dennis Berry - *Leadership Team*

**Seating and enrollment of corresponding members:**

Rev. Jin Hoon Kim – *interim pastor, 1<sup>st</sup> Korean Anchorage PC (Cherokee Presbytery)*  
Rev. E. Stanley Ott – *director, Vital Church Institute (National Capital Presbytery)*  
Rev. Neal Presa – *moderator, 220<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (Elizabeth Presbytery)*  
Rev. Ryan White – *PCUSA mission co-worker (Presbytery of Seattle)*

**Guests/Presbytery office staff:**

RE InSook Baik  
Charles Brower – *Nome Community UMC*  
RE Bernard Irrigoo  
Ai Soon Kim  
Mary Kron – *Presbytery treasurer*  
Melissa O’Malley – *Presbytery administrative asst.*  
RE Jim Powell  
RE Frank Sears  
Alethia White – *PCUSA Mission Co-worker*

RE Joanne Bennett – *Recording Secretary*  
RE Mike Cimino  
Grace Jeong  
RE Rozann Kimpton  
RE Mary Jane Landstrom – *Presbytery Resource Ctr*  
RE Richard Mauer  
RE Ken Selby  
Cynthia White – *PCUSA, Self-Development of People*

**DECLARATION OF QUORUM**

A quorum was present in accordance with the requirement in G-3.0304, that ruling elders representing at least three churches and three teaching elders constitute a quorum.

**ADOPTION OF DOCKET**

Presbytery **VOTED** to adopt the docket as amended by the Leadership Team.

## SPECIAL COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Resolution Committee: Rev. Ellen Johnson-Price

## RULING ELDER TESTIMONIES

In light of the theme verse from I Peter 4:8 – 10, elder commissioners were asked to address the following question posed by the Presbytery Leadership Team “What are the gifts your church has to serve the community?”

## TELLING OUR STORIES: Facilitator Rev. Henry Woodall

Presbyters were directed to mix and mingle in small groups and answer the following questions:

What are two wonderful things about God?

What are two great things about Jesus Christ?

What are two great things about the Holy Spirit?

What are some gifts God gives to the Church?

Name some of the gifts God gives to you.

Tell about a significant place of faith and/or significant event of faith.

Share your joys, blessings, concerns, challenges and opportunities.

Share special prayer requests.

## INTRODUCING THE MODERATOR OF THE 220<sup>TH</sup> GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Rev. Neal Presa briefly addressed the assembly.

## RECESS

Presbytery recessed for a brief break at 10:42 am and reconvened at 10:50 pm, with the joyful singing of “How Great Thou Art”.

## EXECUTIVE PRESBYTER REPORT: Rev. Curt Karns

The exec introduced new administrative assistant Melissa O’Malley; reported on changes within the Presbytery of Alaska, and highlighted sections of the written report (Appendix A), giving special attention to the varied leadership structures within our churches, and the additional pressure caused by a reduction in staffing hours. Presbytery was challenged to dream “God’s plan”. Rev. Mary Ann Warden led in a prayer for Alaska Presbytery.

## RULING ELDER TESTIMONIES

### **University Community PC** – RE Paula Long

The church is used by several worshipping communities; serves as a meeting place for groups, including AA and Sweet Adelines; has been a place for the Summer Arts Festival to rehearse; houses the office of NADR (Northern Alaska Disaster Recovery). The congregation hosted disaster recovery groups assisting springtime flooding victims and supports ministries such as Stone Soup Café which feeds the homeless/poor and Love INC.

### **Atqasuk Chapel** – no report

### **Trinity** – RE Kirby Kauffman and RE Frank Sears

The church is blessed in offering the gift of music to the community; intentional connections have been made with the music community in Anchorage. The music on Sunday is wonderful; the worship serves as a witness to the many musicians who are not Christian. The congregation helps to raise funds for the neighboring elementary school and other groups. A member of staff substitute teaches in the school district.

### **Chapel in the Mountains** – Rev. James Nageak

Morning worship services are attended by the older generation. Presbytery was asked to pray for change in the church. James led in the singing of “We Are One in the Spirit”, while accompanying on the guitar.

*CRE Marjorie Poggas led in the prayers for these churches.*

## MISSION CO-WORKERS

Newly appointed PCUSA mission co-workers Rev. Ryan and Alethia White will be sent to Berlin, Germany to partner with the Iranian Presbyterian Church which is working with the Iranian refugee community in Berlin. Having been raised in Alaska, Ryan still considers Alaska home. Ryan and Alethia shared briefly about the work to which they have been called and asked for prayer and financial support.

## BREAKOUT GROUPS

*Conversation with General Assembly Moderator* - Rev. Neal Presa

*Church Transformation* - Rev. Stan Ott

Mission Co-workers Rev. Ryan and Alethia White

*Self-Development of People* – Cynthia White

*What can CPM do for those looking at entering the CRE program?* – CRE Sandra Wagenius

## LUNCH RECESS

Groups broke for the lunch recess at 12:30 pm. Presbytery reconvened at 1:30 pm

## ANNOUNCEMENT

Rev. Israel Nelson publicly submitted the Alaska Iona Community's pledge for 2014.

## 220<sup>TH</sup> GENERAL ASSEMBLY MODERATOR REPORT

Rev. Neal Presa addressed the *State of the Church* in his report; a question and answer period followed.

## JOINT PARISH REPORT

RE Fenton Rexford expressed appreciation to Jewel Lake Parish for hosting presbytery. The parish is working towards being formally organized and is exploring leadership options:

- Ruling elder commissioned to serve throughout the Ahmaogak-Akootchook Memorial Parish, rather than a single congregation.
- Shared pastor model for the villages of Atqasuk, Nuiqsut, and Wainwright. Another consideration warranting further discussion pertains to a shared pastor model in Kaktovik and Anaktuvuk Pass. Additional funding will be required.

Since the Synod began operating under a reduced function mode, Yukon's Native American Consulting Committee now provides oversight Synod-wide. The North Slope Borough's Healthy Communities Initiative is a good fit with the mission and goals of arctic churches.

## RULING ELDER TESTIMONIES

**Utqiagvik PC** – RE Edith Nageak

The church is blessed to have new carpeting and a new sound system. The congregation has hosted the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission meeting; the ecumenical whaling worship service, singspirations, and AA meetings. God is alive and well. There is much to celebrate: 21 baptisms on Easter and the opportunity for two of their youth to attend Youth Triennium, but 18 funerals have brought much sorrow. Prayer brings the community together. The church, in cooperation with the other Barrow churches, has held four or five joint worship services this past year. Good progress is being made in translating the Old Testament into Inupiaq.

**First Wasilla PC** – RE Shirley Novak

Shirley addressed the body on behalf of youth director and commissioner Daulton Morock. Daulton and the church pastor were called to meet with the family of a church youth rushed to a local Anchorage hospital. Rev. Piper Cartland led in a prayer.

**Savoonga PC** – Rev. Leisa Carrick

Leisa reported on behalf of RE Commissioner Nichols Waghiyi who was unable to leave the island due to bad weather. The church has six new ruling elders in need of Presbytery's support and prayers. Unfettered by a survival mode mentality, the new leaders are discerning how to reach out into the community.

**Jewel Lake Parish** – RE Susan Woods

Elder Woods lifted up those individuals within the church's family, who have passed away this past year. The church expends great effort in community outreach.

*RE Beulah Nowpakahok led in the prayers for these churches.*

TREASURER'S REPORT: Mary Kron

The September 2013 financial report and budget was distributed.

- Presbytery is running through its reserves, with cash reserves now at \$75,000.
- First Fairbanks PC remitted the entire cash settlement this year, rather than spreading payments over four years. Funds which would have been paid in later years, have been set aside and will be designated for future use.
- The Gambell building fund stands at \$809,091.50

RECESS

Presbytery went into a short recess at 3:45 pm.

