

O Ye Frost and Cold

Volume 102 Number 2

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*"I do not occupy myself with great matters,
or with things that are too hard for me.
But I still my soul and make it quiet,"
(Psalm 131:2,3a)*

HOW I LEARNED TO STOP WORRYING & PLAY "KICK THE CAN"

Sitting in the early morning on the far bank of the River, in the small village further North. Water here and there on top of the ice and no one is awake, in a two hundred mile circumference, except the Spring birds, flying and swooping over the River. Two ravens fly over, gamboling and playing in perfect symmetry. It is quiet enough sitting here that I can hear the ice shift there under the bank, in that section of the River right in front of me. Stillness and quiet; and the Song of Spring from God's Heart.

Bishop David Cochran (*Bishop of Alaska 1974 - 1981*), a tall courtly gentleman with a bemused eye and a kind heart, spent his last Episcopal visit here, in his whole Diocese, in this small village, at this time of the year. It was the edge of Break-Up and he spent his Visit, like the rest of us, watching the ice and listening to the morning birds over there, flying across the bar and over the distant timber. Afterwards he wrote, for *the Alaskan Churchman*, his wish and prayer that future Bishops should remember to take the time to just come sit here, in places like this at times like this. Not just Bishops should remember to do that.

I used to spend a lot of Time in places like this; and I remember Springs and Summers and the Old Men, sitting together on old handmade wooden benches, as I am sitting here this morning, watching the River. They would talk, telling quiet stories and remembering. You could see them laugh now and then, but mostly they just sat there watching, wrapped in the Silence and Peace of the River. Birds flying over; children running; planes landing; boats coming; summerstorm clouds forming over the distant mountains . . . and the Old Men just sat there on the old gray wooden benches. Watching. Being quiet. It seemed in those days as if it would be nice and enviable and wise to sit there with them; but even in those days, in small places like this, there were always **THINGS TO DO**. Things that **HAD TO BE FACED** and **DONE RIGHT AWAY**. Who had Time to just sit?

I used to spend a lot of Time in Winter Nights in places like this; and I remember Winter Nights and Grandmothers sewing. By the soft light of the coal oil lamps, they would sit sewing. A cup of tea in an old blue from Samson's Hardware tin cup. The bright colored beads lined out from the fruitcake or cookie tin. White thread. They would sit over there, on the edge of the room, sewing in that soft yellow light, while I and others would visit. The noise of children playing would fill the other parts of the house, while the rest of us were wrapped in **INTENSE** discussions about **WHATEVER** the news or the **CRISIS** of the day was; and the Grandmother would be

sitting over there sewing. Occasionally she might cluck her tongue, but that was about it. Silently sitting there sewing.

Time has passed now and the friends I used to sit with in late night passionate discussions have become the Grandmothers quietly sewing; have become the old Men sitting, as I am this morning, quietly on the benches. Time has passed now and now, as I look back, I think that I have learned something.

I can no longer remember whatever the **CRISES** were that we thought had to be faced **RIGHT AWAY**. I can no longer remember whatever the **WORK** was that we thought had to be done **RIGHT AWAY**. I can no longer remember whatever the **PROBLEMS** were that we thought had to be fixed **RIGHT AWAY**.

All I **CAN** remember is the memory of the Peace that surrounded those Old Men sitting watching the River; the memory of the Peace that surrounded and flowed from the Grandmothers sitting in the soft light sewing. It is the Peace that endures, that lasts; and all the non-Peace fades away finally (*or, as St. Paul pointed out, 1st Corinthians 13:13*).

The General Convention of The Church is meeting in June and if I were going, which I'm not, I would watch, in those thousands that will be there, for folks sitting silently and watching, folks that have spent time in the corners of rooms sewing or on the banks of Rivers watching. I spent enough time in the Interior or along the Arctic Coast to know that the ones with the Gift, the best hunters, the ones that really **KNEW** what was going on, whether out on the ice or in the deep Interior woods, were usually the quietest ones in the room. Among the thousands that will be there at the Convention (*including Becky Snow and Mary Margaret Davis and the Rev. Bessie Titus from our part of the World*), I would watch for the quietest folk back on the Edge.

And here at **THIS** Edge of the World, in a World of news and crisis and problems, isn't the Gift of St. Matthew's to be a quiet place, in the midst of Summer Sun and Winter Storm, where we can sit on wooden benches and watch the River of the Spirit flow, touched by Light; and sense the Spirit sewing the variety of our lives into the Pattern of God's Design, and marvel at its Beauty?

Last night, in this small place on the far bank of the River, the biggest thing happening was a game of "*kick-the-can*" around the old Store, and up and down the trail that runs along the River. While geese flew calling in the evening air, the children of the small place ran laughing through the tall brown grass. And us Older Folk watched, smiling and wanting to play too.

I suspect that's where the Lord Christ was last night, in case you were looking for Him. He was out there playing "*kick-the-can*" with those children, in an Easter parable of what is Important, and what is Not.

Come play. The Game is starting.

*"Peace I leave with you. My Peace I give to you. . .
Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid."
(John 14:27)*

St. Matthew's
Episcopal Church
Fairbanks, Alaska
The Reverend Scott Fisher

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**VOICES
of LENT,
of EASTER,
of SPRING**

We're sitting outside andit's snowing. The days are getting lighter, but it's still snowing. It's Easter, but it's still snowing. We're sitting outside watching the People of God walk by, carrying the crosses of Lent; singing the songs of Easter; watching the geese come back; watching the River and its ice. And we overhear, as they pass by.....

I want to see that in the NEXT Newsletter: how a Vestry Hit Squad is going to be sent out.

We came by just to smile! We're in LOVE!

I told her, "Now that he's gone, it'll be different. You'll have no fun. NOTHING will be fun anymore."

It took 6 weeks for the mail to bring it from Denali Way to out here on Rosie Creek.

. . . so I just praise God, I just Praise God for ALL of my children and grandchildren.

Today is going to be like the 13th stanza of Wallace Stevens's "13 ways of looking at a Blackbird": "*It was evening all afternoon. /It was snowing/And it was going to snow.*" That's my favorite poem.

I'm just a Prisoner of Love.

Hi. I just called to let you all know that I'm out of the Hospital now and I'm back and I'm going Home today. And I just wanted to thank everybody for their prayers. I'm still kiiaiiiiiiiiicking!

This year, this year I want to go out to The Lakes. I miss it out there.

Oh I hate this Time of Year - Lent. It gets so gloomy in Church.

I LOVE this time of year. Lent reminds me of how much God loves ME.

DEADLINE: JUNE 30th

\$2,292.90 WOULD LIKE TO BE GIVEN AWAY



The St. Matthew's Endowment Board, as in previous years, reminds everyone that the Deadline for applying for Endowment Board Grants is the close of the business day on **Friday, June 30th**. The Board has, as they announced at the January Annual Meeting, \$2292.90 to distribute in grant monies this year. Endowment Board grants are accepted for projects that "enhance the worship, ministry, and mission outreach of St. Matthew's. Grants cannot be used for the general operating budget of St. Matthew's".

Endowment Board Grants are a chance to dream. In previous years, grants have covered everything from tuition and books for Fr. Stephen Matthew studying for ministry, to helping re-furnish the Farthing Cross in Nenana; from helping folks travel to a Prayer Workshop in Seattle, to a beginning step towards setting up a Recovery Camp; from bringing an Advent Guest Speaker to St. Matthew's, to contributions to the Food Bank and Young Life; from helping begin the St. Matthew's Website, to beginning work on the St. Matthew's Directory. And more. Endowment Board grants helped purchase the neighboring Bonnified property last year.

Dream a little. Application grant forms are available from the Church Office, or the Endowment Board.

An Anonymous Story from the Congregation:

**SPRING CAMP on the KOYUKUK:
A 4 YEAR OLD LEARNS about PRAYER**

I have a short story for you. My mother told me a story recently about me when I was about 4 years old. When she told me this story I remembered the incident pretty clearly. My parents raised my brother and two sisters and me in year round camps. When I was 4 years old we arrived at a camp where we were going to stay for the spring. It was near a lake in South Fork of the Koyukuk River. There was snow on the ground so we arrived in our camp in a sled. My parents set up the canvas tent and dad left camp with the dog team early in the day. Mom said she was in the tent and she heard us playing outside in the sun behind the tent. Then my siblings began talking about how nice it would be if dad got a moose. They talked about how good it would be to cook moose meat over the camp fire. We were all talking and I said "*I know I'll say a prayer so dad will get a moose.*" So mom said I knelt in the snow and said a prayer. Just as I was ending my prayer a camp robber flew over me and swooped down so I said "*...and camp robber too*" in our language. My siblings laughed so hard at me because I prayed that dad will get a camp robber. Later that day when dad got back to camp he brought home a moose. I remember feeling so proud because my prayer was answered. That's my spring camp story.





HOCKEY FANS

St. Matthew's would like to congratulate Darcy Peter for her contributions to the success of her hockey team!

For the 2005-2006 hockey season, Darcy played defense for the Fairbanks Amateur Hockey Association's Squirt C House League on the "Play It Again Sports" team. Her team wrapped up the season by winning the local March play-offs in Fairbanks and going on to play in

the 2006 Alaska State Tournament in Eagle River.

Darcy is the daughter of Johnny Peter Jr. of Ft. Yukon and Valorie Adams-Gowan of Beaver. Her grandparents are Johnny Sr. & Suzie Peter and Clifford Sr. & Babe Adams.

Her Godparents are Shane Fisher, Colette Wiehl, and Dawn Fields.

Darcy's love of hockey is contagious and wonderful. Her enjoyment of the sport brings her much happiness as well as pride.

Way to go Darcy! Congratulations on making it to State!

Spring Voices

That's the first time I've been to an Ash Wednesday service and you know what? Lent doesn't make any sense without that service.

Do YOU FEEL that God is involved in YOUR Life personally; not like electricity? How do you KNOW?

Actually, I know a lot of marriages that have broken up over broccoli

I HAVE to tell you something funny that happened at Church on Sunday, but you have to PROMISE NOT to PUT IT in the Newsletter.

... got over 80 lynx so far, but he hustles.

Even though we're people of faith and prayer, grieving is hard, isn't it?

...was in a confirmation class in Chalkyitsik, and Albert Tritt was teaching it. He told us the church doors are always unlocked, opening and closing - so we can always go in, anybody can go in. And when we go in, we leave all of our, our bad, uh, spirit. And when we leave, we take with us That Good Spirit out into the world.

ST. MATTHEW'S CHURCH

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		TREE-CLIMBING	Luke Castellini
		MINISTERS	YOUUS!!!

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Spring Voices

The Elders talk, they talk over our way about the way the weather is shifting. It's not the same as it used to be. It used to be, in a white-out, when we were caught in a white-out, we could always tell by the ridges which way, because the winds always come from the same way. But the winds aren't the same now; they've changed. We can't rely on them anymore. And that creates, is creating a feeling of, a feeling of instability.

*"Excuse me, but I'm kind of new to the Episcopal Church -- could you tell me where the accordions go?"
"Right next to the bagpipes."*

He's a pretty impressive guy. We were talking the other day and he told me how sometimes you just have to have faith. There was a time when he was trying to cross the street down here in Anchorage and there was lots of traffic. Lots. Finally he just stepped out there and was doing okay. Then all of a sudden there was a semi coming right towards him. And the truck.....just passed right through him. That's what he's like.

.....said to him, "Why is your Baptist God so angry? I believe in a God who is Silence, and who gives me opportunities."

... told me, "My people never come visit anymore; nobody come around. And they'll do the same to you. But just pray for them and love them; pray for them and love them. Even if you don't have anybody, you always have Jesus."

... said to me, with TEARS, "and now she won't even talk to me". And I told her, "Pray for her. Just pray for her Sister. That's all you can do."

