

O YE FROST and COLD

Volume 102

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A small tinsel covered editorial

... and THE STAR SHINING over the ALL NIGHT LAUNDROMAT

I knew someone once who loved Christmas; and rejoiced about its approach when the first snow would fall in September; and looked forward every year to putting the Christmas decorations out. Among the decorations was an electric candelabra that went in a front window. It was not fancy, but it was safe. And it always went *there*. Plugged in, the orange plastic flames glowed light out into the dark December night.

It's an old custom; putting candles in a front window for Christmas. It dates back centuries. People put a candle in the front window to light the way for Mary and Joseph making their way to Bethlehem. People put a candle in the front window to show Mary and Joseph they are welcome *here*, in *this* house, if they need a place to stay.

What follows is a true story. It happened five, six, seven years ago. The Christmas Eve services had finally ended for the night at St. Matthew's. They had been grand and filled with Holiness and Wonder. The entire World had been here. We had heard at least three times, through the three Christmas Eve services, the Christmas story of shepherds and angels and no room in the inn and the Birth. Then we had cleaned up, so the Church was respectful for Christmas Morning and its Service. The floor has to be clean for The Baby. Then I had staggered next door home to the Rectory. It was two-thirty or three in the morning. I sat in the living room stunned by Christmas and unable to move. Christmas tree lights twinkled colors. Then there was a knock at the door.

I couldn't imagine who would be knocking at the door at three on a Christmas Morning.

A young man and woman stood there, dressed partly for the Winter cold. She was very very pregnant. They apologized 73 times for knocking on the door. They had seen the light on and, since the house was next door to a church, they thought it might be okay to knock and ask for help. They'd been hitch hiking for several days and had just arrived in Fairbanks. She was due to have the baby any time. They had little or no money and no place to stay for the night. Did I have any ideas? Could I help?

I remember staring.

On this Night of All Nights, anything is possible. The Rev. Luke Titus once camped with heralding midnight Angels all around his campfire this Night. ANYTHING can happen on Christmas Night. EVERYTHING happens on Christmas Night.

Hesitantly I said, "Let me see if I have this straight. You're pregnant and about to have a baby any moment and you've just got into town and you have no place to stay?" They nodded. "And you've knocked on my door to ask for help and tell me this story of having no place to stay . . . on Christmas night?" Now they saw the connection and smiled. In their traveling they had lost track of days and didn't know it was Christmas.

Every year, as Christmas approaches, I ponder the same thing. I have for years. The Mystery of Grace. On Christmas Eve I wander the second floor of the Fairbanks Hospital and stare at newborn babies.

Proclaiming Christ as The Way, through the Spirit our lives mold to His life. As He carried crosses, so do we. As He broke bread and ate with friends, so do we. As He celebrated and trusted the love of the Father, so we learn to too. As He is resurrected, so shall we be. As He is born into a family, as a Baby, so are we.

But He arrived.homeless. We "spiritualize this"; and this is the spiritual work of Advent and Christmas – preparing our hearts and lives to welcome Him again. And this is Good and True Work.

But He arrivedhomeless.

Bread broken is Real and Wine poured is Real and Water baptizing is Real. And the knock on my door was Real. Homeless.is Real.

Every year, as Christmas approaches, I ponder the same thing, and have for years. If Mary and Joseph arrived today, in *this* community.and were homeless, what would happen?

I know what would happen in small villages further North. They would arrive on the mailplane, because that's the only way in. They would get off the plane and we would stand over on the edge and wonder who THEY were connected with – maybe the school – and we might make a few comments or jokes and finally somebody would approach and say something with a welcoming smile and they would be adopted up and a place would be found for them. I know this because that was me for years. I was homeless for years in the Interior and Arctic, and never homeless, never hungry. People and communities are fundamentally kind.

So are larger communities, but large communities are trickier. The entire population of Fairbanks does not meet every plane at the airport to see who has come. (Though there was probably a Time when this happened. The oldest tradition of the Country is caring for the

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ST MATTHEW'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA
THE REVEREND SCOTT FISHER



THE SOUND of EARLY WINTER VOICES

Sitting outside and
here come the
People of God;
leaves falling,

Darkness falling, snow falling,
temperatures falling, ice running,
and the People of God are passing
by. As their coats get heavier and
heavier, and hats and gloves
appear, we listen, as they
remember, as they tell stories, as
they puzzle at Life and God, and
overhear.....

I want to tell them a story. Sixty
years ago here, at St. Matthew's,
during the War, there was an
Orthodox baptism service here;
and 15 children were baptized.
We were all here - Greek,
Russian, Serbian, all of us. And
they paid for the Russian priest to
come up from Sitka to do the
baptisms. After the service, the
women had cooked and they sold
tickets to come eat, to raise
money to pay for the priest's
flight home. And the choir stalls
up there were all filled with
young Russian soldiers for the
service.

. . . and after she did that, my arm
was just warm and, you know, my
headache was gone and all the
pain was gone.

I don't know why I'm workin'
here. All the money I make
workin' here in Fairbanks just
goes so I can live HERE in
Fairbanks. I don't know why I just
don't go home, back to [*the
village*] and do things at home. I
don't need this Fairbanks life.

Her Godparents are a disc jockey,
a rapper, a newsperson, and a
senator.

They're out boating on the River.
My dad LIKES boating late in
September. Last year he came
back and said he was surprised
there was ice running, I asked
him when he'd been out there.
"OCTOBER SEVENTEENTH" he
said. [*Sigh*]. Parents are just
impossible sometimes.

And the new puppy's name is
'rubric'.

The Star . . .

Traveler. Cabins were left unlocked and the fire
laid, in case a traveler might need a warm place to
camp for the night. (The late Moses Cruikshank
and Effie Kokrine both told stories of how even the hooves of a shot moose were
used – tied together and tossed up onto a spruce limb in case a starving traveler
needed something with which to make soup). Folks can arrive and not be noticed;
can be hungry and passed by; can be homeless and have no place to turn. We can be
busy (*as if folks in small villages aren't*) and assume somebody or some agency
someplace is doing something.

And Mary and Joseph walk the streets, looking.

People in different places read this Newsletter. Where would Mary and Joseph
stay in *your* community?

In Fairbanks, they could not stay together. The overworked and
underfunded Rescue Mission – the only shelter for homeless here– is not equipped
for families. Mary over there; Joseph over there. This has been true for years. If
either has been drinking, wine perhaps, because it's safer than water when
traveling, or maybe they have stopped off at a Eucharist someplace, they could not
stay at the Mission. There must be Rules. After a certain hour of the evening, it
gets harder to get in. There must be Rules.

If not the Mission, the choices get a little grim. They could drink more,
and maybe get into the Detoxification Unit. Or the 12 hour sleep off at the already
over-crowded Correctional Center. Or they could stay overnight in a Laundromat
or an apartment building hallway. That's about it.

That's a little sad, I think. It's a community responsibility. We sing "O
Little Town of Bethlehem"; not "*O Little Agency in Bethlehem*".

This is the Season of Giving.

So now you reading this are given a *question* for Christmas: where would
Mary and Joseph stay in *your* Community Christmas night?

What happened to the couple that knocked at my door?

They are about to knock on yours.

A Word from Father Steve

THANKSGIVING THOUGHTS

Thinking back on some of the wondrous things to be thankful for. . .

A parishioner who walked up and said, "*I'm so glad to see you Fr.
Steve! My doctor can't find a trace of cancer and it has been two
years since my operation. Will you say a prayer for me?*"

How often we go through life without thinking how much we depend
on other people and their professions. I am speaking of the Fairbanks
Memorial Hospital. The fine staff deserves our thanks and prayers.

I think of a time when I stood on a Fairbanks street corner waiting
for my buddies to pick me up in their car. It was my 21st birthday and
we were going drinking. I had never had a drink before, but like many
young people I thought "*Partying*" was all fun. It took me many terrible
years to realize what a time bomb that was, and would someday blow up
in my face.

Not long ago a person told me that since we had prayed together in
church almost a year ago, the urge to drink had finally been controlled.
We said a prayer for both of us.

Talk about rewards and Thanksgivings.

Yours in Christ,
Father Steve

A PRAYER of BISHOP PETER TRIMBLE ROWE, the First Bishop of Alaska

“O God, how shall we show our gratitude to you for our redemption save in our interest in the redemption of others? If we realize your love in giving your Son to die for us, shall we not tell all others whom we can of your love and good will? Shall we not share your gift with others? All your gifts were given to us so we might give to others. Inspire us to give as you have given through Jesus Christ. Amen.”

Notes:

-Bishop Peter Trimble Rowe was the first Episcopal Bishop of Alaska, serving from 1895-1942.

- Prayer courtesy of Archdeacon Mark Boesser, who is retired and lives with Mildred in Juneau, and sends interesting things in the mail.

Early Winter Voices

There's no 'should've's' in this life; there's only grace.

But how did you get water before the Safewater building was here in the village? And there weren't any TELEVISIONS? And THERE WEREN'T ANY TELEPHONES? But. . . .BUT how did you talk to each other back then? HOW DID YOU LIVE?

I hope the Bishop is not just talkin' about dogs, because. . . .

It doesn't matter what culture you're in — black or white, red or yellow; if we have respect for each other we share with each other.

So there was Robin Williams and, because he's Episcopalian, I went and introduced myself to him and told him when our services were. "How do you do?" he said, sticking his hand out, "I'm Sean Connery."

If this is Global Warming, I say bring it on.

My Johnny Jump-ups and poppies have re-bloomed. It certainly is a different October.

ST. MATTHEW'S CHURCH

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| | | MINISTERS | YOUUS!!! |

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Early Winter Voices

I must say, I was at your Church this Summer and was really disappointed. It certainly wasn't very friendly. I was there two Sundays and neither you nor anybody ever said anything to me and when I went into the Church and sat down; the first person that came up to me glared at me and said: "*You're sitting in my place*". So I moved, and a lady pulled her coat up so I wouldn't touch it. It was all very disappointing.

I don't know her number. I got a cell phone, you know, and with those phones you never dial the number, just the name, you know. So now I don't know her number. Something, this Modern Technology.

I never heard of a Church that does Compline at Midnight 6 nights a week. That's quite remarkable.

We were out over the weekend, still, even though it's October. When we were coming back, that fog rolled in and couldn't see anything. Just pieces of the bank now and then. Good thing I had that jet boat, because I swear sometimes we were going through water only this deep. Did see a moose though. Just standing there on the bank in the fog. Bull. 57 inches. Pretty accommodating moose. He came back to town with us.

And when I die, and at my age I've got to think about these things, I've told my family I want an Episcopal priest to come down and do my service. I was born Episcopal and I'll die Episcopal.

What is the point in living if one can't fight for what is right in life?

"Grab life with both hands and live it" was the way he lived his life.

They call the Yukon: [*Gwich'in word*]. That comes from Birch Creek People; that word. Because they saw the first moose in this country there. No moose then; just buffalo. They saw that first moose, right where that creek comes out. I figure that was about 1000 years ago. Ten generations. They can name them.



A Word from the Senior Warden

FOCUSING on GOD'S LOVE

By Bruce Gadwah

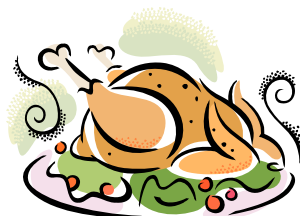
I have shared the Thanksgiving Day Holiday with others here at St. Matthew's for nine years. We came for different reasons, I expect.

