**2022 Alaska Annual Conference Report – By Nico Reijns (Conference Secretary) & Jim Doepken (Conference Communicator)**

The Alaska Annual Conference met, on their own and with their sibling conferences in the Greater Northwest Area, over three weeks in June 2022. Our Clergy Session for the Alaska Conference was June 2nd. Our Laity Session was a Greater Northwest Area event on June 14th. Then we met June 19th – 25th, 2022 on multiple days with our sibling conferences in The Greater Northwest Area. Many of our Alaskan clergy have their conference membership in the Oregon-Idaho and Pacific Northwest Annual Conferences and participated in the conference where their membership is held as well.

This report covers the key actions of the Alaska Annual Conference of June 20th and our Greater Northwest Area-Wide Closing Plenary and celebration on June 25th.

The year’s annual conference was primarily a virtual event, with churches participating from the land of the Inupiaq, Yupik, Tanana, Koyukon, Dena’ina, Tlingit, Alutiiq, Aleut, and other indigenous peoples across Alaska. An in-person head table gathered in Seattle with our presiding bishop, Bishop Elaine JW Stanovsky.

The theme for this year's gathering was "Called to be: Alert, Faithful, Brave, Love" and is based on 1 Corinthian 16:13-14: *"Keep alert, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love."* This theme formed a framework for our many worship and devotional times during our gathering.

Annual Conference 2022 was shaped, in part, by our eventual transition to a Mission District. As you may recall, the Alaska Conference petitioned the General Conference to dissolve our conference and has asked the Western Jurisdictional Conference to incorporate us into the Pacific Northwest as a Mission District. The delay of General Conference 2020 has pushed this transition back but has given our Mission District Task Force opportunity to do the deeper, harder work of finding new ways to work together, of trying to shed colonial values and expectations, and instead work together collaboratively and relationally.

Last year both the Alaska and PNW Annual Conferences affirmed living into the values this group has helped us identify: leveling imbalances, dismantling inequities, practicing healing and grace filled mission with others, emphasizing connectionalism, and working in decolonized ways.

At the invitation of the Pacific Northwest Conference, we nominated individuals to serve on PNW boards and agencies. We pray that they will be a blessing in the new shared work ahead.

The following are some of the major actions of the 2022 Alaska Annual Conference:

* We marked the transitions among our ranks. We said goodbye to several clergy. We welcomed in new clergy and celebrated the commissioning of new colleagues in new paths of ministry. We marked the passing of the Conference Superintendent’s role (and literal baton) from the Rev. Carlo Rapanut to the Rev. Christina Dowling-Soka.
* We passed a petition for General Conference indending to reform the itineracy to be a more consultative process.
* We passed a petition asking the Judicial Council for a declaratory decision about whether General Conference 2024 will have the same delegates that were elected to General Conference 2020 or whether new delegates will need to be elected.
* We passed a resolution on Gun Violence modeled on our *Book of Resolutions* that will be forwarded on to our congressional delegation and our governor.
* In our Greater Northwest Area session on June 25th, we affirmed a statement on reproductive rights, using much of the language in our Book of Resolutions.
* While the Alaska Conference 2020 delegation endorsed Rev. Carlo Rapanut as an Episcopal Candidate, we also lived into a new discernment process for the episcopacy as guided by Western Jurisdiction Leadership. Participants were invited to offer names of potential episcopal candidates to our Western Jurisdiction Episcopacy Committee for discernment either now or in the future.
* Our budget passed with an affirmation of 100% of the voting members.

With the changing of superintendents, the moving in and out of clergy, and our slow-moving process of becoming a Mission District, this is surely a time of transition for the Alaska Conference. It is fitting that, on Saturday, June 25th we marked another transition. We celebrated the upcoming retirement of Bishop Elaine Stanovsky and thanked her for her years of ministry for us and with us and to the larger church.

Next year is going to look very different when we gather once again.