



The Aldersgate Experience

Monthly News of Aldersgate United Methodist Church

February 2018

Dear Friend in the Messiah,

I am grateful for these 40 Days of Prayer and the reminder that the Holy Spirit for us when words cannot capture the thoughts, emotions and the anxiety amidst the unknown life brings (Romans 8).

In a few short months our journeys as congregation and pastor will move into new seasons. I will no longer be your pastor, and Aldersgate will no longer be my appointment as the mission place in our shared Christ journey.

In the weeks of February, I'll be asking the Holy Spirit and working with leadership here to direct our final weeks and months together. I'm certain that I will be entering a grief process that will continue as the loss of our immediate relationship comes. Be assured that I will do my utmost and will rely on God's Wisdom and Grace to walk these days with Thanksgiving and Intercession for you and this blessed Church, and for health and wholeness so Aldersgate can focus its energy and being on God's purpose for you and the work that lies ahead. I promise to do the same once an appointment of pastors to walk among you comes our way.

Be encouraged in the journey Christ has for us, and that we will share through this life and into God's presence eternally. And, remember, the gift of the Holy Spirit that is Christ's Church is for OUR PARTICIPATION in what shall emerge victorious. It is not our church to save, or to control, or to define. It is Christ's Church gifted for our participation. What a privilege! And what a privilege God has gifted me, Aldersgate, to walk with you in this 10-year season as your pastor.

Always remember, God's best works are not over. God gives God's best every moment ... so live into it. Count it your privilege: God's gift of participation to you, that is ... and then be God's work in your daily living. Let it be so ...

By Grace Alone,
Pastor Troy

ALDERSGATE OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Thursday, 8:30 am - 3:30 pm
Friday, 8:30 am - 12:30 pm



WORSHIP MINISTRY

Choir/Orchestra News

Choir practice has begun, of course as always, all are welcome to come and sing with us. Choir practice is on Monday nights. We are almost at the start of learning and rehearsing the cantata that will be offered on Good Friday. The cantata is called "Once Upon a Tree" by Pepper Choplin. We have done this cantata twice before over the years, but never was it done as it will be this year: with live orchestra, once again made up of members and friends of Aldersgate Church. If you are interested in orchestra or choir, please email Sheri at worshipdirector@aldersgatechurch.net. Beginning Monday Feb 5th, choir practice for our weekly anthems will start at 6:45 and last until 7:15. Rehearsals for the cantata will follow this time, starting at 7:15, and lasting until 8:15. Rehearsals will be held in the chapel.

Rehearsals for the orchestra will be held on Sunday afternoons. The first rehearsal date will be determined very soon, but for now, if you are interested, please email Sheri at the above email address.

ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP SERVICE

On February 14th at 7:00 pm, the church will gather for the Ash Wednesday service. This is the evening that begins the Lenten journey. As has become an Aldersgate tradition of sorts, along with communion being served, we will also share in the imposition of ashes. This evening offers a time for reflection and is a meaningful way to start the Lenten season. On this night, a WUW meal will be provided, but there will be no studies. We will ALL gather in worship in the sanctuary.

REMINDER: SERMONS ARE ON OUR WEBSITE EACH WEEK

We are called by God to be in worship each week and it's a discipline we should honor and make a priority in our lives. Of course there are weeks that we can't attend. If you miss worship, please remember that the sermons are up on the web to hear at aldersgatechurch.net.

Thanks.....

Christmas is over, the decorations have been taken down and packed away. Thank you to Marsha Fisher and the group of people that she got together to, first, decorate the church, and now to take down those things, and put the decorations away! Thanks, too, to Don Underdonk and his family and Dick Osborne for putting the trees up, and also for taking them down! It's always a busy busy time, and we appreciate you all offering your hands and hearts to beautify the church building during the Advent and Christmas season.



Wool and Flax Ministry

The Wool and Flax ministry would like to invite you to join them Sunday, February 4th from 1 to 3 pm in room 203. This is a group of novice and experience knitters and those who crochet. They are known for making prayer shawls and blankets. Bring your current project or, if you would like to learn something new, we always have experienced folks willing to teach crocheting and knitting. We also meet Wednesday afternoons from 1 to 3 pm in room 203. All are welcome!



Trailblazer Ministry News

Sharing the love of Christ with children birth - 5th Grade

Ready for warm weather fun? There are so many great ways for your child to plug in this summer.

