

## Harvesting Laborers

*Kevin Miller, President*



*Kevin Miller*

After the recruiter shook my hand in congratulations for joining the U.S. Army, he sent me off to basic training. This was the place and program that trained me in what the Army was about and gave me the assurance that I had a place in its mission. I spent eight weeks learning how to be a soldier and another three months learning what constitutes a helicopter mechanic in that context. I did everything from running miles (and miles) to learning the difference between wrenches and rotor blades. It was an exciting and sometimes overwhelming time. The Army trained me for my role in its mission.

Reflecting on this experience reminds me of Jesus talking to His disciples in Matthew 9:37, 38: “The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore, pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.” I used to think that this meant we needed more outside help. As I pastored, I would pray to the Lord to send me more laborers because we just didn’t have enough people or enough who wanted to harvest. The verses just prior to these describe Jesus ministering to the people in their cities and villages where He was moved with compassion and taught them the grace of God and healed their sick. He knew that people would respond to His love as He poured it into their lives and hearts. As He ministered, He wanted His disciples

ministering with Him to experience His love from the giving end.

While reading this passage one day and praying the usual prayer of adding more outside help, the Lord told me to read on. Matthew 10:1 reads, “And when He had called His twelve disciples to Him, He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of disease” (emphasis added). Essentially what Jesus did was take what He had to work with and turned them into the harvesters He had been praying for. Jesus was saying, “Pastor, you have harvesters. Give them the training and tools to get out in the harvest field; then I will give you more laborers.”

This came home to me in the experience of an elder in my church. He was a lifelong member and carried great influence both within and outside of the church. However, he had never experienced leading someone to Jesus. In the process of his work, a fellow employee began asking him about his faith. These questions resulted in his first Bible study. As you might imagine, he was nervous and afraid he might do something wrong. He came to me for advice and I must admit the training was very basic, but we both learned together. The fellow worker and spouse were eventually baptized and the elder has now done his own evangelistic series and can train others in doing Bible studies. He now leads others out in the harvest adventure.

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## Answering His Call

Quentin Purvis, Vice President of Administration

### *What is discipleship and what is Jesus calling us to in Matthew 28:18-20?*

**D**iscipleship is modeling and teaching men and women the precepts of the Bible, prayer and serving the community. Evangelism is important because it reveals to us what is to take place on this earth before we enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but discipleship should take place first. A disciple is one who grows in Jesus and models Jesus' love. One of the fundamental beliefs of the Adventist Church states: "By His death on the cross Jesus triumphed over the forces of evil. He who subjugated the demonic spirits during His earthly ministry has broken their power and made certain their ultimate doom. Jesus' victory gives us victory over the evil forces that still seek to control us, as we walk with Him in peace, joy, and assurance of His love. Now the Holy Spirit dwells within us and empowers us. Continually committed to Jesus as our Saviour and Lord, we are set free from the burden of our past deeds. No longer do we live in the darkness, fear of evil powers, ignorance, and meaninglessness of our former way of life. In this new freedom in Jesus, we are called to grow into the likeness of His character, communing with Him daily in prayer, feeding on His Word, meditating on it and on His providence, singing His praises, gathering together for worship, and participating in the mission of the Church. We are also called to follow Christ's example by compassionately ministering to the physical, mental, social, emotional, and spiritual needs of humanity. As we give ourselves in loving service to those around us and in witnessing to His salvation, His constant presence with us

through the Spirit transforms every moment and every task into a spiritual experience."

Once a person realizes the love of Jesus and wants to emulate a life with Him and become a partner in reaching their community with the gospel, then evangelism takes them to a deeper understanding of the Great Controversy. A call is extended to you and I and a response is required! You have been given a precious and wondrous call without irresistible pressure—will you follow Jesus?

### *Our Response Is Our Discipleship In Action*

What is the cost of discipleship? It costs everything! However, the rewards are limitless as we are entrusted to a Savior who loves us more deeply and rewards us more completely than anything our minds could comprehend. He desires the best for us; "For I know the plans that I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and hope." Jer. 29:11

Our response to Christ should be obedience to his Word. Obedience is the fuel that puts God's Will into action! It is submitting to what God requires us to do, and is an aspect of our faith that comes from our surrender and compliance to His Will. It is the willingness to cooperate with God and with others in their godly direction and plans. Obedience is not a hammer over our heads, but a tool to understand the Gospel in its fullness. Men and women are assaulted all week from the evil one throwing darts at them. The church should be a place where the fruits of the spirit are modeled through prayer, Bible study and service. This is what we call discipleship. This must take place before evangelism will reap a harvest that will stay in the church.



