

# ALYESKAN

NEWS & VIEWS FOR ALASKAN SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS



## THE GOSPEL CALL

Sharing the Good News in 2021

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### ALASKA CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

6100 O'MALLEY ROAD  
ANCHORAGE, AK 99507  
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# SHARING OUR HOPE

**“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to His great mercy, He has caused us to be born again to a *living hope* (italics supplied) through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead” 1 Peter 1:3 (ESV).**

As we move into this new year, a shaky hope seems to hang out there in the hazy future. We await the benefits of a vaccine. We managed to weather a particularly polarized political season. We have new faces in government. Last year is fading in the rearview mirror.

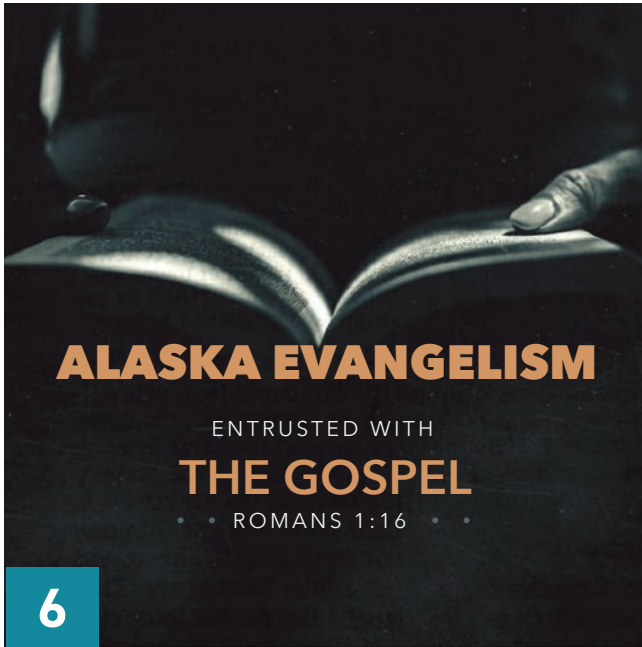
What, really, are people hoping for though? Are they hoping we can go back to the good old days before COVID-19? Are they hoping that the new presidential administration can bring a sense of unity back to us? Are they hoping for the failure of leaders so they can replace them with their own? In the world, hope is a tenuous thing. It really does not have a solid foundation to anchor people's view of tomorrow, let alone today. They really don't have a *living hope*.

This is where you and I can enter the picture. As people who have experienced the Living Christ, we do have a solid hope. We have more than a solid hope, we have the Living Hope. Our futures are certain according to the promises of God. As the hymn says, “Our hope is built on nothing less, than Jesus blood and righteousness.”

Into this weary, jaded world this hope needs sung. It needs sung by people who know the saving power and love

**KEVIN MILLER**  
President





of Christ. It needs sung to our neighbors in the way we mingle with them. It needs sung to our co-workers who are struggling with life. It needs sung to our families, even as we experience the trauma of life. Our hope centers in Christ Jesus.

He is the Living Hope. We can share Him wherever we go to whomever we meet. This is a year that people are wanting some kind of hope that our world can get better. We have this hope. As long as we rest our faith and hope in God, we are assured of a world made new. In fact, we can have an oasis of that world now as we wait for the new one.

This is the year to pray for someone to share that hope with. Pray that the Lord will guide you to a person who is yearning for something more, but needs the assurance of Christ. Pray to light someone's world with the hope that is anchored in the Living Hope. Pray that not only we will do this individually, but that we will collectively become beacons of hope for our communities. Jesus has blessed us with this hope, so let's go out and share it with our world.

*K. M. M. L.*

# A LIFE OF EVANGELISM IN A CULTURE OF FEAR



**RYAN ROGERS**  
Palmer Pastor

In September 2020, a book was published called *Facing Fear* by Nik Wallenda. And Nik understands fear. He's is a seventh generation daredevil. Nik started walking on a wire at 18 months old. Since then, his high-wire performances have taken him across the Grand Canyon, over Niagara Falls, between two towers in Chicago blindfolded, over Times Square, and through an active volcano.

Nik is fearless. At least he thought he was until he experienced a traumatic high-wire accident in 2017. Miraculously, Nik was not physically hurt, but he was left paralyzed by fear. Eventually, he returned to his passion of performing on the high-wire. But, he was only able to step forward on the wire because he overcame the fear in his head.

Fear is crippling. When it wins we stop moving forward. It is winning in our culture and our church is not immune. We are overwhelmed with alarming headlines about health, economy,

religious freedom, vaccinations, government mandates, climate issues and social justice. How do we live a life of evangelism in a culture of fear?

Here are three truths that fuel a life of evangelism in a culture of fear!

## 1. **There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear!** 1 John 4:18

There is an approach to evangelism that uses fear to drive people to God. But fear won't cast out fear. Only love



Ellen G. White  
MHH 281.4

can make room in the heart for truth to land. Courage might compete with fear, but love evicts it. Let love cast out your fear, then let that love spill over into a culture of fear. This is evangelism.

