

O YE FROST AND COLD

Volume 106

Published bi-monthly Number 1

January-March 2007

"A cold coming they had of it at this time of the year, just the worst time of the year to take a journey, and specially a long journey in. The ways deep, the weather sharp. . . ."

-Lancelot Andrewes' Nativity Sermon of 1662

Saint Teresa of Avila described how she knew when it was God that was speaking to her. She said, "You will know when God has spoken to you because of three things. One, you are certain of what the words are. You may not get their meaning, but the words are clear. Second thing," Teresa said, "If they are words from God, they will give you a feeling of peace, whether you understand them, or not. Third, 'The words stay with you a long time. Maybe forever."

- Bill Kreidler, Keynote Address, Friends General Conference, 1994 (quoted in "Heron Dance: A Pause for Beauty" #195)

A COLD COMING

Early Spring sunrise coming up in the East over there, over the downtown buildings, over the parking garage and over the Northward. The hills North turning pink, a sign of the new day coming. The soft pastel colors of new beginnings. The old birch tree stands in the yard, old limbs scarred and dead, a study in black and white. Its white bark echoes the snow wreathed around it; its black splotches the Night's shadows. The tree is as unalive looking as the fire hydrant in front of it. Even the birds ignore the tree. Its limbs stretch west, downriver. The dawn sunlight touches it, and the bark radiates, shining.

The early Desert Folk of the 4th century used short prayers, "arrow prayers" they called them. Short phrases from Scripture, repeated throughout the day, shot into the Heart of God. The Jesus Prayer comes from this Tradition – "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, The sinner". Without meaning to, I fell into this several years ago. Peter's exclamation on the Mount of the Transfiguration – "Master, it is well that we are here" – caught me as it was read in the Gospel the Last Sunday before Lent (*Luke 9:33*); and I carried it through Lent. I held onto it like a drowning man clutching a float. Really, I did not carry it; it carried me. Standing in line in large stores, pushing a cart down grocery aisles, riding elevators in Hospitals, walking into funerals, watching dog races; I was reciting under my breath "Master, it is well that we are here". Sometimes there was a question mark at the end of that sentence. I collapsed against a wall during the reading of the Passion during Holy Week that year and took twenty minutes to say the phrase under the Cross, not believing a word of it. It all made sense Easter morning.

This year another phrase has caught me. Again, I did not choose it. It floated and lodged within me during the reading of the Apostles Creed during Morning Prayer. Again a phrase carries me through this Lenten Spring, through sunrises and silences and grocery stores and grandchildren and telephone calls and funerals of friends. "I believe in God", I am chanting, into each unknown Moment. Again, to be honest, sometimes through gritted teeth. Again, I suspect only the Cross will show the depth; and only Easter Light will show the meaning.

Until then, we travel this cold and dangerous Trail. Begun with an ashen cross, and the reminder of dust. Dangerous enough this Trail that there's been hurt and pain; cold enough to freeze the heart, cold enough to freeze hope and tears and memories and leave them as lifeless as a winter birch tree. It took the Rev. Charlie Rice and Esias Joseph two weeks, in March of 1903, to come in from Circle, overflows much of the way, to hold the first service in Fairbanks. Rice would write five years later that often the only way to find the Trail was by stepping where the Trail was not. We wade through overflows of the Heart; and sink waist deep again and again into places where the Trail is not. But we learn from that and we struggle on, into the Cold Wind.

I watch dreams during Lent too, because one year I dreamed a beautiful and unknown figure named Spirit was inviting us all to a Great Picnic. And that, I realized, was Easter. Last week I dreamed of a ship. And the afternoon light shone directly on the name of the ship: "Job's Discovery". Job discovered there was inexplicable suffering in Life, and friends would sit with you through it. Job discovered there is Grandeur and Mystery in what God is doing – from hippopotamuses to singing stars

(Continued on page 2)



Inside This Issue:

Holy Week Schedule	Pg 5	Vestry and Sunday School	Pg 13
Seasons of Life	Pg 6	Bishop MacDonald Resigns	Pg 14-16
Interior Deanery Meeting	Pg 12	Annual and Vestry Meetings	Pg 22-23



From Christmas into Lent . . .

THE SOUND of WINTER VOICES

We're sitting outside, and the snow is blowing. We're sitting outside and it's STILL Winter, but Light grows and Spring slowly comes. We've been sitting here since Dark December. And here come the People of God. Here come family and friends returning from Dangerous Places; here come folks following a Christmas Star; here come folks with Valentines; here come pick up trucks with the caskets of friends, here comes brave faith and Love itself. We overhear, while dogs howl to run in the Spring races, these Voices.....

You want ME to drive? S---, I haven't driven on anything but sand over there for 16 months. No way I remember how to drive on snow and ice.

...was one of the casualties over there and he DIDN'T come back; and in all these festivities about folks coming home, she's feeling....

That was a nice funeral. Boy, those Episcopalians sure know how to do a good funeral.

Well, I can see all the ladies that he danced with are here at his funeral.

We were buddies when we went up that river to go hunting; and enemies when we came down.

Anytime I hear "*the less you carry the easier the climb*" it helps me clean my closet.

....and there was a good place to camp on one side of the Riverbend; the other side this *high* cut bank. And *that's* where his boat was tied; and a rope coming down from on top the cutbank. That's where the camp *was*. And to get there you had to pull yourself up with the rope. "*Good place to camp!*" he hollered. "*You can see all over.*" "*Yeah, but!*" I said to him, when I could catch my breath, after I climbed up.

UHHHHHHHHHHHHH, WHAT HAPPENED to the NEWSLETTER & WHERE'S IT BEEN?

In mid March, the morning mail into the Church Office is bringing letters from people asking if they've been dropped from the Newsletter subscription list, or if their last issue has disappeared someplace. Well, no. The last Newsletter mailed was a preChristmas/Advent issue that went out in midDecember.

Since then, we've been trying; and have started several times. But, *sigh*, Things kept happening. The Litany of funerals in the "Seasons" article in this issue gives some sense of how busy things have been.

This issue, begun twice in February and now completed in midMarch will hopefully be mailed and received sometime before FreezeUp, assuming that there is a Spring BreakUp out there someplace.

We'll try to do better.

Prayers help.

The best fairly current sources for what's happening at St. Matthew's remain the St. Matthew's website (www.stmatthewschurch.org), or the Sunday bulletin, or the announcements during the Sunday Eucharists. . . or just stop by and visit.



A Cold Coming . . .

(Continued from page 1)

to dust – and the Mystery of God's faithfulness can be trusted. Job discovered that it all really does work out in the end, even twicetold better than before.

"Ohhh, it'll start warming up soon," commented a friend the other thirty below morning. *"Finally the Light will be too much for it."* Soon enough all of this white snow will turn to running water, baptizing us into Summer. And old and seemingly dead birch trees suddenly will sprout green leaves and small singing birds.

And we will all learn what a friend learned once upon a time. Several years ago this month she came as close to death as you can come, when an aneurysm burst in her head. When she finally returned from Seattle Hospitals, she never said "*good-bye*" to anyone anymore. All she ever said was "*I love you*". And when she peacefully died this Christmas Season, her spirit saying only "*I love you*" to us; I am sure she only heard what that birch tree hears as the Light warms it, what hippopotamuses and singing stars and dust and all hear, what Job heard in the whirlwind, what running women and apostles heard on Easter morning – *"I love you."*

There is nothing else. Forever and ever, **Amen.**

"Question: Do you put your whole trust in his grace and love?

Answer: I do."

*[Examination of the Candidates for Holy Baptism,
Book of Common Prayer, pg. 302]*

Remembering Vernon Joseph (+2-24-07):

Anonymous overheard Voices collected during the days of his funeral and potlatch, and contributed by those who loved him.

I'll always miss Vern!

Vern, we'll go fishing again.

Sagova' (*Big Brother*), see you.

Let's go play.



*He came into my life when I felt there wasn't much hope again and again. *Words of wisdom come to mind, like "Well, you're just going to have to get back up and dust yourself off". *Pride comes to us through who we are and where we're from. I found mine through him and his teachings. *A spiritual path is unlike any other. It brought me to find myself as well as my brother. *The feather is a symbol that means I would speak and my voice would be heard. *The drum is a heartbeat that makes a song more than any word. *He taught me that being a Native Warrior means being real. *I am real and so is life. Through him, I celebrate life.

Winter Voices

He called Monday from Mosul, sayin' they were headin' to Baghdad. Then Sunday afternoon those two guys showed up at my door. I didn't know what it meant, until they asked if they could come in. Then I sorta knew.

. . . Yeah I tell you if nothin' else those Iraqis are *elegant* smokers they really know how to smoke it wasn't that bad over there not in Baghdad at least yeah I know I sound pretty excited but I just got back yesterday yeah it's great to be back and I don't know why I can't quit talkin' but I've been talkin' ever since I got back which was only *yesterday* you know . . .

WellIII, have a mystical morning!

You know, for something that started out as SECRET, I mean Jesus' coming, this sure has gotten turned around.

He was so absent minded I watched him once put all his socks on the same foot.

ST. MATTHEW'S CHURCH

RECTOR	The Rev. Scott Fisher 456-5235	SEXTON	Tree Michael Nelson 456-5217
PRIESTS	The Rev. Steve Matthew. . 488-9076	ORGANIST	Laura Vines 452-4565
	The Rev. John Holz 456-3583	CHOIR DIRECTOR	Elaine Jacobson 479-2472
DEACONS	The Rev. Bella Jean Savino 456-1503	ALTAR GUILD	Mary Johnston. 455-7245
	The Rev. Montie Slusher . 474-4570		Cathy Giacomazzi 479-7736
	The Rev. Lee Davis 457-2865		Roxy Wright Freedle. 455-9300
SENIOR WARDEN	Bruce Gadwah 457-7129	SUNDAY SCHOOL	Charlotte Perotti 457-1332
JUNIOR WARDEN	Tom Marsh 458-0223	HEALTH MINISTRY	Martha Thomas, Chair 455-6612
CLERK	Teresa Moore 374-8382	ENDOWMENT BOARD	Darrel Zuke 488-6073
VESTRY	Linda Demientieff. 451-6601	WEB GARDENER	Maggie Castellini 479-5444
	Charlene Marth	NEWSLETTER EDITOR	Mary Margaret Davis 457-2865
	Helen Howard 488-2314	SPIRITUAL DIRECTION	UNITED THANK OFFERING Helen Howard. 488-2314
	Hubert Griffin 452-4692	DAUGHTERS OF THE KING	The Rev. Bella Jean Savino 456-1503
	Darrel Zuke. 488-6073	TREE-CLIMBING	Luke Castellini
	Julia Cockerille 474-2105		
PARISH TREASURER	Carolyn Nethken 457-3304	MINISTERS	YOU US!!!
PARISH	Hilary Freeman 457-4820		
ADMINISTRATOR			

Office Hours: Monday through Friday 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Phone# 456-5235 FAX#: 456-2934

e-mail: sfisher@mosquitonet.com Website : stmatthewschurch.org

Diocesan Website: episcopalak.org

Winter Voices

Yeah, he's got memories. He was talking last night about cleanin' his friend's blood out of his helmet.

...and ever since they prayed, my hands are just warm and tingly and I'm just filled with this happiness all over, this JOY.

Driving over here, right at 5th and Kellum, I passed a bull, and a cow, and a calf crossin' the street.

