

## Prayers

We are always in need of your prayers! Partnering congregations and individuals from across the country can be supporting us by praying for our church, our community, the ministries we share together, and for our people. Also, let us know how we can be praying for you!



The Advance is a program through the United Methodist Church that connects local congregation with mission projects domestically, and around the world. By using a designated Advance number, individuals and churches can donate directly to the project, and 100% of the donation goes to that ministry.

Both Willow UMC and the Willow Church and Community Ministry are supported through the Advance. You can either submit gifts through your conference treasurer, or by going to [www.UMCMission.org](http://www.UMCMission.org), and reference the following numbers:

**Willow UMC— #931511**

**Willow Church and Community Ministry - #931520**

**Fran Lynch salary support - #982950**

When you partner with us in ministry, we will regularly keep you up to date through newsletters and e-mails about what is happening here, and any special projects as they arise.



Willow UMC

Denali at Sunset

**Willow UMC**

**67.5 Parks Highway**

**P.O. Box 182**

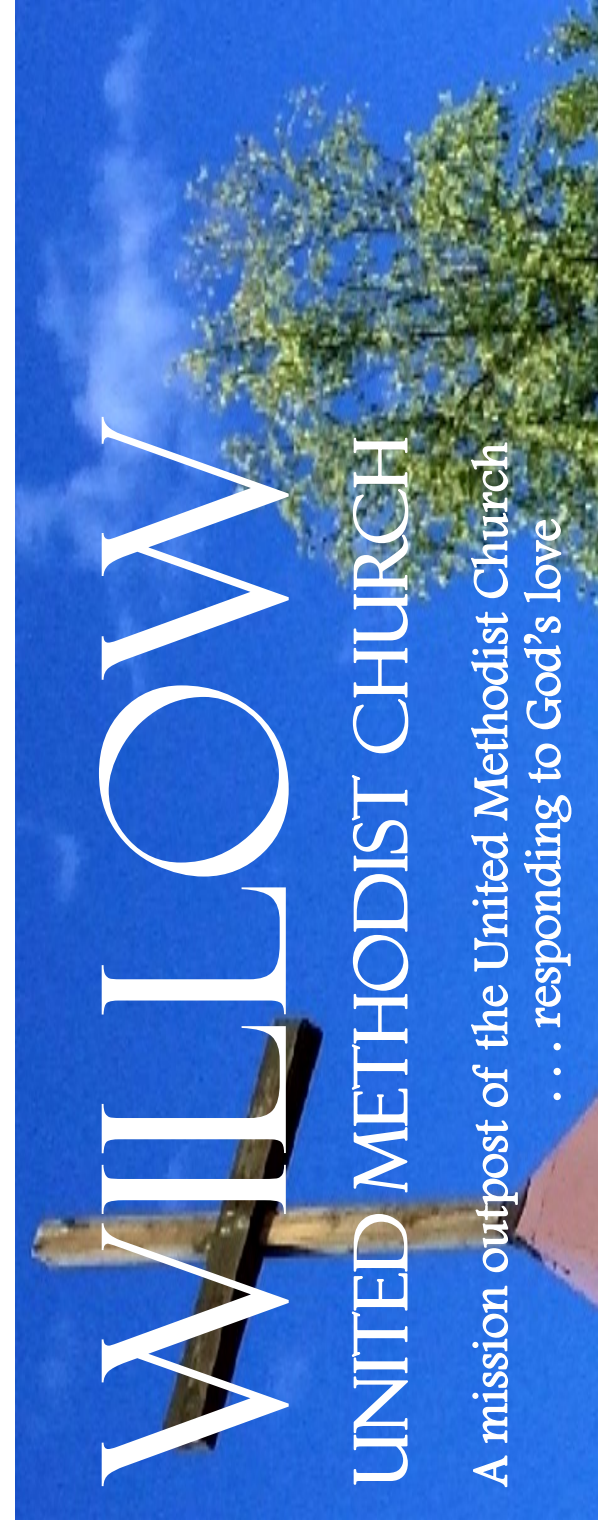
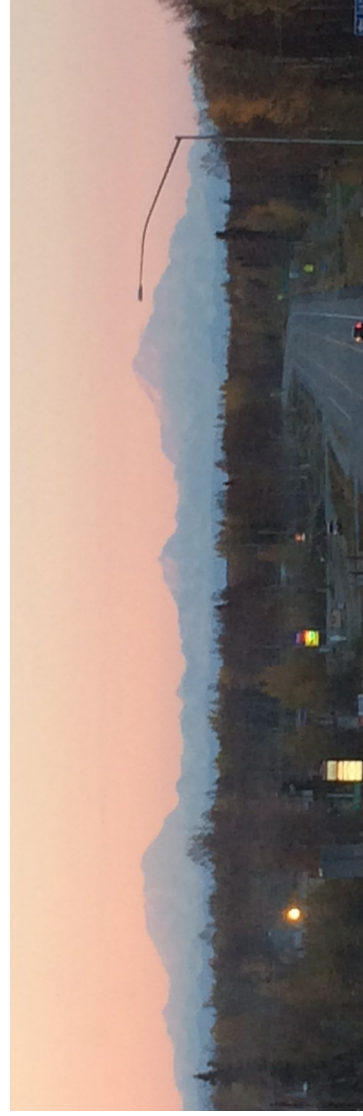
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**Find us on Facebook!**



