ALDERSGATE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

#608 **The GatePost** - The Monthly Newsletter of Aldersgate UMC December 2019

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IN THIS ISSUE:

Pastor's Page	Pg 2
Prayers / Prayer Shawl/ GriefShare/BeFriender	Pg 3
Youth News	Pg 4
Family Ministries	Pg 5
Environmental Ministries	Pg 6
Missions/Outreach	Pg 7-8
Opportunities & Events	Pgs 9-11

Sunday, December 1
Worship Service at 9:00 a.m.
Sermon: "Hope"
Scripture: Luke 1: 5-25
Communion
Food Collection for Families Forward
CONNECT Worship Service
11:00 a.m.—Sanctuary
4:30 p.m. Advent Festival & Caroling
Ed Building, Upstairs (see Pg 5)

Sunday, December 8
Family Worship at 9:00 a.m.
Sermon: "Peace"
Scripture: Luke 1: 26-38
CONNECT Worship Service
11:00 a.m.—Sanctuary

Sunday, December 15
Worship Service at 9:00 a.m.
Christmas Cantata:
"The Winter Rose"
By Joseph M. Martin & Pamela Martin
Presented by
The Chancel Choir
Food Collection for Sunday Supper
CONNECT Worship Service
11:00 a.m.—Sanctuary
Sunday Supper—5:00 p.m. Aldersgate Serving!

Sunday, December 22
Worship Service at 9:00 a.m.
Sermon: "Love"
Scripture: 1 John 4: 7-11
CONNECT Worship Service
11:00 a.m.—Fellowship Hall

Tuesday, December 24
Christmas Eve
Family Worship— 4:30 p.m.
Candles & Carols Worship—7:00 p.m.
Candles, Carols & Communion
10:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 29
Worship Service at 9:00 a.m.
Sermon: "The Magi's Gift"
Scripture: Matthew 2: 1-12
CONNECT Worship Service
11:00 a.m.—Fellowship Hall

Pastor Ken's Connection

Blessed Advent, Aldersgate family and friends!

As we prepare to celebrate Thanksgiving and the coming Advent season, I am so thankful for our Aldersgate church family, and I continue to give thanks to God for the convergence of all our lives together! ***So nobody walks alone!*** I know there are many who are bothered by Christmas decorations being put up in October, and I am right there with you. In fact, a recent cartoon expressed the feelings of many, "Stay in your lane!" ☺

But in a world where longing, loneliness, restlessness, divisiveness and despair abound, the intrusion of unity, hope, peace, joy, and love are a welcome "intrusion"... like the very first Christmas.

"The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned… For to us a child is born, to us a son is given… And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."-Isaiah 9:2,6-7

This Advent, in the midst of all the hustle and bustle, gatherings and programs, let us take time to remember and embrace the ONE who came to us not in mere words and promises, but in the flesh… Emmanuel, God with us! Our church's vision, ***So nobody walks alone***, is based in the reality that we have a God who has not only come to bring light and save the world, but this God is with us every step of the way. God is good! And God is ***here***!

I recently heard of a father who had prepared a Christmas gift for his troubled and estranged daughter last Christmas, but the daughter never came around. So, there the Christmas gift still sits today, waiting to be opened. I'm praying she will come and open her gift this Christmas, and I'm praying that we will all open our Abba Father's greatest gift to us, Jesus, God's life-giving presence that, as Isaiah 9 reminds us, brings us eternal light, counsel, strength, comfort, and ultimate peace for our souls.

Please prayerfully read through our December Gatepost, and reflect on ways that you can not only experience, but also share the presence of Jesus with others this December. Our Christmas Miracle Offering recipients are our Zoe orphans in Rwanda, our Cambodian missionary, Rev. Andrew Lee, the Live to Free program fighting human trafficking and AUMC facility improvements in support of the many Aldersgate and community groups who use our facilities weekly.

God bless you, Aldersgate family and friends! May you experience the sweet *intrusion* of Jesus this Christmas season, and especially for those who are feeling alone, may God's presence, love and light shine through your words, presence and love.

In Christ's ever-present and life-giving love,

Pastor Ken

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

The Church Office

(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®

Grief Share is on a break after completing the Surviving the Holidays session. The next regularly scheduled session begins on Sunday, January 5, 2020, at 2:30 p.m. in the Church Library. **Check GriefShare Website for more info: www.griefshare.org**

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 just getting started. Please feel free to contact the church office if you have any questions or need further information about the group.

BEFRIENDER—LISTENING PRESENCE

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 contact the church office.

Greetings!

