ALDERSGATE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

#598 **The GatePost** - The Monthly Newsletter of Aldersgate UMC January 1, 2019

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Spiritual Goals?

An invitation in 2019 to personally commit to:

Praying... for our leaders, members, and new people God wants us to bless.

Daring... to truly *CONNECT* (faithfully participate in Sunday services), *GROW* (join a small group that focuses on living more like Jesus), and *SERVE* (bless others by using our passions, gifts, and personalities).

Caring and Inspiring... We will face challenges, and we will need the care and inspiration of one another through *grace* (accepting one another's faults and assuming the best in others), *honesty* (openness about our own faults and honest, loving feedback to one another), and *encouragement* (breathe courage into one another and give each other the boost that we all need).

Sunday, January 6 - Epiphany of the Lord

Worship at 9am—Holy Communion
"New Year's Wishes" ~ Rev. Ken Suhr
~ Food Collection for Families Forward ~
Discovering Aldersgate, 10:30 am The Hub

Sunday, January 13 - 1st Sunday after the Epiphany

Family Worship at 9am
"Connecting Together" ~ Rev. Ken Suhr
Children ages 4th grade & up remain in worship with their families
Shepherd Recognition and Group Gatherings,
10:30, Fellowship Hall/The Hub
Zero Gravity (4th & 5th grades), 5:30 pm, Ed Bldg, Rm 8

Sunday, January 20 - 2nd Sunday after the Epiphany

Worship at 9am
"Growing Together" ~ Rev. Tim Ellington
~ Food Collection for Sunday Supper ~
Sunday Supper, 5:30 pm, St. Paul's Episcopal Church

Grow Sunday- January 20 - After worship on Jan. 20, join us in the Fellowship Hall to see our church's overall spiritual growth plan for 2019, and to learn about specific opportunities that will be available in 2019 to grow in grace and in the likeness of Jesus Christ with others.

Sunday, January 27 - 3rd Sunday after the Epiphany

Worship at 9am
"Serving Together" ~ Rev. Tim Ellington

Serve Sunday- January 27 - After worship on Jan. 27, join us in the Fellowship Hall to learn about specific ministries and service opportunities that are available inside and outside our church walls. We pray that you will be fruitful and fulfilled in your life in 2019, and hope that you can join us in bringing the help and hope of Jesus to others in Tustin, Orange County, and around the world in 2019.

Ministerial Staff

Rev. Ken Suhr, *Lead Pastor*
RevKen@aumctustin.org

Rev. Tim Ellington, *Teaching Pastor*
RevTim@aumctustin.org

Ministry Support Staff

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Annapianaorgana@aol.com
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Youth@aumctustin.org
UM Missionary in Cambodia, Rev. Andrew Lee
blog: www.Dreamcambodia.org

Aldersgate Children's Center

Cheyenne Cazares, *Director*
Aldersgatecc @earthlink.net

Church Office Hours

Monday – Friday:
9 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Closed: January 1 and January 21

The ***GatePost*** is a **monthly publication**
of Aldersgate United Methodist Church
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Materials for consideration for publication should be forwarded to:
Aldersgate United Methodist Church Attn: GatePost
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E-mail: newsletter@aumctustin.org

Articles Due to the Editor: Friday, January 18
Next Issue *MAILED* Friday, January 25

Facility Use

Please remember that **ALL GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS** using the Aldersgate facility **must** contact the church office and schedule their meetings, rehearsals and events on the Master Calendar. Using the Master Calendar avoids conflicts and confusion and insures that your meeting or event is set up properly with the necessary equipment.

Our facility is in **constant** use both internally and by outside groups. What you see on the Sunday bulletin calendar is only a small portion of the events and activities that are occurring during the week.

In addition, it is **VITALLY IMPORANT** to remember to close and lock all doors and windows when you adjourn. Thank you for your help in keeping our property secure!