2014 PROPOSED BUDGET

Two documents were distributed: proposed 2014 dream budget, and "From Vision and Strategy to Budget." The Vision and Strategy document identified Presbytery's two major purposes:

- 1) to further communication and connections with the church beyond local congregations,
- 2) to facilitate local ministries (congregations and other local ministries)

and described specific strategies currently in use or desired by the ministry teams of Presbytery. Funding will depend on sharing this vision and strategy throughout the presbytery, on sessions stepping up to fund the ministry, and upon others stepping up as they suggest how to find other funding sources.

It is too early to know whether sessions will step up to fund the ministry. Presbytery **APPROVED** by consensus, a motion delaying the budget vote until the February 2014 stated meeting. In the meantime, Presbytery will continue to operate at 2013 budget levels.

RULING ELDER TESTIMONIES

**Kaktovik PC** – RE Elizabeth Rexford

The church houses a food bank with Arctic Slope Regional Corporation (ASRC) providing assistance. ASRC has donated materials and labor for specific renovations to the building. The church is in partnership with the Presbyterian Church in Manitowak, Wisconsin.

**Anchor PC** – pastor Rev. Britt Johnston

The church's main mission is to the homeless, who are invited to worship and to partake of the fellowship meal following worship. The church now has sufficient funds to pay rent to First Anchorage.

**Fairbanks Korean PC** – RE Jae Maloney

This is a growing and active congregation. Rev. Jeong has served as their new pastor since August.

**First Anchorage PC** – RE John Beard

Members were lost in a major schism, but the church is turning a corner – attendance has picked up, and the youth program has been invigorated. The church is blessed to share the building with two other worshipping communities: a Sudanese congregation and Anchor Presbyterian Church. The church is working towards being designated as an emergency overnight shelter.

*Rev. Trent Baggett led in the prayer for these churches.*

COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY (COM)

Committee co-moderator CRE Marjorie Poggas introduced United Methodist pastors Revs. Trent and Linda Baggett, who have been serving as interim co-pastors at University Community Presbyterian Church (UCPC) and New Hope Church since July 1, 2013. Presbytery **VOTED** to approve COM's recommendation to examine Revs.

Trent and Linda Baggett, who are eligible to be enrolled as temporary members during their term of service at New Hope and UCPC. Trent and Linda read their statements of faith (Appendix B and C), and Presbytery proceeded with the examinations. Presbytery **VOTED** to arrest the examination. The Baggetts were escorted out of the building prior to the discussion. Presbytery **VOTED** to sustain the examination and enroll Revs. Linda and Trent Baggett as temporary members of the Presbytery of Yukon, in accordance with G-2.0506. Linda and Trent rejoined the plenary session amidst applause.

CRE Poggas presented Rev. David (Woo S.) Jeong, who has been serving as Stated Supply at Fairbanks Korean Presbyterian Church since August 18, 2013. As a member of the Korean Methodist Church of the Americas, Rev. Jeong is not eligible at this time to be enrolled as a full member of Presbytery, but may be enrolled as a temporary member. Presbytery **VOTED** to approve COM's recommendation to examine Rev. David Jeong. Rev. Jeong read his statement of faith (Appendix D), and Presbytery proceeded with the examination. Presbytery **VOTED** to arrest the examination. Rev. Jeong was escorted out of the building prior to discussion. Presbytery **VOTED** to sustain the examination and enroll Rev. Woo S. Jeong as a temporary member of the Presbytery of Yukon, in accordance with G-2.0506. Rev. Jeong rejoined the plenary session amidst applause.

#### COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY (CPM)

Committee moderator CRE Sandra Wagenius presented the committee's report.

- The committee is exploring more effective ways of providing Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) training that is culturally relevant. A letter of intent was submitted to Cook Native Ministries requesting seed money to start a pilot project to explore an immersion approach. A response is due back from Cook Native Ministries in December.
- Rev. Duke Morrow has led two CRE trainings and has served as a consultant to CPM. Duke has been an invaluable addition to the committee.
- There has been follow-up with Richard Vitale who has been a candidate in the Presbytery since 2009. Richard has moved to California and as of the last contact was employed by a Roman Catholic school. He does not plan to return to the state of Alaska, but has been reluctant to move his candidacy to the presbytery where he resided. CPM worked with Richard to help him move toward a situation that would allow him to become ordained. In 2011, he was given guidance in steps he could take to attain his goal. At that time he was told that he needed to get back to the committee by the spring of 2012, or he would be removed as a candidate. In the spring of 2013, CPM contacted Richard via email – restating the timeline and advising him of the action to be taken at this meeting. The Office of Preparation for Ministry in Louisville has advised the committee that Richard does not have an active PIF, and as far as the office is concerned, he is no longer in the system. Due to inactivity and Richard's lack of communication with CPM, the committee has removed Richard from candidacy status.
- CRE Sandra Wagenius introduced ruling elder Richard Mauer, who having served as pastor of the Delta Presbyterian/Faith Lutheran congregation the past 14 months, seeks to be commissioned. Delta church moderator RE Mark Wartes commented that he has really seen the congregation come together under Richard's leadership. Elder Mauer has completed Whitworth University's lay ministry program and a PCUSA polity class led by Rev. Duke Morrow. Richard comes with high praise from the congregation in Delta Junction, and they eagerly await his acceptance by the Presbytery, so that he can be commissioned at his home church. Having met the requirements for becoming a commissioned ruling elder, the committee met with Richard and finds that he is well equipped to serve as a commissioned ruling elder in the Delta Junction church.

The session has requested that RE Mauer be authorized to perform the following duties: preach the word, administer the sacraments, conduct public worship, provide pastoral care, preside over weddings and memorial services, moderate session, have voice and vote at meetings of Presbytery.

By **CONSENSUS**, Presbytery chose not to have elder Mauer read his statement of faith (Appendix E) before proceeding with the examination. Presbytery **VOTED** to arrest the examination, and Richard was escorted out of the building, prior to discussion. Presbytery **VOTED** to sustain the examination and commission ruling elder Richard Mauer at the Delta Presbyterian Church on December 15, 2013. RE Mauer rejoined the plenary session amidst applause. Delta moderator RE Mark Wartes, Delta RE Ann Geise, and Rev. Curt Karns were appointed to serve as the commissioning team.

#### EVENING RECESS

Presbytery recessed for the evening with prayer at 6:00 pm. After dinner, Rev. Stan Ott led the second session of *Growing a Generous Congregation*. [The first session was held on the eve of the convening of Presbytery.]

### **SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12**

#### SERVICE OF WORSHIP

Presbytery gathered at 9:00 am for worship. Rev. David Jeong gave the opening prayer with Rev. Linda Baggett leading in the Prayer of Confession. New Testament readings: John 11:32-44 and 2 Corinthians 5:16-21. Rev. Neal Presa delivered the message and gave the benediction. Rev. Matthew Schultz presided over the Lord's Supper with Rev. Curt Karns and Matt serving. The offering in the amount of \$1,261.16 was designated to the emergency food crisis on St. Lawrence Island.

#### PASTORAL WELCOME

Due to the host pastor's unavailability on Friday, Rev. Luke Jones took the opportunity to greet members of presbytery.

#### MISSION IN ACTION COMMITTEE

RE Sara Johnson reported on the Evangelism and Church Growth conference.

#### RULING ELDER TESTIMONIES

##### **Gambell PC** – RE Mike Apatiki

Rev. Sig Kristiansen married Mike and his wife. The new church building committee is hard at work. Important mission lies across the ocean in the Chukotka area.

##### **Immanuel PC** – RE Joanne Potts

Madison Colson attended this year's Youth Triennium and reported that it was a wonderful experience being with other youth. The congregation is in partnership with Nunaka Valley Elementary School; other mission includes the Food Bank of Alaska, AA, and the Mary Magdalene Home. Youth participate in the Crop Walk. The session is working on other ideas to help the youth group.