We had a wonderful fall retreat in November! Gathering at the Aldersgate Retreat Center, we planned for 2020, discussed how things are going on Sunday morning, made cookies, watched a beautiful sunset, worshipped, sang, and we continued to build relationships with each other and with God and Christ. Thank you to Terri Rhodes, Kim Wilmoth, and Pastor Ken for joining us at the Aldersgate Retreat Center! We look forward to our time there together again!

Our confirmation class is going really well, and our youth and mentors are having a good time growing in faith together. We have monthly youth and mentor TGIW dinners together, and we enjoy breaking bread and being in relationship with God and each other.

2019 was an incredible year! We served many meals to the homeless. We served others in Houston, Texas and in Smith River. We sent many youth to summer camps as campers and staff members. We had great Bible studies, and we shared ideas about worship that were incorporated into our "Connect" service. We had two retreats at the Aldersgate Retreat Center. One as a working weekend to paint their basement, and the other to plan for our year ahead. We had an incredible Youth Sunday worship service, and we confirmed seven youth to become members of the church! We broke bread together, we played together, we served together, we loved each other, and we grew in our faith together!

Thank you to our parents for your love and support, and thank you to the congregation for your guidance and love! We look forward to a great 2020 together!

Blessings

Scott Wilmoth

Director of Youth Ministries

Location Change

Family Ministries

Kim Wilmoth, Family Ministries Director

JOIN US 12/1 FOR

Advent Festival & Caroling

COME ONE, COME ALL.

We are combining our Advent Festival and Caroling to one fun night!

A time for all to gather and prepare as we enter the Advent Season.

Sunday, December 1st

From **4:30 to 6:00;** all events will be UPSTAIRS in the Education Building.

- In The Den (Room 7) ~ Crafts for all ages and a special story time.
- In Room 8 ~ Pizza, conversation and craft-making for homebound members.
- In Room 6 ~ Hot Chocolate Bar and Cookies…
- Learn about our mission this advent season of filling baskets for youth in the foster system who have aged out.
- At 6:00 we will gather in the DEN to practice our Christmas Carols, then we will head out to sing to our homebound members. Singing should be done about 7:15
- Remember to dress festively!

Reverse Advent Calendar

A 'Reverse Advent Calendar,' is a project that encourages individuals and families to ***give*** rather than to ***get***,– giving to those most in need during a season in which we celebrate a lowly newborn.
Reverse Advent Calendars work by filling them each day of Advent with the needed/listed items. Last year was such a huge success and our baskets were so appreciated that we are collaborating with Olive Crest again this year. We will be collecting needed items for older youth and young adults with relationship to Olive Crest who are living independently.

If you are not able to attend the Advent Festival, please stop by the family ministries table on the patio to collect a basket and calendar with suggested items to include.

Calling all sheep and shepherds!!

The 4:30 Christmas Eve service will have a re-enactment of the Christmas story. There are parts for anyone who would like to participate. There are no rehearsals and no speaking parts. We need sheep, shepherds, angels, donkeys, wise men and a star. Please stop by the family ministries table on Sunday to sign up or you can email families@aumctustin.org. If you are a 4th or 5th grader, please let me know if you are interested in reading. Older elementary youngsters will narrate the story.

"Green" Christmas Gift Suggestions

Environmental Ministries –
"Caring for God's Creation"
By Sylvia Williams

Eco Stars Recycled Crayons: 20 star-shaped crayons in a box. Made in the U.S. with 100% recycled non-toxic material. This and a pack of recycled paper to color on is a perfect gift for young children. $12.90 at https://smile.amazon.com

Flower seeds - a great stocking-stuffer for **ALL AGES:** The Sierra Club is offering a **"Bee Feed Seed Packet"** for only 50 cents! Pollinators—and people— will love the flowers! https://store.sierraclub.org/bee-feed-seed-packet-p274.aspx

Book - **"Beyond Debate: Answers to 50 Misconceptions on Climate Change":**
By Orange County scientist Shahir Masri, Ph.D., this book makes climate change easy to understand---and offers hope for the future. At bookstores, Amazon, and directly from the publisher: https://www.docksidesailingpress.com

Orange County native plants - choose from a variety of native plants at Roger's Gardens in Newport Beach, and then stroll through their beautiful Christmas boutiques. Native plants are drought tolerant and benefit local birds, bees, and butterflies. "Restore nature one garden at a time" https://www.calscape.org

Animal theme T-shirts and gifts - the World Wildlife Fund offers a creative selection of whimsical apparel and accessories "free with a donation of $55". https://gifts.worldwildlife.org/gift-center

Personalized, Reusable Water Bottles - give something that can be appreciated over and over again while helping save the planet. The metal bottles are my personal favorite. They can be found on multiple web sites but if you're also looking to support local crafters, shop https://www.etsy.com

Zero Waste Starter Kit - this gift from Eco Box contains reusable straws, a travel cup, a bamboo toothbrush and more. Contents are made to be reusable, plastic free, and some items are even biodegradable. This item can be purchased at https://smile.amazon.com

Notes from the Family...