PASTOR TIM'S THOUGHTS

A New Year, A New Start

Why do we celebrate New Year's Day? Why do we watch a giant ball drop in the middle of Time Square? Why do we set off fireworks at midnight?

On July 4th, we celebrate our nation's independence. On Christmas, we celebrate Jesus' birth. On January 1st, what do we celebrate? The start of a new year. Why is that a cause for celebration? We could say, "Bummer another year's gone by." But instead we say, "Yeah, another year's begun." Why?

I think we do so because there's something in us that wants a new start, something in us that longs to hit the reset button and have another go at this thing called life. G.K. Chesterton wrote, "The object of a new year is not that we should have a new year. It is that we should have a new soul."

New Year's Day gives us an opportunity to take stock of our lives, to do a soul check-up, and to start new habits and practices based on what we find. In this way, it's a great gift.

Early Methodists established a tradition of having a covenant renewal service, typically on New Year's Eve, as a way of starting off the year by saying to God: "We want to have a new soul. We want to renew our covenant with you. We want to recommit ourselves to be your people through the faithfulness and grace of Jesus Christ."

According to Henry David Thoreau, "In the long run, you hit only what you aim at. Therefore, you had better aim at something high."

These are good words to consider at the beginning of a new year. What are you aiming at in 2019? Is it something high? Scripture tells us time and time again, "Don't settle for too little. Don't sell yourself short. Aim high."

That's true for us individually and for us as a church. We, as a church, want to aim high in 2019 by seeking to connect, grow and serve in life-transforming ways. During our worship services in the month of January we'll be laying out our vision for the year as follows:

January 6 – New Year's Wishes
January 13 – Connect Sunday
January 20 – Grow Sunday
January 27 – Serve Sunday

We hope that you can join us for these worship services as we start the New Year by committing ourselves to God and dedicating ourselves to seeking first God's kingdom in 2019.

In Isaiah 43:19, God says, "See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?"

Here is to the new thing that God is going to do in 2019!

Happy New Year,

Pastor Tim

In Case You Missed It: Town Hall Meetings Summary

At a pair of town hall meetings held on Sunday, December 9th following worship, Pastor Ken and Pastor Tim reviewed ten Aldersgate UMC Goals for 2019. They emphasized that the goals are focused specifically on areas for improvement – not ministries and programs that are already working well, such as our Youth Ministry and Missions and Outreach work. Each of the goals are intended to either help strengthen Aldersgate or reach new people in new ways. Following the presentation, the pastors responded to questions and received feedback and suggestions.

Questions ranged from those about specific terminology (i.e., "corporate confession" and "inductive bible study") to more general inquiries about the status of the church administrator position and to what extent the new worship service congregation be integrated with the traditional worship congregation.

(continued on next page)

In Case You Missed It: Town Hall Meetings Summary *(continued from previous page)*

Suggestions made by members of the congregation included doing some outreach to children who grew up in our church (now adults) who have not come back since leaving college and/or starting families; developing the capacity to serve communion to homebound members; and publicizing the names of people working on each of the goals so members can know who to go to with their questions and comments in the future.

The following table summarizes the 10 goals and lists the key contacts for each.

Connect: Strengthen our connection with God and one another

1. Worship – Help people experience a personal connection with God during worship services. *Lead Contacts: Pastor Tim, Jan Hanson, and members of the Worship Team*
2. Communication – Improve communication within our church family. *Lead Contacts: Pastor Ken, Gail Kendall, and Administrative Staff*
3. Congregational Care – Rekindle the connection and care of members in the regional shepherd groups. *Lead Contacts: Pastor Ken, Jane Brummett, Suzzi Marquis, Phyllis Gavitt*