Somehow I suspect their lives had changed and they were not comfortable with the surroundings presented to them at the Holiday time of year. Perhaps there was an empty chair at the table. Perhaps there weren't the resources to provide what they were accustomed to. Perhaps they were students and could not go home during the school break. Perhaps the noise and frivolity of a large group helps to squash the pain and anguish of it all. Perhaps . . . Perhaps . . . the list goes on.

At any rate, there is a core group that has been here since its inception. Some have passed on, and will forever be remembered in our hearts. Some have regained the comfortability they once had at home, and will stop just to say "H". Some will send their best recipes, though they are headed out of town. And so, just as our lives change, so does this event at St. Matthew's. We have filled the hall to capacity; and we have fallen to only four tables in a square formation, but we have averaged 50 people a year over the last three years; and it seems pretty stable.

Through all of the years, through all of the tough times, through it all there is a constant to this event: and that is the Newcomer. Whether from the street or the congregation, from Fairbanks or Fort Yukon, young or old, it is the Newcomer that makes this day. Although I enjoy this day with all who partake, I am here for the Newcomer. The face may be new, but the expression is always the same. Their specific problem may be different, but the outcome is somehow similarly devastating. My target is definitely the new arrivals, and the purpose is to give them a little "*lift*". And by "*lift*" it is in the form of the Love of God just when they feel least loved by anyone. Maybe the difference we make is only for a moment, or maybe it is for a lifetime. In either case, it does not matter. What matters is that we open a door to an experience of constant and unending Love which only Christ can provide. Today it may be in the form of a warm meal, or some small conversation, or both. Maybe they will come back on Sunday, and feed again at the altar. And maybe . . . maybe . . . who knows?

Once again we asked the congregation for support; and as always we were inundated with exactly that in the form of turkeys, fruit salads, and desserts. Your offerings not only satisfied the stomach, but warmed the heart and soothed the soul as well. For those of you who have not witnessed what I'm trying to express, I assure you that it is appreciated because I have seen it, and I have felt it, and moreover I have realized it. St. Matthew's is about focusing on God's Love, whether in the Parish Hall or at the altar, and that is what we are about.



WHO WAS THAT MAN in BLACK?

*[Some may or may not have noticed a quiet man with a beard, sitting inconspicuously in the pews during the Sunday morning Eucharists since the end of the Summer. One recent Sunday the rector drafted him to help with the Communion distribution and then **everyone** noticed him, asking the question noted above. After the 37th question, the rector said, "You should write a thing for the next Newsletter to introduce yourself". He has. It follows.]*

Recently various reports have surfaced of strange appearances around St. Matthew's. Some have suspected the bearded figure was Santa incognito, doing a bit of pre-Christmas reconnoitering, investigating the naughty and the nice. Others have stated the opinion that the strange figure was the rare and controversial black-shirted sasquatch. It can now be revealed that the shadowy figure was the Rev. Layne Smith. Father Smith came to Fairbanks at the end of July, and is the Clinical Assistant Professor of Social Work at UAF. Prior to coming to Alaska, he taught at Fort Hays State University in Kansas, and was priest-in-charge of Holy Apostles Church there. Layne has worked in a variety of church-related social service positions, primarily at institutions for abused and troubled children. For a number of years he was director of social services and chair of the professional staff at the Episcopal Church Home for Children in York, South Carolina. At various times he has also been a vicar, a curate, and a chaplain to children's homes and schools. Layne has a wife and a cocker spaniel, and is determined to unite the two of them in the sport of skijoring. His wife suggests this is unlikely.

... from our Alaskan brothers incarcerated in Arizona

RED ROCK

By the Rev. Deacon Lee Davis

Greetings from our Alaskan brothers incarcerated in Arizona. They have recently completed a transfer from Florence, Arizona to a new prison called "Red Rock Correctional Center" located near Eloy, Arizona. During the month of November I made fifteen visits to the new facility. I visited the Transitional Living Unit ("*the faith pod*"), which is larger than the one at Florence and can accommodate 60 inmates rather than 40. During my visits, I ministered to 15 inmates, one on one; shared the Eucharist with 8 communicants; held one service that included GBD and the Eucharist; and presented two courses (*one titled "From Jesus to Constantine: A History of Early Christianity"; and the second one titled "God and Mankind: Comparative Religions"*). I was blessed by an invitation to visit and participate in the Native Talking Circle and give the closing prayer. My time with the inmates was a time of prayer and spiritual growth. It was a time of challenge, and a time in which the Holy Spirit provided much needed support and numerous opportunities for sharing the Gospel. I hope to return to Red Rock CC in February to continue ministering to the inmates. Thank you St. Matthew's for your prayers, support, and encouragement.

Early Winter Voices

... came to Fairbanks originally to work on the pipeline and stayed here to wait for the next one. *STILL* waiting.

I'll tell you what really saved the economy of this town - that Valdez oil spill. And He---, it wasn't as bad as the media said. The recovery was worse.

...and when, uh, Western people came here to this country, they did the same thing. The name used to be '*ch'eno*' - '*the slough by the big hill*'. But they change it to Chena. That university place had a name too, but it was hard to say. There was a big caribou camp up there.

... one of those roadside bombs blew away half of his brain, but he's up now and walking and celebrating life.

... told me she wanted to come in the Church and pray, but was afraid. There was somebody sleeping in the back, so they weren't sure.

Somebody stole the St. Francis statue? *Awwwwwwwwwwwwwwww.*

Lord, I pray for forgiveness; but part of me deep doesn't *really* want forgiveness; and part of me doesn't think I am *worth* forgiveness.

...and when my son died, and I was sitting there, my head in my hands, it was like, it was like he was trying to fix the reception on a radio, and I heard his voice say, "*Mom, there's hope*".

Doesn't Life around this Church seem like a Situation Comedy to you?

I *know* the weather is strange. We have open water at Home in the ice. In November. I've never seen that before.

This is the closest I'm ever going to get to Heaven this side of things - ALL THESE DIFFERENT LASAGNAS!!!!

Early Winter Voices

He's already been there for two tours, and now they're talking about 2007; and I tell you.....

You're the priest at the coolest church in Fairbanks! I mean, it's a log cabin and all, and the people that go there and everything. It's a great church!

I read in the paper that thing about your church NOW having a woman bishop. Can I ask you what you think of that? I'll tell you what I think - maybe MY CHURCH - I'm a Catholic - will *finally* wake up now.

... and if I don't come up with \$150 by 5 o'clock they're going to shut off my electricity. And I've tried ...

We've got no heat and I've run out of oil and I've got no money, and there's no one else I can ask, so I was wondering, and I hate to ask, you know, but. . .

... broke the window at Wendy's and just sat there waiting for the cops, so he'd have a warm place to stay.

... and I sat there with that bottle of whiskey looking at me on the table, and that's how bad it got. It was THAT close. But I wasn't going back there. But I was *thinkin'* about it.

... told me I'm no longer in remission, so, I guess. . .

When people ask me, I tell them I'm a member of St. Matthew's but, honestly, I haven't been here for years. And I feel really bad about that. Is it okay to come back? I'd feel funny about comin' back. I've got all these problems, and those other people, they don't have problems, not like this.

Oh, we'll get through this. SOMEHOW we ALWAYS get through it.

We can NEVER make perfectly clear this side of Heaven how much we really love each other.

Oh, I was raised, and AM, Southern Baptist. Just lead 'em to the Cross every Sunday and they'll be fine is kinda the way we work.

through All The Seasons of life

SEASONS of LIFE through the BEGINNING of WINTER

From the Beginning of Sunday School, to almost the Sunday School Christmas Pageant; from Moose Hunting Season through ice finally running and Freeze Up; through a Glorious Fall and through lengthening Nights and dropping Temperatures; through Permanent Fund Dividends and Basketball Tournaments and Elections and Fiddling Festivals; through friends and family returning from Iraq (*and some not yet, and some leaving for there*); for the **79 days** since the accounting in the last Newsletter; from Sunday, **September 17th** through **Monday, December 4th**; through the last 10 weeks, we have gathered and prayed together **237 times**. An accounting and *some* of the details.....

- 36 Sunday Morning Eucharists
- 30 Private/Home visits by Lay Eucharistic Ministers
- 43 Private/Home visits by Clergy
- 5 Sunday afternoon Eucharists, or visits to Fairbanks Correctional Center
- 55 Midnight Compline services
- 1 Advent Weekday Evening Prayer Service
- 1 Tuesday Morning Denali Center Eucharist
- 11 Wednesday Morning Eucharists
- 11 Wednesday Evening Eucharists
- 5 Thursday Morning Pioneer Home Eucharists
- 7 Celebrations of Holy Baptism – 9 baptized
- 7 Celebrations of Holy Matrimony, or Renewal of vows
- 5 Commendations of the Dying/Departed
- 2 Memorial Vistations or Dinners
- 1 Funeral/Burial Service (*out of Fairbanks*)
- 3 Funeral Services (*within Fairbanks*)
- 4 Blessing of Animals Celebrations
- 2 Houseblessings
- 1 All Saints Midnight Compline tolling of the bell for the year's departed
(*2 # of police arriving to see why the bell was tolling at Midnight on Halloween Night*)
- 3 Birthday Celebrations
- 1 Indigenous Women's Conference hosted
- 1 Lasagna Dinner and Magic / Music Benefit Concert
- 1 9th Annual Thanksgiving Day Covered Dish/Potluck
- 350 Estimated Collective # standing for the Prayers of the People and thereby helping set a Guinness World Record

-
- 64 Warmest recorded temperature since September 17th
(*September 18, September 19th, and October 9th*)
- 29 Coldest recorded temperature since September 17th (*November 24th, 25th, 26th*)
- October 27th First day Fairbanks temperature recorded officially below zero
- 7 inches Official Total Amount of snowfall so far this winter in Fairbanks
- 12 hours, 50 minutes, 20 seconds –
Official Amount of Daylight on September 17th
- 4 hours, 41 minutes, 19 seconds – Official Amount of Daylight on December 1st
-

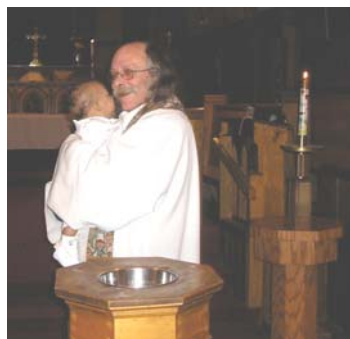
Holy Baptisms

As we celebrated the Feast of St. Matthew on Sunday, September 24th, there were baptism celebrations at both the 9:15 and 11:15 Eucharists. During the 9:15 service, 14 months old **James William Fauvor V** (*born on the 4th of July!*) was

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Seasons of life . . .

baptized, all dressed in white. His Godparents are **Macey Marie Hanks** and **Andrew Thomas Fauvor**. During the 11:15 service, 29 months old **Emilyclara Sandy John** was baptized. Her Godparents are **Ricki Jones**, **Janet** and **David Smith**, **James Brady**, **Doug Felix**, and **Jean Tritt**. On Wednesday evening, September 27th, two months old **Harmony Laine Martinson** (named after her Grandfather **Harmie "Bub" Deaton**, who had been baptized earlier in the year) was in from Nome to be baptized. Her Godparents are **Rhonda Pitka**, **Karen Eskilida**, and **Clint Covey**. During the services on All Saints Sunday, November 5th, there were four more baptisms - 3 months old **Evelyn Lillis Mills**, 38 years old **Jay-Henri Victorio Moreau**, almost 1 year old **Sophia Leslie Evans**, and 3 months old **Isaiah Neil Sam**. Evelyn's Godparents are **Stacie McIntosh** and **Michael Sweeney**; Jay-Henri's Sponsors are **Regina Grant** and **Harry Nicholia**; Sophia's Godparents are **Shannon Erhart**, **Eileen Newman**, **Courtney Moore**, **Archie**, and **Agnes**; and Isaiah's Godparents are **Michael Sam**, **Lydia David**, **Sylvia Koyukuk**, and **Todd Demit**. Immediately following the Thanksgiving Eve service on Wednesday night, November 22nd, almost 8 weeks old **Steven Elijah Ginnis III** was baptized. His Godparents are **William Pitka**, **Laura Pitka**, **Roxy Carroll**, **Maureen Mayo**, and **Charles Talbott**. And finally, as the Church Year swept towards its End, on Wednesday night, November 29th, 4 months old **Jager Anthony Adams Printup** (the rector's great great nephew!) was baptized. Jager's Godparents are **Shawnen Adams**, **Cameron Mitchell**, **Cortez Holloway**, and **Minnie**. It made for a nice symmetry to the Year, for the first one baptized this year had been Jager's close first cousin **William Cole**.



