

## **Alaska Circuit**

Alaska Circuit Update – 3/22

### **Fairbanks, Light of the World—Jason Strong, CP**

- Worship attendance has been up significantly over the past month (about a 10 person/week increase from the beginning of the year). It's been a combination of a few members returning, as well as a few repeat prospects (4 of whom began BIC a few weeks ago). We're continuing to work on improving our prospect management.
- Playground equipment is purchased and looking at delivery in July. Now we're assessing a couple of options for where to put up the equipment, as well as making final plans for ground prep and any further funding.
- Our live-streaming plan is working through a couple of internet issues, but equipment is being purchased and we're looking at setting up as soon as we can work through those problems.
- Mornings with Mommy continues to do well, and we are in discussions of how to add a second session (potentially another day in the same week). That will only be able to happen if we can get more members involved, so please keep those efforts in your prayers!
- We are planning a larger outreach event (a family day) for this summer. We're hopeful that we'd be able to get a WELS Mission Journey team to come up for that (have reached out to Shannon Bohme but haven't heard back yet).
- Our leaders have been talking recently about how to better keep our vision in front of our members. The goal right now is to develop visual materials for our core values to post around church. We've also come up with an acronym to better remember our core values - Cross-SIGHTED.

### **Wasilla, King of Kings—VACANT, vacancy Pastor Nathan Wagenknecht (ANC team)**

- Another circuit meeting, another returned Call. Ben Reichel returned his Call on Friday. They will extend one more call this Sunday, April 3.
- Six youth have started Catechism class
- Church council is calling through membership list to see how everyone is doing and ask intentions of those who have not attended for a while.
- Inreach/Outreach team is planning "First Sunday" activities for both fellowship and outreach
- Original parsonage remodel is complete. A few additional touch-ups are still being finished.

### **Eagle River, Peace—Matt Proeber**

- Been seeing a few more faces in worship as of late! Some are Peace members that we haven't seen in a while. Some are new visitors who came in response to an invite from a friend... almost like friendship evangelism works!
- Currently have 2 BIC classes going. One is about to finish; another to begin shortly after Easter.

- Been meeting with some architects about the possibility of expansion at Peace. It would specifically revolve around our need for more PreK space. Our hope is that we can add an additional classroom and connect more kids/families to Christ. This means our front wall renovation is currently on pause. Also, inflation is insane, and we don't feel comfortable kicking 50k towards a front wall only to have to move it if expansion would deem it necessary.
- PreK Art Walk coming up next week. We use this as a chance for our kids to teach about the events of Holy Week and also to invite families to services.
- Going to utilize the Passion Service on Palm Sunday for 2 reasons: 1) our midweek Lent attendance hasn't been all that great, 2) hoping for a healthy baby around that time which will mean a councilman leading the service. Prayers would definitely be appreciated for both!
- Had some good fellowship opportunities at Peace lately: Bunco game night & Minute to Win it teen event. Hopeful for more in the future.
- Art Camp from July 13-15 will feature a team from MLC. Peace's Parking Lot Party to follow on that Sunday. Hoping for some taco trucks and outdoor games.

**Anchorage, Faith—Chris Ewings, Nathan Wagenknecht, Pao Mua, Hmong** (school closing)

- Faith participated in Anchorage's Fur Rondy parade and handed out 700 water bottles with information about our ministry inside to the crowds of people lining the streets.
- Our midweek Lenten services have been well received. Some weeks, our midweek attendance has almost matched Sunday English services! We've been blessed by the virtual pulpit swap.
- During the season of Lent, we are offering midweek worship services into the homes of members, friends and prospects of Iglesia Luterana de Fe en Cristo. These services have been and continue to be a way to encourage my congregation in their devotional life, strengthening and edifying their faith. They have also been an opportunity to reach out to some new folks who are the friends and family of our members.
- We had a lock-in for our youth on March 4-5 featuring God's Word and an escape room.
- Faith applied for a vicar again in 2022-2023.
- We continue to have one modern Christian worship service each month. We've had 3 services where we've used live music.
- We're looking to have a Seder meal in lieu of our traditional Maundy Thursday worship service this year.
- We're planning an Easter for Families event on April 9 to connect our preschool and church ministries.
- We've had 3 adult confirmations so far in 2022.

**Faith Hmong, Anchorage**

- March, we held our 2nd Family paint night. Had a great time with families

- For the last 7 Sundays we had different men read our scripture reading during service. This was a great experience for the men. Hoping this will lead them to build up confidence and continue to use their gift to serve the congregation.
- As we started the year, outreach and offering has been more of our focus this year. We haven't seen many results for new visitors but for the last three months, we have gotten really close to meeting our monthly goals for offering. We give thanks to the Lord for moving hearts to give more generously.
- Attendance has been pretty steady with the regular attending. We continue to call, encourage, text, and message members who hasn't been in service for a while. Hoping these efforts will result in our members making time to come back to church.
- Had two baptism this past Sunday.

#### **Anchorage, Shepherd of the Hills—Fred Voss**

- Season of Lent has been going well. Attendance on Wednesday evenings has been more than I think ever here at Shepherd. Also our pre-Lenten potlucks have been well received.
- Sunday attendance has been surging to pre-covid levels also. We are planning Maundy Thursday and Good Friday worship services and two services on Easter morning followed by a brunch.
- Currently three children in Confirmation class and some prospects in the wings.
- Recent visit to Kodiak was very good. We will be sending two families to the lower 48 during this yearly rotation in the Coast Guard. We will miss them! I did have the opportunity to teach on the Coast Guard base for Monday and Tuesday an ASIST Class (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) plus spending some time with our folks out there with a potluck and worship on Monday night. Bible studies have been focused on the Psalms with the theme of "A Psalm for Any Occasion". Chaplain opportunities continue.

#### **Kenai, Grace—Ben Phelps**

- Continue to be blessed with a rigorous BIC schedule. Hopefully will be able to "harvest" some of these prospects and bring them into the Grace family.
  - Having talks with parents about baptism for 5-7 kids total. SDG
  - 9 separate BIC sessions (some stop and go). (12 individuals including 3 members)
- On the flip side we are looking at losing about 10% of members this year due to plans to move to the lower 48.
- Still have about 10% of members not returning to pre-COVID levels of participation.
- School connection Sunday continues to have good turnout once a month. Yesterday our guest to member ratio was 4:5!
- School enrollment stands at 77 for next year (goal of 90 minimum)
- Soccer camp June 20-23. 6 MLC volunteers. Will likely fill most of the open PreK slots this way

**Juneau, Christ (Sitka) —Cale Mead**

- Started a pre-k viability study. Looking promising so far. Shooting for fall 2023
- DP Steinbrenner preached for me Feb 13. Carrie came with him to help host a meeting after worship to begin pre-k discussion
- Starting a REACH committee to guide and focus our outreach efforts ahead of opening a preschool
- Time4Tots first session is done and the second session is starting in April with 2 mornings available a week. Only 6 spots open between the two days
- Welcomed a new member yesterday. Have a couple in BIC and another prospect in the hopper
- Some of our Connect Groups are limping...but praying to get a men's group going next week (starting with a devotion and day at the range)
- We're standardizing the tools and materials we give members to invite friends and keep the community in the loop
- Giving Passion Sunday a whirl this year in lieu of traditional Palm Sunday
- Confirmation is May 15 (same day baby Mead #3 is due). Have 3 confirmands this year
- Outdoor Worship/Crab Boil is June 26. Great time and opportunity to invite friends