Ohh, I wake up every morning in pain, and say, "WELL, THANK YOU GOD, 'cause at least if I can feel this pain that shows that I'm alive".

...and it just pierce our heart, but we have to stand up and do what's right.

We're doin' okay. The Aunties have arrived.

I just can't get there this year. I can't find the Christmas Spirit. I'm just going through the steps.

What's really helped me this year is "*Forward Day by Day*". That's what's helped me get ready for Christmas.

I've been around this Church so much these last few days I feel like I'm becoming part of the furniture.

I don't know how much longer I have, but I'm going to make it to New Year's and I'm going out with a Bang.

You think it was bad in the desert over there? Try humping along through the jungle with all that stuff, in the humidity.

She had a soft side, which many people didn't know. That soft side was compassion - *Ch'eghutsen* - it was love.

I didn't know her, but I sure respected her and all that she did.

How are YOU doing?

Row row row your boat, gently down the streeaaaaaaaaam. Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily.....



"O come, thou Wisdom from on high, who orderest all things mightily..." -Advent Hymn #56

AN ANONYMOUS TRUE STORY of a SERIES of CHRISTMAS MIRACLES THIS YEAR

On December 22nd, I left for work at 8 am knowing that I had less than 10 gallons of heating oil. I prayed on the way to work on what to do, and for God to guide me in what to do, because I was going to be without heat by that evening. About 10 am, my son called and asked me if I had ordered oil, because the oil company was in the drive way delivering oil. I told him, he'd better go out there and stop them because I had no money to pay for the bill. The delivery person gave him a piece of paper that said "May you have the warmest of the holidays, this gift of 100 gallons of oil was given to you by an anonymous person."

I had left for work that morning feeling depressed because of my financial problems, although I had just found a temporary job. I did not even have a Christmas tree in my house. Lo and behold, when I got off work that afternoon, there was a tree in my house all lit up and decorated. Some of my nieces had come over and decorated my house during the day. They had visited me the night before.

My nephew had come in from the village and wanted rides to do his shopping and a place to stay. I offered him that. He bought a full tank of gas and gave me \$90.00 for a place to stay. This paid for my water that was about to be shut off at 5 pm. My nephew and niece were in town (for overnight and one day) to do their shopping. I got off work at 3 pm because it was the Friday before Christmas. I went home to give them a ride to the airport. I still did not have any money to buy any gifts at all. I had already told my children that it was impossible for me to buy them gifts, but I would try to buy gifts for my grandchildren. I dropped my nephew and niece off to check in and I went in to say Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. When I was leaving my nephew said "Oh yeah, here. Buy yourself something to eat" and handed me a bill. As I was driving down the street, I thought, "Oh well, I might as well stop by Fred's and buy something to eat." As I reached into my pocket to pay for my food and handed it over to the cashier, I looked at the bill and almost fell over. It was a hundred dollar bill. This gave me a chance to buy gifts for my grandchildren and pay another bill that was well over due.

The next morning, I got a call from another company telling me what they would be turning off, if I didn't pay for the bill that day. The mail came and there was a check in the mail for a one day of work that I had done previously for another person. I ran off to pay that bill. Also in the mail was a letter from the State of Alaska, telling me that I was approved for food stamps. This was a surprise, since they had refused me the month before.

By now, I was overwhelmed with "What is going on here?" I could not believe the miracles that were happening to me. I believe that God works in mysterious ways. I believe there is a God, but I do not go preaching around about it. I slowly got on my knees and thanked the Lord for all that had happened to me the last two days. Although I am still having a hard time, I know that God is watching over me and I will survive.

HOLY WEEK 2007 SCHEDULE

People comment that there are a lot of services at St. Matthew's. There's really only ONE service – the service of this week – and all of the other services we do during the Year are part of this Service. All of the baptisms and all of the weddings and all of the funerals and all of the quiet Wednesday mornings and all of the circus-y Sunday mornings and all of Midnight Complines and all of the potlatches and covered dishes all come from This Week. This Week is who we are; This Week is what we do. Nothing else matters. NOTHING. This Week is the Service we do . . . for God and for Fairbanks and for the World.

Try to resist the temptation of saying, "Oh I know what this looks like. We do this and we do that and so on and so on." Even if you have gone to these services all of your life; YOU are different than you were last year. God draws us each, endlessly, closer and closer to Him.

Come make the Walk with the Christ.

APRIL 1st. PALM SUNDAY

Sunday Eucharists at 8AM, 9:15AM, and 11:15AM. All Eucharists begin in the Parish Hall, with then an outdoor procession into the Church.

APRIL 2nd. Monday in Holy Week

7PM Holy Eucharist

April 3rd. Tuesday in Holy Week

7PM Holy Eucharist

April 4th. Wednesday in Holy Week

9:30AM Holy Eucharist

7PM Tenebrae, A service of Shadows and Gathering Darkness
12AM The Last Compline



April 5th. Maundy Thursday

6PM Simple Covered Dish Supper in the Parish Hall

7PM Maundy Thursday Eucharist, including footwashing and stripping of the Altar. The Offering this night goes to our relatives at Congregation Or HaTzafon. Without them, there wouldn't be Us.

April 6th. Good Friday

12PM Ecumenical Community Good Friday Service, sponsored by Tanana Valley Conference of Churches, at St. Matthew's.

7PM Good Friday Service

April 7th. Holy Saturday

10AM Holy Saturday Service

April 7th, Evening

8PM The Easter Vigil, including the Lighting of the Easter Fire, the Easter baptisms, & the first Eucharist of Easter

April 8th. Easter Sunday

8AM, 9:15AM, 11:15AM Easter Sunday Morning Eucharists

If you would like to help with any part of any of the services, there are sign up sheets in the Parish Hall. Training provided, if necessary. There's room for everyone – that's part of the lesson of the week.

Winter Voices

Thirty-one hours we've been flyin' to get home. Thirty-one hours since we left Kuwait, after being bused out from Baghdad.

I'm just looking forward to not havin' to watch my back twenty-four seven. That's what I'm really looking forward to.

Yeah, we're being deployed again, but that's not public.

That's why my mother always said "never get involved in church politics. NOTHING will make you a non-Christian faster."

. . . and now he's making six figures with some security firm in Afghanistan.

So are those rumors true or not?

They're candy----, those Marines. When we went up on the line, their foxholes were five feet apart. Ours had been twenty feet. FIVE feet! You could spit into the next foxhole.

. . . had to come back Sigh. I missed the Liturgy.

. . . and DON'T put that in your Newsletter.

I'm an agnostic, but I'd like not to be.

. . . and Remember, it's JANUARY. I'd like to meet someone who doesn't believe in Global Warming, because this is the *strangest* winter that I've ever seen. It's the up and down that gets to me.

I'd like to come to Church. But I don't have a ride and . . .

I'm just *oooooooooo* lonely. Am I being punished? Is God trying to teach me something? Whyyyyyyyyyy?

I MET Lady Baden Powell once! I presented arms to her.

I think the reason so many people come up from Minnesota is because, they say, Alaska is the way Minnesota used to be.

Winter Voices

God connects to EVERYTHING. Even Basketball. Peter John said that once.

...were all crying and asking,
"But where's OUR minister?"

. . . and then I realized that money goes, but it's friendship that lasts.

. . . told her I was sorry, but I'd been pretty busy at work and didn't have time to get much of a Valentine's present and she said, "WELL, I HAD TIME TO CARRY YOUR CHILD for 9 MONTHS, DIDN'T I!"

You're getting an Ice Pool ticket? The weather has been so strange; I couldn't begin to guess about BreakUp this year.

It's just another part of the Journey.

I used to talk to her when she was still in our mom's stomach. So we've been friends since before she was born.

WHY do I feel like crying every time I come in this Church?

"I'm okay", he said, "I'm okay." And that was the last thing Dad said.

I got SAVED. I feel new! Different! Like THIS is the way I'm supposed to be. Like this is who I really am! It's STRONNNNNNNNNNG. It's FUN!

...was a meeting and said, "I want to make a motion. I want to move that old men shouldn't have cell phones if they can't hear them."

Now they've left us. They've BOTH left us nowand we're all alone.

I thought raising sheep would be romantic, but mostly sheep spend all their life trying to die, and you spend all your time trying to stop them.

....told me it was time for me to graduate, so he introduced me to Howard Luke.

...and he was like an Angel and was just there for us.

through All The Seasons of life

SEASONS of LIFE in the MIDST of WINTER

From early Advent into early Lent, from darkening December into the earliest days of Spring, through Christmas and Epiphany celebrations into the starkness of Lent, with eyes fixed on stars or crosses; from Tuesday, December 5th, 2006 through Wednesday, March 7th, 2007, through the 93 days since the last accounting, we gathered and prayed at least 327 times. An accounting and, briefly, some of the details:

- 35 Sunday Morning Eucharists
- 22 Private/Home Communion visits by Lay Eucharistic Ministers
- 58 Private/Home Communion visits by clergy
- 4 Fairbanks Correctional Center Eucharists
- 17 Correctional Center services or visits (*outside of Alaska*)
- 78 Midnight Compline services
- 1 Midnight "Bang Pots To Chase Away the Solstice Dragon of Darkness" Compline
- 14 Advent Weekday Evening Prayer services
- 1 Tuesday Morning Denali Center Eucharists
- 12 Wednesday Morning Eucharists
- 13 Wednesday Evening Eucharists
- 6 Thursday Morning Pioneer Home Eucharists
- 1 Celebration of Holy Baptism, 4 Baptized
- 5 Weddings, or Blessings of Civil Marriages
- 9 Commendations of the Dying/Departed
- 20 Funerals (*within Fairbanks*)
- 2 Funerals (*out of Fairbanks*)
- 4 Memorial Vigils, Healing Walks, Prayers
- 4 Memorial "Teas" hosted
- 1 Reception into Columbarium
- 2 Community Birthday Parties
- 1 Christmas Party
- 1 Dark Christmas Solstice Eucharist
- 4 Christmas Eve/Christmas Day Eucharists
- 1 New Year's Eve Eucharist
- 1 New Year's Day Potlatch
- 1 SUCCESSFUL 12th Night Christmas Greens Burning
- 1 Annual Parish Meeting
- 1 Candlemass Celebration and Eucharist
- 1 Boy Scout Sunday Celebration
- 3 Ash Wednesday Services
- 2 Lent Stations of the Cross Services
- 1 Blessing of Holy Prayer Shawls

+34 Warmest Fairbanks Temperature recorded since December 5th (December 9th)

-44 Coldest Fairbanks Temperature recorded since December 5th (January 9th, February 23rd)

10:31AM Sunrise December 5th in Fairbanks

7:39AM Sunrise March 7th in Fairbanks

2:52PM Sunset December 5th in Fairbanks

6:26PM Sunset March 7th in Fairbanks

Holy Baptism

Friday evening, February 2nd, we gathered in a family celebration and Eucharist for the very last of the Christmas services – forty days after Christmas, the Feast of the Presentation, known as "Candlemass". With the Rev. Deacon Lee Davis assisting, 1 month old Charlie Nations Jordan, Jr.; 5 years old Anthony Charles Mayo, 4 years old Angelina Maia Shannon; and 1 year old Isabelle Sienna Shannon were all baptized. Charlie's Godparents are Josh Magette, Jacqueline Edwin, Marcus Peter, and Jacob Wright; Anthony, Angelina, and Isabelle's Godmother is Charlene Honea.

(Continued on page 7)

Seasons of life . . .