Weddings and Renewals

On a warm end of September Saturday afternoon, on Saturday, September 30th, St. Matthew's filled past overflowing (out onto the sidewalks, the yards, etc.) for the wedding of **George James Yatlin** of Beaver, and **Tiffany Renee Tritt** of Arctic Village and Beaver. The rector celebrated, with **Deacon Bella Jean Savino** assisting. George and Tiffany live in that house back over there in Beaver; and 400 of us smiled at the celebration. The following Saturday morning, October 7th, with the rector away at the Diocesan Convention, the **Rev. Deacon Montie Slusher** celebrated the wedding of **Joseph John Bauer** and **Anne Marie Compton**. Joseph is currently scheduled to be deployed next year. The next day, Sunday afternoon, October 8th, **Fr. Steve Matthew** celebrated **Thomas** and **Danielle Stokesberry** renewing their wedding vows. Near the end of October, on Friday afternoon, October 27th, the rector celebrated the wedding of **William Lee Pilot** and **Kimberly Shaley Kayotuk** of Huslia. The wedding, carefully arranged by friend **Peter Captain**, filled the Church and again, my, what smiles and beauty. One week later, in the late afternoon of Friday, November 3rd, in very special circumstances (see below), with tears and prayer and family and friends filling the room, surrounded by the eternity and promise of love, the rector celebrated the wedding of Tanana Chiefs President **Jerry Isaac** of Tanacross and **Arlene Mary Demit** of Tanacross/Tetlin, in Arlene's room in the Fairbanks Memorial Hospital. And smiles and joy broke through. One week later, on late Saturday afternoon, November 11th, the

(Continued on page 20)

Early Winter Voices

. . . told me" *I don't even go to the potlatches anymore. Just been too many; too many funerals.*"

Yes, I know, it's a Catch 22, but you can't stay here at the Rescue Mission. We'll call the police for you and you can stay in the 12 hour sleep-off in the jail. This may not be the best solution, but it IS an answer.

...and I tell you, I think the Army has done a poor job getting us ready for when they come back. When I think what my husband has seen and done AND NOT TOLD ME ABOUT, I get, I get, *ohhhhhh*, I get just worried for him, what he's holding in.

I remember, when I was a kid, visiting at the Pioneers Home, and I met this old guy there. He was in his 90's, but you wouldn't have guessed it. He'd been a pilot on the steamboats on the Yukon. From 1905 to 1909.

Those days there were these bed and breakfasts on Wendell. Well, they didn't call them that then. They were dorms; and I used to run errands as a kid for these Old Timers there. One guy I met there, he'd been a teenager in Texas, went on a cattle drive up to Kansas, met the Earps there, Wyatt and them. He and his friend Frank then just followed the Earps; and bartended for the Earps across the West, and then came up with Wyatt here to Alaska. His friend Frank was known out west as Buckskin Frank Leslie, and was the one that shot Billy Claibourne and Johnny Ringo. Frank had left Alaska because he couldn't take the cold, but Tom had stayed. I finally lost touch with him, but I guess he's laying there now in that Clay Street cemetery.

Well, the Wizards of the Vestry, uhhhh.... Wardens, I mean . . .

So come on all you husbands and wives; all you lovers who haven't made the step yet, this song and waltz are for you. . .

"Waltzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzz across Texas with youuuuuuuuuuu . . ."

Early Winter Voices

I think I'm turning into a Purist. I mean, this is fun and all, but I think I'd really rather have just an unamplified guitar and violin up there.

Where am I going? Now that this weekend and all the dancing is over, I'm going to get a foot massage.

It's like Grandma Charlotte told me once. We were having a church meeting and I was all in a panic because I had NOTHING in my smoke house. And she told me, *'Don't ever worry about food. God will provide.'* And he did. We fed everybody and still had food left over.

He went to church last week with his friend, and they went to ----- Church. And he went to Sunday School and at Sunday school the teacher asked the class, *'Okay. If there was a fire at your house, what are the 3 things you would save?'* and the kids said different things and our son said: my parents, my dog, my musical instruments. And they were all wrong. The right answer was: God. And the teacher made them throw their wrong answers into the fire! He had to throw US into the fire! And that's what he learned at the Sunday School!

Gee, we've got a women Governor and a woman Presiding Bishop. We're going to have to form a Support Group.

The weather IS changing. There's a lake way north back home, Arctic Village, where we go hunting. Way up in the mountains. I was up there this Summer, hunting; and there were frogs there. Gee, funny. There's NEVER been frogs there. NOBODY ever heard of frogs there. But they were *there*. Funny, huh?

I'm going to go home to be with my folks for the holidays. It's too lonely up here. My husband's over there - Iraq - he'll be there another year and a half. *Sighhhhhh*. He's been there a year now. He was home in July....but only for 3 days. Then he had to go back. It's lonely, so I'll go be with my mom. Just every day, wondering if, if he's going to die. Just wondering. But he called me today! During my lunch hour!



A CALENDAR of THE SEASONS: SPECIAL COMING EVENTS in the next THREE MONTHS

Monday, December 4th – Friday, December 22nd

5:30PM *"Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is."* (Mark 13:33) Evening Prayer is prayed in the Church at 5:30PM, Monday through Friday, during the Season of Advent.

Saturday, December 16th

Noon. *Sunday School Christmas Pageant Rehearsal.* All ages welcome (*you too, adults!*) & no previous experience necessary! Come join!

4PM. *"Christmas Party and Potlatch Get Together".* Food, music, singing, and door prizes. Everyone's invited! Bring a covered dish to share. Coordinated by the Rev. Deacon Bella Jean Savino (456-1503).

Sunday, December 17th (3rd Advent; and the last Sunday with 3 Eucharists until January 7th)

8AM *Eucharist, Rite 1*

9:15 & 11:15AM *Sunday School Pageant and Eucharist*

Thursday, December 21st

7PM *"A Dark Christmas Service"* and Eucharist. As in previous years, a service acknowledging the Grief of the Season.

MIDNIGHT *"BANG -POTS -AND -YELL -LOUDLY -TO -CHASE -AWAY -THE -GREAT- DRAGON -OF- DARKNESS"* *"Winter Solstice Compline.* We still haven't figured out the Theology behind this, but it seems to work. If we yell and scream outside the Church Door at Midnight on the Winter Solstice, Light DOES seem to return.

Friday, December 22nd

5:30PM *"Whitney turns 19 Dinner and Birthday Party!"* Whitney Demientieff, daughter of Vestrymember Linda, is turning 19 and everybody's invited to her Birthday Party in the Parish Hall.

Sunday, December 24th (4th Advent & Christmas Eve)

[NOTE TIME CHANGE FOR SERVICES in the MORNING!!!!]

8AM & 10AM *Eucharists (NO Sunday School)*

[Christmas Tree Lights turned on when Light of the First Star appears]

5PM *Christmas Eve Eucharist*, with Bishop Mark MacDonald preaching.

8PM *Christmas Eve Eucharist* (Closed circuit television & additional seating in the Parish Hall)

10:30PM *Christmas Caroling in the Church*

11PM *Christmas Eve Eucharist* (Closed circuit television & additional seating in the Parish Hall)

Monday, December 25th (Christmas Day)

11AM *Christmas Day Eucharist*



A CALENDAR of THE SEASONS: SPECIAL COMING EVENTS in the next THREE MONTHS

Wednesday, December 27th

(Replacing the usual 7PM Eucharist) 6PM Meet at the Church and then Caroling around town.

Sunday, December 31st *(First Sunday of Christmas & New Year's Eve)*

8AM & 10AM Eucharists *(NO Sunday School)*
11PM New Year's Eve Eucharist

Monday, January 1st *(New Year's Day)*

2PM Traditional New Year's Day Potluck/Potluck/Covered Dish (and somebody's gotta offer to make da Soup!)

Friday, January 5th *(The 12th Night of Christmas)*

6PM 12th Night Potluck/Covered Dish/Singing of Christmas Carols, and Burning of Christmas Greens Bonfire. Ancient Christian Wisdom and Lore teaches that if the Christmas Greens are NOT burned, Springtime will not come. No comment about Last Year's efforts.

Saturday, January 6th *(The Feast of the Epiphany)*

Noon. In honor of the Epiphany and Magi and Gifts, the Vestry is meeting to finalize the 2007 Budget. All interested are invited.

Sunday, January 7th *(The First Sunday after the Epiphany; and Return to the Traditional Sunday Morning Schedule)*

8AM, 9:15AM, 11:15AM Eucharists, with Holy Baptism. 9AM Sunday School begins again.

Sunday, January 14th *(The Second Sunday after the Epiphany)*

The 2007 Budget for St. Matthew's, and proposed Nominations for Election to the Vestry, are available in the Parish Hall for discussion and conversation.

Sunday, January 28th *(The Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany)*

9:15AM ONE EUCHARIST THIS MORNING, and the ANNUAL MEETING of the PARISH of ST. MATTHEW'S. See related articles in this Newsletter. Covered Dish following.

Friday, February 2nd *(Candlemass)*

6PM The very last of the Christmas Celebrations. Covered Dish, the singing of Christmas and Groundhog Day Carols; and a Celebration of Holy Baptism and Eucharist, honoring also the members of the Diocesan Society of St. Simeon and St. Anna.

Tuesday, February 20th *(Shrove Tuesday)*

We are looking for volunteers to be shriven; and also for coordinating the Pancake/Mardi Gras Party

Wednesday, February 21st *(Ash Wednesday)*

The Beginning of Lent.

Early Winter Voices

You know, your mother gave me permission to fix your pants. And, I must say, that is the *UGLIEST* sweater I have ever seen. Please throw it away.....