Patty Miller would like to thank *everyone in the congregation* for the kind and loving Care Cards she recently received. You really lifted her spirits! Patty said, "This is why Aldersgate is so wonderful—*all the love*!"

MISSION OUTREACH

FAMILY PROMISE MINISTRY
December Rotation
Week of December 8—15

Your next opportunity to participate in a hosting week for Family Promise will be December 8-15. Mark your calendar and prayerfully consider how you might take part. For more information about Family Promise Orange County and how Aldersgate supports their emergency housing program, check their website (www.familypromiseorangecounty.org) or contact Dave Kendall (see directory).

And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

Matthew 25:40

LEAP Reading Intervention Program
Needs Volunteers

LEAP is a free, nonprofit after-school program offered at four Tustin Unified School District elementary schools (Beswick, Estock, Heideman and Nelson). It was started almost 20 years ago by St. Paul's Episcopal church to ensure that economically disadvantaged students who were struggling with reading had access to additional support. The program is so successful that TUSD partners with LEAP to enable more students to benefit from the program. Volunteers receive training and make a weekly commitment to working after school with two groups of 4 students each for an hour with each group. Books, work sheets, notebooks, etc. are provided to each student and volunteer. This is my fourth year as a volunteer with LEAP – it is a very rewarding way to help others and the students add joy to my week. If you are interested look at the website: leapintoaction.org or contact Sally Parkin (Executive director at 714.225.2756 or at sallyparkin@leaplearningcenter.org or you can contact me for questions about being a volunteer, Jackie Powell (see directory).

Fair Trade Alternative Christmas Marketplace - Thank you!

Thank you to everyone who did their "holiday shopping with a conscience" at the Fair Trade Alternative Christmas Marketplace on November 17. Your donations and purchases helped support small-scale artisans and farmers, empower women, celebrate potential, and end poverty. More specifically, the following list shows each organization you supported, its mission, and the results of your purchases, donations, and interest.

BeadforLife – *Change lives with recycled paper beaded jewelry that supports women working their way out of poverty. www.beadforlife.org 303-554-5901* **($150)**

Cokesbury Fair Trade – *One heart at a time, build a better world www.cokesbury.com 844-956-0259* ; **Equal Exchange** – *Contributing to a more equitable, democratic, and sustainable world*; and **Serrv (UM Committee on Relief**) www.serrv.org 800-423-0071 – *An ethical difference, fair trade gifts and crafts from a range of countries.* **($300+)**.

Concern America – *Transforming need into self-sufficiency. www.concernamerica.org 800-266-2376* **($723.50)**.

Good Stuff Coffee – *Leave a great taste in your soul help former foster youth support themselves for life!* **(sold out of all the products brought to our event)**

Grace Children's Hospital – *Save a child's life: become a partner in grade today!* **($300+)**.

Guatemala Project – *Mutuality, cultural exchange, and indigenous self-determination. www.cprguatemalaproject.org 520-885-7292* **($1,175)**.

Habitat for Humanity – *Empowering families to help themselves. www.habitat.org 800-461-9330* **($40 + volunteer sign-ups)**.

Heavenly Treasures: Shop with a Mission – *Every product represents a changed life. www.heavenlytreasures.org 626-963-7717* **($1,942)**.

Heifer International – *Ending hunger and poverty; your animal donation will support the lives of families in need. www.heifer.org 619-548-3150* **($100+)**

International Sanctuary: Purpose Jewelry – *Empowering girls and women escaping human trafficking to embrace their true identity and worth. www.internationalsanctuary.com 949-752-7788* **($800).**

Live2Free – *Recognizes the dignity of the individual and the responsibility of consumers to slow the demand that drives modern day slavery* **(information handed out)**.

St. Joseph's Indian School – *Helping Native American families since 1927* **($150**).

Thank you to all the Fair Trade vendors and representatives of organizations who participated in the Fair Trade Alternative Christmas Marketplace and generously donated door prizes.
Thank you to everyone on Missions and Outreach who helped with planning, organizing, and running this event. **Thank you** to Aldersgate United Methodist Church pastors, staff, and members who helped with the finances, flyers, setup, sales, and promotion. **Thank you especially** to all the shoppers, from the church and community, who generously offered your time and treasure to support Fair Trade and to make a difference for people and communities around the world.