Weddings

Friday evening, December 15th, in a long planned surprise celebration, the marriage of **Jennifer (Lydon) and David Ferguson** was blessed. It was Jennifer's birthday; and they had been married civilly back in June of 2005, before David deployed to Iraq for 16 months. David returned finally in early December. Working with Jennifer's family (*she's the daughter of James and Kathy Bluekens Lydon*); he arranged the surprise "church" wedding/blessing from Iraq. It was stunning.



Saturday afternoon, December 30th, in a private and intimate service at home, the rector celebrated the wedding of **Eileen Grant and Jay-Henri Moreau**. Eileen is originally from Tanana; and Jay-Henri had been baptized earlier on All Saints Sunday.

On New Year's Eve, Sunday, December 31st, in the early evening, the church filled past overflowing, as the rector celebrated the wedding of **Heather Brown and Sean O'Grady**. With twenty in the wedding party, it was an evening filled with beauty and joy.

On Saturday, February 10th, **the Rev. Deacon Bella Jean Savino** celebrated, in a filled church, the wedding of **Michelle Vanderpool and Alfred Wiehl, Jr.** Michelle is the sister of Vestrymember **Charlene Marth**, who served as Matron of Honor.

And finally, with Episcopal permission because of extenuating circumstances (*Iraq*), **Archdeacon Anna Frank**, on Monday evening, February 26th, celebrated the wedding of **Michael Blocker and Carletta Golson**. The Archdeacon had just returned from the Arctic Coast Deanery meeting; and a "Memorial" tea was going on in the Parish Hall at the same time as the wedding.

Funerals, Memorials, etc

On Wednesday afternoon, December 6th, as the sun was setting, 42 years old **Alfreda Erick** passed away in the Fairbanks Hospital, surrounded by prayer and grieving children, family, and friends. The oldest daughter of **Paul and Lois Williams, Sr.** of Beaver, Alfreda was raised in Arctic Village; and was the widow of the late **James Erick** of Venetie. Her Grandmother **Mary Sam**; her parents; her children **Robert, Heaven, James, Ethan, and Holly**; her stepson **Keith**, her brothers and sisters **Paul Jr., Richard, Michael, and April**; her companion **James Gustafson**, and numerous other family members and friends survive her. Alfreda always had a friendly smile and a kind heart for everyone. St. Matthew's filled for her funeral Saturday morning, December 9th, led by the rector, **the Rev. Steve Matthew**, and **the Rev. Deacon Bella Jean Savino**. Her final services and burial were held Monday, December 11th in Venetie.

Late Friday evening, December 15th, simply walking along the edge of the street, 57 years old **Chester Druck** was struck and killed by a hit and run driver. The son of **Leah** and the late **Joe Druck** of Fort Yukon/Chalkyitsik, Chester was the oldest in the family, a US Army veteran, and always had a broad smile on his face. He's survived by his mother **Leah**, his sister **Lois Verney**, his brothers **Peter, Joey, and Patrick**, his children, many more family members, and all of us who remember him smiling and saying "hello". The rector, who had known Chester over thirty years, said prayers that late night with his spirit in the Hospital; and Chester's services and burial were held back at home in Chalkyitsik Saturday, December 23rd.

As recorded in the last Newsletter, Monday afternoon, December 18th,

(Continued on page 18)

Winter Voices

You're moving outside after 40 years? One last adventure, huh?
There's always one more Adventure.

Cold weather is just following you around! You need to go to Mexico or Hawaii or someplace, so it'll warm up here.

...and on my table was a piece of paper. She drew a heart on it. Her last gift to me.

... and so there I was, still strapped in, but upside down outside of Haines Junction.

... and the Light of God filled his face when he was dying.

Uhhhhhhh Dad, why is there a picture of you in the paper praying for rugs?

... because in 1948 it had a sign on it saying it was "Off Limits to Military and Natives."

They prayed while they were making it, didn't they? I can feel it.

I'm not afraid of dying. I know I'll meet my Lord there.

... and that's why the housing situation is just CRAZY in this town. I mean, there's all these new houses being built, but when the last time any new apartments were built? They haven't been.

Ohhhhhhhh, cheer up. Pretty soon it'll be Summer and Booyah and what's-his-name in that Elvis costume.

They just throw me away, like something out the window, but praise God! HE watches over me and remembers me.

I don't know where Spring is, but I'll bet when it comes, it comes FAST. God too, maybe.

You know, I'm the only member of my family who hasn't had electro-shock treatment.

Winter Voices

What's Lent like? What's it been like before? You know, it felt like I found God in the discovery that I WANTED to put clothes on again (after being stripped). Just finding pleasure in the basics of life, comfort and wholesomeness in the ordinary. These are miraculous sensations after such a sense of vast dryness and suffering. It's much like the return of spring after a long winter. How did that ever happen?

Lent? I think we've been in Lent since about the middle of December. I think we're LIVING in LENT this year. EVERYBODY.

....but I wasn't scared, because I kept remembering that I'd read Psalm 91 to the whole congregation on Sunday - "for He will give his angels charge over you." So we just kept sitting still there- even though chairs were flying. I did get a little nervous when someone said "he's got a gun", but I still just kept praying.....

....and Fairbanks set a new record last night for the coldest temperatures this time of year, and for such an extended period. For the last three weeks....

Well, thank God for Global Warming. Think what this would be like WITHOUT Global Warming.

Prayer works! The doctors kept saying "this is amazing" and I kept saying "prayer works".

... so for Lent I've become a Social Butterfly.

He burns wood, and he was sayin' last night that if this weather doesn't break soon he's gonna run out of trees.

The Light is nice, though.

I think Alaska gave up warmth for Lent.

REMEMBERING

SHIRLEY DEMIENTIEFF

[After Shirley Demientieff died January 3rd, organist Laura Vines found herself remembering this song, which she had written several years earlier for a friend that was dying.]

Here's to Shirley and all the unsung heroes in our lives:



You Win the Roses

In olden days there were great champions
And giants still walked on the earth.
Their stories and tales, they still thrill in our blood
Of women and men of great worth.
Oh that kind of hero we surely do need
But there's another kind too:
All you who quietly work through the night
And amid the storm remain true.

CHORUS:

You win the roses, you win the crown
You'll wear the laurel on your brow.
Yes and you are the champion among us now;
You're here to show us how.

It's rarely a song is written of you
Who bravely looks death in the eye;
Who opens our hearts with a look and a smile
And who teaches us all how to fly.
And what of you who walks in the dark
And carries a light for the rest;
Whose patient endurance amazes us all
Who stands strong when put to the test? CHORUS

I know you don't feel like a hero at all
But that's how we know you are real.
In the sea of confusion, pain, and fear
You are able to laugh and to heal.
And so my good friend, I say this to you:
Accept all our love and good gifts.
Your weakness and failings don't matter at all
For this race doesn't go to the swift! CHORUS

—Laura Vines 2002



THE YEAR 2006 in PRAYER

From the New Year's Eve Eucharist, on Saturday Midnight, December 31st, 2005, with fireworks on First Avenue and moose in the ChurchYard and rector's grandchildren acolyting and zero degree temperatures, into Sunday morning, January 1st, 2006 and the Church filled for a single morning Eucharist; through the 365

days until Sunday, December 31st, 2006, with two Sunday Eucharists, and a New Year's Eve wedding, and again a New Year's Eve Eucharist with fireworks and grandchildren, St. Matthew's gathered and prayed on an average of every 8 hours, 7 days a week. The Official Records of St. Matthew's record 1,122 services during 2006. The Heartbeat of this Body is people praying, and the breath of the Body is Holy Spirit.

147 Sunday Eucharists

4 Sunday Eucharists (*outside of Fairbanks*)

157 Private/Home Communion visits by Lay Eucharistic Ministers

160 Private/Home Communion visits by Clergy

21 Fairbanks Correctional Center Services/Visits (*Fairbanks*)

20 Correctional Center Services/Visits (*outside of Fairbanks*)

257 Midnight Compline Services

29 WeekDay Offices (*Morning Prayer, Noon, Evening Prayer, etc.*)

28 Evening or WeekDay Eucharists

16 Tuesday Denali Center Eucharists

52 Wednesday Morning Eucharists

52 Wednesday Evening Eucharists

19 Thursday Pioneer Home Eucharists

22 Celebrations of Holy Baptism, 33 Baptized

1 Celebration of Confirmation, 14 Confirmed

1 Ordination to the Diaconate

21 Celebrations of Holy Matrimony, Renewal of Vows, etc.

28 Commendations of the Dying/Departed

50 Funerals, Memorials, Burials, etc. (*within Fairbanks*)

5 Funerals, Memorials, Burials, etc (*outside of Fairbanks*)

32 Recorded Other Services, HouseBlessings, Parties, Gatherings, Etc.

"Keep the children near me, Lord"

A GRANDMOTHER'S PRAYER

(A Grandmother found this prayer, and prays it for her children and grandchildren every day. She shares it, for those who are parents or grand parents – or great grandparents – or anyone with children part of their life. It's from "My Personal Daily Prayer Book" by Christine Dallman and Margaret Huffman)

The children you've placed in my life, heavenly Father, remind me that life is for living. Their unique personalities remind me that you've made each of your children special. Their energy fosters joy, and I long for the kind of trust they have. Keep the children near me, Lord; always let my heart be taken by them. For by these little ones, I am reminded how to live.

Winter Voices

Are you SURE you guys burnt those Christmas greens so that Spring would come? I can tell the pot-banging worked. We're GAINING daylight. But I don't know what happened to the warming up part.

I buy a Sanctuary Candle for 'em because I figure there's not really much more I can do for them. And, besides, as they go off into The Great Darkness, maybe a candle will help.

Row, Row! buhBYE? OUTside?
alllllright!

TWO QUIET and SMALL ANONYMOUS DESERT THOUGHTS

As Lent began, following Our Lord into the Desert, folks were asked to reflect on the Deserts of our lives. Here are two thoughts that came.

I have had many deserts in my life - some Gobi sized, some Arizona sized but through it all, God has been there and I am grateful. . . . Hopefully God will guide me where He wants me. Sometimes I feel so unstable. I don't know what I would do without Him in my life.

As I have moved further out into the desert and away from the city, God has shown me the desert parts of my life. Stripping myself of a successful career, beautiful home, full social life and finding out 'Who am I?' Simplifying everything and coming to a peace found in simplicity. That has been my last year.



BLUE GRASS MUSIC in the ARCTIC

By Belle Mickelson

Dear Friends,

It is very exciting to bring you news of hopes and dreams for a new music ministry—a way of bringing God's spirit to Alaskan villages struggling with alcoholism, drugs and suicide. We are stepping out in faith and planning trips to the Athabaskan villages of Tanana and Arctic Village in early March. My son Mike and I will be working with local musicians in each village to design and implement school and church programs and community square dances—that they can later take over. Local villagers are anxiously awaiting our arrival. The Rev. Trimble Gilbert in Arctic Village told me "in the old days we fought tribal wars with arrowheads. It's a different type of war now—against drugs and alcohol. I believe we can win with music."



These Tanana students (in the attached picture) can help teach their friends to sing and play music.

Pray for us... We hope this music with its love of God and each other can reach from one village to the next—and all around the world.