I thought I was doing okay, but now the Season is beginning and, and, and he's not *HERE* this year.

You know I was shot down 3 times in VietNam and wounded twice, but quitting smoking was harder than ANY of that.

It MUST be warmer in Heaven. If it is THIS cold in Heaven, the angels' wings would freeze and fall off.

Ohh, I'll eat Thanksgiving with my sister, but I got to watch her biscuits. She never learned how to make biscuits. You could play baseball with 'em.

You used to see caribou boots like that all over town; that's all I ever wore growin' up. But you never see them anymore.

. . . walked up to Rampart, carryin' the case of whiskey.

....and him and his brothers were all workin' for one of those barge lines; and they got fired, for somethin', in Galena. So they walked home to Beaver from there. From Galena.

That was when we were in the "*Big White Square Table*" mood.

My great grandfather was the King of Hawaii and....

But guys don't get flowers!

She was two months old when her daddy left. I'll be SO GLAD when he comes back next month. The other kids ask me EVERYDAY, "*Is Daddy coming home yet? Is Daddy coming home yet?*" And I am so tired of watching the news and worrying every moment, if, if, if... I'll just be glad when he's HOME.

I'm sure glad St. Matt's is having this Thanksgiving supper. We didn't have any place to go, and...

Heaven is when we admit God with gladness and open arms.

Early Winter Voices

I've heard that! About a flying saucer landing out on the Goldstream Road once. I've heard that story!

Oh, he's her pumpkin pie.

Just keep remembering how worse it would be if it wasn't, thank God, for Global Warming.

. . . I can no longer be complacent about the gift of life or the short time that I am granted with the people I love.

...and it's found in this whole world only in Bethel, Alaska and Tibet.

My Daddy's coming back at 1:30 today!!! He's been gone 16 months and now he's coming home!

....she said to me, "*Daughter, I'm so tired of this world. But last night I dreamed I landed in a good place. Beautiful, with lot of flowers.*" She see ahead. That night she died. Yes, we have a good place waiting for us.

OH, THANK YOU JESUS, THANK YOU JESUS, YOU'VE COME. I'VE BEEN JUST SO HUNGRY FOR HOLY COMMUNION AND I CRY TO GOD THAT HE WOULD SEND SOMEONE.....and you're here. Thank you Jesus. AMEN.

.drove the dogs as high as 17,000 feet up the mountain, but we finally had to turn back. My bunny boots were no good, and....

... was telling me about the first time they saw a helicopter. They all got scared. They'd seen airplanes before, but never a helicopter, and didn't know what it was.

What's today? Monday? I got back from Iraq Saturday, after 16 months. What's it like being back? A little surreal.

. . . and I wake up every morning and say "*Good morning Jesus*".

. . . and I wake up every morning and say, FIRST THING, "*Thank you Lord, for giving me a new and beautiful day*".

Well, now that I've got my "*Combat*" patch, I hope to . . .

"Advent is a Time....."

ADVENT REFLECTION

By the Rev. Deacon Lee Davis

[Yesterday, the first Sunday of Advent, Father Scott mentioned the newsletter and that there was still time. A hint, perhaps, that it would be good for the newest Deacon at St. Matthew's to contribute. Soooo, a brief reflection about Advent.]

The season of Advent is **a time** for reflection about one's life and activities, as you remember and prepare to celebrate the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. **A time** for quiet and prayer. **A time** to remain still, to listen, and to allow the Holy Spirit to speak and guide us into present and future truths; as we grow spiritually as individual members of the Body of Christ and collectively, each with special gifts from God given for the benefit of the whole Body. **A time** not to allow the hustle and bustle of commercialism to encroach upon this time with God, **this time** of reflection, and overshadow the real meaning of Advent and the Christmas season. **A time** to ask ourselves, do we really love God with all our heart, soul, mind and body? Do we really seek to glorify Him in all we do? Do we love one another as God loves us; and do we show that love by our lives and actions? Are we really fulfilling our baptismal covenant to seek and serve Christ in all persons?

Advent is **a time** for reflection, **a time** to search for truth, and **a time** for spiritual growth.

MEMORIES of CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

By The Rev. Deacon Montie Slusher

Christmas Eve of 1941 was marked by two factors. The first factor was the knowledge that our nation had been at war for almost three weeks. The reality of war had not really affected me or my family as the nation had not started rationing and, other than hearing about Pearl Harbor, we had not faced the death of young men in war. The second or immediate factor was the change brought through rural electrification programs. On that cold, dark Christmas Eve, my father took me in the farm truck to pick up my grandmother in Billings so she could spend the holiday with us.

As we slowly drove the eighteen miles from the city to the farm, it seemed we were going through an enchanted land. Houses where we once saw a candle or dim feeble kerosene lamp through a window now had bright lights. Barns and yards that were once dark or visible only in the light of a pale winter moon now stood out starkly in the glow of newly installed light bulbs on tall poles or on the eave of a barn. Now I could understand why many neighbors were saying, "*We hope to have electricity by Christmas!*" But . . . the most dramatic change was that through many windows we saw Christmas trees with multi-colored lights. There were even a few homes with lights on trees, or hung creatively on the house. About a quarter mile from our farm, we could see our own Christmas tree lights that seemed to say, "*Welcome Home!*" As St. Paul said, "*when I was a child, I thought like a child*", I still remember thinking that those lights were like the Christmas Star that guided shepherds and wise men of another time to a place that promised peace to men of good will.

I grew older and so did the war. In the following days and years, many young neighbors enlisted, or were drafted and spent their Christmas seasons far away from the Yellowstone Valley. The young man who had helped us wire the house was killed as his cargo plane crashed flying over the "Hump"; others never returned except in memories of simpler times. The years continued and I and many of my childhood friends found ourselves in uniform in other wars; and again, some of them did not return.

This Christmas Eve sixty-five years later war is still with us. There are still young men and women who are not with us during the holidays. Again, many will never return, except in memories of better times. It is my hope, my prayer that young people can see in the lights of the Christmas Star the vision of peace on earth to men of good will.

Advent is about waiting. What are you waiting for?

AN ANONYMOUS ST. MATTHEW'S ADVENT PRAYER

I am
waiting for a sense of Truth to overshadow my sense of
Doubt.
Waiting for the Return of an Experience of Wonder to
replace my preoccupation with making sense of it All.
I am waiting for a Concept of God that will supersede my
ego's desire to bargain for a Good Time in this Life.
Waiting for an Experience of God that will break through
my walls of Fear, Loss, and Anger.
I am waiting for an Opening in my Soul that will liberate
me from Separation.
I am waiting to Breathe,
to be breathed on by the "Breath of Life".

AN ANONYMOUS ST. MATTHEW'S HOLY CHRISTMAS MEMORY

Back in the early 1990s I lived on a ridge
above the Vallata restaurant, on the
northern slope of the Goldstream Valley.
One very early Christmas morning I was
returning home from the midnight service
at St. Matthew's. It was a crisp, clear,
starry, moonlit night, with the snow
twinkling all around. As I stepped from my
car, I froze. But not from the cold!
Seemingly from nowhere came the graceful,
golden strains of a lone trumpeter playing
"*It Came Upon a Midnight Clear*." The
moment was absolute magic. I'll never know
where that celestial music came from, but
the memory will stay with me forever.

"These are the memories that give meaning to my life and quality to it."

THE HOLIDAY SEASON

By Walter Tommy

I have a lot of happy memories at this time of year. The Holiday
Season.

One Thanksgiving we got a swan from our neighbor, so that's what we
had for our Thanksgiving dinner. I remember when family and friends
that lived away from Nenana would come to visit with us. That was always
a happy time for us.

We just had the bare necessities in our humble home. And I do
mean "humble", with nothing on the walls to show off our lives or what we
might have accomplished. Nothing to distract from the visits we had.

I remember that mom always had a special bale of dry fish for me that she made at fish camp that
summer, and only I was allowed to get as much of it I wanted. I would bring this out just for our visitors. (I
have to mention here, I had special family here in Nenana that I would bring it out for also.) I would serve
that with *chia* (tea) and would feel their appreciation for this. When it was time for them to leave I would
be sad because it felt so empty in the house; even though I had mom, grandma and my brother.

Sometimes uncles would stay with us. Uncle Talbert would go out in the woods and get us a
Christmas tree and I just loved the smell of it in the house. I really don't know why...YES, I DO...because
of the special closeness and warmth it brought into our lives.

There was a group of girls that would go from house to house; and they would decorate up their houses
for the people they went to. Our few decorations are antiques now, but I remember I would make colored-
paper chains and pop-corn chains that they would put up. We had small kerosene lamps that we put behind
the tree, unlit, until Christmas Eve; and only then we would be very watchful of it. Our few Christmas
presents, we were only able to open one after Midnight Mass at St. Mark's Episcopal Church. I was an altar
boy, and I took pride in being an altar boy at these holiday times in our church.

These are memories that give meaning to my life and quality to it. The times we spend with the ones
that matter to us.

So, I take this time to wish you all...Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year.



Anonymous Christmas St. Matthew Thoughts

WHAT TIME

Bethlehem in my heart. The night that mother and her special unborn son were hiding from harm's way, were longing there, long journeying in the warmth of the desert sand under the moon. A child that was born into the world that gave hope to more people, and millions of more of their descendents that have been 2000 years now. And although many claim that there been more wars in the name of Christianity, there may have been a lot more wars if He never existed, and more people without any faith whatever so. For there been war in all religion. And we're to think of all the wonder of love and faith that it did bring.

If I could have been that drummer boy, I have a heart of gold for making a child smile, having only so little to give. Had I been that wise man, what honor that God pick me to find the great one. If the cow and the sheep and the dove really existed in the story, what Great Spirit lies in them. And we should remember each and every animal of God. Earth has so much to offer. And that all I know. And Jesus who came knowing what was in store for Himself but did for the good of mankind and taught the masses of people like a butterfly bring beauty where ever he existed.

What time.



"Jesus is in Christmas" . .

MORE ANONYMOUS ST. MATTHEW'S CHRISTMAS THOUGHTS

I remember being told, "*December 25th was not the legal birthday of our Lord and Savior and real Christians didn't/shouldn't observe this appointed Holiday.*" Another Christian told me, "*You don't really buy into this Holiday, do You?*" And if I did it would be selling out my Christianity. I began to pray about this event in my life. I asked God to reveal to me if this event was a "*sell out*"

to him. Shortly after this I got my first lesson in how I began to look at the holidays.

I received a small booklet in the Mail telling me about how a performance was made Holy. A lady was telling how someone had told her the same thing, about the loss of the sacred Holiness of the Holidays and how it was such a detrimental drawback to the Lord's birthday. However, she read a story of how a holy man had perceived Jesus in the Holidays. In fact he was the one who had started decorating the evergreen tree. He thought to bring a live tree into the house and it should be ever- green - representing everlasting life. And he decided to put red colored objects on it to represent the Blood of Jesus. And then, he should add white for the cleansing blood of Jesus, who died of our sins and shed his own blood that we should become free from sin through his advocacy with the Father. Then, he decided to add green to represent everlasting life. And sky blue to represent the universe. And then he added tinsel to illuminate the stars in heaven.