Grow: Implement a Discipleship Pathway

4. Groups – Enhance the depth and number of weekly reflection and application groups. *Lead Contacts: Pastor Ken and Small Group Leaders*
5. Classes – Offer core discipleship classes and other seasonal and topical classes. *Lead Contacts: Pastor Tim and Class Leaders*
   - 101 Classes focused on Connecting, Growing and Serving
   - Lenten and Advent Studies
   - Inductive Bible Study; classes addressing relevant topics
6. Pastors' Discipleship Groups – Develop weekly cohort gatherings led by a pastor to pray, study, apply and share the knowledge and blessings received from the group. *Lead Contacts: Pastor Ken and Pastor Tim*

Serve: Bless New People in Our Community and World

7. Children's Center Connection – Work with the Children's Center Director to develop ways to connect with and bless the families and staff of the Children's Center. *Lead Contacts: Pastor Tim and Cheyenne Cazares*
8. New Worship Service. *Lead Contacts: Pastor Tim; Launch Team—Cindy Ellington, Sunnie Suhr, Chris Bell, Michael Choi, Don and Amber Jenkins, Colin and Jennifer Waterson, Melissa Astbury, Esther Ro*
   - Develop the core launch team to both design a new service and be a discipleship community themselves.
   - Implement a new worship service designed for those who are looking for God and a community with whom they can connect, grow and serve together.
9. Seniors Outreach for New Seniors – Empower the seniors of our church to develop gatherings and bless the lonely seniors in our community and seniors who have faith questions as they enter their final years . *Lead Contacts: Pastor Ken, Jack Murrieta, Dave Stuart*
10. Communicating and Assimilating New People. *Lead Contacts: Pastor Ken, Administrative Staff, Danielle Murrieta*
    - Equip our members to communicate what is happening in the ministries of our church to new people using their personal networks.
    - Utilize social media to engage with and invite new people to upcoming opportunities.
    - Welcome and follow up with invitational next steps to everyone who participates in any ministry gathering.

Please contact Pastor Ken, Pastor Tim, or any of the other lead contacts if you have any questions or wish to provide additional feedback on the goals and direction for 2019.

If you need prayers for yourself, a family member or a friend, you are invited to contact:

The Church Office
at (714) 544-3653

All prayer requests are given to the pastors and office staff, who pray together weekly. Members of the prayer chain pray specifically for those who ask for prayers for themselves and/or others. If you are interested in becoming a member of the prayer chain, please contact the church office.

Let us support you in prayer!

GRIEFSHARE®

A new 13-week session of Grief Share begins January 6, 2019. The group meets on Sundays at 2:30pm in the Church Library.

GriefShare is designed to help anyone experiencing grief or loss in their life. Whether the loss is through death or some other life loss—job, home, or anything that causes grief, Grief Share can help with coping with the tenderness of that loss. The group is open to anyone who can use help caring for their loss. Contact the church office for more information (714) 544-3653

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY......meets on the **1st and 3rd** Wednesdays of each month **from 3pm to 5pm in the Junior High Room.** If you are interested in being part of this important and meaningful ministry, please feel free to attend a meeting—even if you have no experience, there are knitters and crocheters willing to help those that are just getting started. Please feel free to contact the church office if you have any questions or need further information about the group.

BEFRIENDER MINISTERS

BEFRIENDER MINISTRY
A Listening Presence

The BeFriender ministry of Aldersgate is a listening presence. This ministry is not a ministry of "doing", but of "being," - being present and listening quietly. At times, everyone can be on a difficult journey and needs a caring companion who will listen, empathize, and be a reminder of a caring, faith community. All requests and meetings are confidential. This ministry comes under the umbrella of the Care and Nurture team. If you are interested, or know of someone who might be, do not hesitate to call the church office at (714) 544-3653.

Bishop Hagiya's Christmas Message 2018

We here in the California-Pacific Conference have experienced some challenging and difficult times recently. Life is always a challenge, but sometimes we experience tragedy at a rate far beyond what is normal and natural. Such has been our recent experiences.