## 2. **The Spirit God gives is not a spirit of fear!** 2 Timothy 1:7, Romans 8:15

Evangelism is a spiritual work. People don't just need different information, behaviors, and beliefs, they need a different Spirit! As believers, we may hear the same headlines, but we are filled with that different Spirit.

If we are slaves to fear, we won't help others find freedom from it. But let's be honest. Extreme and fearful views often find a following in the Adventist Church. In these end times, let's not be so focused on the crisis that we lose sight of Christ; so gripped with the horrors that we lose our grip on hope.

When we are freed of fear we will stand out in a culture consumed with it. And the Spirit of peace in the Church will, itself, be an evangelistic appeal!

## 3. **He Himself is our peace!** Ephesians 2:14

A culture of fear is problem focused. It seeks peace by trying to understand, minimize or fix the problem. But peace is not the absence of trouble, it is the presence of Christ! Evangelism shifts the focus! When scripture proclaims "fear not", it has nothing to do with the problem and everything to do with God's presence ("Fear not, for I am with you" Isaiah 41:10)<sup>1</sup>. Carry the presence of Jesus into a culture of fear, **Jesus in you and you in the world!** And know that this is evangelism!

<sup>1</sup>Genesis 15:1; 26:24, Exodus 14:13; 20:20; Numbers 21:34; Deuteronomy 3:22; 20:1; 31:6-8; Joshua 1:9; 1 Chronicles 28:20; Psalm 23:4; 27:1; 56:3-4; 118:6-7; Isaiah 12:2; 35:4; 41:13-14; 43:1, 5; 44:2; Jeremiah 46:27; Lamentations 3:57; Joel 2:21; Zephaniah 3:17; Haggai 2:5; Matthew 10:26; Mark 5:36; 6:50; Luke 1:13; 2:10-11; 12:32; John 12:15; Philippians 4:6; Hebrews 13:6; 1 Peter 3:14; 5:6-7; 1 John 4:4; Revelation 1:17

# 2021 TIME TO REFOCUS ON PEOPLE

Over the last five years as a conference, we have intended to focus on reaching more people with the Gospel, but have often been disrupted in our goal. In each of the last five years, the money that was allocated to Outreach and Evangelism has not been fully spent.

In 2021, we as church members, pastors and the conference team are budgeting to catch up on putting those financial resources to work. Will you pray for someone who is special to you that you will find the right words and the right moment to invite them to join you in the journey to become fully devoted followers of Christ?

We just closed the month of December tithe which has been our best month since March. Thank you for being faithful with your tithes and offerings in spite of COVID-19 and all the financial disruptions. For the year ended December 31, 2020, we were only down -1.26%; God has continued to bless as we respond to Him.

Total tithe in 2020 was \$4,460,066.00.

Total tithe in 2019 was \$4,516,767.00.