So this then, is my Christmas story to my children and grandkids. Jesus is in Christmas. And the gift of giving is representative of His love for me. I carry it on because there is no other way but to accept Jesus and walk in His ways, praising his worth to me and my family and extended family. Far as the Curse is found. Because He is risen today and forever, we can live for tomorrow without fear for redemption. (Maybe YOU can add to that story.)



*"Send them into the world in witness to your love"
("Holy Baptism", Book of Common Prayer, pg.306)*



The 2006 Litany of the Baptized and Confirmed

November, and the Season of All Saints, begin with St. Matthew's remembering the Communion of Saints, and all those that have departed (in one sense) during the Church Year. But it ends remembering the Baptized; all those that have been baptized or confirmed during the Year. Every year that we have done this, the number of baptized always is greater than the number of funerals, as many as those are It ends therefore in Hope, in Light, in the visible promise of the Future. This Church year ending then, we remember and give thanks for the baptized witness of.....

WILLIAM COLE Fisher
HARLEY CATHERINE ANNE Kraus
JADE CHEROKEE Rose
ELISA Wiehl
TRINITY YETANEULNU Pitka
DEANGELO MCKENZIE JOSEPH Attla
EDDIE RONALD Edwin
ADELINE MAE Girl
ISABELLE RITA RICHELLE Jagels
CHARLENE ANDREA John
JANNA MAGGIE VADISHAN Johnson
LEILANI ALIYAH Wholecheese
ISABELLE LOUISE Richert
SADIE JEAN Richert
HARMIE L. "BUB" Deaton
ABIGAIL LYNN Turvey-Waggoner
KAIDEN RAY Farris
GUNNAR JAMES RAY Kelley
DOUGLAS JOHN MARIAN Jones III
JUSTIN PETER TRIMBLE Evans
JAMES LEON BRIAN Alexander
LAUREN Ansaknok (confirmed)
MARC Castellini (confirmed)
JOANNA Jagow (confirmed)

SHANNON James (confirmed)
ALICIA Hill (confirmed)
SHENAE Felix-James (confirmed)
TYLER Loud (confirmed)
MATTHEW Mayo (confirmed)
BRANDON Mayo (confirmed)
KRISTIE Attla (confirmed)
KYLE Pitka-Stark (confirmed)
CURTIS Solomon (confirmed)
PATRICIA Sackinger (confirmed)
CARLA Bassett (confirmed)
ELIZABETH KATHERINE SUE ROSE Simpson
AMARA AUTUMN VIOLET KAREN
KAYE AH'TIN MIKIIRAQ Stevens
JAMES WILLIAM Fauvor V
EMILYCLARA SANDY John
HARMONY LANE Martinson
EVELYN LILLIS Mills
JAY-HENRI VICTORIO Moreau
SOPHIA LESLIE Evans
ISAIAH NEIL Sam
STEVEN ELIJAH Ginnis III
and
JAGER ANTHONY ADAMS Printup

**AN ANONYMOUS
GRANDMOTHER'S
CHRISTMAS MEMORY**

Well, not that anyone would be terribly impressed, but I remember the Christmas when my son was exactly one month old and I spent most of the day nursing him in a very cold bedroom upstairs at my in-law's house. It didn't help the hoped-for bonding and positive relationship which breast feeding was supposed to produce. I hope (and suppose) he doesn't remember that Christmas. But now he's turning 36 this November . . . and teaching his daughter to say "Da Da". So what's a little cold and discomfort in the long haul? It's the Granddaughter that matters now. And I helped bring her into the world. Makes me feel good.



ANNUAL MEETING of SAINT MATTHEW'S SET for JANUARY 28th

As required by the canons and by-laws of St. Matthew's, the Vestry has set Sunday, January 28th for the Annual Meeting of St. Matthew's. As in previous years, we will hold only one Eucharist that Sunday, beginning (*sortof*) at 9:15AM. Following the reading of the Gospel (*Luke 4:21-32, if you'd like to pray ahead of time. The other lessons are Jeremiah 1:4-10; Psalms 71: 1-6, 15-17, and 1st Corinthians 14: 12b – 20*), the Sermon becomes all of us gathered here on First Avenue as Part of the Body of Christ.

Annual meetings are held to discuss and pass the Church Budget for the Year, to call new members of the Church to serve on the Vestry and other organizations, to call folks to represent us at various regional and diocesan meetings, and to receive reports – to hear about how various folks and parts of the Body are doing.

Throughout December and January, the Vestry will be preparing the **2007 Budget**, and it will be available for folks to comment on, making suggestions or corrections, from Sunday, January 14th on. If you or your organization has any special requests or suggestions, please contact any Vestry member.

Parish reports, from all the different parts (*Altar Guild, Endowment Board, Prayer Shawls, Prison Ministry, Health Ministry, Sunday School, the Daughters of the King, Education for Ministry, etc*) and ministries (*clergy, Wardens, retiring Vestry members, etc*) should be received in the Church Office by Friday, January 12th, for distribution during the Sunday services over the next weeks.

As in previous years, we will be calling new members to serve on the Vestry and Endowment Boards, and to represent us at the June Interior Deanery meeting and the October Diocesan Convention. **Cathy Davis, Gregg Eschright, and Marjorie Grunin** will be leaving the Vestry, having given untold numbers of hour, time and prayer to their work. We will be electing three new members (*Cathy, Gregg, and Marjorie are NOT eligible for re-election*), to join the continuing Vestry members: **Julia Cockerille, Linda Demientieff, Bruce Gadwah, Tom Marsh, Teresa Moore and Darrel Zuke**. The By-Laws state that Vestry members must be at least 19 years old, a baptized (*someplace*) lay person, someone who has regularly worshipped at St. Matthew's for at least the last three months; someone who has taken Holy Communion at least three times in the last year, and someone who has regularly contributed their Time, Talent, or Treasure. If you prayerfully wish to consider serving on the Vestry, or to nominate someone (*with their consent*) to be called for election to the Vestry, please contact **Cathy Davis, Gregg Eschright, or Marjorie Grunin** (*who serve as the Vestry Nominations Committee*).

The St. Matthew's Endowment Board will be calling two members to serve on the Endowment, to the seats currently held by **Carol Holz** and **Helen Burrell**. Carol and Helen **ARE** eligible for re-election. Continuing Endowment Board members are **Laura Bender, Ray Cockerille, Bruce Gadwah, Linda Mullen, and Marty Thomas**. Endowment Board By-Laws stipulate that at least 7 of the 9 members of the Board must be "*communicants in good standing [See previous definition for the Vestry] of St. Matthew's*". Should you wish to nominate someone (*with their consent*) to be called for election to the Endowment Board, or if you yourself are interested, please contact **Endowment Board Chair Marty Thomas**, or any Endowment Board member.

We will also be electing delegates (*and alternates*) to represent us at the June Interior Deanery meeting; and the October Diocesan Convention. If again, you are interested, or wish to nominate someone, please contact **Cathy Davis, Gregg Eschright, or Marjorie Grunin**.

Nominations will be announced Sunday, January 14th, during the morning Eucharists. Nominations, with the consent of the nominee, will be accepted from the floor at the Annual Meeting.

Everyone, absolutely EVERYONE, is invited, urged, cajoled into coming to the Annual Meeting. During the Elections however, only those 16 years old or older, who are baptized, have regularly attended St. Matthew's for the last three months, and who regularly contribute their Time, Talent, or Treasure are eligible to vote.

Until that Sunday, prayer and meditation on the Lessons is a good thing.

FOUR RULES for MOUNTAINS & HARD PLACES

1. **Handle situations.** Learn to be calm in the face of chaos.
2. **Persevere.** If you have to crawl on hands and knees, you're going to get there.
3. **Pay attention** to the weather, your gear, and every step you take.
4. **Trust** yourself.

[Extracted from "Editor's Note" by Chris Johns, the November 2006 *National Geographic*]

"In my 83 years I have heard a lot of sermons on stewardship. . . "

WHAT STEWARDSHIP MEANS TO ME

By Shirley Gordon



When I heard that an adult study class on the topic of the theology of stewardship was being offered at St. Matthew's, I rushed to sign up. We were a very small group, but we learned a lot.

In my 83 years, I have heard a lot of sermons on stewardship, and I have applied what I have learned to my "theology" of stewardship. Underlying it all is my belief in God. There has to be a God so that I will have someone to thank for "all the blessings of this life" and for life itself! How do I thank God? I believe I do that by "loving God and my neighbor as myself". Those are only pious words unless they result in action. It takes an act of will and an offering of self. The way I can do that is through the use of my time, talent and resources. It has been a sobering experience to take stock of myself to see how well I am doing in that regard.

The easiest way to see how well I am doing is to take a look at my checkbook. You can learn a lot about yourself that way. I was not surprised to see

how much I spend on food! I was pleased to find that I practice my version of tithing. I am still at the minimum of ten percent of my income after taxes. Not all of the money goes to the Church. I count my gifts to charity, too.

When my children first began to have a little money of their own, they were taught that out of every dollar, a dime should go in the offering on Sunday and a dime should be saved. The rest was for their use. That is not a bad standard for all of us.

It is not as easy for me to evaluate how I am doing in the use of my time and talents. Someone else will have to do that for me. When I was helping at Breadline and Love INC, I believe I was close to giving ten percent of my time in the service of others. I no longer have that kind of energy, but I spend at least six hours a week sewing dolls for children in trauma from wars and natural disasters. "Ragdolls2Love" has given me a tangible way to love my neighbor by my gift of time and talent.

I consider the tithe as the minimum I should give as an offering to God, so what I have shared here should not be considered patting myself on the back. I hope my experience of stewardship will help others to come up with their own "theology".

November 2006

A STATEMENT on STEWARDSHIP from THE 2006 ST. MATTHEW'S VESTRY

We, the undersigned Wardens and members of the 2006 Vestry, affirm the following statement regarding Christian stewardship:

We believe that Christian stewardship is taking care of the gifts that God has given us in the creation and blessing of our lives.

We believe further that our thankful response to God's abundant grace in our lives is to offer ourselves, through our time, our talents and our treasure to carry out His work in the world.

We acknowledge the tithe (giving the first ten percent back to God) as the traditional Christian standard of giving, recognized by the Anglican Communion worldwide and the American Episcopal Church. We also acknowledge that each person must freely and responsibly return thanks in ways known only to him/her and God. We believe the commitment is important, regardless of the amount.

Therefore, we the undersigned, tithe, or are adopting a personal program to bring us to the giving of a tithe.

We invite you to prayerfully consider joining us in being accountable for our lives as stewards of God's gifts.

Signed,

Bruce Gadwah, Senior Warden; Thomas Marsh, Junior Warden; Cathy L. Davis, Clerk; Julia Cockerille; Linda Demientieff; Gregg Eschright; Marjorie Grunin; Teresa Moore, Darrel Zuke





THE PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

By DeAnne Stokes

The Prayer Shawl Knitters appreciate the support and interest in our ministry that we experienced this past month, and want to share some of those experiences and events and voices we heard.

"Yes, I saw the shawls draped over the altar. It looked like a rummage sale!"

On Sunday October 29 at each service we placed completed shawls on the altar for the blessing of the congregation. Afterwards we were in the parish hall to answer questions about our work. As it turned out we gave most of the shawls away. Thus family, friends and community members are wrapped in the warmth and prayers of the People of St. Matthews.