With the global ecological destruction, our wildfires have been severe throughout California. We have witnessed this devastation firsthand in our Northern areas and in the Malibu Canyon. Although our UMC churches were saved from burning, some of our local church members lost homes and property in the fire's wake. We praise God that it was not worse, but we continue to keep all of those who lost homes and possessions in our prayer.

We have also discovered we are far from immune to mass shootings, and the senseless loss of life at the Borderline Bar and Grill hits all too close to home. A former young adult member of our UMC, Noel Sparks was one of the victims, and her Mother still attends our Westlake Village UMC. Our hearts grieve for this family, as well as the other families who lost loved ones in this mass shooting. We still have very few answers to why this all happened, and theologically there are no easy and simple responses. Perhaps our own tears mirror what God is experiencing in this tragedy.

We have lost some of the saints and giants of our annual conference. Jim Brewster, Ana Maria Dominguez, Ken McMillan, Emilio Müeller, Ilse Peetz, and Bob Shepard just to name a few. Although we celebrate their lives, we and their families will miss them greatly. We know that the glory of eternal life will be theirs, but it still stings to not have them among us physically.

Finally, we live amidst the uncertainty of what will happen to our denomination at the Special Called Session in February. At stake is a viable future or perhaps the split of our church and we just do not know what direction our elected delegates will take. The uncertainty and fear are running across our world-wide church and we struggle to keep our anxiety in check.

With these dark clouds hovering over us, this Advent and Christmas season comes to us, perhaps right on time. We need to remember the uncertainty and fear of Mary and Joseph in their time. We also need to remember their response: Against fear, it was not necessarily courage, but faith. Courage is overrated, but faith is so grounded in God that it is the perfect foil to fear. If we remain faithful to God, there will be a positive way forward for all of us, and we need not fear anything.

When I was a young seminary student studying at Claremont, my maternal family faced a very bleak Christmas. Three of the siblings, including my Mom had all died in their early 40's, and my Uncle's unexpected death left a fairly new widow and an unborn child he would never know. How to make sense of this to our family was a theological challenge for a young seminarian. Sitting in a cold living room, lamenting our latest loss, I will never forget the emptiness and sorrow of that cold December day. Yet, I felt deep in my soul that God had not abandoned us, and we would be able to pick up the pieces of our family life.

Through the years, each of the cousins would marry and have children of their own. From that sad family day with just a few of us survivors would spring dozens upon dozens of grandchildren, children and signs of new life. From the despair and loneliness God would provide joy and newness.

Let us remember what is about to spring forth: The symbolic birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ who brings hope, love and faith to all! We cannot, nor should not try to escape the pain of our recent losses, but we can be a people of hope. We can respond to fear and sadness with faith. We can demonstrate to all who can see that we are most of all a people of faith, and that faith is the greatest power in all the world!

Be the Hope,
Bishop Grant J. Hagiya
Los Angeles Area Resident Bishop

Faith

Youth

Hello Everyone!

We had a great month of December together! We sang Christmas carols to our homebound church members at their homes and at Sunrise Senior Center. We also had our annual Christmas progressive dinner and white elephant gift exchange. Thank you to the McCroskeys, the Ros, and the Chahbazians for hosting our stops, and thank you to the drivers for taking us from house to house. It is always such a great event, and the youth have a great time together!

Our Confirmation Class continues on Wednesdays with seven of our youth, Pastor Tim, Courtney, and me. In December we studied prayer, and what it means to be a member of a church body. We've had some great discussions and activities with our youth and their mentors. They are awesome!

The youth's Advent Bible studies sent well, too. We enjoy our time together with each other and with God's word. Thanks to all of our adult Bible study volunteers for all your love, help, and support of this important ministry in the life of our youth.

