

ALDRERSGATE WEEKLY – December 13, 2021-December 19, 2021

Welcome to this week's Aldersgate Weekly with updates and the schedule for the coming week. If you are aware of others, who do not receive these weekly updates but would benefit from them, have them notify the church office and we will add them to the list! If you have any suggestions on how to improve our email, please feel free to respond.

A COUPLE OF REMINDERS MAKE SURE YOU PUT ON YOUR MASK EVERY TIME YOU ENTER THE CHURCH BUILDING AND CONTINUE TO WEAR YOUR MASK AS LONG AS YOU ARE IN THE BUILDING IN WORSHIP, IN MEETINGS, AND FOR OTHER ACTIVITIES. THANK YOU.

WORSHIP

Sunday worship services are held in our sanctuary at 9:30 am. There are refreshments and treats available in fellowship hall after worship.

For those who cannot attend in person, **the video from each Sunday's Worship Service will be available for viewing on AUMC's YouTube channel, on our website, and on our FaceBook page the following Monday. The video will also be emailed to you once it is available.**

WORSHIP LEADERS: As we get into the full swing of "back to worship" we are looking for individuals who sing special music and others who will lead our congregation in our call to worship. Please contact the office if you are willing to make our time of worship special.

LAY READERS NEEDED: We are ready to return lay readers to our Sunday worship experience. Responsibilities include leading the Call to Worship and sometimes Scripture readings. If you are interested, please contact the church office or Andy Gloor. We hope to add lay readers to the worship service ASAP.

CONGREGATIONAL CARE MINISTRY UPDATE

We have re-established a Congregational Care Ministry team. Thank you to Anne Niday, Alice Rice, Nancy Whitson, Jane Nihan and Kay Glennly for serving. These five ladies and myself will be keeping in touch with 3 to 5 members of the Aldersgate family who cannot make it to church on a regular basis. The Care Ministry is a way to keep our church family connected when disconnection has been so common over the last two years. The Care Ministers will be there to listen, to answer questions, to pass on prayer needs and to just be there for our family members who can't be there.

If you would like to hear from a Congregational Care Minister, or you know somebody who would, please contact Pastor Brett or Andy Gloor.

PASTOR'S PONDERING DECEMBER 13, 2021

PASTOR'S CHURCH CONFERENCE REPORT, 2021

***In the last days it will be, God declares,
that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh,
and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
and your young men shall see visions,
and your old men shall dream dreams.***

~Acts 2:17

It is a new day and a new way... Though I have been a pastor for over 30 years, it feels like my first year out of seminary trying to learn the ropes of pastoral ministry. How do you do ministry and act like you are headed toward normalcy when in fact you are not, the pandemic is still here. I'm just like everyone, I would love to get rid of the "bloody old mask" and pretend that everything is okay and soon we can go back to doing church like we used to. However, my gut instinct, right or wrong, tells me that Covid is not going anywhere too soon and might be with us forever, and we will never go back to what ministry used to be.

What this tells me as a veteran pastor is that the old standard "Butts in the pews and bucks in the plate" is gone forever. No longer can we sit by with our fingers crossed so we can return to "normalcy". We have to begin now, immediately, doing church in a new and vibrant way. Some of those different ways are through shared ministry with other churches in our area (UMC Connectionism) and ministry through multimedia. Returning to ministry as we remember and may even desire is only a wishful dream.

A good step in the right direction is for churches to begin sharing pastors, technicians for sound and video, and musicians. You see, most of our United Methodist Churches are small and gray and they don't have people power to do ministry and reach out beyond the church walls, so why not share ministry with other churches to make this kind of reaching out possible and fruitful?

Already, Aldersgate has made a good step in this direction. Our sound and new video system are top-notch. If we begin to think big and professional and put out a product people will want to watch, I think we have a great chance for reaching beyond our church walls and touching people's lives. We need to stretch our imagination and think of different ways through multimedia we can reach out and touch people's hearts: video, Podcast, Newsletter, etc. It may be hard to accept, but the old standard for ministry no longer works. But, we are here to reach out and touch people's lives. With the pandemic, there are not a lot of people who are going to listen from the pews, but they might just through multimedia.

That being said, I want to thank the leadership here at Aldersgate. We have a great group of leaders who are faithful and passionate about God's ministry. Now it is time to dream dreams, think big, and begin doing ministry differently.