Joyce Stenberg, Mission/Outreach Chair

MISSION OUTREACH

TGIW in DECEMBER

Thank Goodness It's Wednesday Dinners December will be on Wednesdays, December 4 and 18, at 6:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Everyone is welcome. Cost is $5 per person, max of $15 per family.

Cooking Slots available: The rotation of volunteer cooks can always use extra hands. If you are interested in serving in this way, please contact the church office (714) 544-3653.

God's Refuge and Strength

will meet Wednesday, 12/4, from 4:30-6pm in Room 7. 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 are co-facilitators.

Christmas Poinsettias 2019

In celebration of Christmas, the Sanctuary will be decorated with Poinsettias.
If you would like to have a plant designated in memory or honor of a loved one, please indicate below. The listing of those designations will be included as an insert in the bulletins of all Christmas Eve services. These are beautiful, florist quality plants. The cost of each plant is $10.00.

Please return this order form to the church office by **Monday, December 15, 2019**
or place in the offering plate by **Sunday, December 14**

Order for Poinsettias

I would like to order _____ Poinsettias for Christmas. Check to AUMC for $ _____ enclosed.

Donated by _____

(Please print your name clearly.)

(Please check below, as appropriate, and *print names clearly*.)

☐ In Memory of _____

_____

☐ In Honor of _____

_____

Please collect your plants after the 10pm Christmas Eve Service
or after worship on Sunday, December 29.

Opportunities and Events

- **"A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood"** movie starring Tom Hanks as Mister Rogers premiered on **November 22, 2019.** The movie will continue to be shown for the next few weeks in theaters in our community and throughout the country. Those who attend can help spread the legacy of Fred's gentleness, kindness as well as the love and care he offered everyone. People are encouraged to:

- Meet in their existing small groups or form a new one.
- Share the movie experience using the Study Guide, developed by United Methodist Church Discipleship Agency. A few of the study guides are available in the church office or on the "A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood" website.
- Theater, movie times and ticket information are available on the website ***Fandango.com.***

JOY Ministries is planning an outing activity to visit Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel Exhibition in Christ Cathedral's Cultural Center. These are the details:

- **Date:** December 12, 2019
- **Ticket information:** A signup sheet available at the Connection Center. We will purchase group tickets when we have a final count.
- **Cost**: $12 ($10 for group of 10 or more)

Time: We will meet in the AUMC Parking lot at 9am and carpool to Christ Cathedral. Tour will begin around 10am.

Opportunities and Events

United Methodist Women
FAITH·HOPE·LOVE IN ACTION

Elizabeth Circle

In December, we will have our annual **Christmas Party** at Judy Dickinson's home on **December 2nd**. Please bring: $10 (to buy gifts for the Family Promise guests) and a wrapped White Elephant gift.

Our Cookbook Project is well on its way. Each month, we are collecting recipes from anyone who wants to participate. (This means ***YOU!)*** If you would like to provide recipes, check with the Connection Center for forms. Completed forms may be turned in at the Connection Center, handed to Lynn Records directly or emailed to Lynn (see directory).

Hope Circle

Hope Circle – Annual White Elephant Exchange

Wednesday, December 18, 9:30 AM in The Hub.

Join us for a fun time of fellowship and celebration. Bring a wrapped white elephant gift to add to the gift exchange—each person who brings a wrapped gift will take home another gift that someone else brought. Always a time of laughter and sharing.

Sunday Supper
December 15 Christmas Party
Gift Card Donations Needed

Collection: November 24 and December 1 between services

$25 gift cards

This year we are specifically requesting cards that can be used within walking distance from Aldersgate UMC: Trader Joe's, Albertsons, Smart and Final, Subway, McDonald's, and other ***local*** fast food restaurants. We will take a few Target or Walmart cards, but the majority of our guests want LOCAL cards. ***NO department stores or shopping malls.***

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E-mail: admin@aumctustin.org | 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 *
* ***CONNECT*** Worship at 11am *

CONNECTING

People with People

People with God

GROWING

In Knowledge and Faith

In Christ-likeness

SERVING

Our Church, our

Community, our World

A movement devoted to connecting, growing, and serving together

So Nobody Walks Alone!

Email GatePost submissions for publication consideration to:

newsletter@aumctustin.org

Submission Deadline: Monday, December 16
Next Distribution: Friday, December 20

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The GatePost is an Aldersgate United Methodist Church monthly publication.

Church Office Hours

Monday – Friday
9 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.