



PARISH PROFILE (MARCH, 2009)

Prayer of This Profile

We humbly ask that God bless this profile as a true representation of our parish that will facilitate a successful end to our search for a full-time Rector. We thank God for the talents of all those at our Parish whose efforts have built our congregation, our church, and our identity. May God's love be known to all creation and may we ever-continue to be instruments in this. We pray in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, AMEN.

I: Our Stated Mission

To know Christ and make Him known; we will provide a pleasant, functional church facility for worship and activities; provide for a spiritual, faithful, pastoral leaders; and achieve sustained growth.

II: Who We Are

A congregation of historic, traditional Episcopalian Anglicans that worship together under guidance found in the Book of Common Prayer of 1979, and the Holy Scriptures. Our core beliefs are found in our common understanding of the Prayer Book and its Articles of Religion along with the belief that Holy Scripture contains all that is needed for life and living, which gives us an understanding of this world and the world to come. We are a parish that has held true to the spiritual leadership and ecclesiastical authority and oversight of the Episcopal Bishop of Alaska in spite of differences between The Episcopal Church (TEC) and the Anglican Communion.

The congregation is primarily comprised of families and retired persons having a general military, airline industry, and/or educational background and occupation. Most parishioners reside in the Eagle River and Chugiak areas north of Anchorage. We regard an ever-increasing number of children in our congregation as a great blessing and encouragement to us.

III: Our History

Holy Spirit has a rich history that began when the congregation was organized in January 1984 as a parochial congregation with Lay leadership and without fiscal assistance. Some 85 Eagle River Chugiak-Peters Creek residents, who were members of the four Anchorage Episcopal churches, were invited to join in the establishment of a mission church in Eagle River area. On Wednesday, January 4, 1984 at the home of Ed and Ginger Thielen 19 individuals met. Communion was celebrated by the Rev Mark Boesser followed by prayer for guidance and encouragement. A Bishops Committee was organized and the first formal service was held the following Sunday in the Frontier Mall at the Artist Piano store owned by Dyana and Robert Orrin, with twenty-eight present.

The first year we were served by a different priest every Sunday until the diocesan convention approved us as the Eagle River Mission. The Rev. Norman Nauska was selected by the congregation and installed by Bishop George Harris in December, 1984 as our first Vicar on a part time basis. Our average active membership grew to about 100 by the end of 1985.

From 1984 to 1991 we moved from mall to mall for various reasons. Making at least six moves during that period. In May 1991, we purchased and moved into the old Canyon Pet Clinic, 17545 North Eagle River Loop Road. Within a month after we moved into the new building our situation drastically changed when our new building caught fire. The fire was determined to be the result of arson. We were able to rebuild and used that facility for the next five years.

The Rev. Norman Nauska's service to Holy Spirit ended in 1992 and the Rev. Larry Spannegel began serving in a supply role. In 1993 the Rev. Greg Kimura was selected as our first Rector. In the spring of 1994 we obtained proposals from three contractors to design and construct an addition to our building. Work by both hired professionals and member volunteers began in September 1995 with major work beginning in April 1996.

By November 1996 the contractor's work on addition to our building was about 95% complete when another fire destroyed 90% of the entire building. The fire was caused by equipment failure. We moved into temporary facilities until we could rebuild. We occupied those facilities until December 1999.

We opted to redesign the building as opposed to rebuilding what little remained after the fire. The project was undertaken in phases due to funds and restrictions by the diocese. We completed phase one and obtained a temporary occupancy permit and held our first service on Christmas Eve 1999. As we moved into the 21st century, our active membership had increased to approximately 200. The Rev. Greg Kimura's service to Holy Spirit ended in 1999 and the Rev. Wayne Britnell began serving as Interim Rector.

In 2001 we completed the construction of Phase III of the building; this included the social hall, kitchen and the large assembly area up stairs. In the fall of 2001 we selected the Rev. Bob Young as Rector; he has served us since and recently announced his retirement from Holy Spirit effective July 1, 2009. Our current active membership has decreased to about 150. Of the 19 individuals who gathered on Jan 4, 1984 there are still five attending and active in the congregation.

IV: Our Programs and Organizations

- Youth
 - Sunday School
 - Vacation Bible School
 - Triniteens Youth Group
 - Episcopal Church Camp
- Adult
 - Sunday School/Bible Study
 - Choir/Music
 - Daughters of the King
 - Men's Parish Breakfast Group
 - Altar Guild
 - Acolytes and Servers
 - Licensed Lay Ministers
 - St. Simeon and St. Anna's
- Community
 - Love In the Name of Christ (Love INC)
 - Visitation to the Chugiak Senior Center
 - Meier Lake Conference Center

V: Our Finances

Today we number approximately 295 members of record (115 households) with 106 active communicants. Our average Sunday attendance is 75 parishioners. Our annual budget has been running in the general range of \$135-150,000. The present trend in membership and income figures is slightly downward. About 35% of our income goes to support facility operations, 35% to support for the position of rector; the balance goes to the diocese and general church programs. Our real property consists of a 2.5-acre site on a major Eagle River thoroughfare. A main 30,000 s.f. facility contains well defined nave, administrative offices, library, several classrooms, nursery, and parish hall (with commercial grade kitchen). We have a \$40,000 balance on our mortgage secured through the Diocese of Alaska.