##### **Olgonik PC** – Rev. Curt Karns

Curt spoke on behalf of CRE George and Lydia Agnasagga who are in Anchorage for medical reasons. Rev. James Nageak and other the Inupiat singers came forward to sing; Rev. Mary Ann Warden translated.

##### **New Hope** – RE Cathy Johnson

The past year has been a year of healing under the leadership of Interim Pastor Rev. Jim Christensen. Rev. Trent and Linda Baggett are currently serving as interim co-pastors. A Pastor Nominating Committee has been elected, but the biggest challenge is in determining whether the church has the financial resources to call a full time pastor. The preschool is at full capacity (39) with a waiting list. Mission involvement includes Love INC, adopt a Hospitality House teenager for Christmas, food distribution; quilts and prayer shawls for needy families.

*Prayer was led for these churches.*

## NOMINATING COMMITTEE: Part 1

Committee moderator RE Ida Olemaun presented the committee's report. Nominations and elections are scheduled for later in the day.

## CELEBRATION OF THE MINISTRY OF THE NOME PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

RE Mark Wartes and the exec met with the session after Rev, Youl Rhee retired in the summer of 2011. With few members remaining and the building in poor condition, the session desired to close the church. Members have been attending other churches in Nome the past couple years, but occasionally gather as a gospel choir. The church's mail has been forwarded to the presbytery office, and the church's bank account has been closed. Church funds are sitting in a designated presbytery fund. The building was sold earlier this year. On the recommendation of the Committee on Ministry, Presbytery **VOTED** to appoint Rev. Sig Kristiansen, Rev. Curt Karns, Rev. Leisa Carrick, and RE Beulah Nowpakahok to an administrative commission tasked with the responsibility of preparing for worship service to close the church on November 24, 2013.

Charles Brower, pastor of Community United Methodist Church in Nome briefly addressed presbytery. Rev. Leisa Carrick read a brief history (appears in italics) of the Nome church, as compiled by Rev. Dianne O'Connell in her book History of the Presbytery of Yukon:

*"During the summer of 1900, a Presbyterian church was established in Nome to accommodate the needs of the gold seekers. A year later, it was turned over to the Congregationalists. It wasn't until 1973, that there was interest to rekindle a Presbyterian church in Nome; this time from the Alaska Native population. A number of St. Lawrence Yupik Presbyterians had relocated to Nome and finding no Presbyterian Church there, they sought to establish one.*

*So here are the names we know . . .*

***Clarence Irrigoo** wrote a letter to Jessie DeVries of the Mission Strategy and Evangelism Committee. He indicated that Nome now had a population of 2,500 and that approximately 160 to 170 people from St. Lawrence Island now lived in Nome. Even though there were seven other churches currently laboring in the community he felt they would rather attend a Presbyterian church, if available.*

***Rev. Sig Kristiansen**, pastor at the Gambell Church, wrote a letter a few days later saying he had tried to discourage the new church idea, but after many pleas, he was beginning to change his mind.*

***Rex Okakok**, moderator of the Arctic Area Council, wrote in November that the Nome idea had enough merit to send a committee to check it out with the people there.*

*In another letter in December, Rev. Kristiansen urged consideration for the concept of a Presbyterian/Methodist joint venture in Nome.*

***Jessie DeVries** wrote back to [Clarence] Irrigoo that on Saturday, January 12, 1974, she, Rev. Gordon Corbett (the associate synod executive), and the Rev. Samuel Simmonds (of Wainwright) would be in Nome to confer with him and other interested members.*

***[Gordon] Corbett** found that the people had a definite need for worship, nurture, and supportive fellowship that they were not receiving in Nome's other churches. A Presbyterian church needed to be established.*

*And, so they began to meet.*

***Alice Green** had conducted services in the early part of the summer. Clarence Irrigoo had led the services in July.*

***Third-one persons** signed a petition to form a Presbyterian church. They pledged to support it with their attendance, financial and other support and prayers. On July 30, Alice Green wrote Jessie DeVries indicating*



*that she had prepared the petition for the Islanders in Nome, and that she had had several conversations with John Shaffer, the new Methodist minister in Nome.*

*Plans continued to establish the new congregation, Rev. Sig Kristiansen, on September 25, 1974, wrote a letter copied to all concerned, outlining what would be needed – choice of a name for the church; election of elders; establishment of a budget to pay for the stated supply and the use of the Methodist Church; and the establishment of a Charter Membership Roll.*

*And so it happened. The Commission to organize the Nome Presbyterian Church was called to order and a motion was made to establish a United Presbyterian Church in Nome. The service of organization for the Nome Presbyterian Church was held on January 15, 1975 in the United Methodist Church in Nome. The membership included people such as Timothy and Anna Gologergen, Clarence and Mildred Irrigoo, Rodney and Josephine Ungwiluk, John and Della Waghiyi, Lucille and Nick Wongittilin, Albert Kulowyi. These are names of people we have known.*

*After the Rev. John Shaffer resigned in 1981, the Rev. Sigurd Kristiansen was appointed stated supply in 1986. He retired in 1990. Clarence Irrigoo served as CLP in 1991. In 1995 CLP Timothy Gologergen served, later being ordained. Rev. Youl Rhee was the last pastor who served this congregation*

The church has declined in membership as many families moved back to St Lawrence Island. Others have married and joined other churches in Nome or moved to Anchorage. Many members have passed on. There were only three session members left (Angela Larson, Bivers Gologergen, and Delia Ipeyana) and no other members available to serve. The ministry of the Nome Church had completed its season of ministry for such a time as this. No doubt many people had been nurtured in their faith from this faithful ministry. We give God thanks for this Presbyterian Church in Nome.”

Rev. Alice Green and Rev. Sig Kristiansen led in a prayer/grace before the lunch recess.

#### LUNCH RECESS

Presbytery recessed for lunch at 11:30 am and reconvened at 12:30 pm with the singing of “I Will Call upon the Lord...” Rev. Henry Woodall accompanied on the guitar.

#### RECOGNIZING OUR ECUMENICAL PARTNERS

Rev. Curt Karns introduced fellow ecumenical leaders Episcopal Bishop Mark Lattime and Alaska Methodist Conference Rev. David Beckett. ELCA Bishop Shelley Wickstrom was unable to attend. Rev. Mary Ann Warden led in an Inupiaq prayer for Presbytery’s ecumenical partners.

#### RULING ELDER TESTIMONIES

##### **Kuukpik PC** – RE Carolyn Ahkiviana

Morning services are held at the Kuukpik church, whereas evening services are hosted by the Assembly of God church. Healing prayer has helped many. Many visitors attended the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration – there was much singing and Eskimo dances.

##### **Eagle River PC** – RE Donna Davidson

The church is in the heart of the community with the community at heart. Before the church purchased the retail building, it was a pool hall. The building is rented to small start-up businesses focused on helping others. AA meets in the facility every day. The church hosts the Eagle River food pantry which had 6,000 visits last year. The pipe and drum core practice at the church; a tax accounting group uses space once a year for pro bono tax help. The church partners with the school by providing backpacks. 20-24 food baskets were distributed during the Thanksgiving blessing project. The yearly auction raised money for mission, and there is a monthly collection box for various missions.

**Delta PC – RE Ann Geise**

The church has been blessed with Richard Mauer leading worship this past year. Service to the community includes hosting AA meetings, provides an emergency fund, participating in Project Thanksgiving and Project Christmas, and serving as an active partner in the Delta Christian Ministerial Association. The roofing job was completed over the summer and the congregation is working on making the building more energy efficient by switching from single to triple pane windows and adding new insulation.

**United Protestant – RE Beckie Behm**

In service to the community, the church doors remain unlocked, and the church serves as host to groups such as the mom’s club, Mat-Su orchestra; mission groups; Family Promise families, etc... The deacons provide quick meals from the deacon’s freezer; deacons offer gas or food cards in addition to offering rides to appointments and worship; the Sunday school food drive helped stock the food pantry and Christmas boxes; cards of celebration and sympathy are distributed.