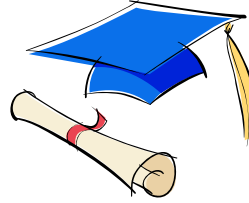
It's a long-distance marriage. He lives in Rio, in Brazil; and I live in Salt Lake City.

I was 5 years old when we left. That was 1942. This is the first time I've been back? What do I remember about Fairbanks? Blackouts. I remember the Blackouts because of the War.

A BEGINNING CHRONOLOGICAL COMPENDIUM of COMING EVENTS

- Saturday, May 13th.....St. Matthew's Rummage Sale & Barbecue
- Sunday, May 14th.....Mother's Day, and UAF Graduation
- Monday, May 15th.....Work begins on LOVE, INC
new building, volunteers sought
- Tuesday, May 16th.....Closing Education for Ministry
Eucharist & Celebration
- Wednesday, May 17th.....West Valley High School Graduation
- Thursday, May 18th.....North Pole High School Graduation
- Friday, May 19th.....Last Day of School in Fairbanks
- Friday, May 19th.....Lathrop High School Graduation
- Sunday, May 21st.....9:15AM Sunday School Carnival
- Thursday, May 25th.....Bishop MacDonald visits for Feast of
Ascension Eucharist, with Confirmations
(covered dish at 5:30PM, Eucharist at 7PM)
- Thursday, June 1st.....Interior Deanery Begins at St. Matthew's
- Sunday, June 4th.....Feast of Pentecost Celebration, one service
at 10AM (probably OUTDOORS).
- Sunday, June 4th.....Summer Welcoming Barbecue &
Picnic following the Service
- Monday, June 5th.....Denakkanaaga Begins in Koyukuk
- Wednesday, June 7th.....Archdeacon Stuck, Walter Harper, etc
reach Summit of Denali (1913)
- Sunday, June 11th.....Trinity Sunday
- Tuesday, June 13th.....Diocesan Camp in Wasilla Begins (thru June 18th)
- Tuesday, June 13th.....National General Convention
Begins in Columbus, Ohio (thru June 21)
- Saturday, June 17th.....The Midnight Sun Run
- Wednesday, June 21st.....Summer Solstice & Midnight Sun
Eucharist on Eagle Summit
- Saturday, June 24th.....Doyon Limited Yukon 800 Boat Race
- Tuesday, June 27th.....First Camping Session at
Manley Hot Springs Begins (thru July 2nd)
- Friday, June 30th.....Endowment Board Grants
Applications Deadline
- Tuesday, July 4th.....The Glorious Fourth
- Sunday, July 9th.....Second Camping Session at
Manley Hot Springs Begins (thru July 14th)
- Wednesday, July 19th.....Golden Days Begins in Fairbanks
- Wednesday, July 19th.....World Eskimo-Indian Olympics Begin
- Friday July 21st.....5th Midnight Sun
Inter-tribal Powwow Begins
- Saturday, July 22nd.....BOOYAH, and the Golden Days Parade
- Monday, July 24th.....Third Camping Session at
Manley Hot Springs Begins (thru July 29th)
- Friday, August 4th.....Tanana Valley State Fair Begins
- Plus a few weddings now and then . . .

A LITANY of 2006 GRADUATES



"Creator of us all, as the Breath of Your Spirit calls the Night into the New Day, calls the Winter into Spring, and calls all of us towards You; so in the Season of Easter schools end for a Season and graduates sigh in accomplishment and thanksgiving, and are called into a new Beginning. Behold all who are part of our lives, who are graduating this Spring, and bless them with grateful hearts, for all who have helped in this journey; skillful minds, to serve You in the days to come; a spirit of discernment, to know and use the gifts and skills that each uniquely brings; and the courage to face the future which You alone hold. As You walked on the Road to Emmaus with Your friends, so You have been with them each step of the Way, in the early mornings and long nights, and so You have promised to be with them always. Even as they are each a Sign of Your Blessing in our lives, so may Your Blessing continue with them. In thy Name, Lord Christ, we do pray. Amen."

CEDAR ANDERSON (West Valley High School, Fairbanks); **KIMBERLY ANSAKNOK** (University of Alaska-Fairbanks, Associates Degree, General Program); **BROOK BENDER** (West Valley High School, Fairbanks); **JASON BOYETTE** (West Valley High School, Fairbanks); **ERIC BRAUSER** (West Valley High School, Fairbanks); **BITTNER BROOKS** (Star of the North Charter School, North Pole, 8th Grade); **NADINE CARROLL** (Hutchinson High School, Fairbanks); **LUKE CASTELLINI** (Joy Elementary, Fairbanks); **ERIC CHANDLER** (West Valley High School, Fairbanks); **DANNY CHILDS** (North Pole High School, North Pole); **WHITNEY ROSE DEMIENTIEFF** (West Valley High School, Fairbanks); **BESS EVANS** (West Valley High School, Fairbanks); **ALLYSON FISHER-SALMON** (Cruikshank School, Beaver, Kindergarten); **BILL FORSKO** (West Valley High School, Fairbanks); **DUNCAN FRASER** (West Valley High School, Fairbanks); **BRENDA HEWITT** (George Washington University, Washington, DC, Masters Degree in Political Science, Political Management); **SHIRLEY HOLMBERG** (University of Alaska-Fairbanks, Bachelor of Arts Degree in Rural Development); **HEATHER HOPKINS** (Lathrop High School, Fairbanks); **DANIELLE HUNTINGTON** (University Park Elementary School, Fairbanks, Kindergarten); **DEWAYN JAMES** (Tanana High School, Tanana); **AMBER JIMMIE** (Minto High School, Minto); **JAMIE JOHNSON** (Nordale Elementary School, Kindergarten); **BRANDON JOSEPH** (University Park School, Fairbanks, Kindergarten); **SOLANA LEE** (Hutchinson High School, Fairbanks); **LISA LINNELL** (University of Alaska - Fairbanks; Associates Degree, Paralegal); **BRANDON MARCOTT** (University of Alaska - Anchorage, Civil Engineering); **ANDY MERITT** (West Valley High School, Fairbanks); **PAUL MERITT** (University of Alaska - Fairbanks, Teacher Certification Program); **KAREN LEIGH MOORE** (Lathrop High School, Fairbanks); **MELISSA NEWMAN** (Effie Kokrine Charter School, Fairbanks; 8th Grade); **TRAVIS NEWMAN** (Hunter Elementary, Fairbanks, 6th Grade); **THOMAS OATES** (West Valley High School, Fairbanks); **JULIE OLSON** (West Valley High School, Fairbanks); **JOHN ADAMS PARSONS** (Lathrop High School, Fairbanks); **ANDREW PEROTTI** (Lathrop High School, Fairbanks); **KAYLEE ROSE PHILLIPS** (Denali Elementary School, Kindergarten); **AMY PORT** (West Valley High School, Fairbanks); **CLAYTON SCHUSTER** (Monroe Catholic High School, Fairbanks); **SHANNON SISTO** (Mt. Edgecumbe High School, Sitka); **LISA THOMAS** (University of Chicago, Masters in International Business); **MISTY THOMAS** (Fort Yukon High School, Ft. Yukon); **DAVID WIEHL** (University of Alaska-Fairbanks, Bachelor of Arts in Business); **CHAYNN WINFREY** (Fairbanks Native Association Head Start); **DONALD** and **DUSTIN** (West Valley High School, Fairbanks).

Spring Voices

I'd like to come back to St. Matthew's - it's my church! - but I can't. I've been to TOO MANY funerals there. It hurts too much.

I've been here 50 years and this is just THE STRANGEST weather.

He likes to fluff even more than you do!

I gave up beer for Lent, but this is the kindof day that....

I gave up sugar for Lent, and I've done pretty good, well, except for wine. Is there sugar in wine?

No, I didn't see it, but I gave up TV for Lent and.....

I tell you, I gave up the newspaper for Lent and I don't.....

... so the Government was outlawing all the drums, you know; so the chief took all the drums over, across the border, for safekeeping they called it, to. . .

The Bishop is going to talk about The Windsor Report? How did we get tied up with Charles and Camilla?

When I heard she was going to preach I had to be there. Every time she talks, it's like she's reading my soul.

Think of all the prayers that had been said in that place. Think of all the prayers.

... and all that's left, when the windows blew out, is a picture of Bill W. and an AA pamphlet on the 12 steps. THAT seems significant.

The Fire Chief told me it was the first time all winter the wind hadn't been blowing. And if it had been blowing, they would have lost most of Juneau.

....said to me, 'you know, you're the first preacher I ever met wearing carharts.'

.....saw THAT BIG ANIMAL walking, with three cubs, and....

Spring Voices

... and I remember going into Church, that Old Mission in Tanana, and there were just caskets all over. So many people had died. Flu I think. NO, it was measles. And it kept being like that. People kept dying.

...threw me out of the meeting because they said I wasn't an alcoholic, but I'm a crack addict and.....

So I'll be leaving St. Matthew's, but.....

....been hooked on cocaine ever since.....

I have NEVER seen such COLORFUL mold as I saw in my father's refrigerator last week.

They talk about, like we were living in a Pit or Hole when I was growing up; and all THIS - Western ways - has come along to help us. But we weren't living like that and it surprise me when Elders older than me say we were. We had EVERYTHING we needed from the Land. From the four Seasons. Even the coming of the first snow was exciting. This Stuff hasn't helped us.

This is her weather, you know. That's what they say - the weather the day you're buried comes from your spirit. And this is the way she was - warm and loving.

....the hardest thing for me to get used to was The Liturgy, because I'm not a liturgical person and wasn't coming from a liturgical church. Saying the same prayers over and over again, with the same words. But I got used to it.

People need to start talking about it - these drug overdoses - and quit covering it up. If they start talking about it, then kids will learn that This Stuff is dangerous and killing Us.

They tell me she's happy and she's with Jesus and I shouldn't feel bad; and I try. But it's hard. It still hurts. I miss her.

through All The Seasons of Life

SEASONS of LIFE in the SEASON of SPRING

From nearing the end of the Season of Epiphany, through the desert of Lent and into the joy of Easter; from mid-February, with dreams of distant Spring, into a Season of snow disappearing, robins singing, and rivers running with ice; from **Thursday, February 16th through Wednesday, May 3rd**; we stopped and gathered and prayed together at least **239** times. An accounting, and some of the details, through the last seventy-seven days:

- 30 Sunday morning Eucharists
- 33 Private/Home Communion visits by Lay Eucharistic Ministers
- 29 Private/Home Communion visits by clergy
- 6 Fairbanks Correctional Center Eucharists or visits
- 52 Midnight Compline Services
- 3 Other Weekday or Evening Eucharists
- 5 Tuesday Morning Denali Center Eucharists
- 11 Wednesday Morning Eucharists
- 11 Wednesday Evening Eucharists
- 5 Thursday Morning Pioneer Home Eucharists
- 4 Celebrations of Holy Baptism, 11 Baptized
- 1 Celebration of Holy Matrimony
- 6 Commendations of the Dying/Departed
- 1 Reception into Columbarium
- 9 Funerals
- 1 Burial (*outside of Fairbanks*)
- 4 Shrove Tuesday/Ash Wednesday Gatherings or Services
- 8 Weekday Lenten Services or Stations of the Cross
- 8 Holy Week Services (*Monday through Holy Saturday*)
- 6 Easter Vigil/ Easter Day services
- 2 Public prayers/invocations
- 1 House blessing (*outside of Fairbanks*)
- 3 Workshops, conferences hosted

March 31st – First Spring Tourists in Church

April 28th – Last snow disappears from main Church yard

May 2nd – Date Nenana Ice Tripod moved this year

0 - # of rectors having a winning ticket

-37F - Coldest Official Temperature recorded since last Newsletter (*Ash Wednesday, March 1st*)

+55F - Warmest Official Temperature recorded since last Newsletter (*May 2nd*)

33 - # of days Temperature below zero since February 16th

8:47AM Sunrise, February 16th

5:12AM Sunrise, May 3rd

5:24PM Sunset, February 16th

10:26PM Sunset, May 3rd

Holy Baptism

In the quiet of the Wednesday, February 19th evening service, family and friends gathered for the baptism of nearly four months old **Trinity Yetaneaulnu Pitka**. Trinity's Godparents are **Cynthia Walker, Nikita Honea**, and **Kenneth Pitka**. And the rector smiled, remembering Trinity's mother's **Delores** as a once-upon-a-time young girl serving as an acolyte in the Church in Beaver.