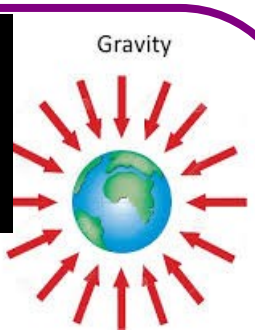
We have been blessed with another incredible year of fellowship together! We've been on mission trips to Houston and to the Navajo Nation. We've been to camps, we've served those in need, we've participated in worship through song, dance, liturgy, and acolyting, we've incorporated more adults to build relationships with our youth, we had a great confirmation class, we had an incredible Youth Sunday, and we continue to build our relationships with God and Christ and with each other! Blessed to be a blessing, and to be the hands of Christ to all! Here's to a great 2019! Amen!

Blessings,
Scott Wilmoth
Director of Youth Ministries

Family Ministries

Kim Wilmoth, Family Ministries Director

zero gravity!



Calling all 4th and 5th graders
Let's celebrate the new year before heading back to school. Come to Zero Gravity. We will have pizza, make dessert and bring in the new year with fun and games.

Sun, 1/6 • 5:30-7:00 • Room 8

Can't wait to see you there!! Bring a friend!

The more the merrier!
Questions: Families@aumctustin.org

Reverse Advent Calendar UPDATE

As of December 21, we have received many baskets full of requested donated items that are much needed! Please pray for the recipients as well as the safe delivery of all items to occur on December 24. A full report including pictures will be included in next month's issue. Thank you!

O***lder youth and young adults living independently are the recipients of this year's donations; they are participating in a program provided by Olive Crest***.

OLIVE CREST
Strong Families, Safe Kids

2019 Important Dates

Vacation Bible School—June 24 to June 28
Junior High SSP—June 30 to July 6
Senior High Houston Rebuild Mission Trip—June 30 to July 6
Plan ahead for fun and meaningful volunteer opportunities next summer!

Children's Center News!

Happy 25th Anniversary, Ms. Jaime P., Assistant Director! We are thankful for the gifts and love that Jaime brings to Aldersgate. Take a moment to tell her how much you appreciate her service.

School closed—January 1 and 21.

Meet the Artist!

Betty Anne Kreutziger

January 24, 2019
10:00 to noon, Junior High Room

Refreshments will be served.

Please join us to meet an artist in our midst. Betty Anne Kreutziger grew up in Philadelphia and was encouraged from an early age to follow her love of painting and drawing. After graduating from Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs, N.Y. with a B.S in Art Education, she has taught art for many years. Betty Anne will discuss how she creates a painting from the small black and white sketch to the finished product. She is a member of and has exhibited with Laguna Plein Air Painters and Southern California Plein Air Painters.

MISSION OUTREACH

Mission Opportunity—UMCOR West

July 15-19, 2019

January 20 (new date) Informational meeting

We have 15 people signed up to participate in this exciting mission trip experience in July, and we have openings for 5 more. I will be opening this opportunity up to University UMC in January if we still have openings by the end of this month.

The reservation fee for a week of volunteering is $25 per person, to be paid back to the Aldersgate Adult Missions Fund, if you are able, before July. Members of the congregation are invited to reimburse this fund as well. Please write out your check to the church, with Adult Mission Trip Fund/UMCOR West in the memo.

Lodging has been reserved for up to 20 people at Hilltop House, a house owned by Hilltop UMC in Sandy, UT (15 miles from the depot). The cost for lodging is a donation of $50 to $100 per day for the group, which will be divided up among participants who are able. The house has a full kitchen, so we can make breakfast, prepare lunch for the depot, and cook dinner, or eat out. (We will discuss details at the January meeting). The total cost for a week of volunteering at UMCOR Depot West is $55 to $85, plus transportation and food, depending on how many people are staying at Hilltop House. Some participants have made alternate lodging arrangements.

Since resources are limited at UMCOR Depot West, monetary donations for project materials are suggested (a donation of $50 per volunteer is recommended). Missions and Outreach will be using some of our funds to cover the cost of the donation. Participants or other members of the congregation are invited to reimburse this fund. Please write your check out to the church with Mission & Outreach/UMCOR West in the memo.