**First Korean Anchorage – RE Sun Heo**

Thirty percent of the members have left. Elder Heo gave thanks for presbytery during this stressful time. The church is served by an interim pastor, but still needs to hire a youth group pastor. The church hopes to elect a Pastor Nominating Committee. Elder Heo asked for prayers for the church.

*RE Fenton Rexford led in a prayer for the churches.*

COMMITTEE ON REPRESENTATION

Committee moderator RE Paul Long reported that the slate of nominees is geographically balanced.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE: Part 2

RE Ida Olemaun reported that the Committee has had a difficult time getting nominees from the interior and western regions. Names were placed into nomination. The moderator opened the floor for nominations. Hearing none, Presbytery **VOTED** to close nominations and direct the clerk to cast a unanimous ballot, as follows:

Committee on Ministry.....	Member (AV) .....	Rev. Tim Carrick <sup>(1)</sup> .....	15
Committee on Ministry.....	Member (I) .....	RE Richard Mauer <sup>(1)</sup> .....	15
Committee on Ministry.....	Member (AR) .....	RE Miranda Rexford-Brown <sup>(1)</sup> .....	16
Native American Consulting Committee .....	Member (I) .....	RE Mark Wartes <sup>(1)</sup> .....	16

The moderator opened the floor for nominations for ruling elder commissioners to Synod. There were additional nominees from the floor; Presbytery **VOTED** to close nominations. Election was by paper ballot. The following were elected by majority vote:

Commissioner to Synod, Principal .....	Ruling Elder .....	RE Fenton Rexford <sup>(1)</sup> .....	15
Commissioner to Synod, Alternate.....	Ruling Elder .....	RE Paula Long <sup>(1)</sup> .....	15

**Legend:** AV – Anchorage/Valley; AR – Arctic North; I – Interior; W – West.  
Number after name indicates 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> term on the committee. \*if the way be clear  
Terms for Synod commissioners end on December 31<sup>st</sup> of the class year.

“A CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE IN THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.) - TWO-HOUR STUDY”

Lack of time precluded Rev. Henry Woodall and Rev. Tim Carrick from leading Presbytery through the study. Congregations were encouraged to undertake the six-hour study.

RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

Rev. Ellen-Johnson Price drafted and distributed the Resolution report (Appendix F).

OTHER BUSINESS

**Yukon Presbyterian Women:** YPW moderator RE Shirley Novak distributed a written report. The Spring Gathering was held at Immanuel PC in Anchorage on May 17-18, 2013. College student, Waverli Rainey gave a presentation on Human Trafficking, and Liz Potter talked about her trip to the Commission on the Status of Women at the United Nations in March. The fall gathering is scheduled for October 19, 2013 in First Wasilla PC.

**Youth Triennium Report:** 1<sup>st</sup> Anchorage Christian Education Director Danna Larson submitted a written report (Appendix G).

FIX THE TIME TO WHICH TO ADJOURN

With other business remaining on the docket, Presbytery **VOTED** to fix the time to which to adjourn to October 29, 2013, at 7:00 pm. The meeting will be conducted via teleconference. The day's session closed with prayer at 1:55 pm.

Sharon Rayt  
Stated Clerk

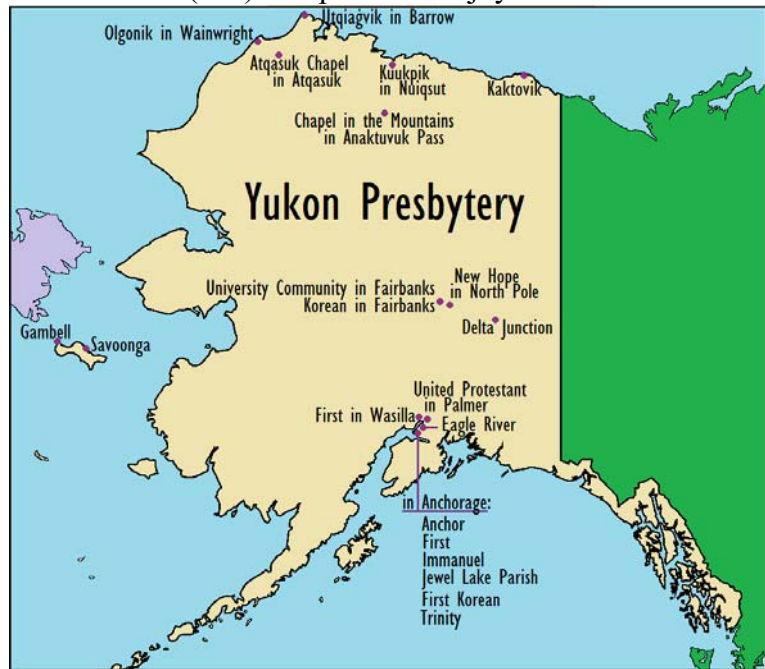
# Executive Presbyter's Report

Fall 2013—Stated Meeting of Presbytery

## 1. Staffing Changes

Jan Burger retired as **Administrative Assistant (AA)** in April. We enjoyed a wonderful retirement party with her, and sent her to United Protestant Church in Palmer to work. We trained up a good worker for them, if I do say so myself.

Melissa O'Malley is the new AA. Melissa's job description is different than Jan's. She works 12 hours per week rather than 20. She is in the office Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Melissa will not normally attend presbytery meetings, but she is with us today through lunch. Please take this opportunity to welcome her.



The presbytery voted to reduce the salary and time the **Executive Presbyter**. I therefore get one more month off each year, to match the salary decrease. I took most of that time off in the summer, though I was not idle. At this meeting, the MIAC will join me in bringing a New Ministry proposal that I have been working on in my “off” time.

## 2. The Varied Leadership Structures of our Congregations

One area of great interest to me is the way the Holy Spirit is at work in our congregations, inspiring some fantastic experimentation in old and new ways of organizing effective and sustainable leadership in our congregations.

A. Currently, only twelve of our twenty-one congregations are operating under the more **traditional approach** of at least one resident Teaching Elder in the congregation.

B. Anchor Presbyterian is following what I call a **Preaching Pastor model** of pastoral ministry. The congregation has chosen to hire the Rev. Britt Johnson Johnston to preach for them on Sundays. The COM has also appointed him as their moderator. This approach calls on the elders of session to provide the leadership for ministry beyond Sunday worship.

C. Four congregations in our presbytery are served by **Commissioned Ruling Elders (CREs) as their pastor**.

CREs are often unpaid. Congregations and the presbytery's Committee on Ministry are always exploring ways of supporting CREs and sessions to allow the leaders and the ministry to thrive.

D. Therefore, three of the four churches with CRE pastors are currently exploring whether to try **a hybrid Teaching Elder/CRE approach**. The sessions of the Olgonik Pres., Atqasuk Chapel and the Kuukpik Pres. are considering whether to call a full-time, Shared Teaching Elder to serve as teacher, mentor and coach to the elders and CREs in their communities. We may be hearing more about this in the weeks to come.

- E. Four congregations in our presbytery do not have any designated pastoral staff.
- Some of these sessions are **wondering about** the hybrid Teaching Elder/CRE approach, whether it might also fit them.
  - Other Ruling Elders are wondering if God is calling for **A Session-team approach**. One elder suggested that presbytery take to heart the Ephesians 4:11-12 scripture passage (that some should be prophets, apostles, pastors, teachers, evangelists), and provide training for different Leadership Callings on the session.

As I say, it is fascinating to watch the Spirit at play, imaginatively inspiring God's people.

### **3. Membership and Financial Challenges**

Membership and finances remain a major challenge for the presbytery. As we have grappled with the cultural changes of our day, we have lost members, and one congregation. It may be that we will rebuild over time—several churches are already reporting the need for New Member Classes. However, for 2013 at least, financial support available to the presbytery is down.