To participate financially—send checks to the Dancing with the Spirit Fund, Episcopal Diocese of Alaska, 1205 Denali Way, Fairbanks, Alaska 99701. Contributions small and large impact kids' lives for generations! \$5 buys an instrument strap; \$10 buys strings; \$30 buys a case; \$50 buys a mandolin; \$100 a fiddle or banjo; \$150 a guitar; \$650 a bass; any amount can go toward music instruction; \$1000 sponsors 5 children for a week of camp;

\$6,000 funds a week-long camp for 30 children—and \$77,000 covers salary and benefits for a full-time priest to run the program!

Thanks so much for your prayers and consideration. For more information, call me at 907-424-5143 or write to Box 1362, Cordova, Alaska 99574.

Love and blessings, Belle

P.S. If anyone knows of a good source of funding for instruments let me know... Petr's Violin Shop in Anchorage is letting us have fiddles for \$100--and small Yamaha guitars for \$150... One of the teachers at Arctic Village said they only had 2 guitars and 8 fiddles... I'm sure a few more will show up when we get there--but I know we could use some more!

A REMINDER from FATHER STEVE

By The Rev. Steve Matthew

I think it is Time to reprint this letter I wrote about my late Mom Cora Ivy. It may help keep a young person from smoking.

[Reprinted from "Letters to the Editor", Fairbanks Daily News Miner, July 1987]

July 30, 1987
North Pole, Alaska 99705

To the editor:

It has now been 10 months since mother passed away from lung cancer. When mom first told me that she was sick, I just couldn't believe it; this just does not happen to your mom - it happens to someone else's, not yours. But one day as I sat with mom in the hospital, she opened her eyes and out of all the pain in them, her eyes still expressed love. I stroked her hair and kissed her and, after she went back to sleep, I sat down to write this.

My mother, Cora Ivey; she was as gentle as she was strong. Anyone who ever came to mom's door

(Continued on page 11)

A REPORT from ST. JAMES/TANANA: The Stained Glass Windows*By Mary Starr*

The exciting news from Tanana is that we now have sent all 4 of our 102 year old stained glass windows that originally were in the Church of Our Savior (*Old Mission*) and now are in the St. James Mission Church downtown. The windows had bowed out and the glass was popping out. The lead in between was corroded and we were afraid we were going to lose them. They have a wonderful history and so Debbie Matthews of Expressions in Glass on Peger Road in Fairbanks came down and looked at them and said she could work on them if we could get them into Fairbanks. Thanks to various people, they were crated up and Arctic Circle Air volunteered to bring them into town. Debbie is beginning work on the first window and you can visit Expressions in Glass, 1922 Peger Road or you can go on line to www.expressionsinglass.net where she is having a link built, so that you can see the windows in progress and read about the history of the windows.

This last summer we were blessed with a visit from the Great Grandson of the late Jules Prevost, the priest who served at the Church of Our Savior in the early 1900s. He was so excited to come here and actually see Tanana and the old church and the window that was donated in memory of his great aunt. He came to Fairbanks on a work crew to KJNP and was able to fit in a trip to Tanana and enjoyed visiting with the elders and especially the Rev. Helen Peters, who shared many wonderful stories of the old mission with him.

If anyone feels moved to help with the cost of this very large project, they can contact Mary Starr Box % St. James Episcopal Mission, PO Box 207, Tanana, Alaska / 907-366-7251 or email, yukonstarr@aol.com.

A REMINDER from FATHER STEVE . . .*(Continued from page 10)*

never went away hungry. Mother was a strong believer in helping people in need.

A mother is the center and foundation of life, the seed of life, as beautiful as the flowers of spring. Her love is as warm as the spring air.

Yes, because of mom, life is in me, because of mom I met my wife, because of wife I am blessed with children and grandchildren. All this because of her love so freely given.

On the spur of the moment have you ever suddenly got up, gone over, and kissed your mother, or called her up just to say hello? A hug and a kiss for mom to tell her how much you love her; for the thousands and thousands of times she kissed your "owie" and made it stop hurting; or the hundreds of times she helped you put that shoe on the right foot. She taught you to eat out of a spoon and was there with a good ear when you wanted someone to talk with, just as your whole world was falling apart.

It seems like mom was always there at the right time. Her gentle touch seemed to fix anything. Instead of crying for mom I'd like to ask you people who are reading this to pray to God and thank Him for letting us have her for her lifetime with us. For dying is as much of life as birth.

She once said to me, when she was a young woman; she thought cigarettes and smoking were so smart - so grown up. She did not think that something so small could possibly hurt anyone.

So - please, whoever you are. Just don't smoke.

Truly,

Stephen A. Matthew



Interior Deanery Meeting

“Convocation and Reunion of Denaa and Diné”
April 25-29, 2007
Nenana, Alaska

Join us to explore the revived partnership between the Episcopal Diocese of Alaska and the Episcopal Church in Navajoland

Special guests will include:

The Diné from Navajoland
Native Alaskans from South East Alaska (Tlingit)
Arctic Coast Inupiaq

Save the date!

Start raising money to get to Nenana!

We expect to have some travel money available but your church’s financial support is needed to make this happen!

More information will be provided at a later date.



INTRODUCING NEW VESTRY MEMBER HELEN HOWARD

[Helen Howard, along with Charlene Marth and Hubert Griffin, was one of three new members elected to the Vestry during the January 2007 Annual Meeting. Here's a brief introduction.]

Thank you for electing me to the Vestry. I shall try to be useful during my term. This is the second time I have been on the Vestry, and strangely enough, Hubert Griffin who was also elected this time, was on with me last time also.

I have been a member at St. Matthew's since 1964, but not all the time. I was gone to England in 1968-69, when I worked for Bishop Ralph Dean, Anglican Executive Officer, in London. Our main duty at that time was to organize the 1968 Lambeth Conference. I took notes on the dais at the conference, which included all the Bishops of the Anglican Communion (*luckily the audio-taping was good, and my notes were not really needed!*)

Before going to London I worked for about two years for Bishop William Gordon at 1205 Denali Way. It was interesting to be in touch with the far-flung parts of the Diocese of Alaska, and I attended St. Matthew's during that time.

I was absent from St. Matthew's for a year or two in Maine in 1976-78, and then attended St. Jude's, North Pole, about a decade. I was on the Vestry there for a term. I returned to St. Matthew's about twelve years ago. I have been teaching Sunday School for much of that time, fourth and fifth grade, and singing in the choir. I am also the representative of the United Thank Offering, and once I attended a national UTO meeting in Seattle when Winnie Nowak was unable to go.

My other jobs have been working for the Musk Ox Project at the University of Alaska from 1964-66 and 1969 to 1974; then for the Alaska Native Language Center as Administrative Assistant. When at the Musk Ox Project I had the opportunity to travel to a number of Bush villages, both on the job, teaching qiviut lace knitting, and privately. Both jobs and the travel gave me a wonderful opportunity to get to know about Alaska's Native community, because I was born in Cornwall, Southwest England.

February 19th, 2007

A RELUCTANT RESIGNATION AS SUNDAY SCHOOL DIRECTOR

By Roxy Wright

[Where would St. Matthew's be without the sound of children and running feet at 9 o'clock on Sunday mornings? Where would St. Matthew's be without the art projects coming down the stairs in the Parish Hall; or the Christmas Pageants filled with angels and sheep and tussling shepherds? For more than a few years Roxy has quietly been the one responsible for seeing that all of that happens. It has taken prayer and faith and determination and commitment. We all owe her a debt of gratitude.]

The days are growing longer...I think of summer and the many things I plan to do. But wait, here and now, the soft winter sunrises, and there are still dog races to run. And there are the lovely memories of Christmas just past, and the warm sun on a beach.

Reflecting on this day, the days to come and the days past – I am thankful for the ever present and wonderful Light and Love of my Lord Jesus Christ in my Life. His Light is ever changing, His waters ebb and flow – trickle and rush, and I know that God calls us to continue on our journey. We are to live fully in the present, cherish all we have learned from the past, and trust in God to guide us on our way.

I have been the Sunday School Director at St. Matthews for a few years now. The job kind of slid into my lap when I started ordering Sunday School materials, after Cathy Davis moved on to other endeavors. With my involvement as a mentor for Education For Ministry, along with a busy lifestyle full of grandchildren, horses, berry picking, hiking, fishing and hunting, I am not able to continue as the Director of Sunday School.

I would like to thank all of the wonderful volunteer teachers over the years, and most especially those helping this year - Linda Mullen, Patty Meritt, Steve Moore, Kathy Mulkey, Helen Howard, Marjorie Grunin, Beth Corven and Virginia MacDonald.

We had a Prayer Gathering in September, before Sunday School began. It was suggested that we do so on some sort of regular basis – to keep the whole congregation aware and involved in the ministry of teaching and sharing with our youth. We need the Holy Spirit to move and challenge us all to be more involved with our youth and elders. There is so much more that our church could do...so be still and listen....is God nudging you?

Check with Hilary for the job description of Sunday School Director. If you have any questions or input on Sunday School, please feel free to call me at 455-9300.



BISHOPS PRESENT:**BISHOP MACDONALD RESIGNS as BISHOP of ALASKA**

On Wednesday, January 3rd, Bishop Mark MacDonald, Episcopal Bishop of Alaska since September 1997, announced in a letter to the Diocese that he was resigning as Bishop of Alaska. As announced in press releases and a Toronto Press Conference the next day, Bishop MacDonald had been selected to be first National Indigenous Anglican Bishop of Canada and he was accepting the position. The position, rare in Anglican/Episcopal Tradition in that he becomes not a bishop of people living in a certain area (*like the State of Alaska*) but of indigenous people living wherever they are in Canada, was requested by Canadian Native People at a national Canadian meeting held in 2005. Bishop MacDonald and a delegation from Alaska attended that meeting.

In June 2006 Bishop MacDonald also became the Assisting Bishop of the NavajoLand Area Mission. Though he has resigned from being Bishop of Alaska, he will continue as Bishop of NavajoLand, thus serving across international borders.

The original January announcement sketched a TimeLine of Bishop MacDonald beginning his Canadian work (*based out of Toronto*) around March 1st, yet continuing as Alaskan Bishop (*with visits back, etc*) until the end of May. Then Virginia and the kids (*who would remain in Fairbanks to finish the school year*) would join him in Canada. **BUT**. On the flight back from Toronto the Bishop was struck ill in Chicago with what was finally diagnosed as an antibiotic resistant staff infection; he has been confined to his bed or house for much of the time as he and his family battled the infection; all traveling has been medically curtailed; and the original Timeline has had to be stretched a little. This has allowed him to spend more time in Alaska and with his family, as he heals.

The latest communication from the Diocesan Office (*as of mid-March*) speaks of Bishop MacDonald remaining Bishop of Alaska until sometime in June; and his installation as National Indigenous Anglican Bishop for Canada on Friday, June 22nd in Winnipeg. If his health permits, he should be able to again begin traveling in late March or early April. The Standing Committee is calling for a **Diocesan Celebration of his Ministry, to which everyone is invited, on Friday, April 27th during the Interior Deanery Meeting in Nenana.**

St. Matthew's has enjoyed a special relationship with the Bishop and his family during his time here. We are the place his family got to hang out; we are the place he got to park his diamond willow staff. Virginia taught our Confirmation class last Spring and this is the place where Blake peered over the altar rail at us. As the Time for departing approaches, we can be prepared to help with the move, as we helped them move in 10 years ago.

REMEMBERING the LAST TEN YEARS.....

As Bishop MacDonald prepares to leave Alaska, it's Time to begin remembering. Here's an anonymous story from back at the Beginning of it all.