And then there was Easter. Saturday evening, April 15th, Choirmember **Rich Davis** stepped into the dark and full and squirming Church and, holding aloft the tall and now lit Paschal candle, as he sang he led us all into Easter. There were

(Continued on page 7)

Seasons of Life . . .

eight baptisms that night, in a rollicking circus of a service. Those baptized, and their Godparents or Sponsors, follow: four years old **Deangelo McKenzie Joseph Attla** (*Wesley Dalton, Shara David, Todd Malemute, Vincent Nelson, Maria Oldman and Sarah Vent*); 1 year old **Eddie Ronald Edwin** (*Allison Bailey and James Bailey*); two years old **Adeline Mae Girl** (*Michelle Riffe and Carl Riffe*); four months old **Hayleigh Elizabeth Girl** (*Michelle Riffe and Carl Riffe*); 1 year old **Isabelle Rita Richelle Jagels**, almost 1 year old **Charlene Andrea John** (*Denise Leigh*); 1 month old **Janna Maggie Vadishan Johnson** (*Janelle Griffin, Lila Cardenas, Nicole Creek, and Timothy Agee*); and **LeiLani Aliyah Wholecheese** (*Hugh Bifelt and Janet Bifelt*).



And then, continuing Easter Baptisms (*but every baptism is an Easter baptism*), on Easter Wednesday evening, April 19th, two years old **Isabelle Louise Richert** and 6 months old **Sadie Jean Richert**, all dressed in white and accompanied by beaming grandparents and family, were baptized. Their Godmother is **Jessica Michaels**. (*Isabelle and Sadie live in Colorado, but had returned here for their baptisms, and to visit Grandparents and family*).



Finally, mid Wednesday afternoon, May 3rd, in the Intensive Care Unit of the Fairbanks Memorial Hospital, 56 years old **Harmie L. "Bub" Deaton** was baptized, at his request. Originally from Kentucky, Bub is married to **Ada Deaton** of Beaver, the father of **Debbie, Doreen,** and **Sandy**, and the son-in-law of **Elsie Pitka** of Beaver.

Holy Matrimony

As a gift for all of us who were there, before the stark desert of Lent wrapped around us, on the last Saturday before Lent, on Saturday, February 25th, **Charles Paskvan** and **Yelena Petrovna Markova** were married here. Soft spring snow fell outside, turning the world new and fresh, as we celebrated their love.

Funerals, Memorials, Burials

Shortly before Midnight, on Ash Wednesday, March 1st, with family and love and prayers surrounding her, 57 years old **Doris May "Dewey" Biddle** slipped away from this World of Lent, after a struggle with cancer, to the Light of the Country of Easter. Daughter of **Stanley** and the late **Madeline Jonas** (*who died last year on February 12th, in Denali Center*), Dewey was born in Fort Yukon, and spent many of her happiest early years with the family in Canyon Village, up the Porcupine River. She grew to be a brave and courageous woman,

(Continued on page 20)

Spring Voices

...and she would pray with me, every time we said the Our Father together, blinking her eyes at each word. That was her way of praying with me, you see.

You know, she said to me, in the hours before she was dyin', *'you know, the snow has always been my diamonds'*. I said to her, *'mom, you're not supposed to be a poet'*. But it snowed that day, the day she died, and it snowed every day since. Until today, the day we're burying her. And now look at the snow in the sunlight.

I'm still going out there to look for ducks. I've heard we're okay if we just boil the heck out of it.

I don't care. I've had the flu before. I'm still going out.

No use. I'm not going out there this year. I don't want to take a chance on the flu.

....and all those who are gone now, all those I miss.

I remember listening to my mother, and other Elders talking, when I was a little girl. And they would say, *"When it gets to The End, people will be being just picked up, picked up."* Now look at it, these days. We never know.

carchofffffffeeeeeeeeeee.

The problem with civilization is that it's based on addiction.

... had a Stradivarius, but he got drunk one night and sat on it. Ruined it and it couldn't be fixed. It was in the family for years after that.

I don't know; I wasn't listening. I spent that whole service crying.

That's the kindof line that should be in the Newsletter, you know. Where Do YOU get those things?

Too much; too much. We're losing too many too quick.

....heard an owl calling, and I know we're not supposed to pay attention to that Old Superstition and all, but still...

Spring Voices

... went out to Creamer's and there was ONE GOOSE walking around out there in the snow. And about 100 cars in the Parking lot staring at it.

... told us she always hoped she would die in Lent, because that's such a quiet time.

Is your Church having Easter Sunday services this year?

That's where I learned how to do cartwheels; when I was 16 and living in Cuba. And I did them until I was 60.

I'm an Old Woman now and I can do as I please.

I'm going to a Church where the FULL Word of God is preached - because the Church does NOT exist before the Bible. It says "In the beginning was the Word of God" - and where the Holy Spirit is ALLOWED.

... so I got out on the 14th, and MAN, I'm tryin' to do good, but it's hard. It's just too much out here. It's HARD.

... when we heard about it, we had a service in my cell. We all got together and prayed for him. I'd just told him, "Us black sheep have got to stick together"

....was certainly the most JOYFUL Easter service we've ever been to.

...said they really enjoyed the service. They're with, they said, a group called the Anglican Mission, and they came because they'd heard we'd broken off from the National Church. "ECUSA", they called it. When I said we hadn't, they said they were sorry, but they wouldn't be able to come back.

.... said they really miss St. Matthew's, but ever since that business with the National Church they....

Oh, I just figure Holy Week is going to be a whole week of tears for me this week.

A Word from the Senior Warden:

St. Matthew's Victory Garden

By Bruce Gadwah, Senior Warden of the Vestry

When I was in grade school my grandmother showed me a picture of a very large garden that was all divided into many plots; and there were one or two people in each section hoeing and weeding. That was the first time I learned about the "victory gardens" of World War II, and the sharing of small spaces with other people to benefit a common cause. As I watched someone weed out the flower beds this Sunday it occurred to me that some things really do not change much at all. After all isn't that what we are about even now; sharing small spaces to accomplish a common goal? There are chores here at the church that someone needs to do to accomplish the ultimate objective of keeping the doors open so that we might better serve our fellow brothers and sisters. How do we arrive at which chores are ours? We could draw straws ... until it is learned that I was playing the piano and Mary Ellen was running the jackhammer on the sidewalk. Obviously, a better way would be to give the job to someone who has the passion for it. Give the job to those that have a deep desire and can reap the satisfaction from doing so. I believe that is exactly what has been achieved by the five or so committees that are currently meeting; and I am very encouraged by their attitude and of their striving towards a common goal. So, you might ask yourself, "What is my passion with regard to serving at St. Matthews?" What plot of the Victory Garden can I sow, cultivate, and harvest that would please Him and also leave me feeling refreshed?



Come check out the St. Matthew's Website

There is lots of info available at your fingertips, including audio sermons, calendars, schedules, pictures....

You can even get the newsletter on-line. It is faster than by mail, you can print it if you like, and it is in color. Visit us soon!

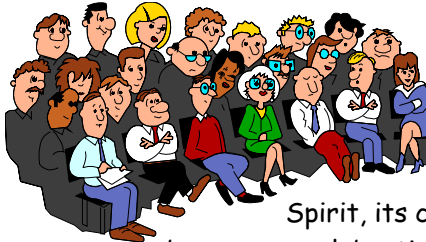
<http://www.stmatthewschurch.org>

SUMMARY of FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP thru MARCH 31st, 2006

	Jan-March 2006	Jan-March 2005
OPERATING INCOME	59,635	59,877
OPERATING EXPENSES	69,951	65,606
+SURPLUS/-DEFICIT	- 10,316	-5,729

COMPANY is COMING!

THE INTERIOR DEANERY is COMING in JUNE to FAIRBANKS



Sunday, June 4th is the Feast of Pentecost, the climax of the Great Fifty Days of Easter recorded in the Book of Acts. In its celebration of the Gift of the Holy Spirit, its celebration of unity and diversity, it becomes a celebration of the beginning of the Church.

In keeping with those themes, The Interior Deanery, the regional grouping of churches from Nenana to Arctic Village, from Eagle to Anvik, is coming for its Annual Meeting to St. Matthew's this year. It's currently scheduled to meet here from **Thursday, June 1st into Sunday, June 4th**. Each of the churches of The Deanery sends two delegates, plus the rector or priest-in-charge. During the January 2006 Annual Parish Meeting, we called **the Rev. John Holz** and **the Rev. Deacon Bella Jean Savino** (who were the St. Matthew's delegates to the 2005 Deanery meeting in Eagle) to represent us at this year's meeting (with **Lee Davis** and **Gregg Eschright** as Alternates).

Deaneries, as a structure of the Church, larger than an individual church and smaller than a Diocese, have existed since ancient times. They began here in Alaska in the early 1970's, as an Annual Meeting of churches in a similar area to come together and share news and common plans. Alaska is divided into four deaneries - the Arctic Coast, the Interior, the South Central, and Southeast. The Interior Deanery is further divided into three sub-regions: the Upper Yukon, the Yukon-Koyukuk, and the Tanana Valley -Highway. The 2005 Deanery meeting in Eagle called **Don Stevens** (of Stevens Village) to serve as Dean; with **the Rev. Bessie Titus**, representing the Tanana Valley; **Lorraine Pavlick** for the Yukon/Koyukuk; and **Debbie Tritt** of the Yukon Flats assisting him on an Executive Council.

The Interior Deanery Annual Meeting is a rare chance for folks to come together, hear how life is in all these places we pray for every Sunday; hear reports from the Bishop and staff on their work and plans; and plan together for the future. Everyone is invited to attend the Sessions.

We'll need help with providing housing, meals, and transportation for our guests; so watch for sign up sheets.



Spring Voices

Gosh, what a joyful service!

That's what I really like about this church. We're so much more relaxed and informal than my church back East.

I attended Easter Sunday service at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Calistoga, California and in the bulletin was this invitation, "*Saturday & Sunday, May 6 & 7, 2006 Preschool Winery Tour. This is great fun! Bring friends!*" What the bulletin should have read was, "*Fund raiser for Preschool; Winery Tour....*" Anyway, everyone had a great laugh on Easter Sunday.

....asked me to come out, but I can't. I just can't afford to fill the car up with the price of gas these days.

....until St. Matthew's faces the Satanic influences there in the church basement, the demonic spirits that are affecting so many people in the congregation, then...

Income Tax? Ohhhhhhhhh, I haven't done that in at least 25 years. I figure I don't bother them; they won't bother me.

What are we doing? Shopping! We gave up shopping for Lent, so now....

. . . and there were about 700 musk ox there. The thing about musk ox is; they smell REALLY good. And their meat is good; kinda like sheep, because they're sortof in that family. But, like the Eskimos say, "*it gives you burps*".

I've walked all over that Country. Used to fly into Anatumuk and just walk to Canada. And the thing is, after a couple of months of walking like that, you really feel like you're ON THE EARTH. I don't know how else to say it. You're ON the Earth. Walked from Cold Bay to King Salmon once. It took me 9 1/2 months. Me and my dogs. Newfoundlanders. Just had a gun and a net, living off the country. Carried with me Hudson Stuck's book.