We will have an informational meeting after church on January 20 (The Hub). The purpose of the meeting is to pass out forms, discuss logistics, answer questions, and build excitement for our adventure! To RSVP for the meeting and for more information, please contact the church office at (714) 544-3653.

Serve Sunday—January 27, 2019

On this special day, you will have the opportunity to hear stories of how people of our church are currently serving in our community. One such organization is SABIL USA. Sabil USA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit community development organization that provides services to refugees and the homeless population in Orange County. Volunteering at their pantry or becoming a tutor are just two ways in which you can serve.

On January 27, look for the donation table where you can drop off much needed items to assist SABIL's clientele (items not covered by SNAP (food stamps)).

- Diapers - sizes 3 to 6
- Hand sanitizer
- Cleaning supplies
- Toilet paper
- Dishwashing soap
- Male shaving supplies
- Shampoo/conditioner
- Shower soap/body wash
- Paper towels
- Laundry soap
- Feminine Hygiene supplies

National Human Trafficking Awareness & Prevention Month

ENGAGE TOGETHER: What Action Shall We Take in 2019?

Human trafficking is modern-day slavery and involves the use of force, fraud, or coercion to obtain some type of labor or commercial sex act. *(Blue Ribbon Campaign definition)*

Your Aldersgate Abolitionists want to continue to provide opportunity and direction for our church in 2019 to define what we want to do. We have several ideas to bring to our clergy and members and are especially looking for a **NEW LEADER** to take on this important direction. Some of the things we have thought about doing include the following actions:

- Study and use the toolkit from the Orange County Human Trafficking Taskforce Faith Work Group
- Implement the Social Media Campaign presented by the Blue Ribbon group in Orange County
- Participate in the Vanguard Prayer Vigil on January 24, 2019
- Share updated information on the Aldersgate website during January 2019
- Collect products, gift cards or other needed items for one of the local agencies
- **… your ideas and interests?**

Help us keep up our momentum and continue to be a "part of the solution" Please let our committee members (Cathy Standiford, Barbara Kynoch, Lynda Bayless, Paul Baker, Pastor Ken, Pastor Tim) or me know if you are interested in being the new Abolitionist Committee leader. We will schedule an Information meeting early in the Year! Blessings to all for your continued support.

Dawn Marie Lemonds, Aldersgate Abolitionist Chair

Since 2016, the month of **January** has been declared as National Prevention of Slavery and Human Trafficking month. In 2014, a small, passionate group of Aldersgate members, with leadership and support of our pastors, have brought the issue of Human Slavery to the congregation through actions such as:

- Sharing information from the pulpit
- Providing prayer request support for those vulnerable, survivors, victims, and the perpetrators and abusers for change
- Writing articles for the newsletter and bulletin
- Conducting church group public seminars and presentations
- Presenting movie nights with discussion
- Coordinating youth education with Vanguard University's Live2Free
- Collecting donations and products for local agencies like Salvation Army, Lighthouse, and Vanguard University's Live2Free
- Volunteering and attending human trafficking conferences, speaking at the CalPac conference laity meeting, and participating in marches and prayer vigils
- Creating a public awareness campaign by posting lawn signs in Tustin in January

Every year, millions of men, women, and children are trafficked in countries around the world, including the United States. It is estimated that human trafficking generates many billions of dollars of profit per year, second only to drug trafficking as the most profitable form of transnational crime.

Human trafficking is a hidden crime as victims rarely come forward to seek help because of language barriers, fear of the traffickers, and/or fear of law enforcement.

Sadly, the statistics continue to rise and more vulnerable people, particularly women and girls, are affected by this heinous crime. It is particularly disturbing to know that girls who are or have been in the foster care system represent a huge percentage of those affected.

