

Reconnecting In Times of Need

“Always listening and caring for the community”

Seeking Connection in COVID Times

*A common definition of
psychological trauma:*

Damage to a person’s mind as a result of one or more distressing events causing overwhelming amounts of stress that exceed a person’s ability to cope or integrate the emotions involved, eventually leading to serious, long-term negative consequences, (Wikipedia, 2020).

The past year has been characterized by a whole series of distressing and overwhelming events. From a global view, we need only think of the presidential election, George Floyd, environmental challenges, January 6, 2021, and COVID-19. At the same time, the enforced isolation and economic hardship caused by the pandemic has intensified other problems faced by many. These issues span alcoholism, internalized oppression, intergenerational trauma PTSD and depression, food insecurity and more. One of the greatest tools for building resilience in the face of trauma is connection with people we care about. Unfortunately, the COVID restrictions have made that much more difficult. However, with a little creativity, and a cell phone, a great deal is possible. One grandparent described a weekly “cooking date” with his granddaughter:



At a specified time, each week they would connect via FaceTime (any video-chat platform would work) to create a recipe together. The grandparent kept the recipes to something the grandchild could successfully accomplish, and some care went into making sure cooking utensils, such as measuring cups and baking pans were readily available. However, even in COVID, these two found a way to do something together and to offer the encouragement that comes through sharing possibilities in this special relationship. The point here is to use the imagination to think about different ways to connect, and especially about how to keep our bonds in meaningful relationships. The COVID isolation—or isolation for any reason—can be harmful. We are created in God’s image, and Scripture tells us God is love. Love is about relationships that matter, so we have to know that too much isolation is spiritually harmful. Now that the vaccine is becoming more prevalent, other possibilities are opening up for connection.

One in particular bears pointing out. Most churches are open now; put on your mask and attend! Not only will you connect with people, but you will also find God feeding your soul in ways you have not thought about. Other groups continue to meet online. Check with the church of your choice, or with the borough office, the senior center, or other helping sources to find out which ones would appeal to you. Remember, there are ways to connect, and ways to feed your Soul.

IAM also provides two other resources for you:

- IAM Cares Connection Phone Line 4-days per week (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday). Someone is available to talk to you and to pray with you about your particular needs. You can call from 6-10 p.m. at 1-866-654-0914.
- A list of pastors, who have let us know that they are there for you, check it out on our website (www.iam.gives).

We are here to serve you.

In Christ’s service,
Rev. Dr. Curtis Karns, IAM Co-Executive



OUTREACH

IAM's outreach to area faith leaders is ongoing. Among other inquiries, we polled pastors for interest in having a regional church leaders' association, to brainstorm common needs and responses to those needs. To date, eight North Slope pastors have expressed willingness to participate, representing churches of five different denominations (including one non-denominational), in four North Slope villages. You can view the names and their contact information on <http://www.iam.gives>. Other area pastors who would like to participate, please contact:

Pastor David Matthews at
IAM Listening Way Director
bishopdgm@gmail.com
907-319-9204



Healing and Renewal Bible Studies - IAM Ministries

One of our ministerial goals at IAM is to equip the Church for healing ministries. IAM ministries was formed to come alongside the churches within the village to help families as they deal with issues. The Bible Studies...have focused on the Power in the Word...so that the Word becomes a tool to use as a means of ministering to others. The Bible studies have focused on the power and the weapons of warfare that can be used in daily personal prayer or when praying for others. The feedback coming from the women who attend our Zoom Bible study sessions has been positive. As the teaching progresses, we will eventually begin instruction on the tools for inner healing using the Elijah House School of Ministry studies.

IAM is consistent with the focus on healing which is found in the Word of God, in relationship built with Our Lord Jesus Christ and with others. As the studies progress, plans for additional studies will be announced in the near future for more Zoom Bible studies and when it is safe to do so-In person ministry time for healing prayers will resume. For more information contact:

Dorothy Bekoalok at:

dbekoalok01@gmail.com





Community Needs Data Collection



Johannes Lampe, president of the Inuit region of Nunatsiavut, at the official opening of the Illusuak Cultural Centre on November 21, 2019 (Nunatsiavut Government)

IAM is committed to intimate communications with everyone. We are listening for what is needed in order to establish healthy communities; economically, spiritually, and culturally. We will listen through the lens of the Iñupiaq Values. The Listening Way leaders will work with the Elders, Adults, and Youth to identify missing components and the best way to utilize them. Specifically, how the components can be integrated into the tribes, villages, cities, corporations, schools, and businesses to build healthier communities by seeking input, concerns and needs from the individuals in the community.

IAM OBJECTIVE:

Ultimately leading to Healthy Iñupiaq Citizens/Communities, Guided by Local Leaders with Self Determination and Sustainability

The Listeners use a data sheet as part of the listening sessions. This information will be summarized and grouped by community for the use of the village steering committee. The Collective Impact team will assist the Elders in coming up with suggested projects to address prominent gaps which may exist in the specific community where the listening sessions are held.

We have collected data from 2019 and 2020, and have started collecting data for 2021. We are in the process of setting up village steering committees to share our findings. If you have people in your village you think would be a good member of your village to be a part of the committee, please contact:

Pastor David Matthews
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Surprises When We Make Ourselves Available

Recently, the Kuukpik Presbyterian Church asked that IAM send spiritual support to the community after two brothers died within a week of each other. The shock of these events was enough that the church leaders believed that extra support was warranted. As a result, Rev. Charles Brower flew to Nuiqsut to add to the help available in the village. Such support is always an effort to share God's grace in the face of hardship. God is love, which means that God cares for us and calls on his faithful to serve as God's hands and feet, reaching out to others in their pain as a sign of God's love and grace.

In this case, it is clear that God had more in mind than the IAM leadership knew when they sent Rev. Brower. Shortly after arriving, Pastor Virgie Kasak was called away to Anchorage due to a family emergency. At almost the same time, Presbyterian Elder Olivia Cabinboy was medevaced to Anchorage with a medical emergency. Church leaders were grateful that Rev. Brower was available to officiate at the funerals. All emergency needs were met, and it was clear that this was due to God's plan, not human plans.

God created all of us in God's own image to live with one another, and with the whole world, in proper relationship. When we take that call seriously, it is clear that God is at work in us and among us, and that there is enough care for everyone.

Rev. Dr. Curtis Karns, IAM Co-Executive

Basic Bible Studies for Healing (BBSH)

Psalms 103:2-3

Praise the Lord, my soul, and forget not all his benefits- who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases.

Held every week on Tuesday at 7:00 pm

Join other women in Christ for a Basic Bible Study for Healing (BBSH) focused on the POWER in the Word of GOD to help us navigate through the difficulties we face in our everyday lives.

Join via Zoom Meeting at:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84552831070>

Meeting ID: 845 5283 1070

Toll free at 877-853-5257

For more information about **IAM** please visit our website: www.iam.gives or contact us via email at admin@iam.gives