



# Presbytery of Yukon

November 3, 2016

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Rhona Apassingok's  
mother, Rhoda

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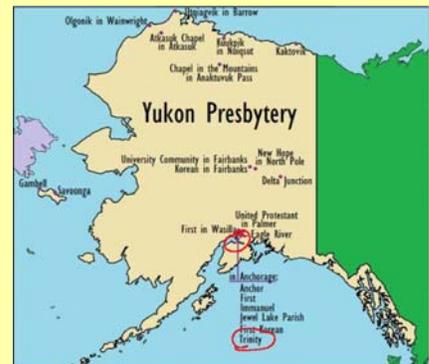


## Trinity Presbyterian Church, Anchorage

### **How Trinity Approaches Community Outreach with Huffman Elementary**

*Rich Wilson, Connections Elder*

Trinity has practiced being a "Connecting Church" for many years with a major focus on interaction with our next door neighbor, Huffman Elementary School. Reaching out to serve School staff, teachers, students and families has brought us into a close, two-way relationship. Equally important, Huffman has accepted multiple invitations to use our Sanctuary, classrooms and Narthex to enrich Trinity's interaction with the larger Huffman family. Several recent highlights:



- Adult supervision for the awesome Huffman Potato and Carrot Garden Harvest in the fall of 2015 and 2016, which this summer inspired Tom Morse and Joan White and others to sponsor the Trinity Vegetable Garden: successfully aimed primarily at involvement by 15 of our own children to plant and harvest potatoes, carrots, beets, green beans and flowers. Both promise to be annual affairs.
- Trinity "scientists" contributed their time and talents in three of the 8 exhibits at the Huffman Science Night last February:

telescopes/microscopes/and other scopes by Myron Wright; Mary Beth Wright brought her recovering eagle; and Tom Morse presented a math exhibit. Huffman was grateful and invited us back this winter.

- Huffman Student Choir (40 kids supported by families and friends) gave a Holiday Concert in the Sanctuary, a big and exciting venue for the choir last November. When they finished, just as most of the kids and their families were heading out the door, the aroma was apparently too much; most made a right turn and joined us in fellowship and delicious potluck selections. The Choir asked to return to Trinity on November 17 for this year's concert. A gifted teacher, Elizabeth Hunt, is credited with the idea and execution. It is an opportunity to invite many who are not churched into a place where they are welcomed and not actively solicited to attend the Church.
- Trinity helped parents participating in Huffman's "Date Night" by providing a safe, supervised (thanks to Joan White's leadership) child care facility while their parents enjoyed a couple of hours at the Zoo.
- Little things count too. Trinity staff and volunteers provide donuts and coffee for breakfast at the start of every school year to honor the dedicated teachers and staff and model what believers do. Many on staff are Christians and find ways of expressing appreciation for this partnership.

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## Apology Issued to Native Alaskans

Dear friends of the Presbytery,

Last summer the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA) voted to send an apology to Native Americans in Presbyterian Church congregations and those not in PC(USA) congregations. The apology recognized that our denomination participated in practices that brought hardship and hurt to many Native American people. Although the apology covers a number of topics, it especially recognized that the policy of sending generations of Native children to boarding schools created many unintended hurts and hardship. Psychologists tell us that the generational trauma caused by these hurts and hardships have continued to affect Native people and communities to this day.

I have run into the issues behind this apology throughout my years of ministry in Alaska. When I first arrived at the First Presbyterian Church of Wrangell, I found that there were some local people who would not even talk to me because, as pastor, I represented some of the atrocities that had happened over the years. It was in Wrangell that the first Christian boarding school was established. Although the school did some real good, including providing a home for some abused children, it also marked the first place where children were prohibited from speaking their own language and were punished if they did. Other Presbyterian ministries condemned Native dancing and drumming as satanic, cut down totem poles believing (falsely) that they were idols, and otherwise taught that everything Euro-American was good and everything Native

American was suspect.

This was the nature of the culture clash between the dominant, Euro-American culture and the Native American peoples of the late 19th Century and early 20th Century. This is important to say. The church is not the only guilty party. Indeed, vestiges of a mindset of cultural superiority continue in the majority culture to this day.

The PC(USA) apology is therefore of particular importance. First, it is a matter of not only talking the talk, but also of walking the walk. As Christians we know that we are sinners, and that we are called to confess our sin and repent when we become aware that we have done wrong. Confession validates the experiences of those who suffered the abuses and helps make healing more likely to happen. Confession also signals our intention to repent and learn new ways of living that do not continue to hurt others. Confession asks for forgiveness and opens the door to the possibility of a new quality of relationships between those involved.

On October 22 four representatives the Presbytery of Yukon stood before the Alaska Federation of Natives annual convention to offer the apology. The apology was warmly received and received quite a bit of press. Indeed, at the same meeting of the AFN Native leaders were discussing the possibility of an Alaskan truth and reconciliation commission that would work for the healing of Native peoples and for the new quality of life between all Alaskans that we have been hoping for.



*From left: Curt Karns (Executive Presbyter), Ron Illingworth (Presbytery Moderator), Ida Olemaun (Moderator-Elect of the presbytery's Native Ministries Committee), Doreen Simmonds (Presbytery Advocate to General Assembly), Julie Kitka (President, AFN Board of Directors), Evon Peters (AFN Moderator).*

We rejoice that our denominational leaders were concerned enough about relationships that they were willing to walk the Christian walk and bring these wrongs to light. Please pray that this act of apology might truly open doors to a new quality of relationships among Alaskans.

*Curt E. Karns*

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## Autumn Fundraiser this Weekend

Autumn Fundraising Event

To Support the Ministries of

To Support the Ministries of  
**ANCHOR PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

**Saturday, Nov. 5, 2016**

Fellowship Hall, First Presbyterian Church  
616 W. 10th Ave. (10th & G)

**SPAGHETTI DINNER**

Includes Salads, Garlic Bread, Desserts

**SILENT AUCTION**

**YUP'IQ DANCING**

Dinner tickets: \$10.00 per individual or \$25.00 per family.

"A fun evening for all."

**Our Mission:**

To provide a welcoming place for Alaska Natives and Christians of all races to worship and have fellowship. Enjoying Jesus Christ in our worship and service to the community. Connecting people to a real relationship with God, each other and the rest of the community.

Sunday Services held in the Chapel

1st Presbyterian Church-11:00AM

616 W. 10th Avenue

Anchorage, AK 99501

We are currently accepting donations of money or of items for this auction. If you have something that you wish to donate, please contact Rev. Dr. Britt Johnston, at 538-7312; [takubritt@gmail.com](mailto:takubritt@gmail.com)

**Mark Your Calendars**

**November 5,  
2016**

**Anchor PC Autumn Fundraising Event**

Saturday, November 5, 2016  
First Presbyterian Church, Anchorage

**November 24,  
2016**

**Thanksgiving Day**

The Presbytery office will be closed on November 24th & 25th in observance of the Thanksgiving holiday.



**February 24-25,**

**Our Next Presbytery Meeting**

In the Anchorage area - Location TBD

2017

Presbytery of Yukon - 616 W. 10th Avenue, Anchorage AK 99577 - 907-276-0914

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