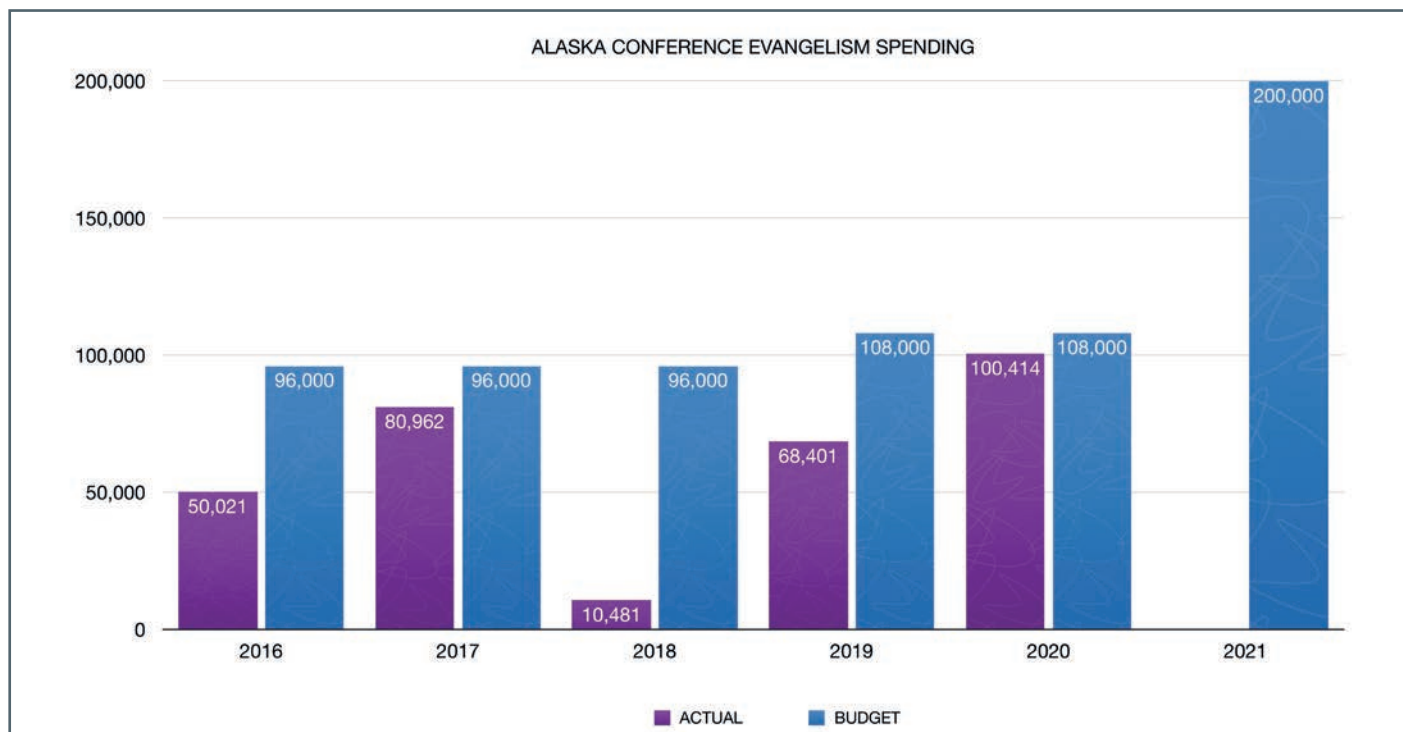


**JIM JENSEN**  
Vice-President of Finance

If you have not made tithing a part of your life, will you give it a try in 2021? Biblically, tithe is defined as 10% of your increase if a business owner or 10% of your income if an employee.

The amount of tithe blessing or windfall was nearly identical. Tithe blessing is

any time when we receive more than \$30,000 from one family or individual in one month and is unlikely to be repeated such as the sale of property or an inheritance. Because this is unlikely to be repeated in a future year, we do not budget on these funds, but can use them for one time projects.



# ADAPTING THE MISSION DURING CRISIS



**MELVIN SANTOS**  
Vice President of Administration

ALASKA EVA

ENTRUSTED

THE GO

• • ROMANS 1

*Pastor Santos heads Evangelism, Discipleship and Church Planting ministries for the conference*

The corona virus pandemic has affected all areas of life including the food industry. In order to survive this crisis, businesses turned to creative ways to meet the needs of their customers by providing “take-out” food since dine-in options were prohibited. DoorDash almost instantly became an overnight success by taking the food to the customers. DoorDash CEO Tony Xu said he founded his company to help small restaurants, many of which are shuttering during the pandemic.

With the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic and state health mandates being imposed to mitigate the spread of the virus, churches are forced to seek alternative avenues to carry out the mission and minister to our church members and communities. Perhaps it's time we reprioritize our methodology. Our mission remains the same, as Jesus

stated, “Go, and make disciples of all nations...” Unfortunately, even though we may have quoted this passage numerous times, we still subscribed to the philosophy of “Come, and we will make you disciples...” It's about time that we “Go” where the people are in the community.

This year, our goal is to produce and provide online training for pastors and members each month and quarterly for churches. We will concentrate on best practices in our approach to meet the needs of the people. In addition, we want to encourage and educate members and leaders to focus on connecting with people and making friends for Jesus rather than just focusing on events.

The problem in soul-winning is not the unchurched people, nor the lack of strategies and tools, but believers who

are not witnessing and sharing their faith. Why is that?

We often put too much emphasis on our inability to connect, lack of temperaments and lack of training. Until we learn how to depend on the Holy Spirit and ask to be filled daily, then all efforts for outreach will be minimal.

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*Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit...*

Matthew 28:19 NIV

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We will need to provide the tools to equip and train, as well as provide resources in connecting with people. The conference will establish discipleship



training, both online and in-person. We will offer training via video conferencing software; limited, in-person training will be available for churches that have not started the Discipleship Master Plan (DMP) Part I training nor completed DMP Part II.

Another resource the conference is looking to provide is leadership development, mentoring and coaching on a monthly basis for pastors and lay leaders. This will involve developing teams to network and collaborate in kingdom growth and church planting.

Finally, we pray that instead of allowing this crisis to be detrimental to the traditional ways most are accustomed to doing church, perhaps, this can be the opportunity to advance and multiply the Kingdom of God.

## BABY STEP EVANGELISM

During the first weeks of churches shutting down, I came to the Cradle Roll Room at Hillside O'Malley Church, making sure that all was in place for the new quarter. There was an action, felt or prop ready to go with each song as we learned the story of Jonah, taking turns riding on a blow-up whale. Yet as we wait, still anticipating the return of the children who are now one year older, animal crackers have grown stale. Children will be moving to kindergarten having reached that magical age of four.