Quentin Purvis

“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.” Matt 28:18-20

AMEN

# God Will Make A Way

Jim Jensen, Vice President of Finance

You are probably getting tired of hearing that conference tithe is lagging behind last year. The short version is that like-dollar tithe is down about six percent.

Personally it has been a very difficult year. As I write this, I am going to bury my parents as they passed away three days apart. As we are going through the various stories and trying to compress nearly 90 years into a few representative stories, I am reminded that our family has relied upon God's promises and He has always made a way for us.

Dad and Mom were very careful planners. But sometimes, even when we do our best, life brings us surprises. When I was about ten, Mom and Dad moved to a new city and new job and bought their first home. The closing expenses on the house were more than what was expected. They even borrowed from my sister and my savings and piggy banks. But at one point, Dad told us that there just wasn't going to be enough money to get any more groceries until the next pay day. In the new house was a stone fireplace and in the mortar between the rocks, the kids that had lived in the home before us had put coins in places where the mortar was coming out. I was playing in the living room when I noticed that and started digging them out. We found about two dollars and Dad immediately said it was God's way of taking care of us. We went to a dairy drive-through next to the farm and bought eggs and milk that took care of us until the next pay day.

My grandfather was a farmer and the story is told of his being one of the first in the area to divert water from both wells and the river to irrigate the farm. I have always been fascinated with new farming techniques. A few of my favorites are Israeli strawberry farmers who, lacking space, started planting their strawberries in pole towers that would be 10-15 feet high rather than across at ground level. When we lived in Colorado and working on rural internet access in some of the churches, the company sent me to one of the farmers on the eastern plains. In his

cab with Satellite Internet, he received up-to-the-minute information on what part of his fields needed fertilizer, water and pest control. At the same time, he would watch futures being bought and sold on a variety of crops. Most recently I came across a *National Geographic* article about how the small country of the Netherlands has become the second largest dollar volume exporter of food after the United States, largely through growing crops year-round in greenhouses.

I do not know what direction we as a conference should take as we look toward the future, but I know that God will provide the resources that are needed either financially or through helping us use new methods and technology. He has also promised that the best is yet to come!

“Behold, I will do something new, Now it will spring forth; Will you not be aware of it? I will even make a roadway in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.”

Isaiah 43:19



Jim Jensen

In 2018, the conference will launch monthly e-mail communiques with happenings around Alaska, a message from the president and information on the national Adventist scene, but we need your help!

Send church, school and ministry event information to the conference **the month prior** to your event and we will include it in the *Adventists Around Alaska* email the first of each month (and promote it on our website and Facebook page closer to the event).

If you would like to receive email communiques, send us your email and we will add you to the list. Event information, email addresses and ideas on how the conference can improve communication can be sent to [alaskainfo@ac.npuc.org](mailto:alaskainfo@ac.npuc.org).

## Competing Commitments

Tobin Dodge, Youth-Young Adult & AMA Director

It is common to speak about discipleship in Christian circles. It often stems from Jesus' example and model of leadership read from the pages of the Gospels. A popular text example is Luke 9: 23, "And He (Jesus) said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." Believers typically have a general idea, certain stereotypes and/or basic expectations to fit the ideas of what this looks like. But what does it look like in Alaska? In our towns and villages? Do we know how to "FOLLOW JESUS in our context?" Or more messier yet, do we know how to engage people in such a way to evoke an answer to this call for themselves?

The apostle Paul was a proficient evangelist, pastor and theologian. Often believers cite his work and theological position as examples of proper methods of practice in the church. Yet one area he failed in is a great lesson of discipleship we can't afford to overlook.

Acts 14 and 15 are replete with stories of Paul and Barnabas wayfaring many miles together as ambassadors for the cause of Christ. However, at the end of chapter 15, Paul says, "Let's go back and visit each city where we previously preached the word of the Lord, to see how the new believers are doing." And though Barnabas heartily agrees, he invites along a companion Paul disapproves of. Paul sharply disagreed with Barnabas over this young man who had been with them, but in Paul's words, "deserted them."

Two questions come to mind (probably a thousand more)...How do we deal with young people who don't measure up to our expectations? How do we deal with

sharp disagreements involving our youth? In complete transparency, these principles apply to all people, but for this article I am focusing on youth!