The presbytery will need to rebuild membership and financial structures, beginning immediately. Members are attracted to the authentic quality of spiritual life exhibited by church members and congregations. Even more, new members these days are not attracted so much as contacted. It is when they experience the church bringing Christ's love into their personal world that they begin asking questions. *How is God calling us to train up passionate disciples—passionate about touching the hurts and hopes of the people around them?*

### **4. Strategies for Pursuing God's Vision for the Presbytery**

The ministry teams of the presbytery has begun exploring how to implement the Vision many of us worked on last year. In this meeting you will hear of changes in our planning budgeting processes, aimed at really seeking God's guidance for the presbytery.

However, what is needed is for the people of the congregations of the presbytery to take up the call to seek God's guidance for their churches, and for their communities. You will see opportunities in this budget proposal for your church. Watch for them. Then go back to your session and to your congregation. Remind them of what they already know: If we are faithful in turning to God in prayer, God will be faithful in meeting us there.

**Statement of Faith – Trent Baggett**

I believe in God. I believe God called everything into being out of nothing. I have total faith that the books of the Bible are divinely inspired and that the common thread of God's love can be found in the pages of his love letters to us. I feel that if one can accept the power of God in the first chapter of Genesis then the task of grasping the faith stories found in the rest of the Bible isn't that much of a stretch. However, the power of God is one thing but the love of God is quite another. For me, the length, width, and depth of God's love is beyond the limits of my mind. It seems that, with good cause we were kicked out of the wonderful garden because we wouldn't behave and ever since God has been trying to show us how to get back. Because God loves us.

I believe in Jesus Christ. So, after many attempts at trying to get us to choose God as our only God, moving from orientation to disorientation and back to orientation God sends His Son to help us. Here, I believe in the virgin birth. If God has the power to hang Saturn then getting a young girl pregnant isn't that big a leap. I believe that Jesus is fully divine and fully human. Because of his conception and his baptism, I have faith that Jesus was fully divine. Because of the pain found in his life and the pain at his crucifixion I understand Jesus as fully human. So Jesus, I feel, was sent by God to show us the way back to the garden – to use our free choice to choose Him and His ways. In his teachings Jesus told the truth, and that made the "suits" mad because he was changing "the way we have all ways done things." Because of his teachings Jesus made the religious powers mad and he ended up crucified on the cross but it was too late. His life, his witness, his teachings were out. Then, I feel, we find this was a divine action of God's in that through Christ's death and resurrection, we are forgiven and promised eternal life.

I believe in the Holy Spirit. We were given a gift that would encourage us, give us direction, guide our steps and lead us to God's will. Jesus knew he was about to leave but he said "Lo, I will be with you always." From that I have come to understand that the Holy Spirit points us to Christ. Christ points us to God and God is the waiting father in the story of the Prodigal Son.

I believe in the sacrament of baptism. As far as I understand the mystery of the sacrament of baptism God has given us the outward and visible sign of water that represents the love of God for each of us and lets us know that we are His. However, at some point in our life we have to profess our faith in Jesus. I believe in infant baptism because a person can be an heir at any age as the Spirit leads them. I don't care what method is used – sprinkle, pour, or immerse – but water must be used.

I believe in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Jesus gave us the gift of remembering him and all that he witnessed to us in the giving of the Host and the Cup. The frequency of this remembering appears that once a month is "as often as we will." What I don't know is what happens in the giving of the Lord's Supper. My feeling is that if one comes with the right mind and heart they receive representation of the body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. If one comes to the table and doesn't have the right mind and heart they may only get grape juice and bread.

**Statement of Faith – Linda Baggett**

I believe in God, the Creator and Father of all that is, who created order out of chaos and breathed into life all that has life. He has set into motion a divine plan for human beings to grow in faith and love of God, and with one another. Since the beginning of time the same God has journeyed with humanity to call and claim us into covenant relationship, revealing God's self to us in a multitude of ways that display the nature of God, that we might experience God's steadfast love, mercy and grace.

I believe in Jesus Christ, the very Son of God, who was with God in the beginning of time and who came to save us from our sins. At the appropriate time, he was divinely conceived by the Holy Spirit who made it possible for Mary to bear the Son of God and Son of Man; thereby making him "truly human, truly divine." This was, according to Scripture, to fulfill the promises of God for the people of God that he would give them a Savior and so that human beings might experience the living God with us in human form and understand his willingness to be the Savior of the world.

Also, at the appropriate time and in accordance with the promises of God, Jesus offered himself to die for us so that he might conquer sin and death, become victor over the grave, and prepare a place for us in paradise. He ransomed himself so that we might live as forgiven children of God. He allowed himself to die on the cross so that we could live and be set free from sin and death. Those who believe in him have this promise of eternal life and a place at the heavenly banquet at which Christ is Host.

As disciples of Jesus Christ, we strive to follow his example of the love of God, and extend mercy and grace to those around us, for it is in God's great mercy we are forgiven and by his grace we are saved.

With Christ as Lord of our lives we are included in the Great Commission (Mt. 28:16-20) to make disciples of Jesus Christ, teaching those we meet not only by word but also example the Good News of God in Christ Jesus. In our modern world, such witness includes offering Christ to those who live around the world and those whose faith traditions are not the same as ours. May those we encounter see Christ in us, and may we see Christ in them as we live and serve.

Through the gift of the Holy Spirit, we meet God in Christ in our everyday lives, guiding us on our spiritual journey and growing in the faith that has been entrusted to us by a loving God; that faith should manifest itself through our personal relationship with the Lord and in community with others by thought, word, and deed. We see Christ in each other through the gifts of the Holy Spirit which vary according to the will of the Spirit and plan and purpose for each life. The community of faith does not share the gifts of the Holy Spirit only with its members but we are called to use the gifts of God to make a difference in the lives of others, more specifically bringing forth justice and mercy for the oppressed and imprisoned, responding to the needs of others, and caring for the children of God throughout the world, thus building up the kingdom of God. All this and more done for the Glory of God.

The community of faith remembers Christ's offering for us when we gather to receive Holy Communion. The bread we receive is a reminder of Christ's body "broken", given, offered for our freedom from sin and death. The cup which we receive is a reminder of his blood shed for the forgiveness of our sins and the mark of the new covenant by which we are redeemed by his blood. When we gather at the table Christ is in the midst of us, just as he is Host at the table of grace at his heavenly banquet.

When the community of faith gathers for the sacrament of baptism we celebrate that God's grace is at work in that person's life, that his new brother or sister in Christ is incorporated into the life of the church, and that a new life has begun. Whether an adult or a child is baptized, we join with those who bring that child forward or stand before the church that we will be the church which Christ calls us to be, doing our part to encourage and support their faith journey, just as those who have gone before us have done so on our behalf. Thanks be to God!

Statement of Faith  
Rev. Woo S. Jeong

Holy Scripture is inspired by God. God's own Word is written by men prepared and superintended by His Spirit. The Bible is of infallible divine authority in all matters. Being wholly and verbally God-given, Scripture is without error or fault in all its teaching, no less in what it states about God's acts in creation, about the events of world history, and about its own literary origins under God, than in its witness to God's saving grace in individual lives. Holy Scripture is God's witness to Himself. The Holy Spirit, Scripture's divine Author, both authenticates it to us by His inward witness and opens our minds to understand its meaning. God is Who He is. He is Himself Truth and speaks truth only, has inspired Holy Scripture in order thereby to reveal Himself to lost mankind through Jesus Christ as Living Scripture, Creator, Lord, Redeemer and Judge. Holy Scripture is God's witness to Himself.

I believe in God, my Father; in His Son, Jesus Christ, my Lord and Savior; and in the Holy Spirit, my Counselor. I believe that salvation by grace, through faith, in Jesus Christ is available to all as a gift apart from works, Eph 2:8-9. All people are made in the image of God, and as such have inherent worth and value, Gen 1:27.

God loves me through Jesus Christ who died for my sins according to the Scriptures. I believed and understood that He was buried and raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.

