

Alaskan Golden Nugget News

Community of Christ

October - December 2009

Thoughts to Consider...

by Willa Frey

What a beautiful Fall we've had! One followed by a sparkling, lovely December. The trees are all covered in frost and radiate their own special beauty! I thanked God daily for the experience, it was fantastic! I couldn't help but wonder how many other blessings all around me that I haven't noticed but have just taken for granted? I have noticed that some people see

and need and just automatically respond. Many times it is just a natural response that some people do. My husband, Al, was like that. I noticed the glow of satisfaction he expressed when he did something for someone – something they didn't expect. You, too, can feel that glow! Try it!

NEWS FROM AROUND ALASKA

KALTAG NEWS by Dave & Karen Ward

We just received great news! Dave and I are going to be grandparents next summer. Our son, Joel, and his wife, Jenni will be the new parents! Joel is in his third year of med school on rotation while Jenni works for Kansas City CSI. So we will be home in Independence happily awaiting the blessed event! Being in a new school is sure nice except for the noise of the builders working on the new gym to finish it by January.

The snow has opened the world up here for the village by being able to get around on snowmachines. It has stayed in the 20's so it's not real cold yet. Boats have been out of the water for awhile with ice floating on the Kuskokwim. Some people have been sick but we haven't seem a problem yet. We have had very good attendance.

Love in Christ, Karen & Dave

Word has come that Dave was called home by the death of his mother. Please accept our condolences, Dave. He had an eye appointment so stayed for a short while in Anchorage before returning home. Hope everything is O.K. Dave

VALLEY NEWS by Carole Coppick

Dwight and a friend went on a moose hunting trip into the interior. They met many interesting people, got two moose. One they sent back to Fairbanks by air for processing. The other, they gave part of it away, carried what they could on the small boat and his friend took part of it home with him. They had a wonderful time even with wet, cold feet! Carole spent the week in Fairbanks helping with the stores here and visiting the Frey's. Later we returned to Fairbanks and were there at Al Frey's passing. We came back a week later for the Memorial Service then had to drive home through a terrible storm with white out conditions. We made it safely.

We had a very good class on Caring Ministry (Temple School). I have great hopes for our congregation and am so glad we have these Priesthood calls. We really believe they enrich our congregation.

Neil & Ellen Long are returning to Wasilla to live. We are happy to have them back!

DELTA JCT NEWS by Cheryl Cooper

Hi Folks! We have been traveling a lot this summer and teaching classes. Recently we have been busy gathering our harvest and preparing for winter. God bless you all!!

FAIRBANKS NEWS by Willa and Sandy

In August, it was final and our church building was sold. We now meet on Tuesday evenings at the home of Chris Steinel, at 6:30 for supper of baked potatoes, etc and a discussion class. Currently we are studying "Soul Feast" by Marjorie J. Thompson. It is thought provoking. We have a Communion service on the first Sunday of the month and Priest Cheryl Davis has been in charge. It has been held at several different homes.

Every two weeks, we have been meeting on Sunday evening to work on Community Outreach projects. It seems everything came together around the same time this year.

We made 120 tied fleece blankets that were given to various organizations in the community. The last Sunday before Christmas, we met to finish up the last blankets and sewed on labels which said, Made for you with Tender Loving Care by Community of Christ. We then sorted the huge mounds of blankets, put them in tubs and assigned delivery so everyone could take part in the experience of giving. It's always a blessing to be able to share in this way.

We also sent 30 blankets out to Kotzebue on the northwestern coast of Alaska for children coming into foster care from outlying villages.

Through a local organization, LOVE, INC (In the Name of Christ) we adopted a family for Christmas and provided them with toys, clothes, and food among other things. A few of us were able to deliver these a few days before Christmas. Seeing the tears and joys in this grandmother's eyes, and profound appreciation that people who did not

know them would care for them in this way, was a very humbling experience.