Welll, my dad walked once from Salcha to Nome; and then back.

Spring Voices

We saw sheep fences up there.
You know, back before
Westerners and guns were here,
that's how they hunted. They
KNEW which way the sheep went,
when they migrated in the Fall.
So they camped there, and
waited. The guy I was guiding, he
took some of that wood from the
fence back to Germany, and had
it tested. It was like 3000 years
old! For three thousand years,
until, I don't know how long ago,
families had camped there and
hunted in the Fall.

Resurrection is hard work, isn't it?
But it's still better than the
alternative.

Oh, I'd eat a bowl of duck soup if
somebody gave me some. But I'd
pray, say "*Grace*", really hard
before I started.

..I like living here, in Fairbanks,
though Fairbanks has changed.
Where else could I see, like I did
once, a pack of wolves on a golf
course?

..... just can't make a living just
trappin' martin anymore.

It helps to be a little quirky to live
here in Fairbanks.

When we were little, we'd take a
strand from a rabbit snare, and
scatter cornmeal. And snare
snowbirds. Then we'd boil 'em up
and eat them. Then they told us
we shouldn't eat them, because
they ate horse poop, and we had
horses in the village in those
days.

They're all out hunting ducks. They
came in the end of last week and
all the guys went out. Even after
all that talk.

. . . and they were all hanging out
with Sean Penn at the Mecca Bar
over the weekend.

We just moved in from [*X village*].
Does it cost money to go to St.
Matthew's? Somebody said you had
to pay money to get into churches
in Fairbanks. Can anybody come?
We're not sure how Fairbanks



THOUGHTS on SPRING from ONE EXILED in SEATTLE

By Kristian Swearingen

[NOTE: Kristian will be returning in Fairbanks to marry
Kiana here at St. Matthew's in, of course, June.]

I've never experienced spring in America before.
I grew up in Anchorage, where, like Fairbanks, the seasons are
summer, winter, and break-up. Spring to me was always when the
playground turned into a giant field of slush, and those of us lucky
enough to have Sorrels would stomp through the puddles with
impunity (usually managing to soak our snowsuits, and often finding a
puddle a bit too deep for the rubber on our boots, so we always ended
up soaked in stagnant ice water anyway-but when you're seven, it's all
part of having a good time). During the six years I spent in Fairbanks,
spring was the first day that the it got above zero; and you could
actually feel the warmth of the sun, instead of just seeing its fleeting
light through the ice fog; and we would run around outside in T-shirts
as if it were spring break in Cancun. In either town, when the snow is
gone, that means it's summer.

Here in Seattle, spring actually exists, actually has a duration,
rather than being an invisible blip between break-up and summer.
There were daffodils in the last week of February. Flowers! In
February! I now understand why these flowers are associated
with Easter-they are the harbingers of spring, the first bright color
to emerge from the soil after the bleakness of winter. But in
February? I had never in my life seen a daffodil before May! And
now, on the first day of April, these first messengers are nearly all
gone, their petals bleached and dropping, their work done
because spring has most definitely arrived in Seattle. Trees are in
bloom everywhere, giant masses pink and white and purple flowers,
and the air is thick with the nearly overpowering sweetness of their
fragrance. The incessant rains of the winter have lessened in their
frequency and ferocity, and soon the sunny days might begin to
outnumber the grey ones.

Yesterday, as I strolled to work on the campus of the University
of Washington, I caught the smell of fresh-cut grass. Young college
kids were sitting out under the cherry trees playing music and
laughing and cavorting in homage to the ages-old Japanese tradition
of the festival of the cherry blossom. Some of them were banging on
pots and pans in time to the songs they sang, and it reminded me
of winter solstice at St. Matthews when we banged on pots and pans
to chase away the dragon of darkness. Maybe, I thought, these
revelers were welcoming his good twin brother.

Perhaps I am just being nostalgic when I say that I miss the
Alaskanspring. It's easy to miss Alaska when you're not trying to
start your car at 40 below. Maybe I only think I miss Fairbanks
because I've only recently left and because I miss St. Matthews
and because my heart is still there with a beautiful girl I have yet to
return for. But when spring comes in Alaska, you know you've earned
it. It arrives just when all hope of ever being warm again has almost
been lost. The melting snow is cause for anxious anticipation of the



**AND THE LORD JESUS IS
THERE
IN THE KITCHEN,
WITH A MOP**

St. Matthew's is again looking for someone who feels called to the position of Sexton. The position, which is primarily responsible for maintenance and security on the church property and its building, is an unpaid position, but a one bedroom apartment on the property is provided. We estimate twenty or so hours of work required per week, with a shifting schedule, depending on church activity.

The position of sexton should not be seen as a job, however, or a chance for free rent. The "sexton" [Old English *Sexestein*, *sextein*, through the French *sacristain* from Lat. *sacrista*] is an ancient position or calling within the Church. In the early Church, the duties of the sexton were part of the functions of the clerical order of *ostiariatus*. The clerics called *ostiarrii* had the keys of the church committed to them and were responsible for the guardianship of the sacred edifice, the holy vessels, books, and vestments. They opened the church and summoned the faithful to the Divine Mysteries. Others of them were specially deputed to guard the bodies and shrines of the martyrs.

Over the years, the position has changed somewhat, but the sense of the position as not a "job" but a Ministry continues. It is spiritual service cleaning bathrooms and emptying trash and picking up after folks, in the service of the One who Washed the Feet of His Friends on the Night Before He Died. At least one diocese requires all those seeking ordination to first work as a sexton for a year in a local church.

Complete job descriptions and applications are available from the Church Office or soon, on the St. Matthew's Website. A complete criminal background check will be required. Contact the Church Office for further information.

Thoughts on Spring . . .

long, warm days ahead, full of activity and light and cookouts and camping and fishing and weddings and floating down the Chena in an inflatable dinghy from Fred Meyer.

While I'm here, I'll do my best to enjoy the easy winters, the long, sweet spring, and the mild summer, although I do feel somewhat like they are ill-gotten gains and unearned rewards. I just hope that I don't forget the meaning of spring in Fairbanks. And I hope that when the time comes for me to raise my own children, I can do it back home in Alaska. I wouldn't want my kids to get spoiled.

Spring Voices

things work. We'd like to come, because we're Episcopalians, you know, but we weren't sure we could.

I need to tell you all that I have Terminal Cancer, so I don't know how long.....

What have you heard from Nenana? What's the Ice doing?

I think it'll be an EARLY Break-Up this year. It's just going to go.

Looks like one of those LATE Break-Ups, doesn't it?

I don't think there's going to be Break-Up this year. Think it's just going to ROT.

I SAW A ROBIN!

Of Course Spring is messed up this year. Remember that stupid fire that You and Bruce and Tom couldn't get going on Candlemass - when you told us if we don't burn the Christmas greens Spring won't come? It's YOUR fault.

I still have tears in my eyes when I hear you tell stories about him.

.....and Thank you Lord that the homeless folk like to hang around so much here at St. Matthew's, for they remind us that it is safe here with God; and they give us the gift of teaching us that they like to be with God too.

It takes a village to raise a bass.

But that's the status of the nest today ... Relatively safe from the wet, sitting in a plastic Glad container, covered with an adult bird.

It's okay. It's called HEALTHY communication. Go ahead and let it out.

....and Gosh, there's rabbits all over the place back home. Just lots! So many you have to keep the cabin door closed or they'll get in the house.

LENT COMES TO HOLY TRINITY - THE HOLY TRINITY FIRE & AN UPDATE

(April 4th)

Juneau's Historic Church, Meeting and Cultural Center Destroyed in Fire

By Maggie Ross

[NOTE: Maggie Ross is a friend and an Anglican Solitary and author who divides her time between Juneau, Alaska, and Oxford, England. She writes regularly for 'Weavings' and her blog may be found at: <http://ravenwilderness.blogspot.com>. Her new book, 'Original Silence: Hardwired Mysticism and Useful Religion' is forthcoming. With her permission, these articles come from her "blog". She also has a boat And a porch that overlooks seals playing on the water and spiders spinning in the greenery.]

It was bitterly cold early in the morning on March 12, 2006 in this small city built on a narrow strip of land between mountains capped by an ice field and the sea. A boat was parked in an alley between the historic Church of the Holy Trinity and the frame house next door. Suddenly the boat burst into flame, quickly involving both house and church, and McPhetres Hall next door to the church.

The fire department responded quickly. The neighborhood was evacuated and its residents found shelter in Centennial Hall, the small convention center, where the Red Cross provided beds and food. The power grid for the entire city was shut down. The miracle is that the whole of downtown with its closely packed wooden buildings did not go up in flames.

It is difficult to explain to those who have not lived here what a key role Church of the Holy Trinity and McPhetres Hall have played in the life of this small city which is accessible only by air or water—there is no road to the outside. In a very real sense they have been the social and cultural glue that has held the town and its very fragile population together. The hall has been a focal point for everything from AA to feeding the hungry, to welcoming tourists, to allowing 101 groups to use its space for concerts, scouts, opera, theatre, dance, wedding receptions—both hall and church are now ash. Nothing was recovered. Theatre in the Rough, our resident Shakespeare repertory company lost all its sets and costumes except those being used in a current production of Don Giovanni at the high school put on by Opera to Go, also based at

McPhetres. Other groups suffered similar losses.

We Juneauites live on the edge of the abyss. Most of us are refugees to as much as from, but for a significant number of people Alaska is the end of the road. Legislators, the homeless, state workers, housewives and husbands, alcoholics, believers, atheists, singers, artists, writers, a large number of summer tourists, rich and poor— the broadest possible spectrum of people found a home at Trinity and McPhetres.

We are so isolated here that if we are to have a cultural life we must make it ourselves, and McPhetres was the focal point of that life. At the wake the McPhetres' groups held for the hall the Sunday after the fire, the rector jokingly referred to them as the 'second congregation,' and during the call-in show the following evening, 'McPhetres Memories,' on KTOO, our local Public Broadcasting station (with 65% of the listening audience), people phoned in, some of them weeping, from cities across the nation.

The beautiful old church was a national landmark, and some members of the congregation are the third and fourth generation of their families to attend it. Priceless artwork was lost along with records, vestments, altar vessels, newly installed and locally made Stations of the Cross— everything was incinerated. The rite of Stations of the Cross is now held every Friday outdoors at the charred heap of of twisted metal—the recently new roof—that is all that is left of the church.

While the nearby Roman Catholic church has given the parish use of its hall on Sundays, we must rebuild and soon, not only for the life of our congregation, but for the life of our city. Because the fire is now labeled 'suspicious' by the Fire Marshall, and because a house and boat were involved, insurance money will probably be tied up in litigation for years. *[NOTE: In an update, the rector writes that they have "increasing re-assurances from the good people at Church Insurance/ Vermont" regarding this possibility.]* In any event, the insurance will cover less than half of the estimated two-and-a-half million dollars it will cost to replace the buildings.

The cost of rebuilding is high because every piece of lumber and every nail must be barged in and then trucked to the site. A home builder in Alaska will pay more for shipping her lumber than for the lumber itself. Due to the price of oil our cost of living is comparable to that of New York and London, yet ordinary people are willing to live simply in order to be able to inhabit this visionary landscape. Holy Trinity's congregation is not well--

Holy Trinity . . . to-do, and the diocese is one of the most financially challenged in ECUSA.

But Alaskans are survivors and more than survivors. Although our total state population is only around half a million, we produce world class athletes, scholars, writers and artists. In the last summer Olympics, Alaska had three Olympians on the US team. Juneau's population is around 30,000 but our high school produced the NBA basketball star Carlos Boozer, and one of our skiers won a silver medal at the Winter Olympics. Koko Urata, having won Athlete of the Year for the Western region in synchronized swimming is on her way to the Nationals.

