# ALDERSGATE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

#615 **The GatePost** - The Monthly Newsletter of Aldersgate UMC Nov/December 2020

## Ministerial Staff

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

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

### Ministry Support Staff

**Children's Ministry Director,** Sonny Boloico
*Families@aumctustin.org*
**Church Administrator,** Maryann Thomas
*Admin@aumctustin.org*
**Financial Administrator,** Heidi Perez
*FinanceAdmin@aumctustin.org*
**Financial Secretary,** Judy Dickinson
*FinancialSecretary@aumctustin.org*
**Music Ministry Director,** Lynn Segrist
*Music@aumctustin.org*
**Organist/Accompanist,** Anna Ferraro
*Annapianaorgana@aol.com*
**Sound & Multi-Media Director,** Doug Bell
*Sound@aumctustin.org*
**Youth Ministry Director,** Scott Wilmoth
*Youth@aumctustin.org*

**Aldersgate Children's Center**
Cheyenne Cazares, *Director*
*Aldersgatecc @earthlink.net*

**CHURCH OFFICE HOURS**
Monday – Friday
9 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

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# Worship Schedule in Nov/Dec

We will continue to worship remotely via live streaming on FaceBook and Instagram. Services will be live streamed at 9:00 a.m. (traditional) and 11:00 a.m. (modern) each Sunday, and may be viewed later on FaceBook, Instagram and YouTube.
Hold each other in prayer during this challenging time.

Reminder that "social distancing" does not mean we cannot speak with one another. Call, text, email—remember Whose we are and that we are called to care for one another.

## All-Church Advent Festival

Sunday, November 29, 2020
3.30-4.30 PM
Drive-In Style
Church Parking Lot

We will kick off the Advent season by worshiping together safely from our cars in our parking lot. We will sing hymns and Christmas Carols and festive dress is welcome!

Please enter from Wass St. and follow parking guides. All cars will exit on Irvine Blvd.

As you exit, goody bags and Reverse Advent Baskets will be available for those who would like to fill and return at a later time. Reverse Advent Baskets will go to emancipated young adults (from Olive Crest) as they transition from foster support to independence.

# Pastor Ken's Connection

**Looking Back on 2020**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow! Let's be real. We have experienced a grueling year that shut down the core routines of our church life and our personal lives. Yet! Here we stand. Together. And we can testify that though we have faced challenges and storms like none before, God's steadfast love and faithfulness have remained a foundation for us to stand on and hold onto. In fact, by God's amazing grace and our collective effort, our church family has been able to grow and shine even brighter during this dark and discombobulating year. The reality is that more people know about and are grateful for Aldersgate UMC of Tustin today than before the beginning of this year, and I am prayerfully confident that we will continue to reflect God's goodness and hope to our community and world no matter what we face in the coming days.

I thank God for Pastor Tim Ellington's excellent preaching and partnership, for the creativity and diligence of our staff, for the faithfulness, care, and wisdom of our leaders, and for the flexibility and generosity of our members and friends in 2020.

As I prepared the recap of our ministries and accomplishments in 2020 (see pages 9 & 10), I realized that while the pandemic definitely negatively impacted our physical gatherings, we were still able to reach and even exceed many of the goals we had hoped for this year. In the midst of all that was taken away, we kept our eyes on our vision, ***So Nobody Walks Alone***, and we were still able to CONNECT with God and others, GROW in the likeness of Jesus Christ, and SERVE our sisters and brothers in our local and global community.

**Looking Forward to 2021**

We are moving into 2021 still facing a world that has been covered with not only a divisive pandemic, but a divisive spirit. The wounds and broken relationships from 2020 lie in wait for a different way, a healing way, a unifying way, and a hopeful community that draws us closer to God, closer to one another, and closer to those who walk alone and in need.

Jesus said, *"My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit- fruit that will last... This is my command: Love each other." - John 15:12-17*

Two words that are repeated several times in John 15 are "love" and "friends." Now, this may sound simplistic, but in a world that has gone to war against our relationships, and has questioned our own relationships with God, it is healing and life-giving to focus on these two powerful words that stand at the foundation of all reality, "love" and "friendship."

So, as we remember our vision statement, *"So Nobody Walks Alone"*… as we remember our core values to CONNECT with God and others, to GROW in the likeness of Jesus Christ, and to SERVE our sisters and brothers in our local and global community… and as we remember the words of Jesus in John 15… we are going to focus on *friendship* in 2021.

