



WHAT IS ARCTIC MISSION ADVENTURE?

Kenneth Crawford, Conference President

Arctic Mission Adventure (AMA) is a unique ministry designed to take the last message of love to the villages of the last frontier.

A Little History

The work of the Seventh-day Adventist church was started in the arctic by dedicated public school teachers and continued by the leadership of student missionaries. From the late 1930s through the early 1980s, the work in the Arctic was vibrant and growing. The status of the Alaska Mission allowed us to retain enough funds to underwrite a growing ministry through many of the villages in the Arctic.

In the mid-1980s, Alaska was changed from Mission to Conference status and funds dried up. For the past 30 years, a number of Arctic churches and parsonages have sat virtually empty with little effort toward evangelism of the indigenous people.

Our Dream

There are 230 native villages in the state of Alaska; most of them are only accessible by remote air service. Over the last seven years we have been able to re-establish our work in a few of these villages, but have a dream to build the work in the remaining villages through localized training and developing ongoing leadership in the Arctic. We are endeavoring to do this through placing self-supporting couples in villages where we already have a presence.

To Date

Ten of our churches have active missionaries in them that are taking the gospel to the native population.

In addition, we've been able to place low-power FM stations in a number of different villages that have experienced a warm reception with the people.

However, we still have 220 un-entered villages that need the love of Jesus and the Three Angels message.

How AMA Works

Dedicated, self-supporting missionaries contribute two to three years of their lives to work in Alaska villages. AMA provides a place to live, utilities, and transportation. Through fundraising, volunteers raise money for living expenses and ministry. To date, our volunteers have been



very successful in re-establishing centers of evangelism in each village.

Village Evangelism

We have a vast area to cover if we are going to establish new centers in the remaining villages through Bible Study contacts and personal evangelism. We have a bold plan!

Step 1: Cover every home in all of the rural towns and villages with an invitation to study the Bible. We are sending out Discover Bible School cards, Native New Day lessons and/or Kid's Zone lessons. The goal is to establish at least one or two families in each village that will be a contact point for ministry there. The initial mailing will cost more than \$66,000, but we are stepping out in faith and partnering with Voice of Prophecy to accomplish this.

Step 2: Place a low power FM radio station in each newly entered area where we have an established contact. Although only recently implemented, this plan has been very successful to date here in Alaska.

These stations require no license from the government and reach out about one mile in distance which easily covers most villages. Already established stations in remote villages have been gladly received. We currently have about 12 low power FM radio stations in different communities.

Step 3: Start a small group meeting place in these villages where people can study together.

Step 4: Place a missionary in these villages to evangelize and continue to grow the small groups into a local church.

Please continue to pray for the Lord's hand to move in the Arctic.

WHAT ARE WE DOING HERE?

Warren Downs, Recent Selawik AMA Volunteer

Reflecting on what we have accomplished here in Selawik, I decided to review the pictures we have taken over the months and share some with you.

The Story In Pictures



Selawik Fires

I helped fight three fires last year; two house fires and the Friends (Quaker) church fire. Unfortunately, all three structures were burned to the ground, and one of the house fires resulted in a death.



Selawik Youth

I believe we had 15 kids in our house this day, packed into our 10 x10 living room. We decided we needed a more structured way to share Jesus with the kids, and something we could do on days other than Sabbath.



Newly Inducted Adventurers



Adventurer Leader Verity Downs

We settled on starting an Adventurers' Club and added Pathfinders a few weeks later. The picture on the right shows Verity Downs leading out in making candles from old crayons. However, we ended up having some of the same kids attend both club meetings.

What The Pictures Don't Tell

As I reflect on these pictures, I realize that there are many stories that the pictures don't tell. They don't reveal the many new adult friendships we began. They don't show the Bibles, Steps to Jesus, and other sharing books we gave away. They don't tell about the people who have begun to find Jesus as their friend. One young man in particular decided to stop drinking and smoking, and has kept his promise even against peer pressure. He has begun reading the Bible and enjoys sharing Steps to Jesus with his mom.