On the good news side, we are pleased to report that through advocacy, action and prayer positive changes have been made as people in our community and country understand that this is HAPPENING HERE not just in other countries, and happening to U.S. citizens even more than to foreign nationals.

- Laws have been changed nationally and in our state with tougher penalties and broader definition of trafficking
- California requires education about human trafficking
- Greater resources are available, but not nearly enough

MISSION OUTREACH

Environmental Ministries

Gary Stenberg

Almost 50 years ago I reported to my first duty fire station as a newly hired firefighter with the California Division of Forestry (now called CAL-FIRE). Things were different back then. In Southern California we had a "Fire Season" that ran from the end of June to the first rains in November. Northern California was already gearing for winter by October when they would send down the "Santana Taskforce"; a bunch of firefighters and fire engines to help out during our season of Santa Ana winds. Now things have changed. Fire season for California is all year round.

Why are things so much worse now? Two things have occurred that are causing more fires. In 1969 our population was primarily in the flatlands. By 2000, we had moved into what is now called the "Wildland-Urban Interface." Most wildland fires are human caused, either by accident or intentionally. More people equals the potential for more fire starts. The next thing that has changed is our weather patterns. We are warmer and drier over the course of each year. Santa Ana winds can crop up at any time now, even in January.

The first thing we must do is to recognize the fact that YES, it can happen to us. Fire can affect us. Tustin, Anaheim Hills, Cowan Heights, Irvine have all experienced wildland fires in the past and will again in the future. What can we do to save our property and perhaps even our lives? The Orange County Fire Authority recommends the following:

Ready Protect your home by taking steps to reduce the risk. NO shingle roofs, NO accumulation of combustible debris near your house, YES to fire resistive plants. YES to a defensible space between your house and the brush.

Set Prepare yourself to be able to leave if needed. Have a GO bag of things you might need on the road such as clothes, medicines, and personal items. Have a family emergency plan on how to get out of the area and where to meet up later. Don't forget to bring phone numbers.

Go If the fire authority says evacuate, don't wait, GO. In fact, consider going early. You know what traffic is like on a normal day. It's a whole lot worse during a last-minute evacuation. Besides, you get in the way of the fire engines.

There is a current set of insurance company commercials on television that says, "We know a thing or two because we've seen a thing or two." During my 42-year career, I can say the same. The 1983 Euclid Fire in Anaheim near the intersection of Euclid and Ball Road demonstrated that shake shingle roofs were bad, even in the middle of a city. The 1993 Laguna Beach Fire proved that clearing vegetation away from structures was critical. When given two houses, one with vegetation cleared and one without, a choice needs to be made by fire officers. I made that choice picking a house with vegetation removed from around it. We protected that house all night long while the house immediately to the north burned to the ground. The fire along that street was stopped at the house we protected. The 1993 Laguna Beach Fire also proved the benefit of early evacuation. The entire city of Laguna Beach was evacuated early during the fire. Not a single life was lost and no one was even seriously hurt. **Ready…Set…Go… works!** Let it work for you.

Opportunities and Events

Sunday Supper Christmas Dinner THANK YOU

It truly took a village! Our amazing volunteers and donors made the December 16 Christmas dinner memorable for 205 community guests. We had over 300 gift cards and over 100 volunteers. It was a beautiful collaboration of all six Sunday Supper congregations. Our volunteers had amazing energy, creative ideas, can-do attitudes, and the great welcoming spirit of Christmas. From beautiful decorations, to two days of food prep, to festive hats and shirts, to stockings for the kids, to dishwashing, to conversations with guests, to donating gift cards, to pouring hot chocolate and beverages, to baking cookies, to carrying out the trash, to cleaning up and moving tables, to handing out groceries, our volunteers were God's light in the season of Advent and Hanukkah, and, for many, tough times.

Thank you, too, for providing $20 gift cards for our guests. They truly look forward to receiving them and we had enough leftover to give away on December 23.