I was convinced of my eternal life in Heaven with Jesus and of God's grace. Through John 5:24, "I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes Him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life," I received Christ who gave me His grace and eternal life. Because I crossed over from death to life, I won't be condemned because He did what God requested Him to do for me.

I was born again into God family through the work of the Holy Spirit who indwells me. Whenever I got discouraged and disappointed, I tried to go back to the Bridge Illustration and the Scriptures. I praise God because He encourages me to serve Him and His people by sharing His love and Word.

I believe each member of the body of Christ is greatly needed to fulfill and accomplish Christ's work on the earth, 1 Pet 4:10. I believe in celebrating the unique bond shared by the brotherhood and sisterhood of believers with Jesus Christ as our Savior. I believe I should actively collaborate with other brothers and sisters in Christ toward fulfilling our collective and individual purposes.

Following mission statement would be a basic principle how to serve God according to what He taught in Scriptures based on John 6:40, Matthew 28:18-20: **My mission is to bring glory to God by sharing the Gospel to those who are unbelievers and by making disciples to equip them to live and minister biblically based on the inerrant Word of God.**



# **Personal Theology of Ministry**

**Submitted By:**

**Richard I. Mauer**

**For:**

**Yukon Presbytery**

**August 2013**

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## Introductory Belief Statement

I am not exactly aware of when I became a Christian – it seems to me that I have always, since childhood, believed in God and, try as I might, I cannot recollect any outright occurrence whence I came to believe. As a child, I remember attending church with our family in upper New York State, in the Everglades in Florida, and North Carolina as dad moved from farm to farm as a herdsman. My earliest memory of making a formal declaration of faith and confessing my sins was on May 27, 1956 when our family joined New Hope Presbyterian Church, near Chapel Hill, North Carolina via letter of transfer and profession of faith – I had been baptized as an infant in New York State. New Hope was the church that we helped build, that our family attended and I attended Sunday school and worship services there each week.

During the following years until 1980, I attended worship services at various military chapels and churches in different communities around the world, sometimes regularly, sometimes infrequently; always a Christian but obviously lacking fire and conviction. In the years 1980 and 1981, I gradually sensed a change in my relationship with the Lord that had not been present before – this was perhaps an awakening prompted or nudged by the Holy Spirit, perhaps owing to Bible study and regular chapel attendance, perhaps all of the above. I finally realized that I fully accepted Jesus as my Lord and Saviour!

After moving to Delta Junction, Alaska in late summer 1983, I formally transferred membership from New Hope Church to Delta Presbyterian Church on March 4, 1984. I became fully involved in the ministry of the church and after examination, was ordained as a Ruling Elder on March 2, 1985. Over the years since, especially since December 2009, I have experienced what I term as another nudge or push, not as gentle as before, by the Holy Spirit into the ministry, perhaps into a deeper “leap of faith.” Following many discernment conversations with several chaplains as well the former pastor of our church and pastors of other denominations, I have been, as they termed it, “watching for markers along the way,” as the Holy Spirit subtly guided me to, at that time, I knew not where. According to at least one prominent Alaskan theologian if one cannot refer to the exact minute that they were “saved,” perhaps they are not. I cannot subscribe to that statement! I believe that I was saved the first time that I confessed to the Lord and accepted him as my saviour – something I do now, frequently.

# Belief Statement

## (The Apostles' Creed)

I do remember that many times as a child and young man, I confessed my sins and asked Jesus to come into my heart, but cannot remember if I was always sincere. At this point in my life however, I can make the following belief statement without hesitation or lingering doubt:

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth,

- I believe that I am, along with everything that exists, created by God as set forth in the Holy Bible, Genesis 1: 1 – 31.
- I believe that God created us for a purpose, the “why” not necessarily how God created us, to live and walk in His way.
- I believe Christian theology and scientific inquiry can be mutually supportive with scientific theory exploring the “how” of our existence rather than the “why.”
- I believe that an element of limited free will exists between God and the human, with God making the major decisions, the human making the minor ones.
- I believe that God allows a limited amount of evolutionary development in all His creation to perhaps strengthen the various species.

And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended into hell. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

- I believe that Jesus is the Son of God in human form, who through God's direction was conceived into and of the Virgin Mary by the Holy Spirit, was born, lived as our Lord in human body, was recognized by many as the Messiah, established the presence of Godly living, witness and salvation among men, was tried and suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried and thus separated from the living for three days.
- I believe that on the third day after death he did regain life in human form, was witnessed by the disciples, and then ascended into heaven where joining God the Father, he and the Holy Spirit complete the God-head or Triune God.
- I believe that through his life, death and ascension, he assumed my guilt and atoned for my sins and those of all who believe and accept Him.
- I believe that through my confession of faith alone in Jesus Christ as savior and Lord that I freely receive God's gifts of salvation, grace and justification.

# Belief Statement

(Continued)

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

- I believe in the Holy Spirit, God's very essence and presence among us and the third holy, equal and living element of the Triune God.
- I believe the Holy Spirit is present with me and subtly, sometimes actively, guides me, nudges me, leads me showing me the way through God's light.
- I believe in the universal church wherein all Christian believers form a bond of unified and world-wide brotherhood and sisterhood under God that transcends man-made borders, language barriers, skin pigmentation, physical characteristics, age and denomination.
- I subscribe to dual beliefs, respecting both centuries old and contemporary thought, with respect to communion of saints; fellowship is of all believers those still living and those who no longer are living and participation in the Lord's Supper or Communion.
- I believe that through the Holy Spirit, I, as a believer and confessor of sins, am forgiven of those sins.
- I believe we, through Jesus Christ, are triumphant over death and that life is eternal or everlasting in a final form, at the time of resurrection, which includes both the body and soul.

# Pastoral Identity

Having served in the capacity of Lay Leader for the Presbyterian and Lutheran congregations of our church since June last, I could assume that my pastoral identity is fairly well established and both congregations would very likely support this assumption.

However, in an ongoing quest to establish an appropriate vision for a pastoral identity followed by a theology of ministry, I find that the appropriate guide to be a biblical checklist following Ephesians 4: 11-14 to self-assess specific characteristics and determine where I may or may not meet standards established by Jesus Christ, Paul and other biblical leaders. Also key to my pastoral identity is the specific calling by God through the Holy Spirit and associated spiritual gift(s).

I firmly believe and fully subscribe to a foundational statement of service and servanthood that is based on the teaching of Jesus as stated in Matthew 20:26-28, "Yet it shall not be among you: but whoever desires to be great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you let him be your slave --- Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give His life a ransom for many."

I also believe that serving in a pastoral capacity is not of my doing; rather it is the call of God to serve in His church in this pastoral capacity and that I am accountable to God to uphold His Word and build up the body of Jesus Christ in thought, word and deed. In further clarification of thought, word and deed, I believe that one serving in the pastoral or ministerial capacity must, in addition to core competencies of ministry of Word and Sacraments, be studious, be knowledgeable, able and willing to daily live and walk in the ways of the good news of Jesus Christ; serving, leading, educating, exemplifying and aiding.

*The Spurgeon Fellowship Journal Feature Article – Fall 2007* cites four primary offices or roles of today's pastors that are directly related to Jesus' ministry (prophetic, priestly, sagely, and governing) and are directly related to roles established in the Old Testament, thus providing the biblical checklist or yardstick to discuss pastoral identity.

**Prophetic Role** - I view this as one who could almost be a faceless entity who passionately carries the Word of God to the saints, perhaps to all humans. I mention almost faceless to indicate that carrying the good news of Jesus Christ is not about the carrier, rather about the Word. However, the person endowed with the gifts of prophecy, leading worship, and as a pastor must, with certainty, exhibit and live the passion of the

# Pastoral Identity

(continued)

scriptures they espouse. This is accomplished through declaration of God's word, expounding the Scriptures as the living word of God and courageously addressing those issues where one must serve to stimulate the conscience of the community.