As part of the Interior Deanery, I was in the group interviewing candidates the last time our diocese was seeking a new bishop. Mark was so much younger than the other men that in front of the whole group I said, "You seem much younger in age than the other candidates. How do you feel about that?" I was thinking he might not have as much life experience as the others, but off the cuff, Bishop Mark responded, "Well, I don't think you should hold it against the others." The room roared with laughter.



"Bishop MacDonald loves music and loves to sing, one of the times I remember was at the Gwich'in Gathering in Fort Yukon singing with Ernest Erick, Sarah James and the late Jonathon Solomon. "



BISHOPS FUTURE: THE SEARCH for THE 8th BISHOP of ALASKA BEGINS

Bishop MacDonald's New Year's announcement of his resignation may have sent stunned shock through the Alaskan churches, but it also started a carefully planned process that we have been through before. The Diocese has been through this Process four times in the last 33 years, when Bishops Cochran, Harris, Charleston, and MacDonald were elected (*Bishops Rowe, Bentley, and Gordon were called to be Bishop by the House of Bishops*). We already know some of what will happen; and the Standing Committee of the Diocese has already been meeting and announcing key committees within the Process.

The Standing Committee of the Diocese becomes very very important in this Process. The Committee functions like the Vestry or Church Committee of the local church. As the Vestry works for the congregation between January Annual Meetings; the Standing Committee works on behalf of the Diocese between Annual Diocesan Conventions. The Committee is composed of 9 members – one lay and one clergy from each of the four deaneries. They are nominated and elected by the Diocesan Convention, usually meeting in October. (*The one remaining seat is nominated by the Bishop and elected by the Convention.*)

The current Standing Committee is composed of the following folks: **The Rev. David Elsensohn** of St. Peter's/Sitka is President and **the Rev. John Holz OF ST. MATTHEW'S/FAIRBANKS** is Vice-President. Other current members are **Martin Oktollik** for the Arctic Coast Deanery, **the Rev. Enoch Adams Jr** for the Arctic Coast Deanery, **the Rev. Dawn Allen-Herron** for the SouthEast Deanery, **Mary Margaret Davis OF ST. MATTHEW'S/FAIRBANKS** for the Interior Deanery, **the Rev. Robert Thomas** for the SouthCentral Deanery, **John Crittenden** for the SouthCentral Deanery, and **Sara Beabar-Fujioka** for the SouthEast Deanery.

They are the ones who oversee the Process of electing and calling a new Bishop for the Diocese. They are ones responsible for the Diocese from the time when Bishop MacDonald officially leaves (*early June?*) until the next Bishop is consecrated (*tentatively scheduled for early Winter 2008. See below*). This is a BIG JOB and worthy of prayer.

They have already met with consultants from the National Church and, as of mid March, have set a tentative TimeLine for events, and the establishment of two statewide committees to oversee the Process. The "BISHOP SEARCH" Committee, working under the Standing Committee, will oversee the Process. The Process is generally three stages. First, The Church in Alaska creates a profile of itself – what is the Church in Alaska like? What is its history? What are its dreams; and what and where is God calling it to be? What kind of a person is it looking for to be our Bishop? What background and skills and experience should this person have? Then, the second step: the door is open for



nominations. Then the third step: the Bishop Search Committee narrows the nominations to four to six names (*usually*) and forwards them to the Standing Committee. The Standing Committee announces the names (*and usually, that additional nominations may be added by petition or some other means*). Then, the delegates to that particular Diocesan Convention VOTE. Throughout all of this, folks are hopefully praying. The "TRANSITION COMMITTEE", working also under the Standing Committee, is responsible for activities between the Election of the Bishop, and his/her Installation.

The Standing Committee announced in their February 2007 mailing that these two committees – the Bishop Search Committee and the Transition Committee – will be established; and each committee will be composed of 7 to 10 members. They announced that the co-chairs of the Bishop Search Committee will be **SHIRLEY LEE** (of St. Matthew's/Fairbanks) and **CLARENCE BOLDEN** (of St. Jude's/North Pole). The chair of the Transition Committee will be **CHARLENE MARTH** (of St. Matthew's/Fairbanks). Each of the Spring Deanery meetings is to select ONE PERSON (clergy or lay) to represent them on each of the two committees. (*Complete qualifications are posted in the Parish Hall*). The Standing Committee will appoint additional members to the Committee to "fill in needed gifts, knowledge, and skill sets and to provide representative diversity. In no case will a majority [of Committee members] be from one deanery".

In that same February mailing, the Standing Committee sketched out a *Tentative Timeline of Events*. Here are the dates to take note of:

- **APRIL 25-29, 2007** Interior Deanery meeting in Nenana. St. Matthew delegates are **Linda Demientieff** and **Roslyn Petersen**, with **Linda Mullen** as Alternate. This Meeting will select the two people (*aside from the chairs*) to represent the Interior Deanery on the Bishop Search and Transition Committees. Members of the Standing Committee, etc. will also begin gathering information for the Diocesan Profile.
- **JUNE 22nd, 2007** Bishop MacDonald installed in new position in Winnipeg, Canada. Standing Committee assumes Authority in Diocese sometime in June.
- **JUNE/JULY 2007**. Sometime in this period, a joint Retreat of Standing Committee, Apostolic Council, Bishop's Major Gifts Campaign People, and Bishop Search Committee.
- **OCTOBER 17-21 2007** Diocesan Convention held at St. Matthew's/Fairbanks. In the absence of a Bishop, Standing Committee is in charge of the Convention.
- **NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2007**. Nominations to be elected as Bishop of Alaska are open for one month.
- **JANUARY 2008.** Annual Meeting of St.

(Continued on page 16)

Bishop of Alaska ...

(Continued from page 15)

Matthew's, which will elect our delegates to the Electing Diocesan Convention later in the year.

- **APRIL 10-13 2008** Probable Interior Deanery Meeting.
- **JUNE 2008.** Standing Committee announces selected nominees to be elected as Bishop; and process open for other nominees.
- **[JULY 16th – AUGUST 4th 2008 Lambeth Conference in England, of the Bishops & Primates of the Anglican Communion]**
- **AUGUST 1-9 2008** Nominees tour Diocese and churches.
- **AUGUST 22-24 2008** Diocesan Convention to elect the 8th Bishop of Alaska
- **OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2008** Consecration of the 8th Bishop of Alaska, Date & Time to be determined by the Presiding Bishop.

Here are four final things to note, based on our previous experience and common sense.

First, though politics and wonderings are maybe fun—What about so and so, what about so and so? — it's also a little early. Better to take time thinking and praying and listening. What has God been up to in this Country, as vast and holy as it is, over the years and what might God be saying now, through all of this? We are part of a wonderful and holy story that God is telling to this part of the World; what is He saying NOW?

Second, folks begin wondering about the Bishop's Office over there on Denali Way; and what happens to it; and what

happens to the folks there. **Cynthia Faust**, Special Assistant to Bishop MacDonald has announced her resignation as of the end of this month (**March 2007**). There have been no other announcements from anybody, so we might expect them to continue. It's an unsettling Time for all of them too, so it would be good to keep them in prayer. Cynthia has been a friend and advisor and the Safe Church Consultant for the Diocese. She's been the one there in a number of private and confidential and painful situations and deserves our gratitude. She has said that she expects to stay in Fairbanks.

Third, folks begin wondering who does all the Bishop-y things if we don't have a Bishop. What about confirmations and what about folks in process towards ordination and what about permissions to celebrate weddings? **The Rev. David Elsensohn**, as President of the Standing Committee, becomes the Person in Charge of the People in Charge (*the Standing Committee*) and he also will become the one to grant permissions to celebrate weddings. Presumably the Standing Committee will make arrangements for Bishops to visit to do the other Bishop-y things, like confirmations and ordinations.

Finally, how does ALL of THIS affect us at St. Matthew's? Well, it'll be funny not to have the Bishop's Diamond Willow staff up there in the Sanctuary anymore; and we'll all wander through the Parish Hall looking at the empty place after Bishop MacDonald's photograph and wonder whose picture will be there next; and there will be a weird empty place in the "Prayers of the People" when we no longer collectively pray for "**Our Bishop Mark**". We will continue to light candles and break bread and drink coffee and mumble about the weather and pray. That's what we seem to do best. We'll pray; and listen to God, and be St. Matthew's.

REMEMBERING ELDERS

In early February, as we celebrated Candlemass on February 2nd, and remembered Simeon and Anna, folks were asked to remember Elders that had played significant roles in their lives. Here are two stories that came:

The late Rev. John Starr and the Rev. Helen Peters were so good to me when I lived in Tanana. Both made me feel really welcome in the church. Helen is like a Mom to me, so caring and concerned. She always has time for a cup of tea and to listen to others. Uncle John had confidence in me, and was always sure that I would take on the tasks he asked me to do for the church. I will never forget both Helen's and John's ordinations (John's in Tanana and Helen's in Fairbanks). I was so happy for each of them on their special day. One Father's Day in Tanana, years ago, the only people who showed up for church were my family and Helen. She conducted the services anyway and geared the sermon especially for us. I love them both and hope they know; I have such happy memories of "my" special elders.

When I moved from Fairbanks June 2005 to work in Anchorage, I used the phone company's answering service to take messages for me for a couple months. I got a call from my dear friend and hero, (**the Rev. Titus Peter**, asking me to call him right away. So I returned his call. When he answered the phone and I told him who I was, he said "I heard you passed away." I finally got to use those famous words: "The news of my death has been greatly exaggerated!" We had a good laugh. Bless his heart!

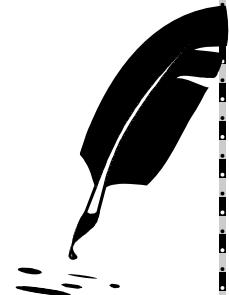
AN EDITED SAMPLING of CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED.....

February 2nd

... For the few that remember us, John and I celebrated our 60th anniversary in June; that means I went up 60 years ago, Also please say Hi to Maggie - and is Dora still about? Our son, Jack and wife (Marie) will be on a tour of Alaska late June and we hope they have time to see the Church. . . .

Best,

Jeanne and John Balcom



[Note: The Rev. John Balcolm was the assistant priest here in the late 1940's; and was the priest here when the original Church burned. They returned here visiting in the late 1990's; and are now retired in New England.]

February 2nd

... Our news is that we're leaving the heat & bugs of Texas (despite the recent cold snap) and heading to Calgary. Jerry has gotten a professorship at the University of Calgary and is being put up for a Canada Research Council grant to cover research money for 7 years. It's renewable for another 7 yrs. after that. So that should take us to retirement.

My book, She Who Prays: A Woman's Interfaith Prayer Book, has gotten some good reviews, especially in the Spirituality and Health website. We figure I can continue writing my next book in Calgary as well as here.

Cathy (now 22, wow!) is on her own & working at World Market. She's recently been promoted to be the head of the gourmet food section. So she'll stay here. Leanne (now 19) is doing well as a sophomore history major at Sam Houston State University and is transferring to University of Calgary for the Autumn. There's a large Scottish community and more European history courses.

Rosie (now nearly 14) is slowing down some. But she's livelier in the cooler weather. So we expect Calgary's snow to agree with her.

Peace be with you & the folks at St Matthew's.

-Jane

[Note: Jane is Jane Jensen and she and her husband Jerry and two daughters and one Sky Terrier were here once upon a time; and used to sit over there with Rosie asleep under the pew. Jerry was teaching at the University; but then transferred to Texas A&M. Now they're heading North again.]

