



GOOD NEWS IN THE DIOCESE
Monthly Report from the Office of The Bishop
July 2008



NEWS FROM REV. GINNY DOCTOR

It is a cool, damp day in Fairbanks. I am wondering where summer went and I haven't even been to fish camp yet! We are busy. Suzanne and Lynnette are working through the annual audit, Anna is getting her hair done (just kidding, she just came back from a pastoral visit to Kivalina), Sherrill is busy making new song books for St. James in Tanana, Shirley is getting it going with the Youth Commission and I am thinking about what I said I would do for the Standing Committee.

I volunteered to create a plan for the Rt. Rev. Mark MacDonald Major Gifts Campaign. We have an old plan that needs revising to bring it up to date with the "scaled down" campaign. I suppose there are some who don't support the campaign. The most frequent reason I hear is that it is not for the whole diocese. But, it is. If we can raise the goal of two million dollars for each of the cases, "The Hudson Stuck Fund for Mission Travel" and "Keeping Jesus

as the Light of the Wilderness" (training), it will help us to reach all of the deaneries with appropriate training for ministry and visits to all congregations. In the past years we have been good at passing budgets with what we call "In God we Trust, Faith Offerings", a nice way of saying this is a deficit budget. If we can raise the money for the two endowments, I doubt that we will have to rely on "In God We Trust" to make ends meet.

The President of the Standing Committee, The Rev. Dawn Allen Herron, went to three of our four deanery meetings to ask people to support the campaign. Over \$6,000 in cash and pledges was received. God is good to us. If we want to, we can do this. It is like the time the man told Jesus, "You can heal me, if you want to." (Ginny Doctor paraphrase of Matthew 1:2) – With thanks and blessings to all.



STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT

By: Mary Margaret Davis

During the month of June the Standing Committee (SC) met twice. In addition to our usual monthly teleconference, an in- person meeting was held at the end of June in Fairbanks. It is encouraging to see all the activities happening in the congregations of the diocese and especially the fine work that the diocesan staff is doing during this interim time.

Both the Rev. Canon Ginny Doctor and the diocesan administrator, Suzanne Krull, were present and could report that the business and finances of the diocese are in good shape at this time. God is stirring the hearts and souls of Alaskans.

We welcomed two new members to the committee: The Rev. Connie Jones from Anchorage and The Rev. Bob Stevens from Juneau. We missed having with us Barbara Learmonth from Juneau, who has been caring for her mother, and The Rev. Jerry Norton from Kivalina, who was hunting.

Some of the topics that were discussed included approvals of bishop elections in other dioceses, the update from our Search Committee and the diligent work that they are doing, our property policies, safe church and anti-racism trainings, some guidelines for communication and relationships in the diocese, The Rt. Rev. Mark MacDonald Major Gifts Campaign and the suffragan bishop task force. Our goal is to organize and clean up some of these areas before the next bishop is here in order to make his/her start a smoother process. We also discussed the upcoming Diocesan Convention (January 2009) and the upcoming General Convention.

The SC will continue to meet regularly by teleconference the first Monday of the month at

5:30 p.m. Any one may present concerns, questions, celebrations and thanksgivings to the committee, through their deanery representative. It is always good to hear what you are doing and have your input.



BISHOP SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE

By: Stacy Thorpe

Search Committee Communication Liaison

It is hard to believe we have been on this journey for an entire year now. It was about this time last June when the Search, Transition and Standing Committees met in Wasilla for the first time. In search of our new Bishop, the committees defined the work ahead, and each member individually committed to seeing the work accomplished. The Search Committee immediately settled down to business, and business it has been. Hectic at some times, frustrating at others, each step has truly been a rewarding experience. We are proud of our Diocesan Profile and excited about the variety of candidates who have entered into discernment with our Diocese. Thank you for all the information and conversation that helped us build the profile. And thank you for your prayerful nominations of candidates.

Most recently, we notified each of the nominees whether or not they were remaining in the discernment process with us. As we continue

studying the information provided by each of the candidates, we are also beginning reference checks. We find it imperative that the voice of each of our members be included in this stage of discernment. In the middle of June, one of our members flew to the Arctic Coast to meet with two other committee members to review candidate packets in person. (Unfortunately, one of our Arctic Coast members remained weathered in to her village and was unable to make the rendezvous!)

For our next step, the entire Search Committee will gather in Anchorage July 18 – 20 to discuss the nominees and the next phase of our process. Our consultant and chaplain will both be present at our gathering. By the end of August, our committee will have prayerfully determined the candidates whom we will be contacting to affirm our continued discernment.

In early fall we will begin visiting candidates. The final candidates that we present to the Standing Committee (and through them to you) will be requested to make a personal videotape answering some predetermined questions. These videotapes will eventually be shared with each congregation in the Diocese.

It is as we enter this next stage that you may wonder about our progress. Although we cannot convey much information, rest assured we are busy

at work. Just think, by this time next year we will have our newly installed Bishop walking amongst us! Your continued prayers are greatly appreciated!



2009 TEC GENERAL CONVENTION

Preparations for the 2009 General Convention of The Episcopal Church (TEC) are underway! Initial housing information has been sent to the diocesan office, which will be shared shortly with the appointed deputies. The Group Administrator for the Alaska Diocese is Shirley Lee, who will be handling all arrangements. The TEC convention will be held the week of July 8, 2009 in Anaheim, California. Each diocese is allowed to send eight deputies – four clergy and four lay. For more information visit the General Convention website, which contains the draft convention schedule and other pertinent material. The website address is: <http://www.episcopalchurch.org/gc2009>.



YOUTH COMMISSION

Plans are underway to host an in-person meeting of the Youth Commission, in August. This commission was formed under the direction of Bishop Mark MacDonald to (as the statement of purpose outlines) “*initiate, sponsor, and support youth activities in The Episcopal Diocese of Alaska and provide links of communication*”.

The commission is comprised of ten members – two co-chairs and one adult and one youth representative from each deanery. The commission has been working diligently toward fulfilling its general purpose, no easy task given the size and diversity of our diocese!

The **Youth Commission** members are:

Co-Chairs:

Rev. Gordon Blue
Rev. Paul Klitzke

Arctic Coast Deanery

Christopher Downey, Youth
Lillian Johnson, Adult

Interior Deanery

(Vacant), Youth
Rev. Bessie Titus, Adult

South Central Deanery

Haley Hanson, Youth
Gail Loken, Adult

South East Deanery

Samantha McNeil, Youth
Rev. George Silides, Adult



NAVAJOLAND VISITED

A delegation from the diocese, numbering sixteen (16), traveled to Navajoland in mid-June. Navajoland is located within New Mexico, Utah and Arizona. The trip was made possible by a grant from The Domestic Missionary Partnership. The Alaska representatives were there to strengthen the spiritual bonds between the Dene' (also known as Dine' in Arizona) people of Alaska and Navajoland. In the weeks to come we will be working on a plan for partnership. The delegation included people of all ages and much was shared.