

# AUKE TALK

October 2009 Edition

## THE PASTOR'S PEN

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Dear friends, I recently wrote a version of this article for the Juneau Empire. It talks about the hope and joy of eternal life in the face of physical death, a subject that we have encountered several times in the last few weeks. May it encourage and comfort you ...

Life is beautiful and wondrous. It is also finite and brief. Both these truths have struck me forcefully and repeatedly since my arrival as your pastor.

We live in a breath-taking landscape. Indeed, as I wrote this article I was looking out my office window mesmerized by the reflection of snow-capped mountains on the glass-like surface of Auke Lake. The intensely blue sky was nearly cloudless. The fog and misty shrouds that blanketed the mountain sides the morning I first wrote these words was a wonder to behold. This place makes it easy for followers of Jesus Christ to affirm the poet's words in Psalm 19. "The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork." (Psalm 19) We live in an enchanted land.

The land's beauty does not shield us from another truth: life's finitude and brevity. In the year and a half that I have lived here I have been closely associated with several folks, both at Chapel and in the community at large, who have suffered profound loss through the death of people close to them. And most of those who have passed on were far too young to have died. Their deaths were sudden, unexpected, and premature. Death has come frequently and it reminds us that life is a fragile gift not to be taken lightly.

As a Christian community, dedicated to Jesus Christ, we believe passionately and confidently in life beyond physical death. We know that physical death is merely a door through which we pass as we enter into an eternal, timeless reality. Christians believe that those who embrace Jesus will live eternal lives of joy and abundance, free of all pain and hardship. Followers of Jesus, like everyone else, shed deep tears of sorrow when death takes loved ones. Still, at the end of the day we are sustained by the reality that on the other side of death there is a life indescribably more beautiful than anything we know in this world.

The grandeur of God's natural world in the environs of Juneau proclaims the truth that life is beautiful and wondrous. The splendor of the environment also reminds me that death is not the final word. The exquisite beauty of this place affirms God's promise that those who look to Christ will experience a magnificent way of living that transcends death and even the beauty of this incredible land.

For our community, which has walked and is walking through some very dark valleys this is supremely good news. May you know Christ's grace and peace.



## Desperately Seeking Ushers for 11:15 Service

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Help us continue to cheerfully and effectively serve our fastest-growing worship service! The 11:15 service is in desperate need of ushers. We should have 4-6 ushers at every service; however we are down to 2 or fewer on any given Sunday. If you can commit to one Sunday a month or to be on call as a substitute usher, please contact Sara Chambers via the church office immediately.

## Women of Faith

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Have you never been to a Women of Faith conference and want to know what they are like? Were you unable to go this year and would like to experience it? Did you go this year and were unable to absorb it all? Then we have just the ticket for you! On Saturday mornings starting 10/31 at 9:30 we will be watching part of the DVD of this year's conference, A Grand New Day. His mercies are new every morning. Come hear the speakers and the music at Geri McCloud's home at 10448 Fox Farm Trail. Come any Saturday you can make it.

## TERMS TO LEARN

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*Note: While Christians should strive to communicate Gospel truth in everyday language (rather than “Christianese”) so that it can be understood, it is also true that our communication and understanding is diminished when we avoid learning and using some words that may not be in common use outside of their Christian context. And if we don’t learn them, how can we explain the concepts contained within these terms to our children and our neighbors? In each issue of Auke Talk, the Christian Discipleship Ministry Team (CDMT) will feature a term every month for you to learn, explain, discuss and share with your family, study group, friends, and neighbors.*

### **This Month: Resurrection**

And I believe in the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. – The Apostle’s Creed

The Christian view of life after death is unique among the world’s religions. It is not uniquely Christian to believe in an afterlife; every major world religion has a view of life after death, but typically they fall into two categories:

1. The soul is freed from the body at death and lives on in an other-worldly existence (characteristic of New Age spirituality, as well as Islam, and Latter-day Saints); or
2. The soul is reincarnated in the birth of another living body (characteristic of many eastern religions such as Buddhism, Hinduism, and Sikhism). Some traditions combine the concepts (i.e., a series of reincarnations before final liberation).

Christian teaching on the afterlife emphasizes two aspects:

1. The promise of eternal life to those who belong to Christ Jesus (1John 2:25). The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness, and immediately pass into glory, and their bodies, being still united in Christ, rest in their graves till the resurrection (Westminster Shorter Catechism Q. 37, BOC 7.037).
2. The transforming of the lowly earthly body into the glorious resurrected body at Christ’s triumphal return. (Philippians 3:21, 1Thess 4:14-18). At the last day, there shall be a general resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust (Acts 24:15), when they that are alive shall in a moment be changed; and the selfsame bodies of the dead which are laid in the grave, being then again united to their souls forever, shall be raised up by the power of Christ. The bodies of the just, by the Spirit of Christ, and by virtue of his resurrection as their head, shall be raised in power, spiritual and incorruptible, and made like to his glorious body, and the bodies of the wicked shall be raised up in dishonor by him as an offended judge. (1Cor 15:35-57, 2Cor 5:1-10, Dan 12:2)(Westminster Larger Catechism Q. 87, BOC 7.197).