Several members and friends gathered at Hunter Elementary School to participate in family craft night. This is one of the more challenged areas in our community and we wanted to work on building a relationship. We worked on a simple craft, making a fleece gator that the children could tie themselves, and prepared all the supplies in advance. It was an adventurous evening and those of us adults who have not been in school for some time, were able to experience a couple of fire drills as the popcorn popper kept setting off the fire alarm! It was a little nippy, but the attendance at our table jumped after the first experience. Each of us worked with a child, one-on-one, showing them how to tie and just visiting. The parents and teachers and everyone else was so pleased and somewhat surprised that we had come to help in this way. We had many questions about our church and who we are. It was a wonderful expression of mission in our community. We started out with 115 pieces of material and ended up with two which we tied and donated to the kindergarten class to use when someone came in without warm clothing.

The Meath family was active in various musical, school, and other miscellaneous activities, including Breanne performing in the Lathrop HS production of High School Musical and doing a fantastic job! Several of us were able to see Trystan perform in the Northland Children's Choir's Christmas concert.

Else O'Brien took a trip to Arizona for some sunshine (no cold!) and enjoyed herself. She was also able to stop and visit with daughter Kim in Washington (not quite so warm) before she returned. We're glad she had a good time, but we always miss her and are happy when she returns.

Fairbanks News Continued

Bonnie & Dave Varguson went to visit daughter Shanna following surgery for cancer on Dave's leg. He is doing well and has recently returned to work. He has been blessed. He's looking forward to next summer when he can return to some of the activities he wasn't able to get to this year.

Willa Frey took time off for a quick three day trip to Anchorage to visit with brother, Lynn Langfield. He was transferred to a Veteran's care facility in Oregon where he passed away on Dec. 4th.

Just after arriving back home, Willa was awakened by Al having what turned out to be heart pains. He was taken to the hospital and put on heavy duty antibiotics to clear up an infection of his aortic valve. His health went down from there and he passed away on Nov. 20th from a heart attack. We were all quite saddened by his passing.

Since we had recently sold our church building, the United Methodist congregation was gracious enough to let us hold Al's memorial service in their building. Al and Willa had served on the Tanana Christian Conference with the Methodist Pastor for several years.

Several family members traveled to Fairbanks to share in the service including: Clyde Frey and Nate Phillips from Buffalo, Amanda Laws and Aaron Frey from Independence, Shanna Nelson from Phoenix, Jennifer Ford from Eagle River, and Janet and Paul Landry and Jenny Morris from Anchorage.

We had a wonderful service of celebration that Al would have been proud of. There was a wonderful turnout from the community that showed just how many lives he had touched.

Sandy returned to Eagle River with Jennifer to celebrate Sara's 10th birthday and Clyde and Nate stayed to visit with Willa for a week.

Jennifer Ford and the girls came up to visit the week before Christmas and brought their new puppies with them. They were able to help us finish the blankets and help with the deliveries. Christmas Eve Sandy, Willa and Penny all traveled back to Eagle River with them to spend Christmas with the Ford family where they were later joined by Alana. We all had a wonderful Christmas and a great visit. While there, we were also able to visit with Connie and Bob Merrill and daughter Lori. It was good to see everyone again and hope it's not so long next time!

During this time, Sandy resigned from her job at the library and has accepted the position of Animal Control Manager. (I know this brings to mind many quips from those of you who know Sandy, but....) She's been working at both positions since the beginning of August and is hoping they fill her position at the library soon!

Chris and Kate have made several trips to Anchorage to visit with family and have had family up to visit them quite a bit also. It's amazing how babies bring you all together. I know we've all been happy to be "substitute" grandmothers, but there's nothing quite like the real thing.

Jennie, Eric, Reyna, and Wyatt Vargason are looking forward to welcoming their newest member of the family any day now. We're looking forward to meeting Elizabeth and know she'll be a blessed addition to the family.

Liz and Perrin Tatum were excited to welcome daughter Aarika as was grandma Cheryl. She was able to take a couple of weeks to share the holidays with the new baby and son Tom's family in North Carolina. While everyone else was bundled up, she enjoyed the temperate (compared to home) climate. We were happy to see her return and in our midst again.

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