

## Structure of Ministry in Alaska

What does it look like now and what will it look like as a Mission District?

\*\*\*Here are some thoughts to get the discussion started, none of these are set in stone or final in any way. We would love to hear your thoughts on how you think we should structure ministry in Alaska in the future!

### **Charge Conferences**

This is how local churches are connected to the larger UMC and to the wider Alaska Conference. Changes to how charge conferences are run are independent of the decision to become a Mission District.

**NOW:** Yearly Charge Conferences are facilitated by Alaska DS

**In the future:** It is possible that yearly Charge Conferences continue to be facilitated by an Alaska resident DS. There is a potential for a future non-resident DS, which could happen regardless of if we become a Mission District or not.

**Other considerations:** Potential for part-time bi-vocation local DS (or multiple local DS's) in Alaska. Potential for collaboration of roles for DS and DCM at Conference level in future. Potential to remain with current structure, supporting full time DS in Alaska. Potential to not have yearly charge conferences, with reports submitted in another manner.

### **Alaska Leadership Team**

**NOW:** Function as the Board of Trustees, Commission on Equitable Compensation, Board of Pensions, District Board on Church Location and Building, AMC Foundation Committee, Rules Committee, and more.

**In the future:** Many of these roles can either also exist at the District Level, or they could be moved to PNW with representation from Alaska leadership.

- Board of Trustees – we can keep this function OR move it to PNW with Alaska representation. It is possible to keep Alaska property in the District if Alaska incorporates as a District (in practice, changing our current incorporation from the Alaska Missionary Conference to the Alaska Mission District).
- Commission on Equitable Compensation – does the work of setting minimum salary and approves request for salary assistance. Combining this work with the PNW would likely set the state for contextual minimum salaries across the PNW Conference. We would advocate for strong Alaska representation.
- Board of Pensions – This is a conference function and decisions are made on a conference level. We will advocate for Alaska representation on this board. Our pension systems are mostly aligned with PNW already, due to the fact that we have the same Pension and Benefits Officer in Bruce Galvin.
- District Board on Church Location and Building – The Alaska Leadership team would continue to assume this role (approving sale, purchase, mortgages, and improvements of buildings in the district).
- AMC Foundation Committee – Work of the Alaska Leadership Team to advise the trustees on funds of investment and dispersion. This would likely become the Alaska District Foundation Committee so that we continue to maintain control of our assets.

- Rules Committee – We would likely move this role to PNW and advocate for Alaska representation on the PNW Rules Committee.

### **Other Considerations**

- There are not enough people in the Alaska Conference to fill each of these committees. Currently, the Alaska Leadership Team assumes most of these roles, however many of these roles could be outsourced to PNW. By partnering with PNW, we could also open doors for people to serve on other boards, such as the Annual Conference Board of Church and Society, the Commission on the Status and Role of Women, or the Board of Ordained Ministry. This partnership could allow more flexibility for people to serve on the committees and teams that they feel called to, rather than to fill empty seats on committees that they are not passionate about. In general, we hope to move administration to the larger conference and to conduct more specialized ministry locally.
- It may be possible to negotiate holding a District Annual Conference every other year in Alaska, or even three years of every quadrennia, with Zoom being used to connect us to the PNW Conference when we host locally. It is possible that Annual Conference across the Greater Northwest Episcopal Area could be held concurrently and locally with Zoom utilized to bring all three bodies together when needed (such as the Episcopal address, or key issues of voting), and to use the other time for contextual work in ministry. The Bishop is open to discussion and creativity to meet the needs of the various districts of the PNW Conference.
- Winter and Spring Rendezvous will likely still continue in a similar format as we gather together as a District.
- Some of the following Administrative & Ministry Councils may shift to PNW, some may stay in Alaska. Initially, very few will change. We can think, talk, and pray about which councils we would like to merge when.

### **Administrative & Ministry Councils**

#### **Council on Finance and Administration**

Possible for council to be assumed by PNW with representation by Alaska delegates. Open to discussion.

#### **Youth and Young Adults Council**

Possible for council to be assumed by PNW, potential for growth and support with new resources, with Alaska representation on council. OR maintain a District Youth and Young Adults Council that functions in much the same way it does now.

#### **Communication Council**

Our volunteer communicator is already working closely with PNW and Oregon-Idaho communications staff. Functionally the Alaska Communications arm of our leadership will not likely change much. We can still maintain a district communications council if we wish.

### **Professional Ministries Unit**

This team will become our District Committee on Ordained Ministry with many of the same essential functions with these exceptions:

- We will lose the role pertaining to oversight and support for the office of Episcopacy, however we could negotiate a seat on the PNW Conference Committee on Episcopacy to keep this tie.
- Board of Higher Education and Ministry function will be assumed under PNW. However, we could request equal representation on this board to be more intentional about directing resources towards Alaska. We could also potentially create a District Committee on Higher Education to intentionally support our campus ministries in Alaska.

### **Archives and History**

Possible for council to be assumed by PNW. Area wide work is already under negotiation with the University of Puget Sound, regardless of if we become a Mission District or not. We can still maintain a local Archives, housed at the District office or potentially by partnering with APU.

### **Disaster Preparedness**

This will likely remain in current form. We will keep a regional contact who will continue to be in conversation with the PNW Conference team.

### **Native Ministries**

Likely keep in current form.

### **Vitality Team**

This team already works closely with the Innovation and Vitality Team of PNW. The Alaska Vitality Team works to vision and identify areas for growth and church planting, while the Innovation and Vitality team of PNW assesses and supports church planters. The Alaska Vitality Team will likely remain in current form with Alaska people working on the detailed research and visioning needed for vitality in Alaska.

### **Outdoor Ministries**

Possible for council to be assumed by PNW, potential for sharing of energy, ideas, and resources related to camping ministries conference-wide. We would ideally have a representative team that would meet locally as well as meet with the PNW team for the sharing of best practices, trainings, programs, etc. Decisions about programming and outdoor ministries in Alaska will all remain in Alaska. Our Boards of Directors would stay functioning at each camp. OR maintain this ministry team so that it continues to function in much the same way as it does now.

### **Conference Lay Leader**

Will change to District Lay Leader; Role and function likely would not change.

### **Associate District Lay Leader**

Will change to Associate District Lay Leader; Role and function likely would not change.

### **Safe Sanctuary Coordinator**

This would likely be assumed by the person on staff in this role in PNW .

### **VIM and Disaster Response Coordinator**

Roles and functions likely would not change. The VIM and Disaster Response Coordinator has already been working with the VIM & DRCs of PNW.

### **Statistician**

This would likely be assumed by the work of the PNW Conference Statistician.

### **Annual Conference Secretary**

Role would shift to be the District Conference Secretary and would act as a conduit between Alaska and the PNW Conference.

### **Secretary of Global Ministries**

This is a conference position so the role would be assumed by PNW. However, we may strongly advocate that this role be filled with someone from Alaska to maintain our connection to GBGM and to monitor Advance projects locally and support missionaries in Alaska.

### **Lay Servant Ministries Coordinator**

Alaska has not filled this role in many years, and we would benefit from moving this responsibility to PNW and tapping into their existing system/structure.

### **Hospitality Coordinator**

This role would now become the District Hospitality Coordinator. Function would remain for District Gatherings and for Annual Conference when it is hosted locally.

### **Disabilities Advocate**

Role and function likely would not change.

### **Abundant Health Coordinator**

This role will come to an end at the conclusion of this quadrennia regardless of if we become a Mission District or not.

### **Nominations Committee**

This is a conference wide committee, so the work would likely be moved to PNW. We would advocate for equal representation on this committee.