Juneau has a symphony, a student symphony, a sinfonia, two opera companies, two repertory companies a student concerto competition and one of the biggest folk festivals in the Western United States (non-commercial). The list of gifted people who live here goes on and on. But dedication and talent tend to focus on doing something for its own sake, rather than producing income, and to rebuild our church and hall we need help.

Photos of the fire and historic photos of the church are at the parish website: www.trinityjuneau.org, and the rector may be contacted at revsilides@gci.net. We need money, yes, but we also need altar linens, vessels, vestments, pew books, reference books, record books, office machines, computers, office supplies—in short, everything that makes a church able to operate. [NOTE: See Update below. Holy Trinity no longer needs 'everything', but has most of what they need, aside from financial contributions, for the short-term] If you can help us rebuild, please send gifts to the Holy Trinity Restoration Fund, 411 Gold Street, Juneau, Alaska, 99801.

Most of all, we need your prayers, and please know that we pray each day for you.

(as of May 3rd, 2006)

HOLY TRINITY UPDATE

*By Maggie Ross (From <http://ravenwilderness.blogspot.com>)
[The information in this update on the rebuilding of Holy Trinity Church, destroyed by a fire on March 12, was gleaned from the Trinity Times (www.trinityjuneau.org) and from local news media and personal internet communications.]*

It's a cold, wet spring in Juneau, Alaska; gales and driving rain make it feel more like October than May. The trees have not leafed out yet, which is

late even for Southeast Alaska. But among the ashes and debris of Holy Trinity Church, white and lavender striped crocuses are spreading their translucent light.

The Juneau community and generous people and parishes across the nation have rallied around and with many gifts have helped the parish gather momentum towards its goal of a rebuilt church and McPhetres Hall, which will require raising more than a million dollars, even after the insurance money comes through.

In the month after the fire, fundraisers began, including a pie-eating contest sponsored by the youth group at which the rector distinguished himself. The Youth of Trinity donated \$4,000. Perseverance Theatre held a benefit performance of "Hair", and fundraising events continue.

St Timothy Episcopal Parish of Yakima, Washington sent altar supplies, prayer books and hymnals formerly at St John's in Union Gap, Washington, and a check for nearly \$2,500.

St Brendan's Episcopal Church, Resurrection Lutheran Church and Northern Light United Church, all in the Juneau Borough, have donated space and worship materials.

The first week in April was devoted to the annual Alaska Folk Festival, which saturates the town with joyous music for a week. But when the rector was paged on Saturday night from the main stage, a lot of people feared the worst. What happened was the best.

Victory Four Square Gospel Church, which has no building of its own, decided to give Holy Trinity Church every cent in its bank account, presenting the rector with a check for \$7,000. Twenty-five members of the Victory congregation joined the Holy Trinity congregation for Palm Sunday. Mark Everett, pastor of Victory for only six weeks, said that he had been praying for direction for their church. "A transition is a very difficult thing to go through..." He believes he was prompted by God to make the gift: "You have to give sacrificially, not in a way that's easy to give, because I gave sacrificially." There were few dry eyes after the announcement.

Other news:

— Holy Trinity hopes to rebuild on the same site within two years and the city has promised that the necessary allowances will be made.

—The congregation continues to enjoy the hospitality of the Roman Catholic Cathedral of the Holy Nativity's parish hall. The two congregations

(Continued on page 14)

[NOTE: In the week of Easter this year, the casket of her old friend lies in the front of the Church, the newly lit Paschal candle burning tall beside it. The pallbearers have closed it; and now they've gone up to the choir stalls and retrieved the moose skin pall draped over the front stall. With infinite dignity and respect, they've slowly draped it over the casket; smoothing finally the fringes so that they hang straight and even. With beauty and love, the casket disappears under it. Watching, I lean over to Grandma Hannah Solomon as she watches and ask, "How many of your friends have rested under that?" "I know", she says, smiling, remembering. The smell of tanned moose skin drifts across the Church; early afternoon sunlight shines on the beadwork. - the rector]



THIS is the STORY BEHIND the MOOSE SKIN CASKET COVER

By Regina Solomon Varner

There is a story behind this moose skin casket cover. It began sometime in the late 60's or early 70's.

There was a White woman [Note: Lee Oates], who was a member of St. Matthew's church, who was attending a funeral, and noticed the black cloth cover placed over the casket, and she later mentioned it to Father Warren [Note: Fr. William Warren, rector of St. Matthew's 1959-1973]. She told Father Warren that she didn't care for the black cloth cover over the Native casket, and thought: if she could buy a moose skin, would the Natives do something with it? Father Warren thought of Mom, Hannah Solomon, and told the lady "Yes"; he was sure he had a member of the Church who could turn the moose skin into a masterpiece with beadwork.

The lady then purchased a big moose skin, and donated it to the Church to be used as a casket covering for funeral services. After Father Warren talked to Mom about the moose skin, she immediately took it home and started making the big cross in the center.

She was by herself at the time, because my Dad, Paul Solomon Sr., was in the Tanana Hospital for treatment. (I don't remember what for; but at that time patients were always getting sent to the Tanana Hospital for treatments).

So, Mom was sewing on the moose skin when Grandma Charlotte Adams came to visit her. She wanted to tell Mom that she was leaving Fairbanks and going back to Beaver now. She just wanted to say good-bye, but then she noticed Mom sewing beads on the big moose skin. She then said, "My sister, what are you sewing? And what a big piece of skin that is." My Mom told her about what took place and what she was doing with the skin. Grandma Charlotte then told her she wanted to help sew on it too. Grandma Charlotte ended up taking the four corner pieces of skin back to Beaver with her, to sew on. When she finished beading on the four pieces, she sent it back to Mom to connect it to the rest of the skin. So, that is where the four corners came from.

As my Mom was finishing the beadwork, she received a call from my Dad saying he was on his way home, and he should be back by late afternoon. My Mom panicky finished the fringe trimming for the edges of the skin. She then called Father Warren to pick it up right away, because her old man was on his way home. She didn't want him to know she was doing this, because she was using his bedroom and bed for putting everything together. Mom thought that if he caught her sewing this in his bedroom that he would think she was preparing for his casket and funeral. So, this is the story behind the moose skin cover.

When Grandma Charlotte passed away [Note: August 1998], it was taken to Beaver to be used on her casket. At any given time, any member who wishes to use it is welcome to do so.

Holy Trinity . . .

(Continued from page 13)

have joint fellowship following their respective services and are conducting a joint Sunday School.

—Arctic Corp, kindness of James Barrett, owner, has provided the parish with office space, meeting space, and storage. The new parish office address (right around the corner from the church site) is 416 Harris Street, Suite 205. The phone is 907-586-3532. The secretary is in Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 11 AM to 3 PM.

It is not possible in this limited space to mention each and every donor (and this blog is not privy to that information) but the parish is deeply grateful for all the many gifts it has received. On Palm Sunday morning, in response to the gift of Victory church, the rector said, "We should be shaped by humility and gratitude of receiving...and gain a conscious awareness of the sacred nature of every gift we have and the stewardship of these gifts."

BITS AND PIECES: News from around the parish



EDUCATION for MINISTRY NEWS

Education for Ministry - EFM meets every Tuesday night from 6:00 to 9:00 PM during the

winter. May 16th, the last meeting before summer break, will be a dinner and the celebration of the Eucharist.

Karen Kiss and Bernice Aragon are finishing the second year, in which the readings focus on the New Testament. Completing year one, focusing on the Old Testament, are: **Mary Ann Gallagher, Kathy Mackey, Tom Marsh, Pauline Wilson, Darrel Zuke and Gladys Terry.** Years three and four focus on Church history and theology.

During our time together, about half of our time is focused on Common Lessons, which address different aspects of our call to ministry - which the mission of the Church states is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ. During this time we also do theological reflections. Sounds hard, but it is basically just thinking and speaking of how God is active and a part of each of our everyday lives.

If anyone is interested in joining EFM next year, please talk with one of the EFM Mentors: **Julia Cockerille, Becky Snow, Helen Burrell, or Roxy Wright.**

NEWS from the SUNDAY SCHOOL

By **Roxy Wright-Freedle,**
Sunday School Coordinator



The last day of regular Sunday School will be May 21st, coinciding with school getting out on the 19th. We will have a Sunday School Carnival with food and games, starting at the 9:15 service. We invite families and friends to join us. We would love and appreciate help and snack donations.

Despite the snow, summer is almost here. I have a very busy schedule during July and August...so I was thinking of perhaps holding Vacation Bible School in June. VBS is a big endeavor, so I need volunteers to help. I will be posting a sign up sheet in the parish hall, or you may call me at 455-9300.

EPISCOPAL CAMPING THIS SUMMER

In the Anchorage area

The Camp will be held **June 13-18 at Camp Challenge near Wasilla,** and is for youth entering the **4th-8th Grades,** from anywhere in the Diocese.

The theme of this year's camp is "*The Perfect Ten,*" and deals with the Ten Commandments as they apply to life today. In addition, there is Bible study, swimming, crafts, music, skits, karaoke, climbing "The Butte," and a "Talent Show."

Any questions about camp? Call Jim Basinger at 907-279-3924 or jbasinger@chugach.net

In the Interior

Three camps are tentatively scheduled at the Bertha Mason Camp and Conference Center in Manley Hot Springs: **(1) June 27th thru July 2nd; (2) July 9th thru July 14th; and (3) July 24th thru July 29th, 2006.** The first group will include youth from the Diocese of Washington (D.C.), the second, youth from St. Columba's Episcopal Church in Washington D.C., and the third: youth from St. James Episcopal Church in Richmond, VA. Youth from S.E. Alaska will be joining one of the groups as will youth from Nenana. Anyone interested should contact the Bishop's office or Lee Davis (cleedavis@acsalaska.net, or the St. Matthew's Church Office)

COMPUTER CLASS OFFERED AGAIN

Vestry member **Darrel Zuke** will be teaching '*Introduction to Windows Based Computers*' again this summer at the Fairbanks Literacy Council, 517 Gaffney. Dates are June 13 through August 8 (July 4th off). Fees are \$40 paid to the Literacy Council. For more information, contact the Literacy Council at 456-6212, or email Darrel at dzuke@gci.net.

A NOTE from the PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

By **DeAnne Stokes** (career@alaska.com)

Knit three, purl three, thank you, God for our knitters:

Cathy, Andrea, Helen, Ann, Bernice, Marty, Mary Margaret, Joan, Susan, Pat, Barbara, Sue and Gregg, Mary Ann, Lynn, Mary, Karen, and Beverly.

Knit three, purl three, thank you, God for the generous donation of yarn from the family of Donna Johnston. We now have kits to go with our patterns.

Over these past sixteen months we have knit, prayed, and given away fifty shawls. We now know that healing and comfort come to both those who knit and those who receive.

Join us Sunday afternoon, May 21st, at 1PM in the Church Library to find out more, knit, and share stories.

Altar Guild Cherished

By Marty Thomas

For 20 years I held the honor of being the Altar Guild Chair. I was well trained by Fr. Roger Williams, and was fortunate in that I'd become the leader of a group of skilled and spiritually motivated ladies, with more years of combined experience and service than I had left in my lifetime.

As I reminisce over the years, I remember my first mental response to my new duty. Altar Guild was in need of a leader; no one was willing at the time, so Fr. Roger approached me. I was terrified! His method was convincing. *"I have something I would like you to do. I know you have the capability to do it and I'd like you to give it a try. Please pray on this matter and let me know"*.

I had only been an Altar Guild member for one year and was a baby in this group. Spiritually and emotionally I was weak, and I'd always been a follower. However, I had a couple of elements that played in my favor. Fr. Roger's faith in my ability to perform was daunting, but he knew what he wanted done, and how; so I believed I would be well trained. Secondly, having been a school teacher, I knew the value of being a life-long learner. Teachers should learn from their students; parents should learn from their children; and leaders should learn from those they lead. And so the odyssey began.

