



**ALASKA MISSION  
for CHRIST**

sharing CHRIST in  
the last frontier



## Messy MISSION

by Rev. Keith Aschenbeck

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Ministry can be a very messy job. Dirty, rotten, sinful people make it especially challenging. But, those are the folks God sends from the Lower 48 to do ministry in Alaska. (FYI – I am one of those.) We are all in good company as far as that goes. Most of Jesus' disciples were fishermen. Having been around the fishing industry a time or two, I know that its hard to get away from the dirty rotten smell that accompanies a port city and the folks who work there. The rest of the disciples were considered young and immature, tax collectors, cheats, etc. God chose the disciples for the very reason that they carried with them a stigma as sinners unworthy of God's attention and deserving of his wrath.

As partners with Alaska Mission for Christ, we are all dirty rotten sinful people seeking to share the news that God sent his son to take the rotten stench of sin from us and wash us clean.



Being Christian doesn't make us "better" people, rather it simply makes us people who recognize how lost we are. Displaying that honesty about ourselves gives witness to the greatness of God's grace.

This was the case for one young man. He came up to be part of a basketball camp in a village. As is the case in many villages, basketball reigns as the competitive sport of choice and the village residents can often try to push buttons on the young folk who visit their communities. One such test, resulted in the



*Volunteers from Oletha, KS removed animal stalls and dug out goat poop from the Aschenbeck's Pole Barn to make room for the new AMC van for the Upper Tanana Valley.*

young ministry team member "losing his cool", making some comments and walking out.

Events like this rarely go unnoticed, and one village high schooler commented under her breath, "and he is supposed to be Christian!" The young man would later, without any prompting from the adults, seek out the boys he had the confrontation with and offer an apology for his poor behavior.

In an act of humility and repentance, he demonstrated an attribute of what it means to be a Christian: recognizing one's sinfulness and seeking forgiveness. In this instance, the community kids witnessed a very different attitude toward sinfulness than they are normally exposed to. The shock of the young men's faces was evident, as was their confusion on how to handle his confession. They floundered for a moment and then offered their forgiveness, after which the relationships and fun of the camp took on a whole new meaning. I pray the impact of that moment continues to take root in their hearts that they would grow in the depth and knowledge of a Lord and Savior who willingly gave His life for theirs.

Send your gifts to:

### Alaska Mission for Christ

The Lutheran Center  
8100 Arctic Blvd.

Anchorage, AK 99518-3003

Or online visit:

[www.alaskamissionforchrist.org/contributions](http://www.alaskamissionforchrist.org/contributions)

### Please Pray...

-For Brittany Baumgartner, our servant event coordinator. She has been struggling with some neurological problems. As I write this, she is undergoing tests at Mayo Clinic in Minnesota. Pray the doctors will have wisdom and know how to bring healing for Brittany.

-For AMC as we enter a process of prayerful strategic planning. May the Lord give us wisdom to see his plans for mission and ministry in Alaska.

-For the Anchorage ministry van. A second van was donated to Alaska Mission for Christ this past summer. This is an older van that needs some repair. Pray that the Lord will provide the funding we need to repair this van for ministry use. If you would like to help, contact, Todd [toddroske@alaskamissionforchrist.org](mailto:toddroske@alaskamissionforchrist.org) or 907-259-5115

# Commit Your Work to the LORD!

It was Wednesday and we had been busy. VBS with over 70 kids runs somewhere between chaos and fun. We were doing the stories that we have all heard from the Bible. The Walls of Jericho fall down, Jesus died for us on the cross, Jesus rose from the dead, etc. While we were following our well trodden path, a young boy asked my wife, "Who killed Jesus?" She was taken aback. We forget that there are people that do not know the story. She gave him a quick answer and said, "We are going to talk about that tomorrow. Come back and find out."

I thought her answer was good. I would have launched into a theological discourse on our responsibility for Jesus' death. The boy did come back the next day and learned that while it was the ruling authorities in Jesus' time that killed him, he died for all of our sins.

This little incident is a reminder of why we do our work in Alaska. People need to know the story of Jesus. We cannot assume that everybody knows who



Campers enjoy a vigorous game of "Knockout" at the Kenny Lake Basketball camp!

Jesus is and what his life and death mean for us.

I am very thankful for all of the VBS teams, the sports camp teams, the Art program team, and the hammer and nail volunteers that worked with us this Summer to make a bold proclamation of Jesus' Good News. Alaska needs Jesus and these volunteers are helping to proclaim him!

**Todd Roeske**

**Coordinator of  
Ministry**

## **I'M TELLING**

you to look  
and see that  
the fields are  
ready to be  
harvested.