February 5th

... Hope all is going well in Fairbanks. I am slow in answering the deadline but sure enjoyed the opportunity to preach at the early morning service while I was in Fairbanks. Look forward to being up to Fairbanks later this year and specifically in July during Golden days when Becky and I want to renew our wedding vows with you as the celebrant.

Peace be with you and yours.

-Paul

[Note: Paul is Paul Haggland, who is really from here, though he and Becky have been exiled in Seattle for a number of years. For a number of years he has been working his way through the ordination process in the Diocese of Olympia. When he was here visiting in early January, he preached at the 8 o'clock service. They'll be up in July to renew their wedding vows on July 22nd (their 24.5 wedding anniversary), and everyone is invited.]

Seasons of life . . .

(Continued from page 7)

family and friends gathered at the Church for a Memorial Service, led by the rector and **the Rev. Steve Matthew**, for 26 years old **Jordan Bos**. Born in Glenallen and raised in Alaska, Jordan was killed tragically in a car accident Saturday, November 18th in Montana, where he was living with the Love of his life **Jessica Marth**, and their young daughter **Niya**.

Tuesday, December 19th, on his 50th birthday, **Charles A. Nickoli Jr.** passed away in the Mat-Su Regional Medical Center in Palmer. Born in Anchorage, and raised in Nulato and Fairbanks, Charles is survived by his son **Carlin Esmailka**, his step son **Travis Nollner**, his fiancée **Francine Burress**, two grandsons, one granddaughter, five sisters, one brother, and numerous other family and friends. The rector and **Archdeacon Anna Frank** held the funeral service at the Fairbanks Funeral Home Thursday, December 21st; before he was transported to Nulato for services there, and his final services and burial in Kaltag Saturday, December 23rd.

Saturday morning, December 23rd, at home and surrounded by his wife and daughters and their love that had always been with him, 57 years old **Harmie L. "Bub" Deaton** passed away here in Fairbanks. Born, as his accent always told, in Kentucky, he was a strong man who worked hard all of his life, beginning with work in the Kentucky coal mines when he was 13 (*and Black Lung Disease would contribute to his death*). He married into the village of Beaver 35 years ago, when he married his wife **Ada**, the daughter of and **Elsie** and the late **Elman Pitka**. Living in Beaver, he worked hard and loved looking for geese. So devoted was his hunting, that an island in the Yukon came to be named after him. He was baptized this spring by the rector, when he was hospitalized. His wife Ada survives him, his three daughters **Deborah**, **Doreen**, and **Sandra**, and their families. The rector held his funeral service at the Chapel of Chimes Wednesday morning, December 27th, assisted by **Sam Pitka** providing music. His final services were held the next day, Thursday, December 28th, in Beaver, again led by the rector. Christmas tree lights still shined in the Darkness on the Yukon, speaking of Hope.

On Christmas Day, Monday, December 25th, 47 years old **Ralph James** died at home in Birch Creek. He's survived by his mother **Clara James**; his sisters **Mary**, **Caroline**, and **Lori**, and their families; his brothers **Isaac**, **Kenneth**, **Lawrence**, and **William**, and their families, and many other family members and friends. Archdeacon **Anna Frank** held his funeral service here in Fairbanks Thursday, December 28th; and his final services and burial were held at home in Birch Creek Saturday, December 30th.

And later on Christmas Day, Monday, December 25th, after celebrating a full day with her family, 89 years old **Delores Linzner** passed away. Born in Wisconsin, Delores arrived in Fairbanks in 1952, and this became home. She was active with the Rebekah Lodge, the Pioneers, and the Borough Seniors program. She's survived by her daughter **Dorothy Timmons** and her family, her daughter-in-law

Deanna (*the late Effie Kokrine's daughter*), numerous grandchildren, 11 great grandchildren, two great great grandchildren, and several surviving brothers and sisters. Wednesday morning, December 27th, the rector led her funeral at the Fairbanks Funeral Home.

Friday, December 29th, 53 years old **Lonnie "Skip" Secson** passed away here in Fairbanks. Originally from the MidWest, Skip had arrived in Fairbanks in the 1980's and had made it his home ever since. He loved hunting and fishing, and was most recently employed by Eagle Express Lines. His 13 years old daughter **Katrina** survives him, her extended family, family members in Michigan, and friends throughout. On Saturday afternoon, January 6th, (*while Archdeacon Anna Frank led another funeral downtown – see below*), family and friends gathered at the Church for Skip's funeral, led by the rector. The service ended with the Beach Boys and "*Little Deuce Coupe*" – and that was okay. In the darkness of the moment, they were singing and reminding of Hope and better times. Burial services will be this Spring.

On Saturday, December 30th, 67 years old **Mary Crow-John** passed away, surrounded by family. Born and raised in Circle, she relocated to San Jose, California when she was 20 and lived there, raising six children. Diagnosed with cancer in 2005, she returned to Alaska and fell in love with it all over again, sitting by a window drinking coffee and looking at the Yukon. Her husband **"Lindy" John** survives her, her brother **Charlie Crow**, her sisters **Ruth Crow** of Circle and **Marion Wilson** of Norfolk, Virginia, her six children and their families, 13 grandchildren, 10 great grandchildren, and many friends. St. Matthew's filled for her funeral, led by the rector and **the Rev. Steve Matthew**, Thursday afternoon, January 4th; and then there was the final trip Home. Her final services and burial were held in Circle Friday, January 5th.

On Monday, January 1st, 91 years old **Rhoda Tobuk Musser** died in the Fairbanks Hospital, surrounded by family and friends. Born in Alatna, she attended the Episcopal Mission School and, when she was 12, was taken by a family to Florida. She returned to Bettles 22 long years later and embraced her family, and life and the communities along the Koyukuk. For 16 years she was the Traditional Chief of Evansville. Her daughters **Kathy Harrell** and **Naomi Costello**, her son **Wayne Musser**, their families, grandchildren, great grandchildren, two sisters, and many others survive her. The Chena River Convention Center filled Saturday afternoon, January 6th, for her funeral, led by **Archdeacon Anna Frank**, **the Rev. Steve Matthew**, **Lay Reader Shirley Lee** and others. Burial followed, in the brief January daylight, atop Birch Hill cemetery.

On Wednesday morning, January 3rd, the tenth day of Christmas, looking towards a brighter dawn coming, having prayed nightly at Midnight Compline for over 15 years for "*a perfect end*", our friend and Companion along the Way **Shirley Demientieff** died in the Fairbanks Hospital, family and friends sitting with her. She was 56. We had said Compline with her at Midnight that night. We had said Midnight Compline with her most nights of the week for the last 15 years. We are still saying Compline with her. Born and raised in Nenana, as the oldest of the 7 children of the late **George** and **Elizabeth Demientieff**, Shirley was. . .

(Continued on page 19)

Seasons of life . . .

Shirley. She was a DOYON Board member; a significant figure in the community of Fairbanks; a friend to everyone, especially those who thought they had none; a demanding and persistent Voice for Justice; a LayReader and ChaliceBearer at St. Matthew's, and a person who prayed quietly every night . . . for you. Almost dying a number of years ago of a brain aneurysm, she had lived with lung cancer the last two or so years. She was here December 21st to bang pots and celebrate the Winter Solstice at Compline two weeks earlier; and five days before her death she had been at the Tribal Hall for a large community wide early New Year's Eve celebration in her honor. Her daughter **Elizabeth "Lisa"**, her son/nephew **Daniel Bettis**, her daughter **Leslie**, all of their families; her brothers and sisters **Mitch Demientieff**, **Joyce Willis**, **Kathy Morgan**, **Cliff Demientieff**, **Janet Demientieff**; her adopted sister and co-grandparent **Leona Allridge**, the rector as friend and confidante, and all of us who remember and still hear her voice survive her. The Tribal Hall overflowed into the streets of Fairbanks for her funeral Sunday afternoon, January 7th; in a service led by the rector, **Archdeacon Anna Frank**, **the Rev. Steve Matthew**, **the Rev. Luke Titus**, **the Rev. James Hunter**, **the Rev. Berkman Silas**, and **the Rev. Deacon Bella Jean Savino**. Services were held in George Hall in Nenana the next day, Monday, January 8th. That service was led by the rector, **Archdeacon Anna Frank**, **the Rev. Berkman Silas**, **the Rev. Canon Ginny Doctor**, and **Marilyn Duggar**. It was, of course, forty below. Final services will be held in Nenana on the Traditional Memorial Day in May.

Quietly and peacefully and almost exactly at noon, on Friday, January 12th, 65 years old **Norma Richards** passed away in the Fairbanks Hospital, surrounded by family, friends, and prayer. Born and raised in Fort Yukon, Norma lived in Fairbanks for many years before marrying her husband **Ray**. That led to years throughout Alaska and the Lower '48. Her brother and sister in law **Art** and **Mary Hunter** survive her, her sons **Ray** and **Rex Richards**, and many other family and friends. "*Memorial Tea*" was put up in the Parish Hall in the days following her death; and her funeral, led by **the Rev. James Hunter**, **Archdeacon Anna Frank**, **the Rev. Deacon Bella Jean Savino**, and **LayReader Peter Newton**, was held here Wednesday, January 17th.

In the early morning of Sunday, January 14th, tragic circumstances led to the death of 16 years old **Joshua Steven Hjelm**. Born to **Daisy Craig** of Mentasta and **Steve Hjelm** of Stevens Village, Josh had a sweet smile and a quiet nature, enjoying his time at fish camps along the Yukon and in Mentasta. His great grandmother **Katie John** survives him, as do his parents, his 4 brothers and sister, and other family members, including his aunt **Karen Saylor** and her husband **Ben**. **The Rev. James Hunter** and **Archdeacon Anna Frank** led an overflowing funeral service for him Friday, January 19th, at the Chapel of Chimes Funeral Home. Final services and burial were held Sunday,

January 21st in Mentasta. In forty below weather, Memorial prayers were led Wednesday afternoon, January 24th by **Harry Fields**, **Benno Cleveland**, **Bob MacGuire**, and the rector for Josh and the others who died that night, at the site of the tragedy.

On Tuesday, January 17th, 22 years old **Martin "Tzuge" Charlie** unexpectedly died. The son of **Norma Dahl Anderson** and **Bobby Charlie**, Martin was born in Minto, and raised there and here in Fairbanks, attending West Valley and Lathrop High Schools. His Grandmother **Linda Charlie** survives him, as do his parents, his brothers **Calvin** and **Keith**, his sister **Melissa**, and many other family members and friends. "*Memorial Tea*" was put up here in the Parish Hall following his death; and his funeral was held Monday, January 22nd. **Archdeacon Anna Frank**, **the Rev. Bessie Titus**, **the Rev. Canon Ginny Doctor**, **the Rev. Steve Matthew**, and LayReader **Shirley Lee** led the service. Final services and burial followed at home in Minto.

On Thursday, January 25th, **Kevin Lee Vent**, the infant son of **Edwina Starr** and **William Vent**, passed away at birth in the Fairbanks Hospital. Parents, grandparents, and extended family members in Huslia, Tanana, and Fairbanks survive him. On Monday, January 29th, St. Matthew's filled to capacity for his funeral, led by the rector and the **Rev. Steve Matthew**.