It was one of the best experiences in my life. I grew and matured emotionally and spiritually. Somewhere deep inside this *'lacking-in-confidence'* follower were abilities stretching for a chance to be used. I prayed, listened, read and learned. I valued the depth of spiritual support and encouragement from my trainer, the gift of knowledge and experience from all the Altar Guild members, those of yesterday and today, and easily learned that *'leader'* does not mean boss. A leader brings together, listens to and works with, and is a part of, the group.

Rectors changed. Altar Guild worked with several priests before St. Matthew's was blessed with Fr. Scott Fisher.

It was truly a pleasure to work with Fr. Scott, who in his previous positions had not had Altar Guild support. I had learned that the Altar Guild serves through the blessing of God to support the priest. Altar Guild ensures that anything needed for a service is ready and properly positioned. Fr. Scott spent the first years at St. Matthew's in awe of the Altar Guild and their work, and the Altar Guild spent as much time, if not more, making sure he stayed 'in awe'!

The years flew by and one day someone started counting. And, along with the *'almost 20 years'* realization came my husband's retirement.

Leadership should change more frequently than



every 20 years. New people arrive with new creativity, thoughts and ideas. Children become adults in that space of time, exhibiting a freshness which, when combined with the *'we've always done it this way'* attitude, keeps an organization like Altar Guild lively and growing.

My husband was an airline pilot who spent many hours away from home, and many of his *'at-home'* hours recuperating from being away. Now that he has retired we are having a grand time doing things together. It was the obvious time for a

change in Altar Guild leadership.

I am so thankful for the gift that was given to me so many years ago. Through this ministry I was able to flex my creativity, grow in many directions, share my learning, help and encourage new Altar Guild members and meet, and more fully participate, as a member of the family of St. Matthew's. Over the twenty years during which I was Chair I was blessed by knowing and working with the following people:

Diana Ashton, Maggie Beach, Helen Bell*, Laura Bender, Sue Bourdon Marsh, Pam Bradley, Carol Brice, Helen Burrell, Sue Camp, Ellen Cashen*, Maggie Castellini, Diana Childs, Julie Cockerille, Phyllis Cox, Kitty Crevensten*, Julie Eastep, Helen Espe*, Linda Evans, Ann Fleenor, Fran Frey, Mary Ann Gallagher, Jeanne Gallagher, Ann Gallagher Seipel, Angie Geraghty, Cathy Giacomazzi, Lori Gorsline, Becky Haggland, Jayne Harvie, Theresa Helmers, Andrea Helms Backlund, Westeen Holmes, Mary Johnston, Doreen Jones, Bev Joseph, Karen Kiss, Madeleine Knie, Brenda Krupa, Karen Lavery, Edna Lawson*, Nela Livingston, Kathy Lydon, Virginia MacDonald, Eva Mahanna, Madeline Marosco, Daphne McLean, Lucille Meath*, Diana Moffett, Teresa Moore, Melanie Morotta, Linda Mullen, Joanne Neumaier, Jeanne Ohlsen*, Maureen Olson, Roslyn Peterson, Alice Phillips, Edna Riley, Gloria Riley, Joni Robinson, Melanie Seitz, Betsy Sharp, Betsy Smith, Al Storvick, Joan Taylor*, Marty Thomas, Deb Treb*, Marie Ward Reid, Charlotte Wilbur, Joan Wilcox, Bessie Williams, Pauline Wilson, Susan Youngblood, Fr. Roger Williams, Fr. Fred Smyithe, Fr. Lew Hodgkins, Fr. Luke Titus, Fr. Richard Simmonds and Fr. Scott Fisher.

* Deceased

And lastly, I want to say thank you to both the current Altar Guild and the church family for the beautiful roses each of you gave to me as I retired. Of course roses do not live long once cut, but I took pictures of each bouquet and will cherish them forever. Thank you so much!

[Note: Marty retired as being Chair of the Altar Guild on Sunday, February 26th this year. The Guild selected Cathy Giacomazzi and Mary Johnston to succeed her as co-chairs.]

AN EDITED SAMPLING of CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED.....

April 10th

Dear Father Scott,

... Thank you to whoever decided to put the sermons on computer for I have been listening to it and not only on Sundays, I listen to it all the time for I don't know why, but I think I gather "strength" from it. So I listen and I listen....its almost like sitting in St. Matthews! Very close to it.....thanks! It is beautiful! Especially knowing that I can sit here and listen to the sermonsI do not even need to be there in person as I am there in spirit!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

[NOTE: services and sermons from St .Matthew's are available on the St. Matthew's Website: www.stmatthewschurch.org. The writer lives in a distant village.]

April 21st

Hi Scott:

Good Easter season to ya and St. Matt's...I got finished and got home the Saturday before Palm Sunday and did Holy week services in Haines...a rather exhausting way to get back in the saddle...and am now on my way to retreat in Indianapolis. Please share my greetings with the parish,

Jan

[NOTE: "Jan" is the Rev. Jan Hotze, vicar of St. Michael's and All Angels in Haines. She's been on the St. Matthew's Prayer List these last several months while she was in Washington receiving treatment for cancer. She celebrates the 25th anniversary of her ordination to the priesthood in May.]

What was Lent like?

Part one

April 22nd

... lots of reflection in my life of counting my blessings and what God has done for me: like people he put in my life to give me hope and courage to go on. Angels like Rita Greenway; Mary Starr; Elaine Mitchell; you; my friends; my children, who add life and joy to my life; St Matthew's parish, who give us a sense of belonging and fellowship. No place like home. . . [The] short and long excerpts of people [in the Newsletter]. And [the] stories of hope.

A Thank You from Kivalina

April 22nd

We want to thank every one of you at St. Matthew's Episcopal Church for praying for our people during our time of sorrow early in April. We may pick up where we left off, but it'll never be the same for the immediate families as well as for those affected by the incident. Once again, our deepest gratitude to all of you who prayed for Kivalina. Please continue to pray for us, especially during our whale hunting season-and for Pt. Hope too.

Thanks, Winona

[NOTE: "Winona" is Winona Hawley, wife of the Rev. Raymond Hawley in Kivalina. As she mentions, there was tragedy there in early April, and St. Matthew's kept the community in prayer.]

April 22nd

Happy Easter, Father Scott.

Here on the Washington side of the Columbia River, spring is in full bloom. It's been many decades since I've experienced spring filled with flowering trees, sunny daffodils and tulips in shades of red and yellow. It is ever so green here with the buds of new life. We'll be getting back to Fairbanks just about when the birch trees are budding next month. It'll be great to see you and so many friends.

- Marie

[NOTE: "Marie" is once upon a time Marie Ward, who was Parish Treasurer for several decades here at St. Matthew's; and then married "Jeep" Reid and disappeared smiling to the Lower '48 for the Winter.]

What was Lent like? Part two

April 25th

... anonymously: I decided to wear my cross everyday [for Lent]. Although it is a small thing, this was more complicated that it seemed at first glance, because I do not like to wear a chain around my neck when I sleep, so it takes a positive effort to remember to put it on each day. Sometimes it did not match my neckline or my outfit, but I wore it anyway. Sometimes I was meeting with people that I was afraid would mis-interpret it as a fundamental or exclusive sign, but I wore it anyway. I felt like I came "out of the closet" and into the light of evangelical expression. It was a good experience that I would recommend to others.

I was also especially attuned to being obedient to the will of God during Lent. I suppose that required more prayer and meditation. Letting God lead my direction, above all else.

What was Lent like? Part three

April 25th

The Preschoolers [Sunday School Class] started Lent by talking about "doing good things for others" and gave donations to the food box in the front of the church. They also made a blanket for someone who was sad.

REPORTS from the WORKING GROUPS

In February, the Vestry formed a number of different committees and working groups to address the ministry and needs at St. Matthew's. They included Stewardship, Building and Grounds, Finances, Hospitality, and Long Range Planning (*which already existed*). An Interest sheet was distributed during the Sunday morning services before Lent, to give folks a chance to join in the groups (*and these sheets are still available throughout the Church and Parish Hall, and also on the St. Matthew's Website - www.stmatthewschurch.org*).

The Committees have been meeting since; and here are reports from several of them. Watch the weekly Sunday bulletin for meeting dates and come join in.

THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

The Stewardship Committee has been meeting to explore the meaning of Stewardship and what it might look like at St. Matthew's. Our goal is to raise awareness about Stewardship at St. Matthew's and create a community of giving in joyful response to God's gifts.

What does Stewardship mean to YOU? What should Stewardship mean at St. Matthew's?

We invite you to share your answers to the above questions at one of our meetings. We are meeting on the first and third Sundays of the month at 10:30 in the Parish Library. Feel free to join in the conversation at any time. Come as often as you like and stay as long as you can. We appreciate everyone's input!

Can't make it to a meeting? Want to remain anonymous? You can e-mail your comments, questions, suggestions, etc. regarding Stewardship to Vestry member **Cathy Davis** at cdavis@gci.net or **Linda Demientieff** at Linda_Demientieff@dec.state.ak.us.

THE BUILDING and GROUNDS COMMITTEE

We have several projects for the grounds this year and kick-started the season with a clean-up on May 6th.

Jackie Sunnyboy has decided, that after many years of outstanding efforts taking care of the flower beds (*I know it's been over 15 years*), not to continue. So we need people who enjoy gardening to step up and help maintain our beautiful flowers. Several folks have already said they want to help. It would be good to have one person to coordinate their efforts to ensure regular care.

Steve and James Moore have volunteered to do the lawn care this summer. However it is a big job and they will need help on occasion.

We would like to coat the asphalt parking lot this summer to prolong its life. This will probably take most of the summer doing a piece at a time as weather and laborers permit. If you enjoy sweating in the sun this may be your opportunity.

We have some copper cut and ready to go to cover and protect the log buttresses. This will take a team effort some Saturday.

We also need help pruning the dead branches from the trees around the grounds.

I welcome any and all suggestions.

Tom Marsh, Junior Warden (temarsh@acsalaska.net)

THE REV. TITUS PETER on RACISM

By the Rev. Titus Peter, retired Vicar of St. James/Birch Creek

Racial - Racism . Whatever.

It has to start at home. Teach your kids at home. Teach respect. My father told us, if a White Man comes by our camp, invite him in and give him what he needs. Especially if he is a White man. I think he teaches this because in those days there were some poor White folks up here since the Gold Rush. And he also thinks one of those White men could be Jesus. And I guess, being a wise old man who looks into the future, he knows there will be some problems: White racism; Indians & Whites; Indians & Eskimos. I practice this until some White man drove into Manley Hot Springs and shot six individuals.

Jesus didn't have problems with racism. He did have priority. (*"I did not come for the righteous, but for the lost sheep."*) He respected the traditional Elders. He quoted them . . . and defeated Satan.

The Parochial Report:

**WHO ARE WE, by the OFFICIAL NUMBERS, as ST. MATTHEW'S?
or HOW the PARISH ADMINISTRATOR & PARISH TREASURER
SPEND their TIME after the JANUARY ANNUAL MEETING**

When the preparations for, and then celebration of Christmas, ends; then the Church Office shifts into preparing for the January Annual Parish Meeting. When the January Annual Parish Meeting ends, and the life of the Church moves into celebrating Epiphany and preparing for Lent, in the middle of everything else going on (*funerals, cups of coffee, phone calls, etc.*); Parish Administrator **Hilary Freeman** and Treasurer **Carolyn Nethken** begin working on the Annual Parish Parochial Report.

