

Snapshot of Ketchikan First UMC

Name of Church:

Ketchikan First United Methodist Church

Advance Special Number (Two ways to give):

Alaska Churches #931027 — specify Ketchikan when using this number

Downtown Ministries of Ketchikan UMC – #3020487

The mission field / community it serves:

Ketchikan...and the lands beyond

Brief history of the Church/Mission:

The Methodist Church was the first church planted in 1900. It is located on the site of the traditional Haida fishing village at the mouth of Ketchikan Creek. As the city's founding economy of timber and fishing has declined the city has transformed itself into a tourist destination. The United Methodist Church has faced the challenges by adapting ministry to the changing needs of the community. Ship yard, hospital coast guard church longest continuing Methodist worshipping community in Alaska.

Challenges of ministry in this particular setting:

Ketchikan is an island community in southern southeast Alaska. There are many who come thinking they are going to have a wild Alaskan experience but soon the rain (168 inches annually), isolation, under-employment and high cost of living bring reality to their dream. The First City Homeless Services – Day Shelter is housed in the church's social hall and is the city's

initial resource for immediate aid. Seven days a week the church and Day Shelter are presented with needs ranging from the ridiculous to the deepest sorrow.

Something that surprises most people about your setting:

There are far reaching and diversified ministries through this body of Christ. We have a program called, "Pigs on a Mission". Every member of the congregation was given a piggy bank to take home to dress and feed. Each quarter the pigs return to church before they go to places outside of our community that we may never go. For example they have flown to: Bolivia, West Virginia, Detroit, Nome, Alaska, Lithuania, emergency relief for European refugees and UMCOR.

Story of what God is up to:

The presence of God is physical and tangible through the people called United Methodist. For example, the hospitality ministries of the Day Shelter offer the homeless and marginally housed people a safe non-judgmental shelter with breakfast and showers. For 40 years the church has hosted a Summer Hostel for travelers. The soup kitchen, nutrition and personal hygiene programs, food collection speak to basic human needs.

Praying for this setting:

Lord of all, thank you for the opportunities to celebrate your grace in every setting. We pray for the power, courage and joy of the Holy Spirit as we serve you.

How should “outside” churches reach us to be in dialogue about supporting the ministry:

Pastors Teri and Evelyn Erbele / email: fumc1@kpunet.net or www.ktnfumc.org.

Do you have a need for work teams...and if so what work could they be doing:

Not at this time