In the early morning of February 3rd, 1994, 42 years old **James Herbert** of Chalkyitsik was walking through downtown Fairbanks. It was his birthday, as he had reminded us the Sunday before at Church. Near the downtown bus terminal, he was shot and murdered. Following his funeral a number of us, including the rector, **the Rev. James Hunter**, and **Shirley Demientieff**, stood every Thursday morning at the site of his murder praying for justice. By the end of March the number standing had grown into hundreds; and those who shot him were arrested Good Friday. That's how Lent was that year. Sometime later, the Borough placed a memorial plaque to James at the Bus Terminal. During renovations to the Terminal/transfer site in the last year, the plaque had disappeared. When family members brought it to public attention, and through the efforts of the Tanana Chiefs Conference, the Borough placed a new marker there in early February. On Saturday morning, February 3rd, the rector, again with the help of **Harry Fields**, **Benno Cleveland** and others, led memorial prayers to James, dedicating the new plaque. On Sunday morning, February 4th, family members and others brought soup to share in memory of James following the 11:15 Eucharist.

Saturday night, February 3rd, another tragedy occurred in Fairbanks, as 53 years old **Catherine Ahsoak** was struck by a car, as she was walking home, dragged several blocks, and died. Originally from Barrow, Catherine had been hard of hearing since a childhood case of measles. Subsequently the driver was arrested. On Friday noon, February 23rd, Memorial Prayers were led by the rector, again with the help of **Harry Fields** and **Benno Cleveland**, at the site of the accident. It was forty-five below. On Monday, February 26th, a funeral service for Catherine was held at the Chapel of Chimes Funeral Home. **Presbyterian Pastor Mary Ann Warden**, Catherine's first cousin, led the service, with the

(Continued on page 20)

Seasons of life . . .

help of the rector.

Tuesday afternoon, February 6th, **the Rev. Deacon Bella Jean Savino** said prayers in the hospital for the soul of 70 years old **Tim Luke, Sr.** as he died, surrounded by family and friends. Born in Healy Lake to the late **Abraham** and **Eva Luke**, Tim had resided in Fairbanks for the last 15 years. Before his retirement he worked as a surveyor. His wife **Ruth** of 43 years survives him, his daughter **Mary Willey**; his son **Salvador**; and many other family members. Final services were held in Dot Lake Saturday, February 10th.

Suddenly and unexpectedly, 62 years old **Mary Ann Nikolai** passed away here in Fairbanks Wednesday morning, February 7th. Originally from DownRiver, she fell in love and had lived in Arctic Village all of her adult life, raising her family and caring for everyone. Prayers were said upon her death; and family and community members gathered at St. Matthew's Friday, February 9th for her funeral, led by **Archdeacon Anna Frank**. Her final services and burial were held at home in Arctic Village the next day, Saturday, February 10th.

On Valentine's Day, Wednesday, February 14th, 41 years old **John Meinhart** passed away in the Anchorage Hospital. John was raised in Fairbanks and worked as an auto body technician throughout the area. He is survived by his wife **Faith Herbert**, his three stepdaughters and stepson, 4 sisters, 1 brother, and a host of good friends he had made throughout his life. They all gathered at St. Matthew's Saturday, February 24th for his funeral, led by the rector, **the Rev. Steve Matthew**, and **the Rev. Deacon Bella Jean Savino**.

Memories and good stories filled the air. His burial services will be held this Spring.

Suddenly on Tuesday afternoon, February 20th, our friend **Michelle McCraven** died. It was Shrove Tuesday and 16 years old Michelle, who had always been a reminder/a messenger/an angel for us, flew away suddenly – reminding us all of the eternity of the Easter message, and its ultimate destination. The daughter of **Cynthia ("Cindy") Merrifield** of Fairbanks and **Larry McCraven** of North Pole, Michelle and her mother often attended Midnight Compline; Michelle wandering through the door in her pajamas and head phones. They would come by during the week too, and at other services, for one of Michelle's most favorite activities was "passing the peace". Active in Special Olympics, she won medals and enjoyed time with her friends. Michelle enjoyed all of her time... *and yet . . .* often she would wander through the second floor of the Parish Hall, as if she were looking for something. When asked, she would explain that she was "looking for Heaven". On the eve of Lent Beginning, she found The Way; which she had always showed all the rest of us. On Saturday afternoon, March 3rd, St. Matthew's filled past overflowing for her Memorial Service, led by the rector, **the Rev. Steve Matthew's**, and

the Rev. Deacon Bella Jean Savino. Organized by her friends **Barbara Smith** and **Cathy Zamora**, we smiled and told stories and said "Thank You" for the Gift of who she had been with us. A Reception followed in the Parish Hall.

Quietly and peacefully, Friday, February 23rd, 77 years old **William ("Bill") Taylor** passed away at home. Born in North Carolina, Bill finally arrived in Alaska in 1949, and this became home. Timing is always deeply the Spirit's Time; and Bill left at the beginning of the dog racing Season. Using a dogteam around Fairbanks in his early days led to a career of sprint racing in the 1960's. He won many races, including the Open North American in 1968, and this legacy continued on with his children. His son **Ricky** was in Anchorage to compete in the Anchorage Fur Rendezvous when Bill died. His wife **Ann** (*a longtime faithful member of St. Matthew's. Ann's handprint, from a preEaster cleaning of the church with Dorothy Pitka, is still on the ceiling on the west side of the Sanctuary*) died in September 1999. He is survived by his children – including **Donna El-Amin**, **Linda Taylor**, **Michael Paquette**, **Doris Lee**, **Darlene Bishop**, **Greg Taylor**, **Ricky Taylor**, and **Sandra Taylor**; 16 grandchildren, 2 great grandchildren; a brother and sister, and sisters-in-law including **Ethel Smith**, **Paula Evans**, and **Elaine Long**. And many friends along the Way. Thursday, March 1st the Tribal Hall filled to standing room for his funeral (*beginning just after Al Grant's funeral was concluding at the Church – see below*), led by the rector, **the Rev. Steve Matthew**, **the Rev. Deacon Bella Jean Savino**, and **the Rev. Mardow Solomon**. **Peter Michael Richardson** led the music, which lifted everyone. A Covered Dish followed that night at the Hall; and Bill's burial will be in the Spring, next to Ann.

Peter Michael Richardson led the music, which lifted everyone. A Covered Dish followed that night at the Hall; and Bill's burial will be in the Spring, next to Ann.

Quietly sitting at home with his family, sitting in his chair in the afternoon sunlight on Saturday, February 24th, 80 years old **Alfred Grant Jr** told his daughter Dee "I'm okay", closed his eyes, and died. Born and raised in Tanana, Al served during World War II on Attu; was a gifted public speaker and emcee at potlatches, explaining the nuances and meanings behind Tradition, and public events throughout the Interior; one of the two best Scrabble players the rector ever met (*the other being the late Jessie Williams of Venetie*); had a smiling comic view of life birthed from the tragedies that he had been part of, and finally a deep and abiding faith. His final words – "I'm okay" – were a Theological Statement. The rector remembers sitting and talking through summernights in Tanana; and longtalks at potlatches or covered dishes or around the picnic tables here on First Avenue. He and his wife **Ruth** were together 53 years. He's survived by his wife, sons **Cordell** and **Alfred ("Ad") III**, daughters **Arlene Grant** and **Dee Grant-Sinyon**, 8 grandchildren, **Tiana** the great grandchild, and many other family members. His family put a "Memorial Tea" up in the Parish Hall in the days following his death, and Thursday morning, March 1st St. Matthew's filled to overflowing for his service, led by his sister-in-law **Archdeacon Anna Frank**, **the Rev. Canon Ginny Doctor**, and **the Rev. Deacon Bella Jean Savino**. Final

(Continued on page 21)



Seasons of life . . .

services and burial were held in Minto Friday, March 2nd.

And finally in the Hospital in distant Anchorage, when it was Time and all that needed to be said had been said, late Saturday afternoon, February 24th, 56 years old **Vernon Joseph** quietly passed away. Vernon was a friend. Born in Tanana to the late **Virginia and Ben Joseph**, he was raised there and Fairbanks, spending also two years in the Army in the early 1970's. Vernon served as a substance abuse counselor here in Fairbanks, and throughout the Interior; and was a familiar figure here at St. Matthew's. He was here several nights a week leading recovery groups; sitting in the church office visiting while he waited until it was time to begin, sitting in the Library or Parish Hall with groups of young people talking about the Real Things of Life. One of the small yet greatest tributes to who he was, was watching the groups meet in his absence, leading themselves, while he was hospitalized. Vernon was a friend. It was he (*often with his friend Harry Fields*) who got the moose for many funeral potlatches throughout the community; or cooked the soup. He had quiet dignity and humor and deep understanding. Vernon was a friend. Some fifty of us gathered at the Church to pray and keep vigil on Thursday evening, February 22nd, when the life support systems were being disconnected in Anchorage. In typical Vernon fashion, and despite certain medical prognosis, he then woke up, remaining conscious long enough to tell his family that he loved them. He is survived by his wife **Rhonda**, sons **Vernon** and **Sean**; daughters **Tammy Rice, Dora Makker, Virginia Lee**; brothers **Ben** and **Cliff Joseph** and **Charles Newby Jr**; sisters **Candy Osteen, Lillian Coleman, Mary Ann Felix, Beverly Joseph, Linda Mae Evans, Sharon Landry**; their families; and all who struggle through Life to do right. The family combined their "Memorial Tea" with the Grant family in the Parish Hall, in the days following his death; and the Tribal Hall filled to standing room Friday, March 2nd for his funeral, led by **Pastor Craig Nicholia**, and assisted by the rector. A potlatch followed that evening. Final burial services will be in the Spring.

There were other deaths during these three months that affected the community of St. Matthew's – Shageluk Elder **Adolph Hamilton** in December and retired wedding photographer and friend **Stewart Rothman** in early February; **John George**'s daughter **Mablelena** died in Chicago also in February, and **Angie Geraghty**'s daughter **Olga Carson** died in Anchorage February 28th. **Veva Richmond**, the wife of once upon a time St. Matthew's Assistant **the Rev. Pete Richmond**, died in Maine in early March. There were certainly others.

But let one more not be forgotten. In the Season of Easter, on Sunday May 28th 2006, **Billy Farris** stood in St. Matthew's with **Michelle Tritt**, for the baptism of their daughter **Kaiden Farris**. The rector remembers his quiet and proud young smile. Billy and Michelle had been High School sweethearts since Chemawa. Billy was from the Gila River Reservation outside of Phoenix. He died Sunday, December 3rd, traveling from Mosul to Baghdad. He was 20

years old. He was serving with the 5th Battalion Fort Lewis Stryker Brigade. Michelle and Kaiden attended his funeral in Arizona. She has a photograph of him from the baptism, signing his daughter's forehead with a cross.

Parties and Pageants and Tree Burnings and Meetings and Friends

In the midst of all of these funerals, the normal life of the Church continued and we journeyed from weekday Advent Evening Prayer to **Deacon Bella Jean Savino's** Christmas Party in mid December (*which concluded with visiting moose in the parking lot*) to the wonderful Sunday School Christmas Pageant on Sunday, December 17th. Christmas Eve included grandson **williamCOLE** commenting on the sermon and Christmas Day arrived with a quiet Christmas snow falling and New Year's arrived with granddaughters **Shelby, Julia, Allyson, and Shani** assisting as acolytes and there were fireworks. Christmas greens DID burn on TwelfthNight and the Annual Meeting was held on January 28th.