"I've always wanted one, but I don't know how to use it"

Answer: *"Be very still and wrap around shoulders."*

Now the Prayer Shawl Knitters are knitting furiously to make sure we have more to share as the requests come in and the need arises.

"How do I get a prayer shawl?"

Answer: *"Just mention it."*

At our last meeting we read this prayer together and want our readers to know this is where our hands and hearts dwell.

The Nine Blessings

I call nine blessings from above

In the name of God: the creator, the giver of life, the holder of time

In the name of Jesus: the savior, the healer, the lifter of pain.

In the name of the Spirit: the comforter, the consoler the sustainer of life.

I knit a mantle of caring

I knit a mantle of protection

I knit a mantle of wholeness

I knit a mantle of strength

I knit a mantle of healing

I knit a mantle of patience

I knit a mantle to enfold you

I knit a mantle to encircle you

I knit a mantle empower you.

(By Cathleen O'Meara Murtha, D.W.)

Bring Spring

By Laura Vines (2001)

Bring spring to us, O Winter Wind.
Bear that tender one carefully to us
On your powerful shoulders,
And surrender your charge to no one, I say.
For we would not trust you in vain.
Amongst your snows we walk, calling her
In our dark, weary times; wishing for
Other, gentler air to breathe, perhaps.
And should we not hear even a faint reply,
To what far, unloving places might
Our souls wander? So truly do we live
By faith: a soft sound, a flicker from afar
Leads us on. For though we are
Ancient beings, each hard season somehow
Contrives to be our first, as if
We had never seen Spring follow Winter.

Grandmothers, Bikinis, Earthquakes, and Mountain Climbing. . .

REPORT on the OCTOBER INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S MEETING in HAWAII

By Bernice Aragon

[NOTE: At the conclusion of the 11:15 service on Sunday, October 15th, the rector, having been handed a note, announced that the news was reporting that a +6 earthquake had hit the Island of Hawaii that morning. There was a collective gasp, and we prayed. ONE of the reasons we prayed was because Bernice Aragon was somewhere over there at a meeting. Thankfully she, and almost everybody, turned out to be fine. Here's Bernice's report on the meeting.]

From October 12th through the 17th I attended the "Episcopal and Anglican Indigenous Women's Gathering for Healing" at the Episcopal Camp and Conference Center at Mokule'ia, about 40 miles north of Honolulu in Waialua, Hawaii. There were 29 of us there - including our leader **Janine Tinsley-Roe**, National Missioner with the office of Native American Ministries at The Episcopal Church Center in New York, New York; and **Bishop Carol J. Gallagher**, Diocese of Newark, and her

(Continued on page 17)

REPORT from THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

By Roxy Wright - Sunday School Director



Prayer Gathering - Sunday School resumed for the winter, back in September. We meet at 9:00 AM for song time, and then the youth go to their age group classes before joining the congregation for the Eucharist. The week before classes began, we had a Prayer Gathering to support, uplift and pray for the teachers, children and all involved with youth Christian education at St. Matthews. We had a good response from both the Vestry and the rest of the congregation. I would like to thank all of those who attended the Prayer Gathering, those whom volunteered for snacks, and for all of your continuing prayers.

Patty Meritt is teaching the little ones again this year, along with help from **Steve Moore**. Patty's class raked leaves this fall when they were learning about service to others and our church. In learning to give, they gave away gold chocolate coins. The class is participating in Project Shoe Box. For Christmas they are filling shoeboxes with necessary items and toys, to send to children overseas.

Song time is from 9:00 to 9:15 AM upstairs. **Linda Mullen**, with her guitar, leads our song time worship, along with **Steve Moore**. We have invited **Father Scott** and any of our other clergy to join us during this time whenever possible. One of the goals that the Sunday School teachers would like to accomplish is more intergenerational - interactive participation with our church family here at St. Matthews.

Kathy Mulkey is teaching the 1st to 3rd grade class. She said that she has been having a larger turn out in her class this year, which has been both encouraging and a joy to her. Kathy attended the Western Episcopal Education meeting that was held in Washington State, in October. She reported that she met a wealth of exciting, innovative people, whose life work is focused on Christian education for both youth and adults.

Helen Howard continues to teach the 4th and 5th graders, with some help from **Louise Smith**. The class has been studying a unit on God's covenant with His People, from the time of Noah to their exile in Babylon. In conjunction with their studies, they plan on making a 'Welcome Home' banner for our troops from Iraq (ancient Babylon). Last year, **Marjorie Grunin** shared teaching this class with Helen. This year Marjorie is focusing on just the children's Christmas pageant. The dates for the program and practice will be announced in the Sunday bulletins. To help out, call Marjorie at 451-1981. [NOTE: The Pageant will be Sunday, December 17th, during the 9:15AM and 11:15AM Eucharists. Practice is Saturday, December 16th at Noon!]

Beth Corven and **Virginia MacDonald**, lead the older youth in Gospel Based Discipleship. They meet at 9:00 AM, in the basement. **Bonnie Hameister** has visited the class to help them with knitting. The youth were making hats and scarves for people. One of them is knitting a prayer shawl. The class was planning on attending the next prayer shawl meeting. **Bonnie** and **Sue Englebrecht** have provided needles and yarn. A big thanks to **Darrel Zuke** for filling in teaching this class when needed this year.

Pat Sackinger is going to be helping the youth (and anyone else interested in participating) make "Ice Candles", during Sunday School on November 26th. In the southwest United States there is a Spanish and Italian tradition of lighting candles and metal lanterns, to light the way for the Christ child. In Alaska, we will be lighting the way with "Ice Candles"! On Saturday, December 2nd, at 1:00PM, this project will be assembled by the picnic tables outside on the church lawn. We will light the display, sing Christmas carols, and drink hot chocolate. All are invited!!

Indigenous Women's Meeting . . .

husband **Mark Gallagher**. There were women from Alaska, Australia, Hawaii, North Dakota, New Mexico, New Jersey, New York Oklahoma, South Dakota and Utah.

Every morning after breakfast we began our day with Morning Prayer and church service, with one of us taking turns doing the service with reading, leading and songs. The Australians sang one morning; the next morning the Hawaiians; and whoever wanted to sing. It was spiritual and awesome. We had a healing service workshop, Group introduction and Reflections on 2005, Campfire social/story telling in the evening, "A Native Woman's Journey" - (presented by **Bishop Carol Gallagher**), open discussion, Millennium Development Goals (MDG's), the Three R's and Indigenous Community.

(Continued on page 18)



DOES ST. MATTHEW'S WANT to HELP BUILD a HOUSE NEXT SUMMER?

Fairbanks Habitat for Humanity is seeking to have an "Apostle Build" House built in Fairbanks this coming Spring and Summer, and wonders if St. Matthew's is interested. An "Apostle Build" house is a Habitat house where 12 area churches pool their resources together to fund and build the House. At least the following area churches have already committed: First United Methodist, Zion Lutheran, North Pole Worship Center, Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church, Door of Hope Church, and the Lutheran Interior Cluster of Churches (*Lord of Life, Fairbanks Lutheran, and Christ Lutheran*).

Each Church commits to the following: a Project Director (who coordinates the project for the local Church); prayer support for the project and family that will get the house; volunteer (*some with construction experience and skills*) assistance, with onsite labor and/or provide lunches to work teams; \$5000, which is 1/12 the cost of the house (*raised however*).

The current schedule calls for the dedication of the site around May 20th, and construction beginning soon afterwards.

The rector and vestry wonder if this calls, if this tugs, if this stirs anyone. Particularly and obviously crucial would be a Project Director. If you are interested in further information, contact the Church Office.

"What we all have in common is that we are the People of God"

REPORT FROM EFM ("*Education for Ministry*")

By Julia Cockerille

There are 12 people involved in EFM this year, including co-mentors **Roxy Wright** and **Julia Cockerille**. We have 4 new members who are studying the Old Testament, 4 members studying the New Testament, and 2 members studying Church History.

We meet every Wednesday evening at the Diocesan Office on Denali Way. Our seminar begins and ends with worship. We discuss the material in our various texts, and though different members are studying different subjects, as a group we are discovering recurring themes, as the story of the People of God unfolds — especially the themes of God's great faithfulness and grace.

Recently we have begun to engage in theological reflection -- we look at our experiences and our world to see the ways God is working. It helps us bring the Word into our daily lives. It also helps us grow and deepen our personal faith and see where we are called to act in the world.

There is a great variety of folks in the EFM group - people with different religious upbringings and different backgrounds and gifts. So we are very rich. What we all have in common is that we are the People of God, too, and we are carrying the story forward - with God's help.

It has been an interesting few months for all of us, and in the year ahead I expect we will learn much and have some great times.

Indigenous Women's Meeting . . .

(Continued from page 17)

Sunday October 15th (*the Day of the Big Earthquake!*) we drove to Honolulu and attended a service at Saint Andrew's Episcopal Cathedral without lights; but there was enough light to make it beautiful. We were invited to a reception in the Parish hall. The last evening we had closing prayer/reception-social. We watched videos. During breaks we went swimming, shopping and climbed *almost* to the top of Diamond Head. It was in the 80's, and **Judy Moore** (*of St. James/Tanana*) made it to the top!! [*We all did NOT attempt to climb Mt. Diamond Head. There were only four of us — Judy and Sarah from South Dakota made it; and Mabel (Sarah's aunt) and THIS crazy woman almost made it.*] We socialized in the evenings talking to each other about women talk; plus how to promote cross-cultural communication; to develop leadership among Native Americans; to implement our spiritual dignity within ourselves and the re-establishment of our birthright through Jesus Christ and the Creator.

I thank **Ginny Doctor** for asking me if I wanted to go. I said, "YES!!" and she said, "Get your bikini packed then". So I packed my old suit because that was one thing I was determined to do. **Judy Folger Moore** from Tanana also went; and perhaps next time she can write her story.

Thanks and God Bless!

**PASSED RESOLUTIONS from the
32nd CONVENTION of the
EPISCOPAL DIOCESE of ALASKA**

[NOTE: The Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese was held at the Meier Lake Conference Center, outside of Wasilla, from Thursday, October 5th through Sunday, October 8th. St. Matthew's was represented by those we called at our January 2006 Annual Parish Meeting - Junior Warden Tom Marsh, Karen Parr, Roxy Wright, and the rector. Tom, Karen, and Roxy reported back to St. Matthew's Sunday, October 29th on the Convention. Courtesy of the Bishop's Office, the following is the text of the four resolutions that were PASSED at the Convention. Other resolutions – courtesy etc. - were also passed.]

RESOLUTION I “In Support of Bishop MacDonald and the Camp Allen Statement.”

BE IT RESOLVED that this 2006 Convention of the Diocese of Alaska expresses and records its support for our Bishop in his efforts to bring about reconciliation including participation in the Camp Allen meeting, so that unity and truth may prevail in the Anglican Communion.

RESOLUTION II “Christ Church Resolution.”

BE IT RESOLVED that we support the actions of our Bishop and our deputies in their commitment to support and follow the Windsor Report framework for keeping the Anglican Communion together and in conversation.

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED that we will continue to support in prayer our Bishop and deputies, the Episcopal Church, and the rest of the Anglican Communion.