Certainly the idea of bodily resurrection is as foreign to modern cultural sensibilities as it was to the Greeks in Paul’s day, and we should appreciate how weird the Christian teaching on the resurrection must have sounded then! Paul’s classic defense of the Resurrection in 1Cor 15 takes his opponents’ arguments to their logical conclusion in order to demonstrate their absurdity from a Christian perspective. “And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. Then those who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all others.” (1Cor 15:17-19).

Paul concludes with a warning as to the observed results of faulty theology here: “Do not be misled. ‘Bad company corrupts good character.’ Come back to your senses, as you ought, and stop sinning” (1Cor 15:33-34). Paul’s bold defense of the resurrection is an encouragement to us to dig deeper to understand better the great promise of eternal life that is ours in Christ.

“But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1Cor 15:57).



## PRESBYTERY OF ALASKA

Angoon ◊ Craig/Klawock ◊ Haines ◊ Hoonah ◊ Hydaburg ◊ Juneau ◊ Kake ◊ Ketchikan  
Metlakatla ◊ Petersburg ◊ Sitka ◊ Skagway ◊ Wrangell ◊ Yakutat

September 28, 2009

Dear Friends:

Grace to you and peace in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Our stewardship of God's gifts is both a means and a measure of our growth as Christians. Whether in His parables about servants entrusted with different amounts of money (Matthew 25:14-30), or speaking of the lilies of the field (Matthew 6:27-29), or in commenting to His disciples on the widow who gave her mite (Mark 12:41-44), Jesus taught that what we do with our money is a mirror of our spiritual life. Our security is not in what we hold on to, but in whom we trust.

The earliest laws that God gave the Israelites told them that they could not work all the time—"Honor the Sabbath, keep it holy"—nor could they keep everything that God provided. Tithing, or giving back one tenth of what you harvested or gathered or earned, was God's way of teaching Israel that God had a plan for them and that God would provide for them. Jesus teaches the same, and human nature has not changed over time. For us, stewardship is a spiritual discipline.

In matters small and large, in our regular economic life and in times of surprising bounty, we are called to return a portion to God. Our offerings and tithes support the mission of Christ and our giving is an exercise that brings us closer to Him. It's not that we buy our way to Christ, but that we trust our way and our living into His hands.

As Alaskans, we have a common spiritual opportunity and challenge—what do we do with our PFD dividend? The short answer is: Give thanks to God, give back to God 10%, and use the 90% joyfully.

I invite you to join with other Alaska Presbyterians in the 50/50 Club. Ten per cent of our dividend this year is \$130.50; give it to your church and mark it '50/50'. Half of it will remain with your church for its local mission, and the other half will be used around Southeast Alaska in the presbytery's mission.

Join us in giving thanks to God for all He provides, and in using this special gift to Alaskans for Christ's sake.

David Dobler

## Love INC.

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*Love INC mobilizes the Church to transform lives and communities in the name of Christ.*

### BENEFIT AUCTION

Join us at Centennial Hall on Friday, November 20 from 7:00—9:00pm for an evening of desserts, auctions, and music! Tickets available from your Church Ministry Coordinator or Love INC, 780—4090. Learn more about us at [www.loveinc.org](http://www.loveinc.org)



### Chapel Ladies Fall Fellowship

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*Saturday, October 24th at 10:00am*

Come join us for a continental breakfast and discussion about Vitamin D by Justine Emerson, family nurse practitioner. Learn more about this vitamin deficiency and enjoy getting together with other women of the chapel. Bring your questions for Justine! Don't miss it! Childcare will be provided.

### Necrology Report Request

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We are trying to compile a list of church members and regular attendees of Chapel by the Lake that have passed away (2006—2009) to honor on All Saints Day, Sunday, November 1st. We are asking for your help! If you have the name of a loved one that attended Chapel by the Lake and you would like to include their name in our list, please submit your information to Donovan in the church office, 789-7592, [cbtlmanager@chapelbythelake.org](mailto:cbtlmanager@chapelbythelake.org).

### Thank You

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The Deacons would like to thank the following people for helping provide snacks for October's Coffee/Cookie fellowship time:

- Joyce Landingham
- Charlotte Truitt
- Jennifer Scott
- Heather Ramseth
- Kristin Price
- Saralyn Phelps
- Karen Paulick
- Lori Meiners
- Carrie Macaulay
- Marilyn Loney
- Diane Lohrey
- Elaine Loopstra
- Susan Cox
- Bruce Johnson
- Pat Spence, center pie ce

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### FOR CHAPEL YOUTH AND PARENTS:

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#### High School Mystery Overnighter

*Saturday, October 31 to Sunday, November 1  
5pm-10am*

Meet at Chapel at 5pm and enjoy a night of mystery, trick-or-treating, games, and food. Come in costume and hungry!

#### Teen Parent Meeting

*Sunday, November 8  
6-7pm*

In Smith Hall at Chapel by the Lake. Come meet the leaders, talk with other parents, hear what your youth are learning, and enjoy dessert. Child care will be provided.

#### Middle School Overnighter

*Friday, November 13 to Saturday 14  
7pm-9am*

Meet at Chapel where we will kick off the night with pizza, followed by games, and a movie.

*Jessica Reighard*

For questions contact:

Jessica Reighard

Youth Director

907-723-0452

[jreighard@chapelbythelake.org](mailto:jreighard@chapelbythelake.org)

### Special Thanks:

I'm so grateful I just wanted to Post-It! Thanks John and Seth for the beautiful car makeover! (see picture below)