**Priestly Role** - Subscribing to the belief of the priesthood of all believers, one can readily identify with and share equally with all believers the open access to God. One serving in this role is called to become sensitive to others' spiritual needs and their needs in times of pain and death, standing with them as a presence to help remind them that God is ever present, to assist them with prayerful intercession, to help them reconcile with God and others whom they have separated, to share their pain and grief, to console them, to bless them, to lead them in worship and to stand as an honorable and honest servant leader.

**Role of Sage** – This role represents living an ordered and stable life as one who makes wise decisions; provides wise counsel from the pulpit or through individual or group counseling; one who is studious and ever seeking of knowledge and truth to impart to the priesthood of believers; and to facilitate an ordered ministry, promoting peace and calmly addressing disharmony or strife.

**Governing Role** – Player-coach, referee, administrator, visionary, warrior, steward of critical resources and servant-leader are among the main responsibilities associated with the governing role of the pastor. Each, in my view, is associated with one key and essential element that can, if present, facilitate success or if absent, guarantee failure – humility! Whether Lay Leader or Ordained Leader, one should be mindful of Jesus' command to love one another and that the role and position occupied is not about individual glory and personal ego, rather it is to perform duties associated with His church, His people, His glory and His work. On occasion, one serving as leader must make tough decisions that may have a propensity to be unpopular. This being the case, one must possess the moral courage to seek prayerful resolution, yet stay the course if the decision is correct.

# Theology of Ministry

Inasmuch as I define ministry as serving or service to the Lord, the opening thought regarding a theology of ministry is: “I serve as I lead and I lead as I serve.” This definition or concept does most certainly place the “me” directly into the ministry dynamic just as Paul, the apostles, and all the Christian leaders following the teaching and modeling of Jesus have used their God-given spiritual gifts to serve and charge their ministries, large or small, successful or not. To ensure that this statement is not mistaken or misread, the “me” used in this context is the servant leader or practice of servanthood to God and God’s people, not self-aggrandizement. A second thought regarding a theology of ministry, also about “me,” is: “I serve as I learn and I learn as I serve.” The essence of both thoughts being that I am a servant of God and God’s people who, guided by the Holy Spirit, provides servant-leadership in the church of Jesus Christ whilst ever engaged in the learning process of biblical study and personal prayer to develop a deeper, fuller and richer understanding of God’s Word and God’s direction in the life of His church and for his people.

The theology or philosophy of ministry that follows, while encompassing some larger community or universal concepts, is, by the very nature of our church and community size, developed with the smaller, family-sized, congregation in mind. This stems from the fact that ours is a small rural and widely dispersed community with over twenty-two active churches among a population of around 3,490 registered voters in a geographic area of 61.1 square miles of which, 55.2 square miles is land and 5.9 square miles is water.

Foundational to this theology is a firm belief in the priesthood of all believers wherein every Christian has direct access to God without anyone acting as a “go-between” and that each of us shares a mutual responsibility to minister to each other within this community of believers.

Also foundational to this theology is the concept that the church is reformed and always reforming which leads to the question of how we do church in this society, how do we bring the Word of God to our own congregations as well as to those we attempt to reach in our ministry – a task of equipping the body to willingly and constantly share our faith honestly and creatively without losing focus on Jesus Christ, our rock of salvation, who is alive and liberates us to seek his healing love without regard to time or place or circumstance.



# Theology of Ministry

(Continued)

Within the small church family or community there resides a wonderful opportunity to expand the priesthood of all believers and to equip all the members of the body to explore and appropriately use their spiritual gifts. This is real owing to the communal nature that already exists within the church walls as well as outside in the small community. This setting also permits those in the community to view, very close and personal, our day-to-day love or unfortunate lack thereof of the Lord – if we walk in the light of love, it is witnessed by all. If we remain in the dark – we are unseen.

Another wonderful opportunity residing within the small congregation of forty to eighty members is sharing of leadership among the membership thus regaining active participation of all of God's people in the work of the church, sharing the Gospel and restoring the laity to its essential role. This statement does not assume that there is no place for the "ordained professional" within the small church. Rather the philosophy of trained laity with roots, reputation and responsibilities present in the community and church represents the opportunity to "grow our own" from within and removes the ever-present fear for the allocation of scarce church resources. Additionally, this method facilitates more active support by the denomination with the ordained pastors, in our case both Presbyterian and Lutheran, providing training, mentoring and regionalized support as requested or required.

The return to the unpaid laity for ministry also allows small stabilized churches in communities where growth, other than minimal, can only come from other churches, the opportunity to realistically assess, without undue concern for fiscal resources, their worship services, programs, mission and facilities. This return to the laity, most importantly, provides the church family relief from fear of having to contemplate the "closing of the doors" and finding another church home.

This model does potentially place, at least initially, an identity burden on one assuming the position of servant leader or lay leader in a church that has always employed a pastor owing to the existing expectations of the congregates. The members may also experience somewhat of an identity dilemma as they are expectant that the leader will make the major decisions, basically within an existing institutional model with its associated hierarchical structure of the pastor and expert at the top of the "pyramid." The lay led model embraces the people-focused or living organism concept wherein people step forward to exercise particular spiritual gifts and assume various functions within the body of the church of Christ. If the pyramid does exist in any form, it may have Jesus at the top but if one really conceptualizes the leadership of Jesus, we view the pyramid quite differently - it is inverted or more akin to a cone with the servant-leader at the bottom or point supporting all the people, serving all the people, caring for all the people and loving all the people while always teaching, preaching, perhaps beseeching, perhaps guiding and ever modeling.

# Theology of Ministry

(Continued)

Having received the call to ministry through the Holy Spirit as previously mentioned in the introductory statement, I committed to both Presbyterian and Lutheran congregations that the substance of the worship messages will be Holy Bible based and consistent with the specific principals of both denominations. Being equipped with several acquired skills and blessed by the Holy Spirit with gifts of administration, knowledge, leadership, leading worship, pastor and teaching, I am excited and continually blessed to research and present weekly messages based on the Holy Scripture. I view worship as key and essential, the foundation, of ministry. I approach every message with a vision of the Phoenix rising from the ashes to signify that every new message, prayerfully compiled, thoughtfully researched and passionately presented has the potential to enlighten, to renew, to refresh and perhaps sustain with God's word for another week, another period.

With membership in both congregations fairly stabilized during this year; with much-needed facility upgrades, especially insulation, in the process or accomplished; and with a dependable revenue stream, we, as a Christian body, are free to prayerfully develop a vision and strategic plan for the future of Jesus' church here in Delta Junction. Development of a vision may focus on evaluation of spiritual gifts and equipping the saints to assume leadership roles within our worshipping community. Planning will likely include discussions regarding membership, enhanced children's programs, Bible study programs, adult Sunday school, worship structure, mission outreach in addition to the AAA program currently sponsored, joint worship events wherein local churches jointly sponsor baccalaureate and other community-wide events, and participation in Presbytery and Synod sponsored events.

From a personal perspective, pending a formal call by Delta Presbyterian/Faith Lutheran church, I will seek ordination through Presbytery of the Yukon as a Commissioned Lay Pastor and entry as a candidate to become a Teaching Elder.

**PRESBYTERY OF YUKON  
RESOLUTION REPORT**

“**The fall 2013 meeting of Yukon Presbytery** began with worship, in which CRE-to-be Richard Mauer focused on the theme Scripture verses of I Peter 4:8-10. He urged us to not let our ability to “maintain constant love for one another” be blocked by complaints, and instead to smile in order to increase our face value.

After declaring a quorum, seating corresponding members, and welcoming first-time commissioners (Ruling Elders were so excited to welcome the new Teaching Elders from their congregations that they stole Curt’s thunder in doing so!), we moved on to a time of **telling stories**. Henry Woodall taught us to play. “Thumb in Hole” with various partners as we moved around the room, which resulted in great hilarity as we also reflected on the greatness of the Triune God and shared our joys and concerns.