RESOLUTION IV “Resolution on Cooperation with Navajoland.”

BE IT RESOLVED that the 2006 Convention of the Diocese of Alaska supports the Bishop of Alaska in his continuing conversations with the Diocese of the Yukon and the Arctic in the Anglican Church of Canada.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the 2006

Convention of the Diocese of Alaska supports the Bishop of Alaska in his role of providing pastoral oversight as Assisting Bishop of the Navajoland Area Mission.

RESOLUTION VII “Supporting the Regional Blue Ribbon Panel of Alcohol and Drug Abuse.”

WHEREAS, Alcohol and Drug Abuse has been linked to a recent increase in crime in North Slope communities; and

WHEREAS, North Slope community members have come together in a series of public meetings demanding change and expressing a willingness to become involved; and

WHEREAS, In response to these meetings, the North Slope communities have established a Regional Blue Ribbon Panel on Alcohol and Drug Abuse; and WHEREAS, The purpose of the Regional Blue Ribbon Panel will be to advise the North Slope residents on actions the North Slope communities can take to alleviate and counteract alcohol and drug abuse across the North Slope Villages; and WHEREAS, The Arctic Coast Deanery shall work cooperatively with the North Slope Borough and tribal and community organizations to ensure that all voices are heard; and

WHEREAS, The Arctic Coast Deanery staff will provide any technical assistance to the Regional Blue Ribbon Panel;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the 2006 Convention of the Diocese of Alaska express support to the Arctic Coast Deanery community in their support to the Regional Blue Ribbon Panel on Alcohol and Drug Abuse and encourage community across the North Slope.



Seasons of life . . .

(Continued from page 7)

rector celebrated the wedding of **Jerry Allen Carter** and **Sarah Marie Monroe** of Healy. And again, the Church was filled with joy. And finally, Thursday evening, November 30th, the rector celebrated the wedding of **Edwardo Michael Burdick** and **Alicia Anne Chaney**. Alicia had arrived in Fairbanks the end of October from the Midwest, to wait for Edwardo. Edwardo returned Saturday, November 25th, from a 16 month tour in Iraq with the Stryker Combat Brigade. The smiles could not have been grander.



Funerals and Memorials

On Wednesday, September 20th, 74 years old **John Hutchins Bridgers** passed away in the Anchorage Regional Hospital. Originally from Mississippi, John had bush piloted for BLM and worked gold claims, among other things, in the Tok area. He'd lived in Eagle, Tok, and Fairbanks during the 1970's, and from 1995 on. His wife **Patsy Bridgers** survives him, as do sons, daughters, other family members, and friends throughout the region. Following services Tuesday, September 26th, and burial at Birch Hill, folks gathered in the St. Matthew's Parish Hall that afternoon for a reception and memories.

Sunday, September 24th, surrounded by prayer and family, 62 years old **Vera James** died in the Fairbanks Hospital. Born to **Mary Jemima** and **Isaac Fields Sr.** of Fort Yukon, she was raised in Fort Yukon, which she "*kept running smoothly for 40 years*" as the financial officer for the city of Fort Yukon. Four sons, and many brothers and sisters and other family members, and friends throughout the North survive her. Her funeral and burial services were held in Fort Yukon Thursday, September 28th.

On a Monday afternoon with a cold wind blowing, October 16th, folks gathered on the side of the hill in the Nenana cemetery for the funeral and burial services, led by the rector, of **Katey Ketzler-Peter**. Katey had died Thursday, October 12th, at birth. Born to **Annie Ketzler** and **Michael S. Peter**, they, and her older brother **Michael Shane**, survive her. Following the service, family members from Nenana, Fort Yukon, and Fairbanks gathered in the Nenana Senior Center to share soup.

And Wednesday, October 18th, *ahhhhh*, 74 years old **Lewis Warren Beyer III** passed away in the Fairbanks Hospital, from a sudden aneurysm. Born in Virginia, Lew moved to Fairbanks in 1953, and graduated from the University of Alaska – Fairbanks in 1955. A familiar figure and business owner around Fairbanks, Lew at various times had owned the Co-Op Soda Fountain, two Dairy Queens, the Steakhouse, the Fox Lounge, a wholesale grocery distributorship, and snack bars in two bowling alleys. Not limited to Fairbanks, he tried some gold claims at Eureka, and

loved Manley Hot Springs – where for several years he bought and operated the Manley Lodge. In 1979, he started in Fairbanks Interior Accounts Service, a business which

continues to this day. More than all of that, he had a probing mind, a caring heart, and eyes that smiled ready for adventure and fun. More than that was his role here at St. Matthew's. He was a founding member of the St. Matthew's Endowment Board, and often an advisor to the Vestry and Endowment Board. By his probing questions at Annual Meetings, he kept rectors, vestries, and Budget presentations focused and on track. Some of the pews and kneelers in the Church exist because *he* repaired them. At least one of the picnic tables on the Church lawn that folks enjoy eating summer lunches at, *he* donated and maintained. And the framed presentations in the Parish Hall of the original

checks to build the original St. Matthew's, *he* donated. His wife **Lottie Davey-Beyer** survives him, and her family, his sisters **Dorothy** of Florida and **Ruby** of Maine, and their families; and the next time a rector or vestry is wrestling with a Church budget, or someone is sitting at the picnic table on a green sunshine July afternoon – they will owe him thanks. St. Matthew's filed past capacity Monday evening, October 23rd for his Memorial Service, led by the rector, with **Senior Warden Bruce Gadwah** and **Chalicebearer Mary Ann Gallagher** assisting with the Eucharist. Stories filled the night, and continued through the reception in the Parish Hall following.

Word was received Sunday, October 22nd that 73 years old Nenana elder and friend **Edna Anne Mae Ketzler** had passed away at home in Nenana, surrounded by family and friends. Born in Cape Nome, with 14 sisters and 10 brothers, she arrived in Nenana to attend St. Mark's Episcopal Church Mission at age 14. She soon had to leave, because of a death in her family, but she returned to Nenana at age 19, marrying **Richard Ketzler** in 1950. Ten children, including two sets of twins, came from the marriage; and further along, 16 grandchildren and numerous great grandchildren. A familiar figure around Nenana, Edna was a dedicated and faithful member of the Episcopal Church, and often stopped by St. Matthew's, or the St. Matthew's Church Office, when she was in Fairbanks. **The Rev. Deacon Montie Slusher** officiated at her funeral and burial services in Nenana Thursday afternoon, October 26th.

Thursday evening, November 9th, 58 years old **Arlene Mary Demit Isaac** passed away in the Fairbanks Hospital from cancer, surrounded, as she had been, by family, friends, prayer, and love. Born in Tetlin to **Fred** and **Bella (Joseph) Demit**, Arlene graduated from Chemawa Indian School in 1968, and had worked for various village councils, and other agencies. Her parents preceded her, as did her son **Damien Isaac**. Her husband **Jerry** (*see above*) survives her, as do their children **Herbie**, **Jerry Jr.**, **Galen**, and **Angeline**; 4 grandchildren, and other family members. The Chena River Convention Center filled to capacity for her funeral service,

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Seasons of life . . .

led by the rector, **the Rev. Steve Matthew**, and **Archdeacon Anna Frank**, Saturday afternoon, November 11th; and her final services were held in Tok Tuesday, November 14th.

Sunday morning, November 26th, just as the 11:15 Eucharist was about to begin, the telephone rang in the Church Office, asking for clergy to come quickly to Denali Center to pray. **The Rev. Deacon Bella Jean Savino** left to go over, and arrived to pray with gathered family at the passing of 80 years old **Nellie Cadzow Carroll**. Nellie had been resident in Denali Center for several months. Born to the late **Daniel** and **Rachel Cadzow** at Rampart House in Yukon Territory, she and her husband **Thomas Carroll Sr.** raised 12 children in the Fort Yukon area. Thomas, her husband of 60 years, survives her, as do 11 children and their families, numerous grandchildren and other family members, and friends throughout the region. Her services and burial were held at home in Fort Yukon Thursday, November 30th.

And finally, Friday, December 1st, as Midnight approached, surrounded by family in the room and hallway, 73 years old **Gabriel Nollner, Sr.** passed away unexpectedly in the Fairbanks Intensive Care Unit. Originally from Galena, Gabe was a familiar friend in Fairbanks and regularly attended St. Matthew's at the 11:15 service. He sat in the last pew and held the door open for the choir to process in (*Gospel chorus* ". . . to be the Keeper of the Door-o-o-o-or"). Now, as the Season of Advent was beginning, and its stories of Gabriel going to Mary, it is his smile that holds the door open to the new Church Year. We can trust that. Hundreds gathered at the David Salmon Tribal Hall for his funeral, led by the rector, **Archdeacon Anna Frank**, **the Rev. Luke Titus**, and **the Rev. Deacon Bella Jean Savino**, Monday morning, December 4th. **Archdeacon Anna**, **Dan Winfrey**, and **Johnny Evans** led us in memories and stories, while **Ken Charlie**, **Sam Pitka**, **Bill Stevens**, and others played familiar tunes. As the service ended, "*Amazing Grace*" shifted into "*Eagle Island Blues*", and Gabe was away, bound for his final services back home in Galena later in the week.

Other deaths during this period necessarily affected the Gathering of St. Matthew's. Tragically, above Arctic Village, 31 years old **Everett Dale Simple** of Venetie drowned on Friday, September 15th, his 31st birthday. Everett was the son of **Ethel Simple**; the nephew of Evangelist **Gary** and **the Rev. Deacon Margo Simple**. He had gone to Arctic Village for **Angela Tritt Reid's** funeral [See last

Newsletter] there earlier in the week. Following recovery, his services were held in Venetie Thursday, September 21st. Early in the morning of Friday, October 13th, in an assisted living facility in Sheldon, Washington, 90 years old **Mary Cochran**, the widow of **David**, the 4th Episcopal Bishop of Alaska, peacefully passed away. Bishop and Mary Cochran arrived in Fairbanks in 1974 (with sons **Phil** and **Tom** and **Joe**, who brought his wife **Gayle** along), succeeding **Bishop William Gordon** in the Diocese, and in the house on Kellum Street. They were here until 1981, when they retired to the Tacoma area, and Mary continued her active ministry (*"While the rest of us worried about plans and programs for training and ministry, " commented the (then) Rev. Don Hart, then rector of St. Matthew's, upon their retirement, "Mary just went out and did it."*) She was instrumental and key in helping Cambodian refugees in that area; receiving an award for her work from the Governor of Washington. Final services were to be held in Michigan. Several days later, on Tuesday, October 17th, and not far from **Mary Cochran**, another part of Alaskan Church History rested, when **Dorothy Vinson Hall**, 87 years old, died peacefully in her sleep in Sequim, Washington. Born in Milwaukee, Dorothy arrived in Alaska in 1948 to serve as a nurse at the St. Mark's Episcopal Church Mission in Nenana. There she met Allan, and they were married for 57 years, Allan being ordained here at St. Matthew's in 1974. Dorothy was the Treasurer for the Diocese for many years, and **Bishop Gordon's** last Secretary. For thirty years, St. Matthew's was their home. She and Allan retired to Sequim in 1975. Theirs was always and finally a love story. Allan had died 34 days earlier, on September 13th. (See last *Newsletter*). On Saturday, November 4th, 44 years old **Curtis Charlie** died in his sleep in Nenana. Curtis was the son of the late **Chris** and **Martha Charlie** of Minto, the brother of (among others) **Roy Charlie** and **Esther Hayward**, and the father of 5 daughters and a son. His funeral was held Wednesday, November 8th in Minto. On Thursday, November 16th, 62 years old **Mary Ulen** died in Denali Center, where she had lived for the past 16 years. Her passing needs to be noted because it was impossible to visit at Denali and not be aware of Mary and her smile. She was never NOT smiling. That's the kind of person she was.