First, every emerging generation has been seen as aliens & strangers by the older generations even if 30 years later they act similar or repeat the history they were trying to reject. For example, millennials have been targeted as the newest generation to reek havoc on the culture, yet many of the gifts and talents they possess will help the church flourish, not flounder; thrive, not tank. However, it took Barnabas (meaning encourager) to defend, protect and give Mark a second chance. Who of you are the Barnabas of today? Who of you will stand to encourage and empower our youth and young adults to follow the clarion call of Christ to serve on His workforce? Even if they don't have it all figured out, even if they make mistakes, even if they have left the church. How are we, as the BODY OF CHRIST, reaching out to call youth and young adults to the life and service of Jesus?

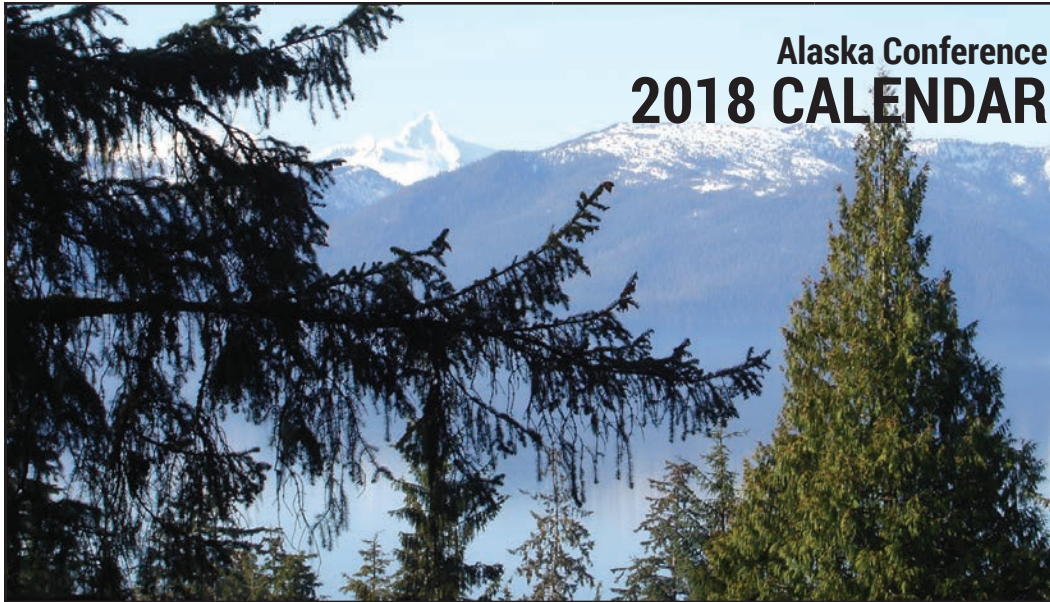
Secondly, and not surprisingly, disagreements among believers are not new or infrequent. But what makes Barnabas so radical is that he stands up against the leading church planter, the thought leader and one who had met Jesus personally on the road to Damascus. Barnabas was willing to risk his own ministry and reputation to defend and protect a young man who had made a bad choice, but was repentant and felt God could still use him in ministry. Paul was not willing to give him a second chance. But since Barnabas did, not only did Apostle Paul have to modify his opinion of Mark later, he had to validate the fact that Mark was a force to be reckoned with in

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Are you a Paul that has caused a young person to not be involved in church today? Maybe you are a Barnabas: the forever optimist, always encouraging, always looking for a young person to mentor and equip for Jesus.