Required by National Church Canon Law, St. Matthew's, like every Episcopal Church and Mission in the country, is required to fill out a Parochial Report, summarizing the church and its activities in the previous year. (*The rector remembers late nights with **Elsie Pitka** and pencils in Beaver, trying to fill out the Report for the church in Beaver. EVERY CHURCH is required to fill one out*). This information is one of the ways the Diocese, and the National Church, gets a sense of what's going on here.

Here are the official numbers from this year's Annual Parochial Report, summarizing St. Matthew's, as of December 31st, 2005 (*NOTE: needless to say, some of these figures, like for attendance, are estimated; and also NOTE: There are a whole lot of legal, canonical, and technical definitions behind each of these terms, particularly the financial ones.*)

Number of Baptized Members reported as of December 31 st , 2004 (<i>last year's Report</i>)	1,239
Increases during the year (<i>thru baptism, confirmation, transfer, etc</i>)	40
Decreases during the year (<i>death, transfer, inactive, etc</i>)	23
TOTAL active Baptized Members (<i>as of December 31, 2005</i>)	1,256
All communicants in good standing	
(<i>Baptized members who, regardless of age, are faithful</i>	
<i>in corporate worship, unless for good cause prevented", and</i>	
<i>"in working, giving, and praying for the spread of the Kingdom of God"</i>)	1,256
Communicants in good standing under the age of 16	268
Average Sunday Attendance in 2005	383
Total Attendance on Easter 2005 (<i>all services</i>)	715
Number of Sunday or Saturday Evening Eucharists	179
Weekday Eucharists	163
Private Eucharists	427
Daily Offices on Sunday	46
Daily Offices on Weekdays	297
Marriages	13
Burials	46
Baptisms, 16 years & older	2
Baptisms, under 16	42
[<i>NO confirmations in 2005</i>]	
Total Church School Students Enrolled	30
Number of signed pledge cards for 2005	61
Total dollar amount pledges for 2005	\$118,590

OPERATING REVENUES

Plate offerings, pledge payments, & regular support	\$250,556
Available for operations from investments	\$0
Other operating income	\$0
Unrestricted bequests used for operations	\$0
Assistance from Diocese for operating Budget	\$0
TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE	\$250,556

NON-OPERATING REVENUES

Capital funds gifts & additions	\$37,852
Additions to Endowment & other Operating Funds	\$1,546
Contributions & grants for congregation-based	
outreach & mission programs	\$9,090
TOTAL NON-OPERATING REVENUE	\$48,488

TOTAL ALL REVENUES \$299,044

OPERATING EXPENSES

To Diocese, for Assessment	\$62,639
Outreach from Operating Budget	\$6,686
All other Operating Expenses	\$188,682
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$258,007

NON-OPERATING EXPENSES

Major improvements & Capital Expenditures	\$52,231
Expenses for congregation's outreach & mission	\$12,658
TOTAL NON-OPERATING EXPENSES	\$64,889

TOTAL ALL EXPENSES \$322,896

As of December 31st, 2005

TOTAL cash in all checking, savings accounts	\$25,453
TOTAL investment at market value	\$69,945

Seasons of Life . . .

(Continued from page 7)

facing life with deep faith and, underneath, the always present family sense of humor. She loved her family, and knew deeply many of the traditional skills of life (*including her beautiful beadwork, which was admired throughout the State*). Her husband **Jim** of 30+ years survives her; along with her children **Paula (Beckley)** and **Julie (Biddle)**, their families; her father **Stanley**, her 7 sisters and 3 brothers; and many other family members and friends (*including the rector, who first met her & Jim in Chalkyitsik some 36 years ago. He still remembers her eyes dancing with a smile at the Chalkyitsik altar rail*). With snow falling softly, St. Matthew's filled past overflowing for her funeral on Monday, March 6th, in a service led by the rector, **the Rev. Steve Matthew, the Rev. Mardow Solomon, the Rev. Titus Peter, and the Rev. Deacon Bella Jean Savino**. Burial followed on Birch Hill Cemetery; with a potlatch following at the Tribal Hall.

On Sunday, March 5th, 64 years old **Gary Woodrow Goodman** died in Palmer, after a long and brave battle with cancer. Originally from California, Gary arrived in Alaska in 1971; and met and married **Clara (Charles)** in 1976. They made their home in Clara's community of Dot Lake for the next thirty years, hunting and fishing and becoming known, in retirement, for their greenhouse gardening and tomatoes. His wife Clara survives him, along with his mother and sister, 6 daughters, 12 grandchildren, and numerous other family members. In thirty below weather, St. Matthew's filled on Saturday, March 11th for his memorial service, led by the rector and **Fr. Steve Matthew**. A reception followed at the Friends Church auditorium; and Gary's remains were received into the St. Matthew's Columbarium the next day.

Early in the morning of Friday, March 10th, as dawn was breaking, **Kenneth Chilson Pitka II**, who had died earlier, was delivered. Tears and prayers surrounded him, his mother **Niki Honea**, and his father **Kenneth Pitka**. They survive him, as does his sister **Jaelynn**; his grandparents **Karen Honea** and **Fred Holmberg** of Ruby, **Melvin Sam** and **Marie** of Fairbanks, **Arlene Pitka** and **Ben Juneby** of Beaver and Eagle, **Wayne Smoke** and **Flo** of Minto; great grandparents **Don** and **Clara Honea**, **Tony** and **Emily Sam**, **Elsie Pitka**, and **Jenny Smoke**; and all of us. St. Matthew's filled on Monday, March 13th for Kenneth's funeral, led by the rector and assisted by **Sam Pitka**. A potlatch followed out at Pike's that evening, with final services and burial following in Ruby that Wednesday.

Sunday, March 12th, in a hospital in distant Seattle, 51 years old **Norman Beatus** of Hughes died, after a brave struggle with pulmonary fibrosis. The son of **Henry** and **Sophie Beatus** of Hughes, Norman was born and raised there, graduated from Chemewa, worked for Doyon Drilling for a number of years, and was a skilled carpenter who had built his own home in Hughes. His wife **Barbara (Moses)** survives him; as do daughters **Joyce Oldman**, **Tanya** and **Jessica Beatus**, **Cherise Ann**, stepson **Jody Moses**; grandchildren **Shoshanna** and **Christian Oldman**; his parents and in-laws; 5 sisters; and many other family and

friends. Many filled to overflowing the Wedgewood Resort for his funeral service, led by **the Rev. Canon Ginny Doctor**, on Thursday, March 16th. His final services and burial were held again at home, in Hughes, on Saturday the 18th.

On the first day of Spring, on Tuesday, March 21st, with snow quietly falling, 83 years old **Estella (Jones) Gundrum Ketzler** died at Denali Center, after a brief struggle with cancer. Born and raised in the Upper Yukon, she married **Silas Gundrum** of Fort Yukon, and they lived a traditional way of life. Early in the 1940's, she moved to Nenana and married **Daniel Ketzler** and took to working as a cook on fishing boats, supply boats, and barges throughout Alaska, and beyond. In later years, she had retired to Fairbanks, but still enjoyed traveling and keeping in touch. She's survived by her children – including **Joe Gundrum, Charlie Ketzler, Sharon Smyth, Alicia Nelson, Martha Ronaldson, Sharon Sunnyboy**; special friends **Harry and Thelma Fields, Alex Ketzler, Lois James**, and all of us who enjoyed her company. St. Matthew's filled for her funeral, led by **Archdeacon Anna Frank** and **Fr. Steve Matthew**, on Thursday, March 23rd. Her final service and burial was held in the sunshine atop the hill in Nenana, by the rector and **Fr. Steve Matthew**, on Monday, March 27th.

On the morning of Tuesday, March 28th, surrounded by family beside her, 66 years old **Eleanor Madeline Captain** slipped away in Denali Center, where she had lived for nearly twenty years. Born and raised in Kokrines, she later moved to Ruby, where she married **William Captain Sr.** Together they raised a large family, living a traditional lifestyle and listening to Hank Williams and, when she moved to Denali Center, their staff and nurses became a second family to her. Those surviving her include 6 sons, 4 daughters, 4 sisters, 4 brothers, and all of their families (*including her grandson Peter Captain, Jr., who has helped so many others with funeral arrangements for their families*). As many as could gathered at the Fairbanks Funeral Home for a brief service on Wednesday, March 29th, led by the rector; before flying home to Ruby, for her final services and burial on Saturday, April 1st.

Sometime during the night of Monday, April 3rd, 37 years old **Donald Frederick Carlo Jr.** died unexpectedly in his sleep at home in Eagle River. Born in Fairbanks to **Marlene** and **Don Carlo Sr.**, Don lived here for 16 years. His mother **Marlene** survives him; his sister **Donna**; his brothers **Charles** and **Jeff Nelson**; his uncles **Stacy** and **Jody Carlo**; and other family members. All gathered here Saturday afternoon, April 8th for his funeral service, led by the rector (*with assistance again from Peter Captain, just returned from his Grandmother's funeral*); with stories and memories filling the reception in the Parish Hall afterwards.

On Tuesday, April 4th, at his residence here in Fairbanks, 93 years old **Edward Mayo Sr.** quietly died, closing a link to a generation of Alaskan history. Born near Rampart, and raised there, he moved to Fairbanks years ago, but always returned to the Yukon. During his life he was a fisherman, hunter, gold miner, dog musher, business owner, and more. In his early years he entered the North American Sled Dog Championship races several times. Among those surviving him are his daughters **Peggy Wright, Lillian Folger, Ruth**

(Continued on page 21)

Seasons of Life . . .

Macchione, and their families; his sons **Clyde, Fred, Eddie, Leonard**, and **Harold** and **John Greenway**, and all of their families; 56 grandchildren, 95 great grandchildren, and more family and friends near and far. The David Salmon Tribal Hall filled to capacity for "Mr. Ed's" funeral late Saturday morning, April 8th. The service was conducted by the rector and **Fr. Stephen Matthew**, with **Sam Pitka** providing music (and **Anna Huntington-Kriska** coordinating everything superbly, as usual). A potlatch followed that evening, and Mr. Mayo was laid to rest back home in Rampart Monday, April 10th.

In the quiet early morning of Thursday, April 6th, with family and prayer around her, 78 years old **Lilly Herbert**, of Denali Center and Chalkyitsik, slipped ahead of us to Easter. Born and raised in Chalkyitsik, Lilly lived there all of her life, living a traditional life – cutting moose in the Fall, cleaning geese in the Spring, and sewing under the shade of a tree. She was noted throughout the Interior for her beautiful beadwork, and many enjoyed her bread and *Khwaii luu chyaa*. She'd been resident in Denali Center the last four or so years, always gently smiling, always attending the services. Her sisters **Minnie Salmon** and **Martha McKeown** survive her, as do her children and their families – **Paul "Snook"** and **Alma Herbert, Virginia, Christine; Patricia, Agnes** and **Peter Druck, Merle** and **Pamela Herbert, Stephanie Herbert** and **Bryan Joseph, Terry** and **Tina Herbert**; her special grandchild **Ami**, 17 special grandchildren, 13 great-grandchildren; and many many others. St. Matthew's filled for her funeral Monday, April 10th, in a service that was led by the rector, **the Rev. Steve Matthew**, and **the Rev. Deacon Bella Jean Savino**, with **Peter Solomon** assisting with music. Her final services and burial were held at home in Chalkyitsik the next day.

And finally, on Monday morning, May 1st, in the Season of Easter, 89 years old **Emma Fleenor**, the mother of **Ann Fleenor**, quietly passed away in the Fairbanks Hospital. And prayers were said, as memories and tears quietly filled the room. Born in Michigan, but spending most of her life in Wyoming, Emma came to be with Ann and us some 6 years ago. She and Ann were familiar occupants of the front pew on Sunday morning, until transportation just finally became too difficult. Faithful Lay Eucharistic Ministers visited her then every Sunday. Her final services and burial will be back home in Wyoming.