Our world desperately needs people who know how to be in intimate friendship with the Lord. Our world desperately needs marriages and families who know how to be true friends to one another. Our world needs people who know how to care for, support, encourage, and sacrifice for friends. Our world needs people who will build friendships with people who are walking alone or distant from God. Our world needs people who will be a friend to someone and value them no matter what circumstance or need they find themselves in. Our world needs people who will be friendly and a friend to someone who thinks or believes differently than they do. And our world needs churches that will focus on helping their people develop their friendship with God, friendship with one another, and friendship with neighbors of all kinds.

In 2021, we will focus on friendship through these key ministries…

**Friendship with God-** Worship, Prayer, Spiritual Pathways, and Discipleship Pathways

**Friendship with One Another-** Congregational Care, Relational Classes, and Small Groups

*Continued Pg 5*

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

**The Church Office**
**Admin@aumctustin.org**
**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!

## Christmas 2020

**December 22, 2020 - 7:00 p.m.**
Virtual Christmas Caroling

Join Lynn Segrist and Ann Ferraro for a Christmas Carol Singalong in a Facebook Live event from the sanctuary. Folks will request which carols we sing by using the Chat feature on Facebook.

# December 24, 2020
## Christmas Eve Services

4:00 p.m.
Drive-in Service in Parking Lot of Church

7:00 p.m.
Facebook Live Service

# PASTOR TIM'S THOUGHT

## Waiting on God's Promises

Sunday, November 29th marks the beginning of Advent. Advent is the season of four weeks leading up to Christmas and the start of the New Year in the Christian calendar.

The term comes from the Latin *adventus*, which means "coming." In Advent we prepare ourselves for the "comings" of Christ – whose birth we prepare to celebrate once again, whose presence comes to us through the Word and Spirit, and whose return in final victory we anticipate.

So Advent is a season of preparation. It is also a season of waiting - waiting on God's promises.

I don't know about you, but waiting doesn't come naturally to me. I'm tired of this pandemic and all of the ways that is has disrupted our lives. Nine months into social distancing, and we're still waiting for some return to normalcy. It feels like forever.

But God operates on a different time table. There were approximately 2,000 years between Abraham and Jesus – 2,000 years of waiting on God's promised Messiah. There has been approximately 2,000 years since Jesus' birth and today – 2,000 years of waiting on God's promised Messiah to return. For 2,000 years Christians have been waiting for Christ to come in final victory. For 2,000 years Christians have been crying out, "Come, Lord Jesus, come."

For all of us who get impatient with God, and I include myself in that group, here's what Peter writes in 2 Peter 3:9:

*"The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish but everyone to come to repentance."*

God isn't slow, but God is patient. So the history of Christianity is a history of waiting. That's why Advent is such an important season. It reminds us that to be a disciple of Jesus is to wait on God's promises.

Just as they did 2,000 years ago, we still live between the time of promise and the time of fulfillment. We live in the Saturday between Good Friday and Easter. God has already destroyed death, yet this dying world is still waiting for final resurrection.

Philip Yancey writes, "It is a good thing to remember that in the cosmic drama, we live out our days on Saturday, the in-between day with no name. I know a woman whose grandmother lies buried under 150 year old live oak trees in the cemetery of an Episcopal church in rural Louisiana. In accordance with the grandmother's instructions, only one word is carved on the tombstone: Waiting."

Waiting is challenging because it reminds us that we're not in control.

While locked up in a Nazi prison where he would ultimately be executed, Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote these words to his fiancée, Maria von Wedemeyer:

"A prison cell, in which one waits, hopes, does various unessential things, and is completely dependent on the fact that the door of freedom has to be opened 'from the outside' is not a bad picture of Advent."

Advent reminds us that God alone can open our door of freedom.

Advent reminds us that Christianity, ultimately, isn't about what you and I can do. It's about what God can do. It's about what God has done and what God will do.

To follow Jesus we must be willing to wait on God's promises, knowing that it is God's promises that sustain us, cheer us on, and keep us going no matter what life throws our way.

So here's the million dollar question in the midst of this pandemic, "Does God keep his promises?" Every time we start to question that, let us look to the baby born in Bethlehem. As Paul reminds us in 2 Corinthians 1:20, "For no matter how many promises God has made, they are 'Yes' in Christ."

Waiting Expectantly,

*Pastor Tim*

*Continued from Pg 2*

**Friendship with Neighbors-** Relational Serving & Giving and Relational Sharing of our Faith

Bishop Grant Hagiya recently shared, "We need small communities of sanity." May Aldersgate UMC of Tustin be a community of sanity in 2021 ☺. Beloved, let us give thanks this Thanksgiving, let us remember the hope, peace, joy, and love we have in Jesus Christ this Advent and Christmas, and let us prepare to be a community of love, friendship, and hope to many in 2021. As we close out this year, I am ever grateful for you and your abiding love and partnership… I am secure in the grace of knowing that the Lord of all creation walks with us every step of the way… and I am excited and look forward to seeing our friendships with Jesus, one another, and others grow in 2021!

