Pastoral Care: Alaska Style

October 2017

I somewhat nervously punched the phone number into my cell phone. I had never spoken to Joan or her sick husband John (not their real names). A day before, a text message came across my phone stating that these members of Faith desired a visit from the pastor. The issue at hand was that I was in Indiana support-raising and they were in Juneau, some 3,000 land-and-ferry-miles away. Thanks to the aid of modern communications I was able to speak with Joan and John, pray with them, and deliver to them the comfort found in God's Word. In that moment I was extremely thankful for the cell phone that I so often despise as a major distraction in my day-to-day life.

The Alaska Marine highway connects isolated communities in Southeast Alaska by ferry.

One of the many challenges unique to ministry in Alaska is distance; vast distances in fact. For example, Juneau is about 300 ferry-miles away from Ketchikan. In fact, none of the over 30 communities in Southeast Alaska are connected by a physical road. To get to these isolated places you have to either fly in or take the ferry. While it is not a cheap endeavor to visit these dispersed towns and villages, it most certainly is a worthy and necessary endeavor in the ministry of the church.

Faith Lutheran Church partners with Alaska Mission for Christ to support Aaron who serves as their pastor and AMC's missionary to Southeast Alaska.

To provide pastoral care in rural and rugged Alaska requires using all the available means. Unlike many pastors in the lower 48, a pastor up here is unable to just "pop-in" for a shut-in visit. Face-to-face visits take planning and coordination. From phone calls to Facetime to Skype, the pastor finds innovative ways to deliver God's Word and prayer for His people.

Rev. Aaron Spratt

Aaronspratt@alaskamissionforchrist.org

Whole technology can have its downsides, I am thankful for this gift from God. It allows me to instantly traverse the vast distances of Southeast Alaska. Through these electronic means I am able to deliver to God's promises found in His Word. As well, it allows relationships to build during those lengthy times where a pastor is unable to visit his people. Things are a little different in Alaska, but through it all, God will not be stopped. He sends out His Word all across the world despite all obstacles!

Rev. Aaron and family plan to move to Juneau in December. To support Aaron and family please go to: https://www.alaskamissionforchrist.org/take-action/ and click on the "Make a donation" link.

Alaskamissionforchrist.org

Pray

Volunteer

Give

Notice: Within the next month or two, Alaska Mission for Christ will be changing services to process web based payments. If you are an occasional or one time giver, this change will be seamless. If you are a regular monthly giver, you will soon receive instructions on how to make the transition. Look for that information coming soon! For questions contact Jan Bruick (Janbruick@alaskamissionforchrist.org)

PRAY FOR US

- Our Servant Event Coordinator, Brittany Baumgartner, had to step down due to health concerns. Please keep her healing in your prayers.
- Pray for our Interim Servant Event Coordinator, Jan Bruick. Jan will be serving for one year as we look for a new person to fill this position.
- Pray for Rev. Aaron Spratt and family as they make preparations for their move to Alaska in December.
- Pray for Keith Aschenbeck and family as Keith works to reach into the lives of those who are struggling with addictions.
- Pray for the Alaska Mission for Christ yearly Face-to-Face Board meeting on October 14-15.
- Thank the Lord for the work of Dr. Lee Schlueckeber who taught at a Bible School in Bethel last month. This is a great opportunity for us to help train native leaders in Southwest Alaska.
- Praise the Lord that ex AMC Missionary, David Grosz has been declared cancer free after months of intensive treatment!
- Pray for the Hmong Deacons that are finishing up their training process and are soon to be certified by the district.
- Pray for us as we formulate plans to call a missionary to serve in Southwest Alaska.
- Pray for Mike Speer the owner of Cheap Wheels Rent-a-Car. He has been a blessing to AMC and our volunteers for many years. He is presently in Seattle taking specialized treatment for a very aggressive lymphoma. To help Mike and to find out more check out his GoFundMe page: https://www.gofundme.com/big-mike-s-life-with-mantle-cell
- Pray for wisdom as we seek the best ways to make a bold witness to Jesus in the land of the midnight sun.

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