Tobin Dodge



## Alaska Conference 2018 CALENDAR

WINTER	SPRING	SUMMER	FALL
<p>January 1 <i>Closed for New Years</i></p> <p>January 15 <i>Closed for MLK Jr Day</i></p> <p>January 25 <i>K-12 Board of Education</i></p> <p>January 26 <i>Arctic Mission Training</i></p> <p>January 27 &amp; 28 <i>Elders Training</i></p> <p>January 28 <i>Alaska Executive Committee</i></p> <p>February 1-4 <i>Pastors &amp; Teachers Meetings</i></p> <p>February 19 <i>Closed for Presidents Day</i></p> <p>February 23-25 <i>Nome Camp Meeting</i></p> <p>March 9-11 <i>Bristol Bay Camp Meeting</i></p> <p>March 23-25 <i>Bethel Camp Meeting</i></p>	<p>April 20-22 <i>Youth Prayer Conference (ages 13-18)</i></p> <p>May 31 <i>K-12 Board of Education</i></p> <p>May 25-27 <i>Pathfinder Camporee @ Pioneer Peak Camp (Palmer)</i></p> <p>May 28 <i>Closed for Memorial Day</i></p> <p>May 31 <i>K-12 Board of Education</i></p> <p>June 3 <i>Alaska Executive Committee</i></p> <p>June 15-17 <i>Interior Camp Meeting</i></p> <p>June 24-July 1 <i>Alaska Camps: Polaris*</i></p> <p><i>*Alaska Camps dates are subject to change</i></p>	<p>July 5-7 <i>Young Adult Retreat @ Camp Tuk (ages 18-35)</i></p> <p>July 8-15 <i>Alaska Camps: Tuk Juniors (ages 8-12)</i></p> <p>July 13-15 <i>Men's Retreat</i></p> <p>July 17-21 <i>Southcentral Camp Meeting (Palmer)</i></p> <p>July 22-29 <i>Alaska Camps: Tuk Teen xTreme (ages 13-16)</i></p> <p>July 23 <i>Closed for Camp Meeting deBrief</i></p> <p>August 3-5 <i>Southeast Camp Meeting (Young Adult focus)</i></p> <p>August 5-12 <i>Alaska Camps at Lorraine</i></p> <p>August 6-9 <i>NAD K-12 Teachers Convention (Chicago, IL)</i></p> <p>September 20 <i>K-12 Board of Education</i></p> <p>September 23 <i>Alaska Executive Committee</i></p>	<p>October 12-13 <i>Natives Ministries Workshop</i></p> <p>October 14 <i>Arctic Mission Adventure Board</i></p> <p>October 19-20 <i>Young Adult Convocation (ages 18-35)</i></p> <p>November 22-23 <i>Closed for Thanksgiving</i></p> <p>December 2 <i>Alaska Executive Committee</i></p> <p>December 24-28 <i>Closed for Christmas</i></p>

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Sabbath morning??



Present	Kevin Miller, Quentin Purvis, Jim Jensen, Steve Evenson, David King, Tau Siaki, Don West, Joe Chythlook, Ryan Woehler, Elsa Coronado, Warren Libby, Edmore Mangena
Absent	Alice Moncher, Steve Lewis
NPUC Representative	John Freedman, NPUC President
Guest	Tobin Dodge, Youth Director

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORTS

### President's Report

#### Camp Meeting

- Cabins were painted—ABC made a profit—meetings were well attended across all age groups. Our pastors did an incredible work during this time; Alaska Camps was a tremendous support.
- Learned some things:
  - Not so much Sabbath afternoon programming.
  - Auditorium floor needs to be replaced.
- Feedback has been very positive.

#### Arctic Mission Adventure (AMA):

- Native Workshop is coming up in October with an AMA board meeting on Sunday.
- Parsonage was rented at Shungnak to the public school for a teacher to live in during the winter.

#### Conference Health Insurance:

We are frustrated with their new plan and feel that it is not helpful to Alaska.

### Agenda (09-65)

**Voted** agenda with addition of a NPUC Report

### Trust Services Chuck Simpson

*It Is Written* is making a proposal to begin a trust service in Alaska at a rate of 15% to them. (Chuck Simpson believes that this is a very high percentage.)

### (09-66)

**Voted** to explore *It Is Written* as well as other options such as NPUC to be the trust manager in Alaska.

### Minutes (09-67)

**Approved** the June 11, 2017 ACEC Minutes— with deleting part of (06-57), "All expenditures in excess of \$10,000 would need to continue to be voted by the Executive Committee."

### (09-68)

**Approved** the June 11, 2017 Executive Session Minutes.

### (09-69)

**Approved** the June 28, 2017 Email Minutes.

### Membership Transfer (09-70)

**Voted** to transfer five members from the conference church.

### Treasurer's Report (09-71)

**Voted** to accept the August 2017 Financial Statement as presented, subject to audit.

## CONFERENCE REPORTS

### Camp Tuk Update

Jerilyn Burch gave a report of work that is being done at Camp Tuk. They are ahead of schedule mandated by the Executive Committee.

### (09-72)

**Voted** for conference to transfer the pontoon boat over to Camp Tuk Board.

### Juneau FYI

The City of Juneau is wanting to charge taxes on undeveloped land owned by the school. We are retaining counsel and have sent in an appeal.

### Alaska Camps

Camp Polaris attendance this year was 52. Alaska Camps is developing a three-year program for Lorraine, Polaris and Tuk.