Think VBS and Summer Church Camp

Join us June 11 - 15 for VBS - "Rolling River Rampage"!

Get ready for your child to experience the ride of a lifetime with God! We need lots (100+) of volunteers before and during the event so please share your gifts. More details to come!

Summer Church Camp Opportunities

Make sure Church Camp is part of your summer plan. The Susquehanna Conference of the United Methodist Church has many different Church Camp opportunities including a Family Camp at Wesley Forest, Greene Hills or Mount Asbury. A list of camps can be found at <http://www.susumcamps.org/>. Register before April 15th and Aldersgate will pay 50% of the registration fee for campers. Just pay 50% at time of registration, submit a copy of the registration to Melanie Feldner at childrensdirector@aldersgatechurch.net and the Church will pay the balance. Questions: contact Melanie at the email above or 717-737-7923 ext. 107.

Large Group Sunday School Leaders needed for April and May

Large group is for children KG - 3rd Grade and is held each Sunday morning during the Sunday School hour. Curriculum is provided and Large Group lasts just 20 minutes. Please consider taking either April or May or both! Parents this is a great opportunity for you to "dip your toe" into being a Trailblazer volunteer. Curious about what we do? Come to the FLC at 9:45 a.m. and check it out!

Upcoming Dates to add to your Calendar

February 4 2-4pm: Adventure Club (KG-3rd Grade)

February 4 2-4pm: Summit Seekers (4th and 5th Grade)

February 18 2-4pm: Adventure Club (KG-3rd Grade)

February 18 2-4pm: Summit Seekers (4th and 5th Grade)

Do you want to know more about how you or your children can join our Trailblazer Ministries?

Contact Melanie Feldner at childrensdirector@aldersgatechurch.net or 717-737-7923 ext. 107

No What's Up Wednesday Studies on Ash Wednesday

February 14th is Ash Wednesday. We will have our typical What's Up Wednesday dinner on February 14th; however, all are encouraged to attend the 7:00 pm Ash Wednesday Service, so none of the studies will be in session that evening. There will be no WUW4Kids that evening, so that your children may also experience worship with you. There will, however, be nursery care for children age 5 and under.



Superbowl LII Party 2/4 6-9p at the Shick's!

The annual YFA Superbowl party is on 2/4 at 6pm. Join us at the Shick home, 10 White Birch Lane, Mechanicsburg. It is always a fun time whether you want to watch the game or not. They have a great set up to hang out with your friends, play games, watch your favorite team or gather around the bonfire!

Please bring an appetizer or dessert to share! A light dinner option will be available!

Souper Slurp Off Sat 2/17/18 – volunteers needed 3:30-6:30pm

Aldersgate hosts the annual Souper Slurp Off event on Saturday 2/17/18. This event supports the Youth and a local women and children's ministry. YFA students help serve at the event. Enjoy time with friends as well as some great soup and dessert options, or sign up with a friend to make a soup!

Sign up to help today @ <https://ttsu.me/slurp-off>

Ski Roundtop Sat 2/24

YFA will take to the hills for snowtubing and other fun at Ski Roundtop on 2/24. Cost is \$31 per person. Contact Sheryl Behr to signup! Meet at Aldersgate at 12:45 pm. Additional drivers may be needed. The church van will leave Round Top at 5 pm, arriving at Aldersgate around 5:30pm. Passes are valid until 10 pm. Supervision and transportation are needed for any who desire to stay past 5 pm. Meal vouchers are available for purchase (\$10) for those interested. Bring your signed release: SkiRoundTopRelease. Parents are welcome to join us, and INVITE A FRIEND!

Creation 2018: 40th Anniversary 6/27-6/31!

Creation 2018 is a Christian music festival held each June in Mt. Union PA with nearly 80,000 people. Christian music artists give concerts and lead worship while great Christian speakers challenge the mostly youth-aged audience to make a move closer to God.

All YFA students are encouraged to join us. A parent or adult is needed to attend with 6th grade students.

15 Tickets are available for \$150 each on a first come, first served basis! Cost increases to \$165 on March 11th or after the 15 tickets are gone. Don't wait, claim your ticket TODAY!

Join The YFA Team!