-John 4:35

## News from Sterling and Cooper Landing

Bill and Roberta Hilgendorf

Sterling Lutheran has been busy this summer. In June a new slab was laid down for an addition which, when completed, will include 2 classrooms, storage and possibly a restroom. With the addition this winter of our after school program, which we call the Hungry Caterpillar Club, the congregation felt it was time to make the church ready for expanded children's ministry. The building will hopefully be completed some time in the next year.



In July a team of 5 came from Redeemer Lutheran in Manitowoc, Wisconsin, to lead Vacation Bible School and used the "Mighty Fortress" materials from LCMS. The theme was "In Jesus the victory is won." The AMC team which lead VBS at the state fairgrounds at Ninilchik, lent us their materials after they were done 2 weeks before, which was a great blessing. With the church decorated to look like a fortress, we hosted 12 children and had a very good experience. The closing worship and picnic drew a few new people to the church, which was also a joy.



# New Blessings New Challenges

As I have begun the support raising process, I have met so many wonderful people! I have been overwhelmed by people's generosity and excitement for my call to serve Southeast Alaska. I have been tremendously encouraged by God's people to share the Good News of the forgiveness of sins found only in Jesus Christ's shed blood.



*Aaron gives a presentation to a congregation in Louisville. Aaron and family are raising support to begin service in Southeast Alaska. You can support Aaron and family by clicking the "Give" link at: <https://www.alaskamissionforchrist.org/take-action>*

One question that I receive consistently from those hearing about my call is "What will your ministry work look like?" This is a great question that provides many opportunities to share about the unique challenges of serving such a remote and isolated area such as the Southeast. My approach is threefold: 1) Mercy work 2) Teaching of the faith 3) Word and Sacrament ministry.

Mercy work is the way we show our love for our neighbor to our neighbor. The love of Christ permeates His church so that we, as members of Christ's body, demonstrate and show God's love through service. Mercy can consist of large-scale endeavors, such as building and construction projects. Yet it also consists of the small day-to-day interactions with members of our surrounding communities. Opportunities to serve our neighbor abound in the isolated communities of the Southeast, whether they be widows, orphans, those on hard times, and even those experiencing seasons of prosperity.

Teaching of the faith is central to the Great Commission of our Lord Jesus Christ. St. Paul states in Romans 10:17 that, "Faith comes from hearing and hearing through the words of Christ." Jesus Christ has delivered to His church the words of eternal life. Martin Luther's Small Catechism captures the essence of Christ's teachings and provides the fundamental elements of the Christian faith. Many churches continue to partner with AMC in the Southeast to conduct vacation Bible schools and teach the faith. I look forward to many new opportunities to teach the

faith in Southeast communities in the near future!

Word and Sacrament ministry is the source of God's gifts to His church. Through Holy Baptism God brings His people from darkness to light and makes them His very children, giving them eternal life and salvation. In Jesus Christ's Holy Supper, He delivers His very body and blood for the forgiveness of sins. God calls men to shepherd and serve His people wherever they are located; whether over mountains or across seas (and many times both). With the Lord's guidance and support from our partners, AMC has the joy of delivering these gifts all across Alaska's wild and rugged terrain.

You might be thinking, by this point, that the work of the church in Alaska really isn't all that different from your local church's work. You're spot on! While geography and culture vary around God's created world, the essence of the church's threefold work does not vary. We are to love our neighbor, proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ, and receive His gifts. Praise be to our unchanging God that He lavishes all His people with the same good gifts throughout all the world!

Contact Aaron at: [aaronspratt@alaskamissionforchrist.org](mailto:aaronspratt@alaskamissionforchrist.org)

Aaron Spratt

## Missionary to the Southeast Alaska

How to Direct Thrivent Choice Dollars:

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Step 3—Look for your designated Choice Dollars on the right side of the screen.

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## You Can Help!

### **Pray**

Alaska Mission for Christ depends on people to pray for us and for the people of Alaska. To become a prayer partner, write:

[bbaumgartner@alaskamissionforchrist.org](mailto:bbaumgartner@alaskamissionforchrist.org)

### **Volunteer**

We need both long and short term volunteers to help us share the Gospel in Alaska. Volunteers lead VBS, Sports Camps, do hammer and nails projects and even live in villages and serve people with Jesus' love. For more information, contact:

[bbaumgartner@alaskamissionforchrist.org](mailto:bbaumgartner@alaskamissionforchrist.org)

### **Give**

Alaska mission for Christ depends on gifts from people like you. Either donate on line at [www.alaskamissionforchrist.org](http://www.alaskamissionforchrist.org) or send checks to Alaska Mission for Christ, 8100 Arctic Boulevard, Anchorage, AK 99518



*Don't forget to find us on Facebook!*

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