### Youth/Young Adult

The vast majority of Seventh-day Adventist churches are both shrinking and aging as more senior, youth and young adults disengage. However, the Fuller Youth Institute,



Quentin Purvis



	<p>through their groundbreaking <i>Growing Young</i> project, has identified scores of congregations who are reversing this trend while developing cultures that welcome, empower, and engage seniors, youth and young adults effectively. <i>Growing Young</i> is a comprehensive year-long pilot to educate, inspire and resource a core of 12 local churches in the NPUC through the Fuller Youth Institute <i>Growing Young</i> Cohort, whereby preparing these churches to serve as mentoring churches for a NPUC Adventist Cohort in the fall of 2018.</p> <p>Alaska Conference will be sending representatives from Sitka and the Samoan churches to participate in this pilot project.</p>
NPUC Update	<p>The NPUC has three objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Youth: Bring our young people back to church by getting them involved. <i>Growing Young</i> is part of that plan.</li> <li>2. Spiritual goal will focus on discipleship. Personal experience of our membership.</li> <li>3. Total Member Involvement (TMI) General Conference initiative is to get all members in the church involved in winning souls for the Kingdom.</li> </ol>
Pastor Placement (09-70)	<b>Voted</b> enabling action to find pastors for North Pole and Delta Junction.
(09-71)	<b>Voted</b> to redistrict Korean/Bethel to Korean/Talkeetna.
Credentials (09-72)	<b>Voted</b> to give Don Lee a Commissioned Credential License
<b>MOVED INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION</b>	

## Harvesting Laborers

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As I've traveled around the conference, I have come across many laborers in the harvest and many more potential laborers. We have many people who are just waiting for the encouragement to minister. I believe that Christ's disciples really do want to get out in the harvest and Jesus will give His disciples what they need to successfully do it. I no longer pray for more outside laborers. Now I pray that the people we already have will enter into that harvest pouring out God's love to others because Jesus wants His disciples to know the joy of God's love in their lives as they minister to others.

## Competing Commitments

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the service of Jesus. Not to mention, the Gospel of Mark was written by this very young man whom Paul rejected.

Are you a Paul that has caused a young person to not be involved in church today? Maybe its time, depending on circumstances, to reach out and invite this person back, not just to the church, but to God's calling in service. Maybe it's time for the Pauls of the church to stand up and validate the young, who admittedly don't have it all together, but recognize that God still loves them and will use them.

Maybe you are a Barnabas: the forever optimist, always encouraging, always looking for a young person to mentor and equip for Jesus. Keep it up, but remember this is a special calling; not everyone is capable of sticking with it especially when they fail or fall short of expectations. But stand for them, love them and lead them.

No matter how you describe yourself, each of us need to find a young person to pray for and ask God's guidance as to how we can be a Barnabas.



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PSALM 145:18-19

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# Alyeskan

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## All Benchmarks Met!

*Jerilyn Burtch, Camp Tukuskoya Operating Board Chair*

**T**he Alaska Conference Constituency meeting on July 24, 2016 moved that: "The local churches in Anchorage and the Mat-Su Valley will take over the physical responsibility and upkeep of Camp Tukuskoya within two years, or the constituency will sell the property." This motion was accompanied by a two-year timeline, as follows:

- December 2016 Operating board
- April 2017 Operation plan
- May 2017 Bylaws & policies in place
- September 2017 Transfer of Physical Operation
- July 2018 Funding Plan, Conference subsidy only



After an organizational meeting on September 16, 2016, our board ratified its Constitution & Bylaws on October 11th. There are representatives from six churches—O'Malley, The Second Mile, Northside, Eagle River, Palmer and Wasilla. In February of 2018—with a rental policy, budget, bank account, and funding plan in place—our board voted to accept physical responsibility for Camp Tukuskoya. As suggested by the motion timeline, the budget relies on the conference for no more than their annual subsidy of \$11,000.

Before the one-year anniversary of the Constituency motion, we had logged over 1,500 hours of volunteer labor and raised over \$40,000 cash. In-kind donations are always welcome. Referencing our completion of all the benchmarks set by the Constituency, the Alaska Conference Executive Committee voted on June 11, 2017 to transfer physical responsibility for the Camp Tukuskoya facility to the Camp Tukuskoya Operating Board. We are scheduled to meet with conference administration and Pastor Tobin Dodge, Director of Alaska Camps, to draft written protocols delineating spheres of responsibility for the conference, Alaska Camps, and the Camp Tukuskoya Operating Board.

For more information on "Camp Tuk", visit [www.camptukuskoya.weebly.com](http://www.camptukuskoya.weebly.com) or email [AlaskaCampTuk@gmail.com](mailto:AlaskaCampTuk@gmail.com).