Our **Executive Presbyter** talked about ways that the Holy Spirit is doing new things within our Presbytery, and challenged our usually “introverted” congregations to try more “extroverted” activities such as going out into our communities in order to spread the love of Christ.

We heard that the congregation of **UCPC** hosted many volunteers this summer who were en route to help in the flood-damaged villages along the Yukon River and are grateful for their new interim co-pastors, while the music ministry at **Trinity** church brings musicians into the congregation and builds relationships in the music community around Anchorage. Representing **Chapel in the Mountains**, James Nageak led us in a spontaneous song to remind us that we are “One in the Spirit.” We were introduced to **mission co-workers** Ryan and Alethia White, heading off to a ministry site in Berlin, before we went into our breakout groups.

After lunch, our meeting resumed with a report from the **Moderator of the General Assembly**, Neal Presa, visiting with us from New Jersey and bringing greetings from our brothers and sisters throughout the entire PC(USA). He encouraged us to work for “unity in difference,” based on Ephesians 1-4, and gave us the wonderful image of an ecclesiology of feasting, in which we in the church focus less on rules and more on relationships.

We heard from the **joint parish** about their exploration of new ways of doing church, such as partnering together to share a Teaching Elder to minister alongside their CRE’s, and from **Utqiagvik** about their new carpet and the numerous community services they’ve organized with other churches in Barrow. The congregation in **Savoonga** is excited to welcome several new Ruling Elders, while **Jewel Lake Parish** is mourning the saints from their congregation that have died in the past year.

The **Treasurer’s Report** challenged us to read tiny print, as well as for our congregations to turn in their mission pledges for 2014 by the end of the year. The **proposed budget** for 2014 invites us to creatively DREAM about how God is calling us to do ministry in our Presbytery, and for our congregations to participate in bringing those dreams to reality with their financial support (Presbytery will vote on the final budget at the February 2014 meeting).

We heard about the manse and church renovations occurring in **Kaktovik**, about an upcoming fundraiser on November 22 for **Anchor** Presbyterian Church featuring Eskimo dancing, about the new members and new pastor at **Fairbanks Korean**, and about the increase in enthusiasm and attendance which is occurring at **First Anchorage**.

The **Committee on Ministry** presented the three new pastors serving in Fairbanks and North Pole for examination to be accepted as temporary members of the Presbytery of Yukon, while the **Committee on Preparation for Ministry** presented Richard Mauer to be examined and approved as a CRE serving in Delta. All were accepted with applause. The CPM also invited input as they think creatively about how to provide effective and culturally relevant training for CRE's. We then adjourned for dinner and more breakout sessions in the evening.

On Saturday morning, **host pastor** Luke Jones welcomes us to Jewel Lake Parish (he was too busy playing host to do it yesterday!). After a half-second report from the **Committee on Representation**, we heard that **Gambell's** Ruling Elders have taken on leadership of their worship services in the past year and are excited about construction of their new church building new summer, that **Immanuel's** delegate to the youth Triennium this past summer had an amazing experience, and that **New Hope** continues to heal and grow under the leadership of their interim co-pastors while discerning whether to call a full-time or part-time installed pastor for the future. We prayed for CRE George Agnasagga from **Olgonik** and his Lydia during her cancer treatment in Anchorage and were serenaded by the Inupiat choir!

We worshipped and shared the **Lord's Supper** together, led by the new pastors and CRE's in our Presbytery, with preaching by Neal Presa. Then Sara Johnston shared the excitement and hope about the church, and the "fire inside her" that she gained from attending a recent **Evangelism and Church Growth conference** with other Presbyterians from around the country. She encouraged us to be both IN the Word and IN the world.

With sadness, we voted to close the **Nome** Presbyterian Church, and established a commission to hold a closing service there on November 24. We celebrated the ministry and history of that congregation before heading for lunch.

We recognized and were introduced to our **ecumenical partners**, heard about hopes to bring back an evening service at **Kuukpik** which just celebrated its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and about the gift of the **Eagle River** congregation being in the heart of town and widely used by the community. We heard that the **Delta** congregation has welcomed Martin Luther (in the form of a 3-foot statue) into their church office, that **United Protestant** in Palmer has its doors open to provide meeting space, warmth, and theater costumes for members of the community, and prayed for the pain, struggles, and beginning of healing of the past year at **First Korean Anchorage**. Finally, the **Committee on Nominations** presented their slate of nominees and accepted further nominations from the floor for a vote.

The End. . . whew, what a weekend!

**2013 Yukon Presbytery**  
**Delegation to Youth Triennium Report**

The Yukon Presbytery was well represented at the 2013 Presbyterian Youth Triennium held at Purdue University July 16-20. The delegation of 11 youth and two advisors included: Samuel Ahsoak (Utqiagvik-Barrow), John Bell (FPC-Anchorage), Katie Bell (FPC-Anchorage), Sadie Bower (Utqiagvik PC-Barrow), Madison Coulson (Immanuel-Anchorage), Callee Dahl (FPC-Anchorage), Megan Junge (FPC-Anchorage), Jeremy Leavitt (Utqiagvik PC-Barrow), Paul Lindemuth (FPC-Anchorage), Charles McNeill (UCPC-Fairbanks), Kelsey Olmstead (FPC-Anchorage), Andy Halfacre (advisor FPC-Anchorage) and Danna Larson (advisor/registrar FPC-Anchorage).



The delegation met for a pre-retreat at First Presbyterian Church in Anchorage July 13-15. The pre-retreat included a service of commissioning at First Presbyterian Church on Sunday, July 14 led by Rev. Matt Schultz and volunteering at Jewel Lake Parish on Sunday afternoon to support Jewel Lake's "Hay Day" Outreach Event. In addition the youth attended the Bear Paw Festival in Eagle River on Saturday night and went bowling on Monday morning. Those from Anchorage and Fairbanks enjoyed sharing recreational outings with the Barrow youth who had some "first time" experiences on the rides at the Bear Paw Festival.

The Yukon Delegation was a part of 5,200 youth who gathered at Purdue to experience the theme "I Am ..Who I Am" through powerful worship experiences including a candlelight communion outdoor service, small group gatherings focusing on understanding one's own identify as a child of God and one's identify within the church and helping prepare 150,000 meals for "Stop Hunger Now." In addition there were lots of opportunities for hanging out at the Treehouse (exhibit room), cooling off at the Purdue water fountain sculptures due to the over 100 degree temperatures, participating in lots of recreational activities and signing autographs and exchanging tourist pins because everyone wanted to talk to us because we were from Alaska!

Members of the Yukon Presbytery Youth Delegation have described the Triennium in the following ways: "an experience like no other"; "seeing over 5200 kids and worshipping with them truly reaffirmed my faith"; "amazing experience for me to learn that God is always with us"; "life-changing journey"; "there must be a God if all of these youth would work this hard to find a place to sit for worship"; and "this was a lot of fun!"

The Yukon Delegation was selected by the PC(USA) Pentecost Offering to be highlighted at the Triennium because of the expense it requires for our presbytery to send a delegation to the Triennium. The delegation was photographed in the Treehouse and during worship. The photos can be seen on the Pentecost Offering website and will most likely be used in interpretation of the Pentecost Offering.

Thank you to everyone from the Presbytery who helped make this trip possible for the youth and advisors. The money to fund this trip included contributions from the participants and/or their congregations, Mission Stock Fundraising, and monies from the Presbytery Restricted Triennium Account. The Yukon Presbytery received scholarships for travel and racial ethnic students from the Presbyterian Youth Triennium Travel Pool and Scholarship Fund and additional money for racial ethnic students from the PC(USA) Racial Ethnic Ministries- Native American Enhancement Scholarship funds.

The Presbyterian Youth Triennium occurs every three years, so for many of our youth this will be the only time they will be able to experience such an event. Thank you to the Yukon Presbytery and the local congregations for your continued support of the youth in the Yukon Presbytery.

In gratitude,  
 Danna Larson  
 Yukon Presbytery 2013 Triennium Registrar