As a young mother, I became a Cradle Roll Leader and, along with my three small sons, started the journey that would take me to this place years later. I have learned many things through the years from incredible mentors, and been blessed to evangelize to the smallest of these church members.

Believing that if you capture the heart of a child in a program that is active, simplistic in presentation and a solid Bible story or lesson as the foundation, they in turn become the youngest evangelist. When a child loves to come to class, is energetic in participation, learns words to songs that are repetitious and simple, parents want to bring them back each week. Parents become engaged in the program when asked, willing to tell the Bible Story as the children sit on a blanket and snack on animal crackers. The smallest baby becomes part of the program as they are rocked in the cradle by the other children while we sing songs that focus on Christ. Parents love that their children, no matter what age, are welcomed, greeted, and feel included. Each parent is acknowledged, welcomed by name and as they leave, thanked for bringing their child to class.

Capturing the child with songs and participation encourages parents to come week after week and be a part of the miracle that happens in their child's lives. They learn about sharing, taking turns, praying, loving, being kind, learning Bible stories and respecting God's creation. Hugs are freely given, making the child feel loved by their teacher.



**JOANN STEVENS**  
Administrative  
Assistant

Cradle Roll is the doorway that leads to baby step evangelism and by God's grace, when it is time for their child to move on to the next class, the parents will continue to come to church and feel comfortable with leaving their child at the door to kindergarten, making their way into the sanctuary to continue their journey.

# DOES EVANGELISM HAVE A PLACE IN SACRIFICIAL CHARITY?

I am sometimes asked what role sacrificial giving has in evangelism. Often in the church, we see a dichotomy between evangelistic and charitable ministries, as if these are mutually exclusive. However, Jesus ministered to both temporal and spiritual needs of the multitudes during His earthly ministry. He taught in synagogues, preaching the hope of the “kingdom realm”. He also fed, healed and sheltered the vulnerable, protecting them from natural elements and social ills (Matt 4:23,24); many of which, like the two blind men healed in Matthew 20:34, became His followers.



In the early church, Christ instructed His followers to adhere to two commands: The great commandment to love God and our fellowman (Matt 22:37-40) and the great commission (Matt 28:16-20), to spread the gospel to all nations. These two commands embody both evangelism and charitable action. This was seen in the community of early believers described in Acts 2:42-47. Every believer was faithfully devoted to the teachings of the apostles. Their hearts were mutually linked, sharing with one another whatever they had and out of generosity, they even sold their assets and distributed the proceeds to those in need. The apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders

TANDI PERKINS  
Development Director



and the Lord added to their number daily those who accepted the gospel of Jesus Christ (paraphrased).

Is there a place for evangelism in sacrificial charity today? Absolutely! I see it every day in the lives of our Bush Alaska communities. Our Arctic Mission Adventure (AMA) workers lending a hand in the name of Jesus: fixing houses, visiting the sick, providing a safe place for those in trouble, a warm meal, a kind and encouraging word, a place to learn about Jesus, and baptizing lives changed through acceptance of Jesus as Savior.

I see it in those who sacrificially give in support of our workers and AMA. I see it in those who give clothing, food and Bible study resources. I see it in mission groups that come to repair buildings and administer Vacation Bible School's and day camp programs. Finally, I see it in our prayer warriors who take time out of their busy day to pray over God's people, the work and the lives that need to be touched. Each one committed to offering their time, talent and resources to further God's work in Alaska. In Appeal for Missions, Ellen White wrote:

*This is true of temporal as of spiritual blessings. The Lord does not propose to come to this world and lay down gold and silver to advance His work. He supplies men [and women] with the resources, that they may, by their gifts and offerings keep his work advancing. The one purpose above all others for which God's gifts should be used is in the sustaining of workers in the great harvest field. And if men will become channels through which God's blessings can flow to others, the Lord will keep the channel supplied.*  
PH 004 5.1

In a world where many people are espousing individualism and self-promotion, we are being called to evangelical charity – to sacrificially give of our time, talent and resources to believers and nonbelievers alike throughout our sphere of influence and beyond – to point to Jesus Christ as Savior. I am so thankful for the faithful men and women who give of their time, talent and resources to further the kingdom of God in the Bush and throughout Alaska.



# EDUCATION IS EVANGELISM

On the sixth day of creation God created man in His own image. Then the “Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.” Genesis 2:15. God blessed Adam and Eve and gave them dominion over the earth. What an amazing privilege that must have been for Adam and Eve. To be coworkers with Christ in bringing order and value to a newly created world. How sad it is for us today to see the chaos, destruction, decay, and lack of order that Satan has created to destroy God’s marvelous works.

For those of us who have discovered the wonderful Seventh-day Adventist message, we, because of the understanding of the Great Controversy and the Word of God, have a knowledge of what is taking place in our world today. We know that this will soon come to an end and we will once again be placed back into that original garden that God has waiting for us.