Ann DiPlacito

Aldersgate Sunday Supper Coordinator

Opportunities and Events

WOMEN'S RETREAT

RENEW • RESTORE • REFRESH

All women of AUMC are invited to attend. This will be an opportunity to "renew, restore, and refresh" our bodies, minds, and souls, as we spend time with one another and with God in a special retreat setting.

When: Saturday, March 2, 11:00 am thru Sunday, March 3, 11:30 a.m.
Where: Aldersgate Retreat Center, Pacific Palisades
Cost: $100.00**, which includes an overnight stay, and three meals. (Scholarships available.)
Leaders: Rev. Debbie Gara and Rev. Linda Robison

Registration will begin **Sunday, January 6** on the church patio.

***Special Note about costs: As noted above, we are requesting a $100 registration fee from each participant. That said, we will **never** decline any participant due to lack of funds. In addition, the ACTUAL cost for the retreat center and meals is $165 per person. You can see that there is a discrepancy between what we are charging and what we have to pay the retreat center. As your circumstances allow, please consider giving an extra donation beyond your retreat registration so that we can welcome those unable to pay and so that we can meet the actual costs of the retreat. God bless you for your generosity!*

God's Refuge and Strength—Now meeting on Wednesdays, 4:30-6:00, Room 7

The first God's Refuge and Strength meeting in 2019 will be January 9. Beginning in February, we will meet the first Wednesday of each month. This is a conversational gathering for women who have survived and/or are concerned about sexual assault and harassment in our society and world. This is safe space within the walls of our church for women to come together to share our stories, express our current anxieties, and lift each other up in prayer and support each other. Cindy Ellington and Cathy Standiford will co-facilitate.

Sharing Our Stories (SOS)

Please mark Thursday, January 17, 2019, on your calendar. SOS will welcome Jim Hartley to share his thoughts on his faith, family, and friends.

Jim will tell us how scouting got him into endurance sports and how his engineering career and military service blended together.

Please join us as we welcome Jim in the HUB at 10:00 AM. Save these future SOS dates:

March 21 with Dick Behn

May 16 with Suzzi Marquis

See you then,
Pat Downie, Jeannie Wright, and Sue Bishop

Memorial Rose Garden Workers Needed

It is with great appreciation that we thank Lynda Bayless for all of her hard work and vision in maintaining our Memorial Rose Garden (which is to the east side of the Sanctuary outside the windows, if you are unfamiliar with its location.)

Lynda has been working at keeping the garden weed and pest free for the past several years, ensuring that it continues as a restful and respectful space in memory of those who have gone on before. Lynda now finds that the work is more challenging than her health can endure, so it is time to hand the responsibilities off to a new set of hands.

Lynda is willing to offer her experience as a resource for the new gardener. If this sounds like a service that you can provide to your church family, please call the church office and speak to Gail Kendall (714-544-3653) or email her at admin@aumctustin.org.

January 16 in The Hub

Hope Circle

Hope Circle will meet on Wednesday, January 16, 2019 at 9:30 am in The Hub. Ruth McQuerry will finish telling the story of her life. Hope to see you there.

January 7 in Fellowship Hall

Elizabeth Circle

Elizabeth Circle will meet on Monday, January 7 at 6:45 in Fellowship Hall for Game Night. Please bring diapers for our charity project, HOPE.

ALDERSGATE
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
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www.aumctustin.org
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Sunday Schedule

* Worship at 9am *
* Childcare provided for infants & toddlers starting at 8:30am
Christian Education for children offered after Children's Moment in worship *

ALDERSGATE MOTTO

"We're Here for Good"

Purpose:

To welcome, accept and equip our community to share Christ's love in meaningful service.

We are guided by these principles:

- **Faith grounded in Scripture**
- **Spiritual Curiosity**
- **Gratitude**
- **Inclusion**
- **Meaningful Relationships**
- **Accountability**
- **Love and Grace**
- **Prayer**