Shrove Tuesday included a Vestry sponsored Pancake Supper and the last service of Ash Wednesday included visiting **Bishop Ben Arreak** from the Canadian Diocese of the Arctic. Prayer Shawls got significant media attention when they were blessed near the end of February; and mid-March included a party celebrating **Fr. Steve and Val Matthew's** 47th Wedding Anniversary, **Senior Warden Bruce Gadawah's** 11th Anniversary of his arrival at St. Matthew's, and the rector's 30th anniversary of his ordination to the Priesthood.

Various people helped with preaching during the Time, including **Fr. Steve** and **Fr. John Holz**, and **Deacons Bella Jean Savino, Montie Slusher, and Lee Davis**. Exiled to Seattle friend and Candidate for Holy Orders **Paul Haggland** preached in early January; and Postulant for Holy Orders **Shirley Lee** and **the Rev. Bessie Titus** preached in mid February. Through the efforts of all of the above, and more – Compline Layreaders **Linda Luke** and **Tree Nelson**, Lay Eucharistic Minister **Julia Cockerille**, **the Rev. Layne Smith** and **the Rev. James Hunter**, and ever faithful and companion **Archdeacon Anna Frank** – the rector was able to make two short trips Outside, and he is grateful.

In the middle of March, in the middle of Lent, the Light continues to grow each day. Fairbanks has set record cold temperatures for this time of the year, but someplace Spring is coming, someplace Easter is coming. Friends have shown us the Way.





SUMMARY of the MINUTES of the 2007 ANNUAL MEETING

On Sunday, January 28th, 2007, the Proclamation of the Gospel for the Morning being concluded, the rector called the meeting to order at 9:56 a.m. The following actions were then discussed or taken:

1. **Charlene Marth** was nominated and elected as Annual Meeting Secretary. A quorum was established. Agenda was approved. Minutes of 2006 were approved.
2. Parish organization reports were presented, along with the rector introducing parish members (*lay and ordained*) by name and asking them to speak to the ministry that they are involved in. All reports were received.
3. **Cathy Davis, Gregg Eschright and Marty Thomas** were appointed as Election Judges (*Tellers*) by the Chair.
4. **Karen Dullen, Helen Howard, Hubert Griffin, Laura Bender, Mary Ellen Koeller** and **Charlene Marth** were nominated for election to the Vestry; and **Hugh Griffin, Helen Howard, and Charlene Marth** were subsequently elected.
5. **Parish Treasurer Carolyn Nethken** presented the 2006 Financial Report, noting that 2006 had ended with a Deficit of \$6210. There were corrections to a few items on the Report; and a number of questions and following discussion occurred. The Report passed unanimously.
6. **Roslyn Petersen, Linda Demientieff, and Linda Mullen** were nominated as delegates to the 2007 Interior Deanery Meeting. **Linda Demientieff** and **Roslyn Petersen** were called to be the St. Matthew delegates, with **Linda Mullen** as Alternate.
7. Senior Warden **Bruce Gadwah** presented the 2007 Budget on behalf of the Vestry. The budget is increased to 287,224. There was discussion regarding the budgeted increased number of delegates to the 2007 Diocesan Convention (*from 3 to 4 delegates*); and the need for increased giving. The Budget passed unanimously with no changes.
8. A motion was made to change the voting for 2007 Diocesan Convention delegates from plurality to majority. Motion passed unanimously. Nominated for election as 2007 delegates to the October Diocesan Convention were **Julie Cockerille, Roslyn Petersen, Becky Snow, Linda Mullen, and Tom Marsh**. Elected were **Tom Marsh, Julia Cockerille, Becky Snow, and Linda Mullen**; with **Roslyn Petersen** as Alternate.
9. The St. Matthew's Endowment Board was electing to two 3-year terms and one 1-year term. Nominated for election to the Endowment Board were **Carol Holz, Helen Burrell, Maggie Castellini, and Sue Englebrecht**. Elected were: **Helen Burrell** (1 year), **Carol Holz** (3 year), **Maggie Castellini** (3 year).
10. It was moved to recess the meeting at 12:28 p.m., to continue with the Eucharist; and the Meeting adjourned, having received final election results, at 1:00 p.m.

SUMMARY of the FEBRUARY 2007 VESTRY MEETING

The Vestry of St. Matthew's met for their monthly meeting on Monday,

February 5th, with the following present:

Senior Warden **Bruce Gadwah**, Junior Warden **Tom Marsh**, Vestry Clerk **Teresa Moore**, **Julia Cockerille**, **Darrel Zuke**, **Linda Demientieff**, **Charlene Marth**, **Hubert Griffin**, **Helen Howard**, Parish Treasurer **Carolyn Nethken**, and the rector. This was the first full meeting of the new Vestry. After sharing a meal, the following actions were then discussed or taken:

1. As a means of introduction, each person present was asked to share an unknown thing about themselves. Following a reading a portion of Luke 5 - the call of the disciples - a brief meditation was read from the books presented as a gift to the Vestry from the Rev. Deacon Lee and Mary Margaret Davis.
2. Annual Meeting minutes were distributed, and briefly discussed. Minutes of the brief January



28th meeting were approved.

3. **Treasurer Carolyn Nethken** distributed the 2007 Budget and there was discussion. The January 2007 Financial Report was distributed: Monthly Operating Income for January totaled \$15,018 and Monthly Operating Expenses for January totaled \$21,944; resulting in a Monthly Surplus/Deficit of - \$6,926. The Treasurer explained the Financial Report, giving an overview of the different sections, the difference between restricted and non-restricted accounts, etc. The need for an Income Budget was discussed.
4. Wide ranging financial discussions continued, including the possibilities for automatic payroll deductions, the use of Paypal on the Website, and the possibilities of having a St. Matthew's Wedding Planner. Various members agreed to explore these further. The rector reminded the Vestry of its financial oversight responsibility; and it was decided to explore establishing a Financial Subcommittee.
5. Members were asked to reflect on ONE THING they would like to achieve by the 2008 Annual

Meeting. Passions ranged from Youth and Sunday School Programs to Church Music to improving Building and Grounds. There was focused interest in establishing and strengthening ties to the churches in the rural villages.

6. The Vestry continued its prayerful discussion of issues affecting the wider Church; and agreed to continue the discussion at the next meeting.
7. The rector requested Leave for February 8th - 24th; and this was approved.
8. **Hubert Griffin** agreed to begin researching preservation of the St. Nicholas icon.
9. Various meetings were announced, including Safe Church Training in North Pole next week, and Antiracism Training at the Nenana Deanery meeting in April. Senior Warden **Bruce Gadwah** reported that St. Matthew's is still scheduled to host the Diocesan Convention in October; and he will contact the neighboring Methodist Church for possible use.
10. **Roxy Wright Freedle's** resignation as Sunday School Coordinator was discussed; along with the feasibility of establishing a focused Youth/ Sunday School Committee.
11. The Vestry agreed to coordinate a Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, in the rector's absence, and responsibilities were planned; and it was approved to send a "Thank You note" to the **Rev. Deacon Lee and Mary Margaret Davis**, for the Vestry meditation books.
12. It was agreed that the next meeting would be either March 5th or 19th, depending on the Finance Committee and, with a Closing Prayer said by the person present ('a la the Gospel Reading) who had most recently been fishing, the meeting adjourned at 9:50PM.

SUMMARY of the MARCH 2007 VESTRY MEETING

The Vestry of St. Matthew's met on Monday, March 5th for their regular monthly meeting, with the following present: Senior Warden **Bruce Gadwah**, Junior Warden **Tom Marsh**, **Julia Cockerille**, **Darrel Zuke**, **Linda Demientieff**, **Hubert Griffin**, **Helen Howard**, Vestry Clerk **Teresa Moore**, and the rector. Following opening reflection on the previous day's Gospel, and individual drawings of when each had seen Our Lord present recently in the Life of St. Matthew's, the following actions were discussed or taken.

1. It was moved to accept the February minutes, as presented.
2. The February Treasurer's Report showed February Budgeted Operating Income totaling \$14,600 (Year to Date Total \$29,618) and February Budgeted Operating Expenses at \$25,905 (Year to Date Total \$47,849). This resulted in a Monthly Surplus/Deficit of - \$11,305; and a **Year to Date Accumulated Surplus/Deficit of - \$18,231**. A wide ranging financial discussion followed, including possible

amending the 2007 Budget. It was moved and passed to freeze all spending except essential Budget Items until the Vestry Financial Committee can meet Saturday, April 7th, and bring their recommendations to the April Vestry meeting.

3. Various fundraising options were discussed, and it was decided to hold a **Chili and Cornbread Cook-off Saturday, March 17th** from 5PM to 7PM, under the chair of **Hubert Griffin**; and a **Spaghetti Feed and Chinese Auction Saturday, April 14th**, under the chair of **Darrel Zuke**.
4. **Teresa Moore** and **Tom Marsh** reported on the possibilities of automatic payroll deductions; and it was decided that such a system is currently not feasible. There was general discussion about the various St. Matthew accounts; and the new ordinance requiring St. Matthew's to get a City Business License. **Darrel Zuke** reported that the final details are being worked out for the Website PayPal account.
5. There was discussion about the "Passion for Native Ministry" Program, increasing the involvement of St. Matthew's in the Interior Deanery. Initial plans, coordinated through **Archdeacon Anna Frank**, are being made for visits to Circle and Stevens Village within the month.
6. Discussions about issues affecting the wider Church were postponed for this meeting; **Hubert Griffin** reported on initial information about restoring the St. Nicholas icon; and the Senior Warden reported that the Methodist Church would be available for the October Diocesan Convention. There was discussion about Roxy's resignation as Sunday School Director; and it was noted that the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper had raised \$271.
7. There was discussion about updating our insurance policies; tax options for the Sexton; and the Junior Warden will be installing hand sanitizers. **Darrel Zuke** reported on the world wide use of the St. Matthew's Website (www.stmatthewschurch.org); and the rector reported on the Ordination Process and the number of individuals from St. Matthew's within the Process.
8. There was discussion about the Interior Deanery meeting scheduled for Nenana April 26th - 29; and the role this meeting will play in the beginning Bishop Search Process.
9. With the decision that the next regular meeting will be Easter Monday, April 9th, the meeting adjourned at 9:20PM with a Closing Prayer by the rector, as the person present who had most recently driven a dogteam.

Holy Week at St. Matthew's

APRIL 1st. PALM SUNDAY

Sunday Eucharists at 8AM, 9:15AM, and 11:15AM.

APRIL 2nd. Monday in Holy Week

7PM Holy Eucharist

April 3rd. Tuesday in Holy Week

7PM Holy Eucharist

April 4th. Wednesday in Holy Week

9:30AM Holy Eucharist

7PM Tenebrae

12AM The Last Compline

**April 5th. Maundy Thursday**

6PM Simple Covered Dish Supper in the Parish Hall

7PM Maundy Thursday Eucharist, including
footwashing and stripping of the Altar

April 6th. Good Friday

12PM Ecumenical Community Good Friday Service,
sponsored by Tanana Valley Conference of Churches,
at St. Matthew's

7PM Good Friday Service

April 7th. Holy Saturday

10AM Holy Saturday Service

April 7th, Evening

8PM The Easter Vigil, including the Lighting of the
Easter Fire, the Easter baptisms, & the first Eucharist of
Easter

April 8th. Easter Sunday

8AM, 9:15AM, 11:15AM Easter Sunday Morning
Eucharists

St. Matthew's Episcopal
Church
1030 Second Avenue
Fairbanks, AK 99701-4355

O Ye Frost and Cold

Address Service Requested*

March 28, 2007

***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.