*So, how do we as Seventh-day Adventists Christians broadcast this astonishing message of hope and understanding to those who are not able to make sense of what is happening in this chaotic world?*

## Education

Our Adventist school system has been raising up generations of young people since the 1870s. Today the teachers in our schools have a difficult, yet marvelous opportunity, to “carry the torch” that has been burning for the last 150 years. A torch that Satan is trying desperately to extinguish, knowing that if he can destroy a generation of young people, he can destroy the church.



**ROD RAU**  
Education Director

Our teachers are one of the greatest channels of evangelism we have today. Their notable job is to help young people navigate the maze of all that is happening in our world. They have been called to the “front lines” of battle against Satan in order to guard the students against his influence. The mission of the teacher is to convey an understanding of the current world events and how these events are leading up to Christ’s second coming. The student’s classrooms may be the only place they will find hope and encouragement through the influence of the Bible and their dedicated Christian teachers

It is our job, as a people and as a conference, to pray for our teachers as they engage in the tremendous responsibility of developing a generation of young people. A generation that will serve as coworkers with Christ in what little time we have left on this earth. A generation that is looking forward to doing the work that Adam and Eve were responsible for, tending the Garden of Eden.

## CONFERENCE SCHOOLS

### Amazing Grace Academy

2238 S. Inner Springer Loop  
Palmer, Alaska 99645  
907.745.2691  
alaskaaga@gmail.com

### Anchorage Junior Academy

5511 O'Malley Road  
Anchorage, Alaska 99507  
907.346.2164  
ajaak@gci.net

### Dillingham Adventist School

PO Box 182  
Dillingham, Alaska 99576  
907.842.2496

### Golden Heart Christian School

1809 Farmers Loop Road  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709  
907.479.2904  
ghcs@acsalaska.net

### Juneau Adventist Christian School

4890 Glacier Highway  
Juneau, Alaska 99801  
907.780.4336  
cynthia.lewis381@gmail.com

### Sitka Adventist School

1613 Halibut Point Road  
Sitka, Alaska 99835  
907.747.8855  
sitkaadventistschool@gmail.com

# LIFESTYLE EVANGELISM

## Arctic Missions | Youth | Radio

When I was pastoring in the local church, I encouraged a shift of thinking from evangelism as being an event, to evangelism as a lifestyle. One of the ways we did that is to talk about evangelism as being “everything” we do. You as a believer are a “walking advertisement” for what you say you belong to. So, as a Seventh-day Adventist, Bible practicing Christian believer, it is necessary to see everything you do as a potential impact for the Kingdom of Heaven.

For many members this has been a relief. It takes the weight off from having to have an “E-V-E-N-T” to being validated in the outreach and ministry done on a daily basis. And of course, there are others that fit on the scale with different thoughts, but for this article, I will be speaking to the position that everything we do can affect the Kingdom of Heaven.

In the ministries I am privileged to lead (Arctic Mission Adventure, Youth & Young Adults), evangelism is embedded in the code of thinking even if it is not spoken in terms of evangelistic outreach.

Arctic Missions for example is the Mission’s wing of the conference that focuses on living, teaching and preaching the Gospel to those who live in Bush Alaska. Evangelism must be a lifestyle and practiced in real-life ways or the words spoken are completely ignored. Living the Gospel opens the door to teaching and preaching the Gospel.

The Youth ministry—which encompasses Young Adults, Pathfinders, Camps & Children’s Sabbath Schools—has a variety of outcomes; all of which desire our young people to know Jesus personally and grow in HIM for the rest



**TOBIN DODGE**  
Arctic Mission Adventure  
Youth & Young Adult  
& Radio Ministry Director

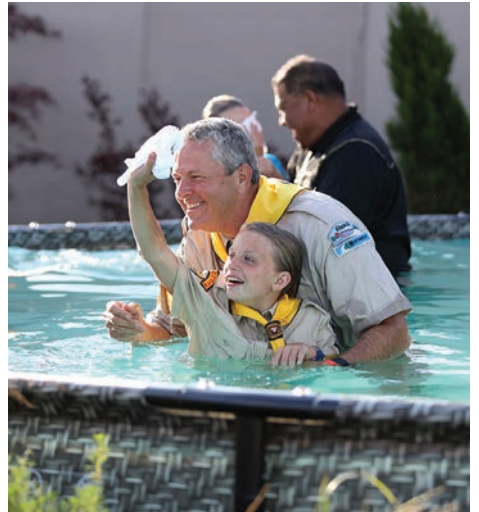
of their lives and through eternity. It has evangelistic components throughout, but the discipleship journey is pragmatically our strongest outcomes.

Radio Broadcasting Ministry is honestly frustrating when it comes to results. A broadcast DJ can play music, a pastor can preach, an individual can pour their hearts out in testimony, but often you never know the impact it is having on the listening audience. Furthermore, in some contexts, unless you are intentional about getting community feedback, you don’t even know who’s listening.

