

Snapshot of Unalaska UMC

Name of Church & Ministry:

Unalaska United Methodist Church Outreach and Community Ministry.

Advance Special Number ('Two ways to give):

Advance #931855 Ministering to the Bering Sea fishing fleet, processors, stranded crew members, and the community

The mission field / community it serves:

Unalaska and the Aleutian Islands

Brief history of the Church/Mission:

Unalaska United Methodist Church comes out of an old Methodist Mission in Unalaska that had it start in the late 1880's. With the help of donations from other United Methodist churches and individuals from all over the country, the late 1990's brought with it a parsonage and new church building. This new church was initially founded with the expectation of growing a new, mainline protestant congregation in a place that had no denominational presence.

Challenges of ministry in this particular setting:

Every 2-5 years there is a near 80% turnover of the congregational makeup as people move in and out of the community. The congregation ebbs and flows throughout its history, as the island's population is ever changing. Partner churches help stabilize and make up for our limited membership in congregation.

Something that surprises most people about your setting:

The volatility in all aspects of life experience except for the various degrees of isolation special to rural Alaska and industries that demand 60-80 hour work weeks.

What are the ministries that persons can support financially:

2nd Blessings, Abundant Health of Tutiakoff Ballfield & church membership supported annual passes for the public recreation center, Abundant Health of greenhouses and community gardens, Community fire pit and meditation path, Girl Scouts, Family Financial Wellness & Assistance Fund, capital support for church and parsonage maintenance, online ministry, salary support for regular and outreach services.

Story of what God is up to:

God is experienced each day in the creation of the isolated wilderness of the Aleutian Islands -- in the awesome power of the ocean, to the dynamic and volatile weather , and the vast abundance of sea and tundra life. We experience the holy spirit at work in our community through our 2nd Blessings sales, when a mother in need of some way to help her sick daughter get more fruit and vegetable in her fickle diet but she does not know how, and as she tells a member of the congregation by the entry way a like new juicer walks into the church as a 2nd Blessings donation! True Story -- she found a solution and we all think a little more about our faith and connections through the Holy Spirit.

Praying for this setting:

God, grant us moments of peace each day to feel the presence and to hear the wisdom of the Holy Spirit, as we give thanks for the abundance of sea life in the Aleutian Islands that feed our families and provide us with working income, as we wait out the weather that shapes our landscape and delays our travel plans, as we work together in community to make today and tomorrow a little better than how we found it. We ask you to hear this prayer so that we may do your work on Earth in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

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

Facebook messenger, website contact, (507) 338-8862, leadership@unalaskaumc.org, Matt's cellphone 907.359.1029

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

Small groups only, flexible travel schedule, wilderness experience a plus; specialized work in construction and building maintenance .