Sunday School Teachers and Youth Leaders (YOU) Are NEEDED! Interested or want to hear more? Contact Sheryl Behr at

youthdirector@aldersgatechurch.net or 717-645-8569

High School and Middle School Sunday School teachers are needed. Teachers serve on a monthly basis. Materials are provided. The need/opportunity continues for both classes!

We are always looking for extra hands on Sunday evenings, special events and behind the scenes.

Please pray about these opportunities to serve and join the youth fellowship team!

YFA Continued...

Newsletter Events

This Month

2/4: Super Bowl Party 6:00-9:00 pm

2/11: YFA Sunday 6:00-8:15 pm

2/17: Super Slurp Off 3:30-6:30 pm

2/18: YFA Sunday 6:00-8:15 pm Birthday Dessert Night!

2/24: Snow Tubing @ RoundTop 1-5 pm

2/25: YFA Sunday 6:00-8:15 pm

Long Term Forecast

3/11: YFA Sunday 6:00-8:15 pm Meal Night!

4/1: Easter! No YFA Sunday

4/20-22: Pittsburgh Project - High School Students



SAVE THE DATE

Ladies, save this date for the upcoming Ladies Spring Brunch. This year we will enjoy a presentation by the "Friends of the Heart"

So many of you have enjoyed these Ladies Brunches. **We extend an invitation for you to join the SonDay Sisters in planning and preparing for this fun morning.** Contact Carol Diffenbaugh at 717-737-7923 ext. 104 or email

healthministries@aldersgatechurch.net

Ladies Spring Brunch
Save the Date: April 21st

Featuring the

"Friends of the Heart"

FREE BRUNCH

April 21, 2018

Registration: 8:30am

Breakfast & Program 9am- 12:00pm

**SAVE THE DATE & CONSIDER JOINING THE
SONDAY SISTERS AS WE PLAN THIS FUN
MORNING!**



We invite all parents to attend a **Parenting seminar- 'Kids and Technology' Monday, Jan. 29th from 6-8pm.** Lisa Murray returns as the speaker for this event. Please come join us. There is a \$5 voluntary donation for the workshop. We need a head count for this event, so please RSVP to; Kathleen Blazey: preschooldirector@aldersgatechurch.net or 737-7923 ext. 103.

Preschool registration for the 2018-2019 school year will take place in February. Registration forms will be posted on-line the 15th of January. We would like all forms turned in by February 9th. They can be turned in to the front office or the preschool office. Current preschool and church families will have priority in registering. Please contact Kathleen Blazey if you have not yet scheduled a tour of the preschool.

The preschool is hosting a '*Kindergarten Information Night*' on **Tuesday, February 13th from 7-8pm** in the sanctuary. All parents are invited to attend. Bring your questions and/or concerns about kindergarten readiness and expectations. We will have 4 kindergarten teachers from the CV school district available to answer questions.

Support Group - If you or anyone you know would benefit from attending an 'Autism Support' group, please contact Kathleen. The preschool hosts a monthly group for parents who have children with a diagnosis of autism. Some great connections have been made and we pray that this group continues to offer love and support to parents in our community.

Kathleen Blazey, Preschool Director

"May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus." Romans 15:5 (ESV)

WOW! Look What God Has Done!!!

In 2008 the 2000 building loan debt stood at nearly \$2 million. In 2011 it was not much lower than that (about \$1.92 million). In six short years, we have pummeled it by the gifts God has given us and the gift of giving as stewards God has presented to us.

Our January 2018 payment on the debt has pushed the loan under \$800,000! It now stands at \$799,106! This is amazing. The result is that our interest payments in 2018 will be about \$31,000 – That's about \$50,000 LESS in interest payments than just a few years ago. The blessing of that is our 2018 principal payments on the loan from our weekly Tithes & Offerings will total \$98,000! This does not include the additional debt-reduction payments non-budgeted through Election Day sales, designated donations, rent of our facility, interest on our bank balance, Hershey Park volunteering, and gift-card sales. Below is a quick snapshot of those contributions to debt-paydown in 2017. (Keep in mind that every dollar saved in interest payment means the loan is retired sooner, and those dollars will be freed up for more ministry!)