The beauty of recognizing that everything we do can have a positive evangelistic impact on someone’s life, is that it gives us permission to stop doing trivial exercises, by focusing our life and

efforts on what matters. We stop hosting events for the sake of doing something, to targeting our activity that can impact a life for Jesus. We live our life (belief and practice) that everyone matters to Jesus and all that we do can help them come to know Him better.

That being said, people matter to Jesus, we know that. But ask yourself; have I intentionally reached out to the disenfranchised, a youth or young adult to help them on their journey towards eternity with Jesus? All ages are struggling these days, however, many of our young people lack the support or ability to cope with the challenges of life. Your reaching out to be the hands and feet of Jesus to that person becomes, Evangelism as a “LIFESTYLE”.



*The beauty of recognizing that everything we do can have a positive evangelistic impact on someone's life... that everyone matters to Jesus and all that we do can help them come to know Him better.*



**CALL TO PRAYER**  
 Teleconference Prayer Meeting  
**Fridays at 7-8 pm**  
 Join fellow believers for prayer and praise!  
**1-800-719-6100**  
**Access Code 4760107**



Thank you for your generous support of Arctic Mission Adventure during 2020. You helped us weather the many challenges due to COVID-19 and put us on secure footing for 2021.

Because of your faithful support, our AMA workers can remain in the villages they serve bringing the Good News to Bush Alaska.

From all of us at AMA, thank you and God Bless!

Arctic Mission Adventure, 6100 OMalley Rd, Anchorage, AK 99507 P:907.346.1004  
 web: [www.arcticmissionadventure.org](http://www.arcticmissionadventure.org) email: [info@arcticmissionadventure.org](mailto:info@arcticmissionadventure.org)

# OLD DAYS

*Old days, Good times I remember  
 Fun days, Filled with simple pleasures  
 Drive-in movies, Comic books and blue jeans  
 Howdy Doody, Baseball cards and birthdays  
 Take me back, To the world gone away  
 Memories, Seem like yesterday  
 Oh, old days, Good times I remember  
 Gold days, Days I'll always treasure  
 Funny faces, Full of love and laughter  
 Funny places, Summer nights and streetcars  
 Take me back, To the world gone away  
 Our good memories, Seem like yesterday  
 Old days*



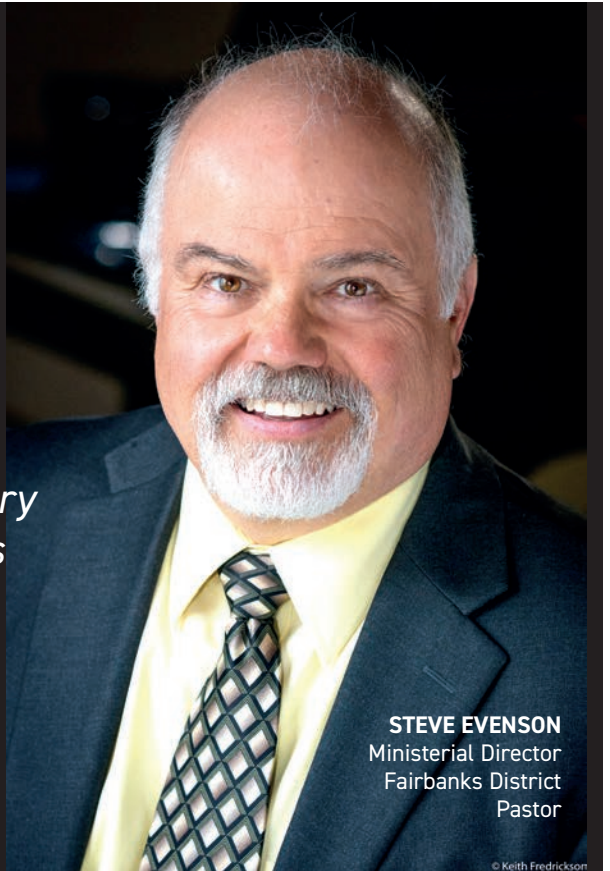
I heard this song some time back. These lyrics to the song that Chicago recorded many years ago brought back memories of my teens. The carefree days of wonderment, fun with friends, seemingly no cares in the world.

Sometimes we are legends in our own minds. We...could be anything, dreams of what would be could be in our future. And for a number of years, I was just that, living the American Dream.

I had decent jobs, opportunity to travel, found a wonderful woman to marry, raised two sons and with pride enjoyed their graduation from academy, then

*But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

II Corinthians 3:18



**STEVE EVENSON**  
 Ministerial Director  
 Fairbanks District  
 Pastor

© Keith Fredrickson

college, then to both of them earning their Masters Degrees. Watching both boys find spouses, then children. The joys of family have been wonderful.

And through all of this was the joy that we all were walking hand in hand with our Heavenly Father. That probably is the greatest joy a father can have.

II Corinthians 3:18 tells us "But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord."

Where I stand today, this is my great hope: that I would day by day, draw closer to Christ and that I would reflect the creator's love to others. One of the phrases that I encourage others and myself with is, "Go be a blessing to someone today!"

