



Nathan & Sandra Hanna  
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**The Village of Mekoryuk (population 210)** is located at the mouth of Shoal Bay on the north shore of Nunivak Island in the Bering Sea. Nunivak Island has been inhabited for 2000 years by the Nuniwamuit people or Cup'ik (Shoop'ik) Eskimos. The first outside contact was in 1821 by the Russian American Company, who recorded 400 people living in 16 villages on the Island. A summer camp called "Koot" was noted at the current site of Mekoryuk in 1874. In 1891, Ivan Petroff found 702 Eskimos in 9 villages, including 117 people at "Koot". An epidemic in 1900 decimated the population, leaving only four surviving families in the village. In the 1930's the Evangelical Covenant Church was built by an Eskimo missionary, followed by a BIA school in 1939. People moved to the village from other areas of the Island to be near the school.

Pastor Nathan Hanna comes from first-generation committed Christians. After graduating high school he enrolled in Bob Jones University, where he was constantly burdened by the school's legalism and critical, separatist philosophy. He was then challenged to leave his "comfort zone" and find out what God would do in his life. He completed the school year out, packed up his jeep and headed North for Alaska. He met Fritz Geffe, an Inupiat pastor from Fairbanks. He found a place to live, a job, and enrolled in UAF to complete his requirements for an Alaska Teaching Certificate. God's grace was revealed to him when he met and married his wife Sandra. Sandra is a godly and multitalented Christian woman. After completing his M.Ed. at UAF, he and Sandra moved to Kipnuk where they taught for 3 years. They then moved to Mekoryuk, Sandra's home town, where they taught for 4 years. They adopted their daughter in 1999. Later, while in another village, they were able to adopt their son. The Lord had also opened the door for them to return to Mekoryuk and accept the call to Pastor.