Tragically, Saturday, November 18th, 26 years old **Jordan Bos** died in a car accident in Montana. Born in Glenallen, and raised in Alaska, he was the Love of Jessica Marth, and the father of their daughter **Niya**, who was baptized here in 2005. The three of them were living in Montana when the accident occurred. Jessica grew up here at St. Matthew's – from acolyting as a young girl, to teaching confirmation classes

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SUMMARIES of the OCTOBER & NOVEMBER 2006 VESTRY MEETINGS

October

The Vestry of St. Matthew's gathered for their monthly meeting Monday, October 30th, 2006, with the following present: Senior Warden **Bruce Gadwah**, Junior Warden **Tom Marsh**, Vestry Clerk **Cathy Davis**, **Julia Cockerille**, **Marjorie Grunin**, **Gregg Eschright**, **Darrel Zuke**, **Teresa Moore**, and the rector. Following the sharing of Pirate Stew, potato salad, and pomegranates, and GBD reflection on Luke 13:10-17, the following actions were discussed and/or taken.

1. September minutes were accepted, as presented, and details for the upcoming Lasagna Dinner on Friday, November 3rd were settled.
2. The Financial reports were reviewed and discussed, noting that September Budgeted Operating Income totaled \$19,027 (January through September Total \$192,913.); September Budgeted Operating Expenses totaled \$19,293 (January through September Total \$201,244); resulting in a monthly surplus/deficit of - \$266 (and the Year to Date Surplus/Deficit now totaling - \$8,331); and accepted.
3. It was decided to defer final decision on a recent donation to St. Matthew's until further prayer; and the use of the Quick Books accounting program was discussed.
4. With **Cathy Davis** reporting from the Stewardship Committee, the Budget Building Process was discussed, and vestry announcements and the use of the Time/Talent/Treasure forms in November were decided. Additionally, pension needs for clergy were noted, as part of the 2007 Budget discussion.
5. It was noted that a new sexton - **Tree Michael Nelson** - has now been hired; and it was again decided to invite **Archdeacon Anna Frank** and/or **Interior Dean Donny Stevens** to the vestry meetings, to increase awareness of our regional ministry and needs.
6. **Bruce Gadwah** reported on efforts to contact Floorcraft regarding stored carpeting; **Tom Marsh** and **Gregg Eschright** reported on the installation of the Sacristy roof heating tape; and there was general discussion about the 2007 Diocesan Convention.
7. **Darrel Zuke** and **Teresa Moore** reported on Sunday School plans; and there was discussion about the Nursery and its program.
8. It was moved and passed to recommend **Bernice Aragon**, **Mary Ann Gallagher**, **Kathy Mackey**, and **Martha Kerr** be licensed as Lay Eucharistic Ministers.
9. There was discussion about St. Matthew's role in the Borough/City Emergency Response Plan.
10. Reports were heard from the Vestry Planning Committee, and the Website People.



11. There was discussion about the successful recent Book Sale; the showing of "*An Inconvenient Truth*" (with agreement that the use of ceramic coffee cups instead of Styrofoam would be encouraged); and the plight of the homeless within the city.

With agreement that the next meeting would be held Monday,

November 20th, the meeting closed with the reading of "*The Prince Mammoth Pumpkin: A Parable*", by James P. Adams.

November

The Vestry of St. Matthew's gathered for their monthly meeting on Monday, November 20th, with the following present: Senior Warden **Bruce Gadwah**, Junior Warden **Tom Marsh**, Vestry Clerk **Cathy Davis**, **Marjorie Grunin**, **Gregg Eschright**, **Darrel Zuke**, **Teresa Moore**, **Linda Demientieff**, Parish Treasurer **Carolyn Nethkin**, the rector, and, by Vestry invitation, **Archdeacon Anna Frank**. Following a sharing of food and fellowship, and GBD reflection on Luke 18:35-43, the following actions were discussed or taken:

1. The Archdeacon shared with the Vestry the Diocesan Vision for Native ministry, and St. Matthew's role in this ministry. It was noted this could include visits to villages by St. Matthew's people sharing knowledge of Lay Ministry, Lay Reading, Altar Guild, Sunday School, and/or Bible Study. The need for "*Safe Church Training*" at St. Matthew's was discussed; and the Diocesan Office will be contacted to schedule this.
2. It was moved to accept the October minutes.
3. The Financial Report was received, noting that October Budgeted Operating Income totaled \$21,453 (January through October Total \$214,366); October Budgeted Operating Expenses totaled \$25,341 (January through October Total \$226,585), resulting in a monthly Surplus/Deficit of -\$3,888 and now a Year to Date Total Surplus/Deficit of -\$12,219.
4. Several Budget and Stewardship items were discussed. The Annual Parish meeting will be held Sunday, January 28th, 2007; the Vestry will meet as a committee Saturday, January 6th at Noon to prepare the 2007 Budget; and retiring Vestry members **Cathy Davis**, **Marjorie Grunin**, and **Gregg Eschright** will serve as a Nominating Committee for the 2007 Annual Meeting elections, reporting back to the Vestry at the January 6th meeting.
5. There was discussion about the Christmas Eve videotaping; and participation in the Diocesan Annual Advent Appeal for retirement funds for non-stipendiary clergy.
6. It was moved and passed to support aspirant **Shirley Lee's** application for postulancy towards ordination.
7. Arrangements for the December Standing Committee and Commission on Ministry were discussed; as

Seasons of life . . .

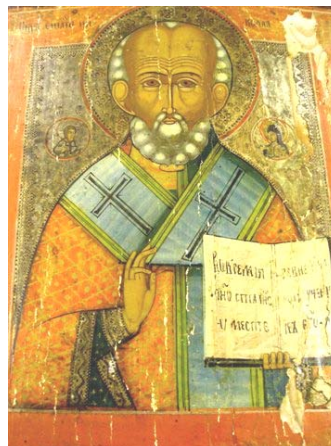
with her mother **Charlene Marth**. She and Niya have now returned to Fairbanks. A Memorial service for Jordan is tentatively scheduled for Monday afternoon, December 18th at St. Matthew's. Early Friday morning November 24th, surrounded by community and family and prayer, 39 years old **Jennifer Lynn Charlie** died in the Fairbanks Hospital. Born to **Susie** and the late **Elijah Charlie** of Minto, her funeral was held at home in Minto on Thursday, November 30th. And finally, Tuesday, November 28th, 72 years old **John P. Williams** of Chalkyitsik passed away quietly in Fort Yukon. Born and raised in Chalkyitsik, which was always home, John had a deep deep faith and devotion to the Church; and a generous and kind heart. And eyes that smiled. His funeral was held Saturday, December 2nd in Chalkyitsik.

New Ministries; Blessed Animals and Prayer Shawls; Concerts and Birthdays . . . and an Icon

We need to note and recognize that various folks have begun new ministries during this time. **Bernice Aragon**, **Kathy Mackey**, and **Marty Kerr** began serving as Lay Eucharistic Ministers; and Marty and **Sandy Soren** have begun helping with the Prison Ministry. **The Rev. Steve Matthew** has begun assisting **Shirley Lee** in altar preparation, as part of her training towards ordination. Other new events have happened. **Dick** and **Charlotte House** returned from their 5 year Exile Outside on October 15th, and now provide meditative guitar music and singing during the 8AM Eucharist. We celebrated birthdays during this Time – including Grandma **Hannah Solomon's** 98th on October 10th; **Maggie Beach's** on October 22nd; and the rector's in mid-November (*"How old are you, Father Scott?" "87." "REALLY? I never would have guessed"*). **Sasha** and **Kaiser** and a 6 weeks old sled dog puppy and **HerkyBear** and **Pearl** and **Max** and **Beethoven** and **Rueger** and **Toby**

and **PomPom** and **Molly** and **Twinky** and a whole bunch of others, and (*somewhat later*) **Libby** and **Bella** were all blessed, as part of the St. Francis "Blessing of Animals and Others" Celebration in October. As part of that Celebration, the movie *"An Inconvenient Truth"* was shown October 15th and, that same Sunday, by standing for the Prayers, we became part of a worldwide effort to successfully set a Guinness Book of World Records for folks Standing Up Against Poverty. On October 25th and 29th, Prayer Shawls were blessed, as part of the Prayer Shawl Ministry, and they have quickly been distributed, wrapping folks in prayer and comfort (*see Related story elsewhere in this Newsletter*). During October the Vestry successfully held a fund raising Book Sale and, on Friday, November 3rd, combined their efforts with **former Senior Warden Jane Sandstrom** to hold a successful fund raising Lasagna Dinner and Benefit Concert.

And Saturday night, December 2nd, as the Moon grew overhead towards being full, and the rector numb from recent crises, we gathered in the Dark Church, the Darkness of the World all around, and lit a solitary Blue Candle. And prayed Compline. An Ending and a Beginning. The **icon of St. Nicholas**, recently given anonymously to St. Matthew's, glowed ancient and wise beside the Altar, soft wood colors filled with Light, as the Night, as the House, as Us together. *Mara Natha.*



Vestry Minutes . . .



Wardens reported on: cell phone service for the sexton; the possible installation of security cameras; the need for work on the rector's car (*and the future need for a new car*); the installation of a new dishwasher in the rectory; and recent work done cleaning the church basement.

10. **Darrel Zuke** reported on recent Website developments; **Gregg Eschright** reported on his work on directional signs for in the Parish Hall, and **Tom Marsh** reported on recent Planning Committee work. This report included conceptual drawings of future expansion possibilities.

11. The scheduling of 4th Sunday Advent and Christmas Eve services was discussed (*noting the rector's mumbling about Divine scheduling*); the continued difficulty of the homeless in downtown Fairbanks was noted (*St. Matthew's is the only church in the downtown area open during the week*); help with the Endowment Board preAdvent sales was volunteered; and the need for more Songbooks was noted; as was the need for new chairs in the Parish Hall.

With the decision that the next meeting would be held Monday, December 11th, the meeting closed for November with the Lord's Prayer.

were possible plans for the October 2007 Diocesan Convention.

8. **Teresa Moore** reported on Sunday School progress.

9. Various Committee Reports were received. The



St. Matthew's Episcopal
Church
1030 Second Avenue
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O Ye Frost and Cold

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***Please Note:** Returned copies of **O Ye Frost and Cold** cost the church \$2.16 each,
forwarded copies cost \$0.75 each.

Can't come to Church? Church will come to You!!

As the monthly listing of services shows, there are a number of Lay Eucharistic Ministers trained and willing to bring the Eucharist to those who are sick, shut in, or unable to come to the Church. If you would like someone to bring you the Communion, or know of someone who would like that, please contact the Church Office at 456-5235 or slip a note in the offering plate on Sunday mornings.