Just this week I received a phone call from a lady that had been listening to KRGW (Keep Reading God's Word) 106.9 which is a part of the Alaska Adventist Radio Network here in Fairbanks. She was just radiating how much she was enjoying that radio station, how much it filled her with joy and happiness. She mentioned K-Love was okay for some people, these songs and inspirational topics filled her with joy for God. It made me feel good that we (Fairbanks Church) had installed this radio station a year and a half ago.

So, for all the Old Days that I have such good memories of, and the current blessings I see God pouring out upon His people, I have now stepped into the future, where I need to be filled continually with God's Holy Spirit. Every Day! It's not the Old Days anymore.

*Continued on Page 14*

# OUR NEWEST TEAM MEMBERS

## Bristol Bay and Kenai Peninsula Area Pastors



### PASTOR TODD & GINA PARKER

Dillingham & Togiak District

*Pastor Todd's mission statement has always been, "Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence.*

*Then He bade them, 'Follow Me,'"*

Ministry of Healing, page 143

**Todd Parker was born in Bishop, Calif. Todd worked for Sam's Club, but the Lord was calling him to do His work. In 1990, he married Gina Withrow, and later they had two children, Colten and Jessica. While working full time, Todd became a colporteur and worked evenings. He loved telling others about Jesus. After two years, the toll of working two jobs was too much, and he quit the colporteur work.**

After moving to Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, to be closer to his parents, Todd had everything, but he was miserable. He felt the calling of the Lord even greater. After much prayer, he and his family knew it was time to move forward in faith. Todd quit his job and went to the Amazing Facts School of Evangelism and became a Bible worker. During his eight years as a Bible worker, he helped plant a Native American Church in Plummer, Idaho, organized an annual Creation Day Camp in the Park with over 132 children attending consistently, along with prison ministry and many other outreach programs to win souls for Jesus. In March 2014, Todd was called to become a pastor for the Gulf States Conference.

This past spring, Todd and Gina were extended an invitation from the Alaska Conference to serve the Bristol Bay area. After visiting the area, they accepted and joined our team in July 2020.

Source: [www.southertidings.com](http://www.southertidings.com)



### PASTOR JONATHAN & ERIN MERCILL

Homer & Midnight Son District

*Pastor Jonathan's ministerial approach is based on the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19 & 20:*

*"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

**Pastor Jonathan grew up in East Africa as a missionary kid. While at an evangelistic series in Tanzania, Jonathan, then eight years old, felt the call to the ministry. It was his dream to return to Africa as a medical professional and travel from village to village helping people. But God called him to pastoral ministry.**

After pursuing his own ministry ideas for 20 years, Pastor Mercill acknowledged God's call to ministry and began his educational journey and has a Bachelors of Religion from Union College and a Masters of Divinity from Andrews Theological Seminary. His ministry experience includes foreign evangelist crusades and chaplaincy.

Jonathan has a passion for all ages of our church and has led Pathfinders, Adventurers, all ages of Sabbath School, including Cradle Roll, Kindergarten Division at Campmeeting and a Cubbies Summer Camp Pastor. He believes that our youth are critical in hastening Christ's coming. "With such an army of workers as our youth, rightly trained, might furnish, how soon the message of a crucified, risen, and soon-coming Saviour might be carried to the whole world!" —Education, page 271

He enjoys spending time with his family, studying and teaching survival skills and other outdoor activities. Jonathan and his wife, Erin, married in 2003 and have three children.

# ALASKA CONFERENCE STRATEGIC PLAN

In Fall of 2020, the conference team came together to outline initiatives through 2024. Three primary ministries were identified, and although time and resources may result in programmatic changes, the conference will continue to emphasize discipleship of its churches and members, expansion of the Arctic Mission Adventure ministry, and intentional development of our youth and young adult leadership and mentoring. Below are the major goals for each ministry:

## DISCIPLESHIP

1. **DMP Training:** 75% of our churches complete Discipleship Master Plan training
2. **Education/Ministerial:** Host two joint meetings with both pastor and teachers
3. **Baptisms:** Realize increase of 10% in active member per year
4. **Resource Library:** Develop and create online repository of discipleship resources
5. **Church Plants:** Establish two church plants in Dutch Harbor and Kotzebue

## ARCTIC MISSION ADVENTURE

1. **Staff:** Fill all current AMA positions
2. **Self-Supporting Church Status:** Transition select churches to self-supporting status
3. **Native Leadership:** Cultivate Native leaders through development and implementation of the Native ministry leader training program
4. **Development:** Addition of 25 new ministry supporters
5. **Board:** Create managing board that will provide ministry oversight

## YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS

1. **Pathfinders:** Double 2019 attendance at 2024 Oshkosh Camporee; annual leadership training
2. **Enhance Ministry Support:** Host youth and young adult events including bi-annual ministry conventions; Sabbath School training; rallies and *Growing Young*
3. **Leadership Development:** Identify and mentor a minimum of three youth adults
4. **Day Camps:** Host camps in village hubs that have not had camp as of 2018; increase attendance by 50% through 2024
5. **Resident Camps:** Host resident camps in Flat Lake, Dillingham and Vank Island; move to operating boards in all locales
6. **Education:** Support Alaska schools in increasing enrollment through promotion at youth events; assist with back-to-school marketing efforts and development of mission-driven curriculum



## CONFERENCE CALENDAR

<p><b>February 8 &amp; 9</b> <i>Teachers Meetings</i></p> <p><b>February 10</b> <i>New In Ministry Meeting</i></p> <p><b>February 15</b> <i>Closed: Presidents Day</i></p> <p><b>February 26-27</b> <i>Nome Camp Meeting</i></p> <p><b>March 8-12</b> <i>Alaska Schools Spring Break</i></p> <p><b>March 12-14</b> <i>Bristol Bay Camp Meeting</i></p> <p><b>March 25</b> <i>Board of Education</i></p>	<p><b>March 26-28</b> <i>Bethel Camp Meeting</i></p> <p><b>April 9-11</b> <i>Utqiagvik Camp Meeting</i></p> <p><b>April 13</b> <i>Alaska Conference Town Hall</i></p> <p><b>April 17</b> <i>SALT Youth Conference</i></p> <p><b>April 24</b> <i>Growing Young Cohort</i></p> <p><b>April 30-May 2</b> <i>St. Lawrence Island Camp Meeting</i></p> <p><b>May 3-5</b> <i>Conference Spring Strategic Planning Session</i></p> <p><b>May 13</b> <i>Arctic Missions Board Mtg</i></p>	<p><b>May 16</b> <i>Conference Executive Committee Meeting</i></p> <p><b>May 21-23</b> <i>Alaska Adventist Ministries Convention: ACS-Pathfinders Growing Young-Alaska Pilots</i></p> <p><b>May 29</b> <i>Alaska Missions Offering</i></p> <p><b>May 31</b> <i>Closed: Memorial Day</i></p> <p><b>May 30-June 5</b> <i>Camp Cresendo</i></p> <p><b>June 6-26</b> <i>Young Adult Disciple Trek</i></p> <p><b>June 18-19</b> <i>Interior Camp Meeting</i></p>
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## IN THE NEXT EDITION

In 2021, the Alyeskan focuses on the first of three of the conference's main initiatives, Discipleship.

In the next edition of the Alyeskan, we continue with

### THE GOSPEL CALL Evangelizing Our Communities

sharing how churches and schools are reaching their communities.

# ALASKA CONFERENCE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

December 13, 2020 | Zoom

**PRESENT:** Kevin Miller, Chair; Melvin Santos, Secretary; Jim Jensen, Chad Angasan, Celesta Babb, Steve Evenson, Missy Harris, Jim Jensen, David King, Kallie McCutcheon, Danya Nicketa, Tina Steenmeyer, Tiffany Tago, Ryan Woehler, Jessica Yun

**NPUC REPRESENTATIVE:** John Freedman

**INVITEES:** Lowell Cooper, Brenda Johnson, Tandi Perkins, Steve Evenson

**ABSENTEES:** Mally Concepcion, Elmer Joseph. Invitee: Tobin Dodge, Rod Rau

**DEVOTIONAL | PRAYER:** Kevin Miller

**VOTED** to approve October 2020 Financial Report subject to audit.

**VOTED** to approve the implementation of 1.6% pay increase on Jan.1, 2021 for Conference employees.

**BOARD ORIENTATION:** Lowell Cooper provided an orientation on roles and responsibilities of effective Executive Board members.

**PERSONNEL: VOTED** to approve hiring Jonathan Mercill to pastor the Midnight Son (Kenai) and Homer church district.

**CLOSING PRAYER:** Danya Nicketa

## Old Days

*Continued from Page 12*

We must be brave in this New World. Everything is changing. But just how to be brave, what does that mean?

If you have been spreading the Good News—The Gospel—before stepping into this New World, good for you! The change won't be hard. You've already committed yourself to the very commission that Jesus gave us!

"And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen." Matthew 28:18-20

It's comforting to know that we will not be alone as we step into the future. We just need to remember that God will be with us every step of the way.

Ellen White wrote, *In the great closing work we shall meet with perplexities that we know not how to deal with, but let us not forget that the three great Powers of heaven are working, that a divine hand is on the wheel, and that God will bring His purposes to pass.*

—Evangelism, p. 65 (1902).

Let's not forget that it is God who has led us in the past and it is God who will lead us in the future. Turn your eyes upon Jesus!

## REMOTE SABBATH SCHOOL

1.800.719.6100 Access Code 4760107

Sabbath Mornings at 9:30 a.m.





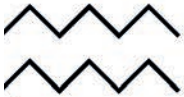
# Alyeskan

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