VI: The Diocese of Alaska

The Episcopal Diocese of Alaska covers a landmass of 586,412 sq. miles. It has 47,300 miles of coastline, 3 million lakes, and over 3,000 rivers. Only 20 percent has seen civilization. There are 53 congregations, ranging in size from tiny subsistence villages to major cities. Because of the vast size of Alaska the Diocese has been divided into 4 regions called Deaneries. We strive to respect the customs, values and dignity of our many cultures.

Holy Spirit is located in the South Central Deanery. This Deanery includes 14 congregations. The most remote congregation, Kodiak, lies on an island in the Gulf of Alaska. There are four congregations in Anchorage: St. Mary's, St. Christopher's, Christ Church, and All Saints'. Holy Spirit Church in Eagle River also lies within the municipality.

The Alaska Range dominates the geography of this Deanery and sports Alaska's tallest peak, Mount McKinley, so named in 1896 for William McKinley, who was at this time a candidate for president. An earlier name had been Denali - a Tanaina Indian word meaning "the big one" or "the great one". The state of Alaska officially renamed the mountain "Denali" in 1975; however, the federal Board of Geographic Names had not taken any action and congressional legislation has been introduced to retain the name McKinley in perpetuity. Mount McKinley is the highest mountain on the North American continent. The South Peak is 20,320 feet high.

VII: Our Community – Eagle River

History: The Eagle River/Chugiak community began as a farming community separate from Anchorage. As Anchorage has grown, Eagle River has become a large and expanding bedroom community of Anchorage, separated from Anchorage by Ft. Richardson military reservation. It is now a self-sufficient major suburb of Anchorage.

Population: Eagle River, as of 2007 has an estimated population of 35,000, with expectations of continuing growth. Governmentally, it is part of the Municipality of Anchorage, with an estimated population of 359,200. Eagle River has its own main business district and shares some utilities with the Mat-Su Valley, rather than Anchorage.

Chugiak-Eagle River continues to attract visitors and new residents alike because of its pristine beauty and modern conveniences. New subdivisions are in the planning stages that will accommodate those wishing to relocate to this area. However, plenty of open space remains allowing residents and visitors to thrive in this beautiful Alaskan environment.

VIII: What We Offer Our New Rector

Previous sections of this profile should provide a reasonable synopsis of who we are as a parish; we are proud of our identity and believe this in and of itself should prove attractive to many prospective rectors. While Holy Spirit is a mid-size church, we have the community to support any amount of growth our new rector can help us realize. Holy Spirit's magic is that the nature of our people and environment allows us to maintain an energetic, supportive, and close-knit church family; something often lost as small congregations grow. Our history demonstrates that we have and will continue to overcome all obstacles self-sufficiently while supporting those in need. Our membership includes cultural, political, theological, and intellectual diversity; a true strength that represents the beauty of God's people. We are situated in one of the most beautiful places on earth; an utter masterpiece component of God's Creation. Most importantly, we are a spiritual congregation; hungry for leadership and inspiration. In syntheses of all the above, we offer an opportunity to join and lead a loving church family.

Historically, we have only been able to financially support part-time rectors; this has created a less than ideal situation for all involved. We are committed to providing adequate compensation to ensure our new rector can provide us with full-time ministry. We will work with whoever is called to this position to provide a stipend, housing allowance, automobile allowance, pension, and insurance for a total annual compensation package in the neighborhood of \$90,000. As with any church or other non-profit organization, this compensation total is subject to whatever funds are available from donations; in consideration of our historical finances and strong potential for growth, we are confident we will be able to achieve, maintain, and possibly enhance this level of compensation.

IX: What We Seek in Our New Rector

We believe the nature of any true call is that it must be a fit for both the congregation and the rector; as such, we understand we will not be a good fit for all potential rectors just as not all potential rectors will be a good fit for us. We've provided a detailed profile in hopes that potential rectors will understand who we are in consideration of who he or she is. Simply stated, we seek a full-time Rector who is a good fit for us.

We recently surveyed our membership to capture our expectations for our new rector. To paraphrase one comment: we seek somebody with an Anglican Episcopal background who is bible grounded; not making a big issue of controversial issues but quietly doing what is right. We've engineered our initial application to capture the same information from applicants as we have captured from ourselves. To ensure a good fit for both our rector and our congregation, we will not provide a specific list of qualities we are seeking beyond what is provided in the attached Position Description. Rather, we are asking each potential rector to prayerfully complete the application and allow us to determine if we feel a good fit exists. As we move through the selection process, we will then share the details of our survey to ensure that those who we believe will be a good fit have the opportunity to make their own determination. Ultimately, this will be a prayerful and collaborative process; we trust God to guide our hearts and minds as well of those of all prospective rectors.