Other deaths during this time, either here or elsewhere, affected our life together, were remembered in prayer, and need to be noted. These included 60 years old Tok resident **Myra David**, who died here in the Fairbanks Hospital Monday, February 20th, and whose final services were held at home in Tetlin; 48 years old Circle resident **Norman Carroll**, who also died in the Fairbanks Hospital February 20th; and whose final services were at home in Circle Friday, February 24th (*Norman's father – Albert Carroll Sr – had just died the previous month*); and 86 years old **Martha "Montie" Carlo Littlefield** of Sitka, who died there Thursday March 2nd. Montie was born in Rampart; raised in the Ft. Yukon

Mission by **Dr. and Mrs. Grafton Burke**; and was a surrogate Mother and Grandmother to generations of Mt. Edgecumbe students. Her funeral was there in Sitka Monday, March 6th (*with Archdeacon Anna Frank from the Bishop's Office attending to represent all of the rest of us*). Our good friend, 43 years old **Elmer Riley** of Minto, died tragically in Fairbanks Monday, March 13th; and his services were held at home in Minto Tuesday, March 21st. 92 years old **Grandmother Mary Thompson** of Ft. Yukon and Chalkyitsik died in Wasilla Saturday, March 18th; and her funeral was held back home in Ft. Yukon Friday, March 24th. Familiar Manley Hot Springs resident, 84 years old **Charles Dart**, died on Monday, March 20th; and his funeral was held there Saturday, April 1st. On Friday, March 24th, the body of our friend, 38 years old **Jesse Demientieff** of Huslia, was finally found and recovered. Jesse, who was married to **Orville Huntington** of Huslia and the mother of two, had disappeared in bad weather some five weeks earlier, on a caribou hunting trip out of Huslia. Folks from throughout the region had searched endlessly for her; and her funeral was held there on the Koyukuk in the days following. On Wednesday, March 29th, 55 years old **Allen Lee John** of Circle died there; and his funeral was held there Monday, April 3rd. (And also during the month of March, **Kriska**, a small black Pomeranian that **Bishop MacDonald** had confirmed here back in 2003, also died.)

In the early morning hours of Saturday, April 8th, Choir member **Jim Hameister's** father – 60 years old **Jimmy Hameister Sr** – passed peacefully away at home, with his wife **Bonnie** and his son beside him. On Palm Sunday, April 9th, in Duluth, Minnesota, **Bishop Mark MacDonald's** father – 77 years old **Adrian Blake MacDonald** – passed away, and his services were held there later in the week (*Cards and memorials can be sent to Bishop and Mrs. MacDonald at the Bishop's Office: 1205 Denali Way; Fairbanks 99701*). 87 years old **Albert Kangas** of the Pioneer Home and Ruby also passed away on Palm Sunday, April 9th; and his funeral was held at home in Ruby on Good Friday, April 14th. 92 years old **Cecelia Johnson** of Denali Center passed away there on Wednesday, April 12th; and her funeral was held in Tanana Easter weekend. On Easter Tuesday, April 18th, 83 years old **Fred Demit** of the Upper Tanana died in Tanacross, surrounded by family. His funeral was held in Tetlin Friday, April 21st. On Saturday, April 22nd, 22 years old **Stuart Demoski** died; and his funeral was held in Nulato Friday, April 28th. And on Sunday, April 23rd, 55 years old **Janel Thompson**, the wife of Fairbanks City Mayor **Steve Thompson**, died after a struggle with cancer. Her funeral was Monday May 1st at the First Presbyterian Church.

There were other moments of grief during this time.

On Sunday, March 12th, when the Lessons spoke of wood and fire and crosses, word was received here that the historic **Holy Trinity Church** in Juneau, where **the Rev. George** and **Hunter Silides** and children are, had burned completely to the ground during the Night. Thankfully no one was hurt, but it was a complete loss of everything inside the Church. The services here that Sunday were filled with

(Continued on page 22)

Seasons of Life . . .

shock and tears. St. Matthew's raised an initial +\$1300 as a contribution, and our prayers and contributions continue [See related articles in this Newsletter].

It was some Time, this Lenten Spring; leaving us all wearily longing for the Easter Proclamation of Resurrection.

Chocolate Trifles and Visitors and Other Transitions

Lent and Spring, in both obvious and subtle ways, are times of Transitions, and comings and goings. St. Matthew's hosted three conferences during this period: an **Indigenous Women's Conference** was held the last weekend of February (February 24-26); **Bishop MacDonald** led a special presentation on the Windsor Report, in preparation for June's General Convention, Tuesday, March 14th; and we hosted one of the continuing sessions of the Diocesan **Leadership for New Directions** April 20th through April 24th. All of these brought by new and old friends. Other visitors wandered through too. On Wednesday, March 8th, **Elsom Eldridge Jr.** stopped by to visit. He had left St. Matthew's when he was 5 years old, when World War Two was beginning. His father, **the Rev. Elsom Eldridge Sr.**, was the priest here from 1939 -1942. **Carol Phillips** (the widow of **the Rev. John Phillips**) was here visiting Sunday, March 26th; **Clark Gordon** (grandson of **Bishop** and **Shirley Gordon**) showed up from Savannah on Sunday, April 2nd; **Sarah Isto**, Holy Trinity/Juneau Vestryperson, surprised us at Midnight Compline Tuesday, April 4th; **Lloyd** and **Bev Schommer** returned from their Winter Exile Outside Wednesday, April 5th; and **Lana Palmer** of Ketchikan joined the Thursday Pioneer Home Eucharist Maundy Thursday, April 13th. There were also leavings: Sexton **Fiona Stewart-Campbell** resigned and left us Friday, April 7th.

As we began facing into Lent, in those Last Days of Epiphany, we were given images of ministry and service to

hold onto. On Sunday, February 26th, **Marty Thomas** retired as Chair of the Altar Guild, after 21 years of coordinating and directing this Ministry and Service at the Heart of our Life together. She received two dozen roses. **Cathy Giacomazzi** and **Mary Johnston** have now become the new co-chairs of the Guild. Then, several days later, as we gathered on Shrove Tuesday, February 28th for the Annual "Bring-what-we-have-to-give-up-decadent-dessert" covered dish, we colored and hid the "Alleluia", filled with our prayers for Spring, and marveled at the Chocolate Trifle that **Cathy Giacomazzi** had brought.

That's what we remembered as we headed into the crossed wilderness of Lent. Faithful service of the heart and roses and chocolate. All things transition and change. Roses and chocolate and the heart endure.



Monday morning of Holy Week

A LITTLE MORE CORRESPONDENCE . . .

Spring Arrives on the Lower River

April 27th

It's been bright and beautiful, and below freezing until this week...what I've come to believe is a wonderful spring. Now the temperatures are getting a little higher and the snow is starting to melt. Walking to school this morning I felt like I was walking through a clumped sugar bowl. And don't let me forget to mention that the birds have begun to arrive -- ditsin, ni/tiy, tavo, nondahl, vats, yith gagga, etc. (Geese, cranes, swans, ducks, seagulls, snowbirds.) We won't mention what happens to kids' focus on school when spring arrives!

Jeanette

[NOTE: "Jeanette" is Jeanette Dementi, once upon a time St. Matthewite, now married to Jim Dementi and they live at home in Shageluk.]

SUMMARY of the MARCH 2006 VESTRY MEETING



The Vestry of St. Matthew's met for their regular monthly Vestry meeting on Monday, March 27th, in the Parish Nursery. The following were present for the meeting: the rector, Senior Warden **Bruce Gadwah**, Junior Warden **Tom Marsh**, Vestry Clerk **Cathy Davis**, **Darrel Zuke**, **Julia Cockerille**, **Gregg Eschright**, **Teresa Moore**, and Parish Treasurer **Carolyn Nethken**. Following an Opening Gospel Based Discipleship Study of John 4:43-54, the following actions were discussed or taken:

- † It was passed to accept the minutes of the February meeting, as corrected.
- † Treasurer **Carolyn Nethken** reviewed the Financial Report. February Operating Income totaled \$17,781 (YTD Operating Income = \$39,530); February Operating Expenses totaled \$21,819 (YTD Operating Expenses = \$47,404.) This resulted in a Monthly Deficit of -\$4038; and now a **Year-to-Date Deficit of -\$7,874**. Given this, the anonymous contribution from the Tikkun, Inc. was gratefully noted, and deposited in the Operating Fund account.
- † Reports were heard from the various Vestry Committees, including **Cathy Davis** reporting on the Stewardship Committee; **Julia Cockerille** reporting on the Long-range Planning Committee, Junior Warden **Tom Marsh** reporting on the Building and Grounds Committee; and **Gregg Eschright** and **Teresa Moore** reporting on the

plans of the Hospitality/Friendly Committee.

† There was discussion and planning for Parish Barbecues on May 7th and June 4th.

† A report was received from **Andrea** and **Oliver Backlund** on activities of the Tanana Valley Christian Conference; and the

Vestry noted that The Good Friday Ecumenical Service will be held at noon at St. Matthew's this year.

† The rector discussed plans to contact an archivist at the University of Alaska regarding our archives; and the best way to protect them in the wake of the fire at Holy Trinity and their loss of all their archives. **Darrel Zuke** will look into our insurance coverage and report back to the Vestry on whether it is current.

† There were a variety of discussions - including the future of the Sexton's position; plans for Holy Week and Easter; the Adult and Youth Confirmation programs; the June Interior Deanery meeting; the April LOGOS Training in Anchorage; and the need to look into fire alarm upgrades.

† It was agreed the next regular meeting of the Vestry would be Monday, April 24, 2006 at 6:00pm in the Parish Hall. (*Some though had liked meeting in the Nursery with the company of the stuffed animals*).

The meeting concluded with a reflection by Vestry members on what really had happened at the meeting and what significance it had for our lives together and for the Church.

St. Matthew's Venturing Crew

Are you ready for this?

- ✓ Test your limits.
- ✓ Meet new friends.
- ✓ Make a difference.
- ✓ Go Venturing!

Would you like to do more than just bum around the town doing the same old thing as last summer?

St. Matthew's Parish Hall May 16, information and refreshments for young adults ages 14 – 20.
For more info, please call Cathy Plumlee @452-1130 or email cjpbsa@acsalaska.net

Thursday, May 25th

ASCENSION CONFIRMATIONS

The groups have been gathering since early March – on Wednesday evenings the Parish Hall fills, in the midst of choir practices and Wednesday Evening services and stray visitors, with youth and families and supporters; and, on Sunday evenings, a quiet somewhat older group gathers around coffee. The Wednesday Youth Discussions and Classes, led by Virginia MacDonald, Dawn Jagow (with assistance from Charlie), and Wes and Emily Stark (with assistance from Calee); and the Sunday Adult Evening Discussions led by the rector, with structure and advice provided by Elisabeth, have been times of learning and prayer, Gospel based Discipleship Bible Study and “How come?”. All of this has been in preparation for renewing Baptismal vows in the Celebration of Confirmation.



On the fortieth day of Easter, in celebration of the Feast of the Ascension, Bishop Mark MacDonald will be here at St. Matthew’s to celebrate this re-commitment. The service begins at 7PM, with a covered dish at 5:30PM in honor of those being confirmed. Among those being confirmed are LAUREN ANSAKNOK, KRISTIE ATTLA, CARLA BASSETT, MARC CASTELLINI, ALICIA HILL, JOANNA JAGOW, SHENAE JAMES, HAYLEY JOSEPH, TYLER LOUD, BRANDON MAYO, MATTHEW MAYO, PAT SACKINGER, and KYLE STARK

In thanksgiving for the gifts each of them brings St. Matthew’s in this commitment, please keep all in prayer; and come join this Easter Gathering on the 25th.

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



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May 19, 2006

*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.