Ever grateful and hopeful,

*Pastor Ken*

# Christmas Candlelight Cabaret 2020

## a Facebook Group Event

## Saturday, December 12, 2020 - 7:00 - 8:30 PM

***Benefiting AUMC Youth Ministries***

### About this Event

You're invited to attend this year's AUMC Candlelight Virtual Event. Candlelight Cabaret 2020, (aka Candlelight Dessert), will be presented "LIVE" through AUMC's Facebook Group. Enjoy watching on-line at home via Facebook. (A Facebook account is needed for this Group Access Event.)

Join us for this special event featuring the Candlelight Cabaret Quartet with Anna Ferraro on piano, members of our AUMC Senior Youth, Christmas Blessings and Messages from Pastor Ken and Pastor Tim, plus a few pre-recorded messages. **AND** there will be a Special guest appearance by Mrs. Claus

Purchase your "virtual tickets" through this invitation on-line or mail your check to AUMC.
Recommended donations are $20/per person / $50 for Watch Party / $ Donation amount over $50.

**Deadline is December 9th for on-line donations and received checks in the office.**
You will receive the Facebook Access link by email on Friday, December 11, 2020.

1) AUMC Donations, click here **for on-line donation** and enter amount under "Other" and note "Candlelight 2020"

2) **Checks to AUMC and Memo: "Candlelight 2020" and your email address**
Mail to or drop-off: AUMC / 1201 Irvine Blvd. / Tustin, CA 92780

For questions, comments or more information, please contact the church office 714-544-3653.

*Candlelight Blessings ,*
your friends at Candlelight 2020

# Children's Ministries News

Sonny Angel Boloico, Director

## Sunday School

***Enjoy games, get to know one another and learn about Jesus.***

Every Sunday

**10:15 am**

Via Zoom

(all ages through 5th grade)

Please contact our Children's Ministry Director, Sonny Angel Boloico, to receive a link to the Zoom gathering. Sonny may be reached at families@aumctustin.org; or email/ call the church office for assistance. **Parents**, if you would like to be added to the Children's ministry roster, please contact the church office (714-544-3653 | admin@aumctustin.org).

**Weekly Bible Lesssons w/Friends**: Sign into YouTube to hear Bible stories presented in collaboration with Aldersgate Children's Center via this link:
https://www.youtube.com/c/AldersgateUMCTustinCalifornia/videos

**Greetings!**

The youth of Aldersgate have continued to be active during the pandemic. We've had regular meetings on Zoom on Sunday evenings, and we've had Bible studies and devotions on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Recently, we've started a Bible study with Pastor Ken called "The Bible Project" which meets via Zoom on Wednesday evenings at 7pm. We have a good time interacting and engaging with other youth and adults of the church.

In September we had Youth Sunday in our on-line worship format. It was a great Sunday morning with incredible messages from two of our graduates, Amber Dulebohn and Nathan Boone. Amber also provided us with the gift of music. Ava Kuntz and Garrett Wilmoth led our singing, Gabby Falchetti read her Statement of Faith written during Confirmation Class, and Braden Suhr presented the announcements. They represented our youth well that Sunday, and congratulations to our graduates!!

The youth have also had some safe in person gatherings on Sunday evenings. It is so great to just see and be with each other in person. We've had discussions about going back to school, on line classes, and life during this pandemic. We have also safely played some fun games together. Unfortunately, future in-person gatherings have been postponed due to increased Covid-19 restrictions.

Thank you all so much for your love and support of our youth! Amen!

Blessings,

*Scott Wilmoth*

Director of Youth Ministries

## Charge Conference 2020 NOTES

On Thursday evening, November 12, Aldersgate's annual Charge Conference was held via Zoom. Presided over by Rev. Adiel DePano, the 30 plus attendees heard pastoral reports from Pastors Ken and Tim, approved the Lay Leadership Roster for 2021 as well as the 2021 Salary Packages for Rev. Ken Suhr and Rev. Tim Ellington as presented by Don Rohrbaugh, Chair of the Staff Parish Relations Committee. Reports were presented by Herb Chatterton, Chair of the Board of Trustees and Dave Stuart, Chair of the Finance Committee. The Trustees continue to maintain our facilities in the warm and welcoming condition we so greatly appreciate. The Finance Committee celebrates all of the generous financial support that allows our many ministries to continue to serve our church family, our community and the world in Jesus' name. Electronic copies of the Charge Conference reports can be obtained by emailing Maryann Thomas, Church Administrator at admin@aumctustin.org.