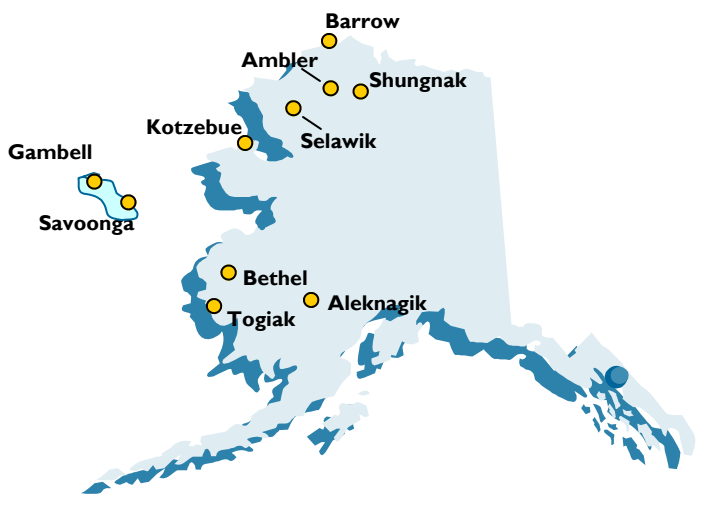
Pray that the Lord of the harvest will **throw** workers into His vineyard!

AMA TARGET VILLAGES

The AMA initiative encompasses ten villages in Alaska: Aleknagik, Ambler, Barrow, Bethel, Gambell, Kotzebue, Savoonga, Selawik, Shungnak and Togiak. God has led individuals to serve in the communities of Bethel, Savoonga, Shungnak and Togiak, but there is so much more work to be done!

With over 230 villages throughout Alaska, the need is great. Wouldn't it be a blessing to have an AMA volunteer and radio station in every village!

To learn about AMA volunteer opportunities, visit www.alaskaconference.org. For information on village life, visit http://www.commerce.state.ak.us/dca/commdb/CF_BLOCK.htm



MEET OUR AMA VOLUNTEERS!

Want to meet some of the AMA missionaries at work now?

Mike & Fran Hansen

Mike and Fran Hansen live in Gambell, an Eskimo village on the northern coast of St. Lawrence Island in the Bering Sea, 38 miles from the coast of Siberia. The island has been inhabited for more than 2,000 years by Siberian Yup'ik Eskimos. Around the



Fran & Mike Hansen

end of the 19th Century, the island had a native population of more than 15,000 Eskimos. After whalers arrived, alcohol and disease reduced the village to less than 300.

President Roosevelt established a reindeer reservation in Gambell in 1903. A reindeer camp was established at the village site of Savoonga and by 1917 the herd had grown to over 10,000 animals. Savoonga is known as the "Walrus Capitol of the World." Walrus, whale, seal, and reindeer comprise 80 percent of the islanders' diets. Over 96 percent of the population of St. Lawrence



Gambell Church Interior

Island are Alaska natives. Because of its isolation, Gambell and Savoonga have been able, in many ways, to maintain their traditional Siberian Yup'ik Eskimo culture.

Mike and Fran have dedicated their retirement to making a difference in Gambell. Their specialty is suicide prevention in teenagers by working with the children in the village.

Tony and Aerin Sherman

Tony and Aerin Sherman are newlyweds that recently moved to work in the village of Shungnak. This beautiful village lies on the banks of the Kobuk River in the Brooks Range. The name of the village is derived from an Eskimo word which means jade, a stone found extensively throughout the surrounding hills. Shungnak residents rely on fishing, hunting and trapping, and have a strong arts and crafts industry producing baskets, masks, mukluks, parkas, mittens, etc.



Tony & Aerin Sherman

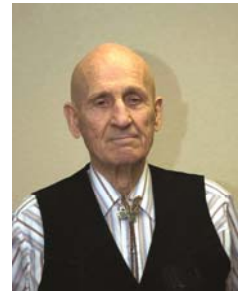
The church and parsonage in Shungnak has been empty for about 30 years and the Shermans moved there to re-establish the work. The parsonage is a one room cabin that is 16 ft by 16 sq. ft. The floor was falling out so Tony crawled underneath and braced it enough to be able to live in. They have been working to make it livable with a wood stove and some other comforts. Our plan is to raise \$130,000 to build a new parsonage for them in 2013 next to the church. They now have a snow machine and a sled so they can haul wood. Tony and Aerin are making friends in the village and plan to stay there for several years to evangelize the area.