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---------|
| Election Day Soup/Bake Sales | \$2,780 |
| Regular E-Giving To Building Fund | 7,390 |
| Bite Out of Debt Campaign | 19,042 |
| Gift Card Revenue | 2,360 |
| Hershey Park Income | 1,728 |
| Interest on Bank Account | 506 |
| Room Rental | 1,764 |
| Other Building Fund Giving | 5,481 |

Staff-Parish Relations Committee

Processing/Conversation on Future Timeline

This is a communication to ensure the body of Aldersgate Church is aware of general time-flow and tasks of the pastoral appointment process we are now experiencing:

Thursday, January 11, 7 pm – Pastor informs SPRC of appointment

Friday, January 12 (by Noon) – Pastor meets and processes with Ministry Staff

Friday, January 12 (late afternoon) – Utilize Aldersgate’s extensive “Aldersgate E-Alert” system (300 households) to announce/inform the appointment.

Ongoing Action Steps:

SPRC met with District Superintendent Barry Robison (January 11) to develop a “profile” for the call/appointment of the next lead pastor. SPRC also decided to move forward with appointment of a full-time associate pastor July 1.

As a Church Body, we are called to “Pray ... Plan ... Ponder the Progress *(and God’s faithfulness ...)*” We must rehearse and tell the story of God’s faithfulness, lest we grieve the Holy Spirit through this process.

SPRC Declares that We Will navigate this by God’s faithfulness and as a faithful people for the health of Christ’s mission and call.

We will be setting a timeline through May 2018 on celebrating/concluding this season of appointment with Pastor Troy Howell. If you have thoughts or suggestions, please contact Jen Starner, Chair, through the church office (secretary@aldersgatechurch.net).

We will be setting a timeline for incoming transition(s) and pastors and how we will receive them.

For now, PRAY. We pray God’s leading and the Church’s (Our Bishop and Cabinet of Superintendents ... and our local congregation of Aldersgate) “HEARING” in the Holy Spirit. An announcement on Lead Pastor and Associate Pastor appointments will be made once the District Superintend informs The Staff-Parish Relations Committee, and the SPRC is introduced to the individual(s).

2018 Soup-er Slurp Off (Soup-tasting event)

Calling all soup makers and soup tasters!! Our tenth Soup-er Slurp Off will be Saturday, February 17 (“rain” date of Sunday, February 18) from 4 to 6:30 pm. This annual tradition has become a great time of fellowship as soup makers compete for the title of best soup and attendees get to sample and fill up on a variety of soups, yummy breads and a sweet spread of desserts. Soup’s on, until it’s gone!! So to all of you potential soup makers, be thinking about a scrumptious recipe. We will cap our soup participants at 25.

Right now we are also looking for volunteers to help orchestrate the event or be available the evening of the event. Please let Jen or Lezli know if you are interested.

Tickets will be available outside the FLC beginning January 31. Adults - \$12; children ages 5 to 12 - \$5; children under 5 are free. This event is open to the community so invite a friend or purchase a ticket for them.

For more information or to volunteer, please contact:

Jennifer Benson at jenbenson101@gmail.com, 717-979-5170

or

Lezli Austen at lezliausten@centralpenn.edu, 717-732-5347



Domestic Violence: is a pattern of coercive, controlling behavior that can include physical abuse, emotional or psychological abuse, sexual abuse or financial abuse. It is a pervasive, life-threatening crime that affects millions of people across the United States. Domestic violence does not discriminate - it can affect anyone, regardless of age, economic status, race, religion or educational background *

Domestic Violence Services of Cumberland & Perry Counties

Provide **24 hour toll-free hotline for Cumberland and Perry counties 1-800-852-2102**. All services are free and confidential. Additional information on DVSCP can be found at their website www.dvscp.org. Services listed on their website include:

- Emergency Shelter: for those in immediate danger
- 24 Hour Hotline: Answered by trained staff to assess the caller's needs, provide crisis counseling and schedule appointments for further assistance
- Counseling and Advocacy: Provides empowerment counseling with a focus on safety planning and goal setting. Advocacy efforts may include referral services.
- Assistance with Protection from Abuse Orders
- Children's Programs: Child Counselors/Advocate
- AMEND Batterers' Intervention Program

If you know someone in need of these services, please share this information with them.

*Quote taken from the <http://www.dvscp.org>



What's Up After 40 Days of Prayer Study? More What's Up Wednesday Studies of Course!