## ABOUT OUR COMMUNITY . . .

Willow, Alaska, spans about 30 miles of the Parks Highway, north of Anchorage. Mostly spread out and rural, the approximately 1200 residents represent an economically diverse spread. With easy access to Anchorage, Willow is a favorite spot for many weekenders

who want to get out of the city for the 'real Alaska' experience. Anything from simple small cabins to extensive second homes are spaced throughout the



A View of Denali from Willow

area. Intermixed with this is one of the most impoverished areas of the state. Many people live completely 'off the grid,' with no electricity, water, or fuel source other than wood.

Many houses are temporary-turned-permanent, and not necessarily designed for winter weather. Since temperatures here can dip well below zero and stay there, and the snow fall can exceed 9-10 feet per winter, this creates some real challenges for people in those conditions.

The primary employment includes dog sled trainers and flight-guides for hunting and fishing.

Beyond this and such things as teachers and services, employment opportunities are primarily based in communities roughly 30-40 miles away.



Panning for gold at the historic Independence Mine

Willow is somewhat central to much of the state's road system, and was once even

considered as a site for the state capital. Because of its location and accessibility, many great recreational, historical, and scenic locations are readily available within a day's drive.

## ABOUT OUR CHURCH . . .

Willow UMC is near the center of the area that makes up Willow. We are the only mainline Protestant church for over 30 miles, and one of the largest churches in Willow. With about 50-60 in worship each Sunday, we are a larger family-like church. Much of our focus is on responding to the poverty we see around us.



The cross at the front of the sanctuary is made from diamond willow



Volunteers from the church butcher a moose that was donated to the Food Pantry.

Our Mission Statement is: To be a mission outpost of the United Methodist Church in Alaska, and as Christ's disciples responding to God's love by our witness, stewardship and outreach with and for all persons and creation.

Because of the outreach efforts of Willow Church and Community Ministry, Willow UMC is seen as a trusted source of help for those in need, and a caring place for children, youth, families, and adults.

## ABOUT THE WILLOW CHURCH AND COMMUNITY MINISTRY . . .

Much of the outreach ministry of the church is accomplished through the Willow Church and Community Ministry. Currently led by Deaconess Fran Lynch, the ministry was formed in response to the poverty needs in this area. The weekly food pantry serves

between 200-300 people monthly. We have a firewood ministry, help with specific construction projects on homes as needed, and have a fuel voucher program. The Church and Community Ministry also partners with the Willow Health Organization and the Willow Area Community Organization (WACO) in improving services and events available to the community.



The Willow Church and Community Food Pantry

## HOW CAN I HELP?

Willow UMC and the Willow Church and Community Ministry rely on the gifts, presence, and prayers of our partnering Congregations. For those who are ongoing supporters of our ministries, **THANK YOU!!!**

For those who are interested in finding out more, here are some ways you can help:

### VIM Work Teams

Yearly work teams help with construction projects, Vacation Bible School, chopping and distributing wood, and a number of other jobs as needed. Groups come from all over the country for 1-2

weeks during the summer. Staying at the church or in member's homes, we experience first-hand what it is to be in ministry together



A VIM team from Tennessee work on the church roof.