Shungnak Church

Dan Rothhoff

Togiak is located at the head of Togiak Bay on the Bering Sea. It is within the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge and is the gateway to the Walrus Island Game Sanctuary. Togiak is a traditional Eskimo village which relies on commercial salmon and herring fishing. Scheduled and charter flights are available from Dillingham.



Dan Rothhoff

Dan Rothhoff is an octogenarian, former wrangler, guide, pilot and now a front line AMA Missionary. About five years ago, the Alaska Conference stepped out in faith when someone offered to donate the money to build a new church and parsonage in this village. The conference responded and ordered the materials. The materials cost over \$60,000 and the shipping was even more! Shortly after the materials arrived, the donor found that he was unable to meet the donation obligation.



Newly Renovated Togiak Church

The conference voted to ask Maranatha to come and proceed on faith anyway. Then as the work progressed and we started praying for a worker, God sent us a most unlikely one in Dan. Yet Dan has made remarkable inroads into the village since his move there three years ago. The Sabbath School and church services have grown and Dan has a number of Bible studies in the village. He has organized the church, acquired a church van and established a full satellite 3ABN television station in sharing the message in this remote village.

ARCTIC MISSION ADVENTURE: Are You Up For A Challenge?

- **The Goal:** To fulfill the commission of Jesus Christ to make disciples of **all** nations, teaching them to observe all that Jesus taught.

- **An Extended Stay:** In any mission field in the world, the greatest success has occurred when indigenous people have been trained and empowered to live the gospel and lead their own people. In some cases, it has taken several generations to reach this milestone. It may require a commitment to live in a particular native community for an extended period of time by those individuals suited to do so.

- **Meeting Them Where They Are:** Missionaries have tended to superimpose North American Adventism upon whatever culture they encounter. This may lead to long-term impediments to the spread of the gospel. For example, native people of Alaska generally follow a subsistence lifestyle when available which means that they have a high intake of animal-based foods in season. If an Alaska native was to suddenly adopt a vegan or vegetarian dietary program, it would cause malnourishment at the least and possibly serious harm. But if taught by example and incremental steps were taken toward a more healthy lifestyle, much good can be accomplished.



- **Training In Leadership:** The nature of life in the Alaskan villages more closely parallels that of third-world developing countries than any other paradigm. Because Alaska is part of the United States, there are social safety nets present which do not exist in many foreign countries. In the Arctic, unemployment is high (close to 90%) and many survive on the benefits of food stamps, energy grants, housing assistance, and other forms of government support. It is wonderful that these programs exist, however a social barrier to self-dependence and indigenous leadership pursuit is erected. The church must overcome these obstacles in its quest to encourage self-reliance and the development of spiritual gifts within the native community. A fine line exists between cross-cultural leadership, which is committed to developing local leadership, and just creating dependence in their lives.

- **Job Description:** No matter what your training, when you arrive in the village to provide spiritual leadership and discipleship you will be viewed as the pastoral team for the church. This is as it should be. The villagers need to be aware that you are primarily supported by your local employment or distant donors rather than a consistent stream of funds from the Alaska Conference.

- **Our Challenge To You:** Do you have a spirit of adventure? Do you have a heart of service for helping hurting young people? Are you self-motivated? Do you long to make a real difference? Are you open to living in a native culture in Alaska? Arctic villages have a suicide rate among teenagers that is 400% higher than the U.S. national average. We plan to make a difference. Would you like to help as well? Go to www.alaskaconference.org for more information and ways you can support AMA.



Our Mission

Our Lord commissioned His people to make disciples of all nations. Arctic Mission Adventure has been designed to help implement that discipling, especially of Alaska native peoples of Northern and Northwestern Alaska.

Our Goal

To see the Seventh-day Adventist Church in villages such as Ambler, Bethel, Gambell, Savoonga, Selawik, Shungnak and Togiak grow into dynamic, vibrant spiritual centers is our goal. Most of these villages have an Adventist church and parsonage and our goal is to have each one filled with enthusiastic worshippers and workers.