***2021 Lay Leadership Roster can be found on pages 11-12 in this issue.***

Please join Aldersgate UMC in collecting new pajamas.

Place your PJs in one of the three bins located outside along driveway or in back parking lot from 9 to 4 weekdays or go to https://aumctustin.org/give/ to make a monetary donation designated to "Project Pajamas."

All sizes accepted and distributed to people in need this holiday season:

*Children *Youth *Seniors

Aldersgate's Mission/Outreach team has partnered with the Tustin Community Foundation who sponsors Project Pajamas. A great big **Thank You** for joining us in the Spirit of the Season.

*Dear Faithful Members of Aldersgate, Sunday Supper is so grateful for your continuing support of our gift card program. Each week since the third week of March we have been able to give every adult a $10 gift card. You live out the word of the Bible to "Love One Another."*

*Bless You, Sandi Benson,*
*Sunday Supper Coordinator*
*St. Paul's Episcopal Church*

**Special Workshop Recap:** The Bill Mefford Workshop, "Walking with Those in Need," on Saturday, October 24 was attended by 18 members of Aldersgate. The attendees represented many areas of our church. The following are the highlights of the workshop:

- **Devotional Activity on Justice** (Story of Moses)
- **Inventory of Aldersgate's Ministries** – Breadth and Depth- we looked at 7 of the ministries our church does and evaluated them according to the breadth ( # of people engaged in this ministry) and depth ( level of passion for the ministry)
- **Breakout group #1 on Inventory**- We discussed each of the activities in small groups and debated about the depth and breadth of involvement. We learned that we need to learn more.
- **Incarnational Relationships Activity**-We learned a "new" set of descriptors for Incarnational Relations- SIMPLEX- relationship is one that is generally how we relate to a project. It generally has few opportunities for development of relationships but it is a really good and often "starting place." MULTIPLEX relationships are generally 1-1 relationships where two people intersect in multiple areas and have the opportunity to engage and learn about each other. Multiplex relationships are the foundations for change.
- **Breakout group #2 on generating ideas for "Walking with People in Need"**- we looked at our inventory and brainstormed how these programs could offer more multiplex opportunities.
- **Started thinking about Action planning** for how we are going to live out these ideas
- **Regroup on December 5, 10 am** to continue working toward the future (Anyone interested may join us for this workshop)

If you have any questions, please contact the church office.

MISSION OUTREACH

international Sanctuary

heavenly treasures
A MICRO ENTERPRISE NETWORK

## VIRTUALLY Our Best Craft Fair Ever!

Your Mission/Outreach Team is hosting an online **Alternative Christmas Fair** this year. Four vendors will post links so you can order in time for Christmas giving. This opportunity will be available through the E-Connect beginning mid-November.

We are pleased to welcome Heifer International, Heavenly Treasures, Concern America, and I Sanctuary. All four organizations aim to build better lives.

Let's plan to "Shop With a Purpose" this year by supporting these Fair Trade groups.

Please watch for details mid November in the Aldersgate E-Connect.

CONCERN AMERICA
GROW A GLOBAL HEART

PASS ON THE GIFT
HEIFER INTERNATIONAL

ALDERSGATE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
1201 Irvine Boulevard * Tustin CA 92780
Phone: 714.544.3653
E-mail: admin@aumctustin.org | www.aumctustin.org
**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

# Sunday Worship Schedule

* Online **Worship** at 9am via Facebook and Instagram*
Christian Education for children through 5th grade at 10:15 am via Zoom. Call Church Office for details*
* Online ***CONNECT*** Worship at 11am via Facebook and Instagram*

**CONNECTING**

**People with People**

**People with God**

**GROWING**

**People with People**

**People with God**

**SERVING**

**People with People**

**People with God**

**A movement devoted to connecting, growing, and serving together—**

**So Nobody Walks Alone!**

# Aldersgate Inclusivity Statement

We welcome and work for the full inclusion of all persons into the life and ministry of Aldersgate United Methodist Church. As followers of Jesus Christ, we believe all persons are created in the image of God. We celebrate our diversity and recognize the sacred worth and dignity of all persons without regard to gender, race, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical or mental ability, family structure, economic status, or education.

We proclaim this statement of welcome to all who have experienced the pain of exclusion and discrimination within the church. We respect the differences that remain among us as we journey together in faith toward greater understanding.