DECEMBER 2021 SERMONS AND SCRIPTURES

December 7th, "He Holds The Keys" (Revelation 1:12-20)

December 14th, "The Heart of Christmas" (Luke 1:26-38)

December 21st, "What's It All About" (Luke 1:26-38)

December 24th Christmas Celtic Reading

December 26th, "Magnificat"

JANUARY 2022, SERMONS

January 2nd, "Encouragement, And Praise Falling From Your Lips" (Ephesians 1:15-23)

January 9th, "Jesus The Messiah" (John 20:30-31)

January 16th, "Dying For The Messiah" (Galatians 2:15-21)

January 23rd, "How Would You Recognize The Messiah?" (Luke 4:16-27)

January 30th, "What Are You Waiting For? You Are The Messiah!" (1 John 2:26-28)

MEDITATION AND PRAYER IN THE SANCTUARY

Jesus said that God's house is a house of prayer, and that "where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them" (Matthew 18:20).

Aldersgate is offering the use of our Sanctuary to individuals or families who wish to spend some reflective time in a sacred space, during office hours. (Monday-Friday, 8:30am-12:30pm, 815-654-3800)

Christ is with us always, wherever we are, but we hope that by opening up the Sanctuary for prayer and meditation, you will experience the blessing of Christ's presence in our house of prayer.

Some guidelines:

- Please refrain from using the Sanctuary if you have symptoms of illness.
- Please wear a face mask while in the church.
- Please do not bring food or beverages into the Sanctuary, except bottled water. (please take it out with you)

COMMITTEE CHAIRS: Please let the church office know when the various committees will be meeting so we can have the information on the calendar for the Weekly, the Squeek and the bulletins and website. For the Squeek in particular, our calendar is so empty that it may be eliminated from the Squeek altogether.

2021 CHURCH CONFERENCE will be Tuesday, December 7 at 6:30 PM in person at Aldersgate. The SPRC will meet at 5:45 PM on the same date.

LUNCH & LEISURE: Lunch & Leisure will meet again on Friday, December 17th, 11:30 am at the 3 Bs Restaurant, 7007 N. 2nd Street in Machesney Park. A sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board outside the church office. Or contact the office or Ken & Beth Whitford by Wednesday, December 15th if you are attending.

SPIRITUAL RESOURCE CENTER:

The Spiritual Resource Center (SRC) has a display of daily devotional books for the year. You are welcome to take one home for the entire year, or exchange it at any time. These books are normally on the book cart, top shelf, in the SRC. A full listing of the materials available (DVDs, books, CDs) is kept in the note book on the table in the SRC. Check it out this year to increase your daily devotion to God. Happy Reading, Listening, Viewing for 2022!

ALTAR FLOWERS: Nelson Flowers will provide altar flowers again as needed at a cost of \$25 with a Friday morning delivery. The signup sheet is on the bulletin board outside the office. You may also call or email the church office.

TOY MINISTRY: The Toy Ministry is in need of cardboard boxes about the size of a carton of copy paper.

Meetings and Events: December 13-December 19, 2021

Monday, December 13

Tuesday, December 14

Wednesday, December 15

Thursday, December 16

Deadline for January Squeek articles

Friday, December 17

Lunch & Leisure

11:30 AM

Saturday, December 18

Sunday, December 19

Sunday Worship Service (Indoors)

9:30 AM

HOSPITALIZATION - As hard as we try, we are not always aware of church members who are in the hospital. As such we cannot then visit a person who is sick or injured. We are not always contacted by the individual hospitals when someone from Aldersgate is a patient. If at all possible, please contact, or have someone else, contact the church when a hospitalization occurs.

ALDERSGATE JOYS: For all our answered prayers.

ALDERSGATE CONCERNS:

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS:

Those in the congregation, who are experiencing physical or emotional distress.

Barb Hoey

Rena Borgman

Covella Weller

Mark Hoey

Ron Niday

Sandy Wenig

Don O'Hea

Karla Burrows

David Levine

Pete Weller

Bill Rhodes

Rachel Baskerville

Bev Hollar

Marylon Cole

Jack Axford

Thomas Hardwick

Also please pray for people around the world, especially people who are suffering with Corona virus.

For medical and health workers, first responders, and volunteers

Names of persons will be maintained on the prayer list for three weeks. It may be determined to discontinue or be continued for an additional three weeks.

BIRTHDAYS THIS WEEK:

December 09

Madeline Roth

December 15

Bonnie Moore

December 16

Mary Lou Gaziano

December 17

Becky Taylor

December 18

Garrett Ingham

December 19

Jo Ann Goranson

December 19

Linda Earlywine

ANNIVERSARIES THIS WEEK:

None