Many of you are involved in a Wednesday evening 40 Days of Prayer Study Group. Please remember another 6 weeks of What's Up Wednesday's Short Term Studies will begin on February 28th!! So keep your eye on the bulletin for registration information and sign up for another exciting Bible Study!! What's Up Wednesday will continue into April, our last session with the dinner will be Wednesday April 4th.

Blood Drive March 18

Mark your calendars and watch for the sign up sheet that will be posted this month.



February 2018

Prayer Calendar

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--|--|--|---|---|---|--|
| | | | | 1 Pray for our sister church, the Krichev Revival Church and her Pastor | 2 <u>Presentation of the Lord</u> Luke 2:24 Praise God for the Christ Child | 3 2/3/1943 Prayer of thanksgiving for 4 U.S. Army Chaplains who gave their lifejackets to others and chose to go down with the ship praying |
| 4 "Lord whatever this day may bring, Your name be praised." Dietrich Bonheffer born today in 1906 | 5 May the love of Christ and the Holy Spirit permeate our world... that all people will be cared for physically and emotionally" Anne C Queen | 6 Pray for our Pastor and the leadership of the church | 7 Pray for each of the WUW studies, may the Holy Spirit fill their classrooms and the hearts of the participants | 8 Pray for those serving at Mission Central, and those they serve | 9 Pray for Christians in Somalia who risk martyrdom if their faith is discovered | 10 Pray for the Mature Methodists Group at Aldersgate as they serve the church |
| 11 The transfiguration of <u>the Lord</u> Alleluia, God of Glory & Might in the face of death | 12 Pray for UMCQR (United Methodist Committee on Relief) helping those in need | 13 Pray for those attending AA ,may they feel welcomed at Aldersgate and may God free them of their addictions | 14 <u>Ash Wednesday</u> "Let me be a true follower of Christ our Lord who brings light into all of our darkness" | 15 Prayers of Thanksgiving for the Agape Love of our God | 16 Pray for the children served by the Neighborhood Center of the UMC in Harrisburg | 17 Souper Slurp Off Pray for those serving in this ministry, and those being served by this ministry |
| 18 Pray for the acolytes serving during Sunday worship. May they remind us to continue to carry the light of Christ as we leave the church | 19 <u>President's Day</u> Pray for our country and its leaders | 20 Pray for those taking the Zumba class meeting in our church | 21 Pray for the women in the Wool & Flax ministry as they crochet and knit the prayer shawls, and those receiving prayer shawls | 22 Pray for Bishop Park and our DS Rev. Robison | 23 Pray for the Aldersgate Intercessory Prayer Ministry Team | 24 Pray we may "Do all the good you can, by all the means you can" John Wesley |
| 25 Pray for shalom, may the love of Christ be carried out to our community and practiced throughout the world | 26 Pray for those living in poverty without heat this winter | 27 Pray for those serving as Sunday School Teachers and Youth Leaders at Aldersgate | 28 Pray for the Christian church in China & praise for Robert Morrison, in 1807 the 1st Protestant missionary to China | | | |



Dear Gary (LeGore),

Aldersgate UMC has been a huge supporter of our cause in 2017. We could not have done it without your help. Thank you for helping us collect 44 pints and saving the lives of 132 local patients!!

The CPBB (Central PA Blood Bank) family

Thank you for your very generous donation of wonderful Christmas gifts filling the requests of families with young children this holy Christmas season. Your involvement with The Silence of Mary Home means so much to us and the people that we serve. The gifts you have given go a long way to help in our mission of filling the needs of the poor in the Harrisburg area. Many blessings to you for your continues generosity to us and have a blessed Merry Christmas!

From the Silence of Mary family

In Deep Appreciation of Your Gift:

With great gratitude and love, I want to thank each person who participated in the Christmas love offering presented to me Dec. 31 in worship. It continues to be a great joy and a significant growth experience for me to walk with you in the role as pastor of Aldersgate Church. The affirmation you offered in this gift - and in other ways throughout the year - matters, and I count it a privilege to be on the Christ Journey with you.

With love and a deeply grateful heart, - Pastor Troy Howell

(Also, many thanks to those who shared Christmas candy, cookies and breads with me along the pathway to Christmas!)

*Thank
you*

Articles for the March 2018 Newsletter should be sent to the church office at secretary@aldersgatechurch.net by **February 15th**.

Thank you.



January 8, 2017

Pam Caserta
Pam.caserta@yahoo.com

Dear Pam:

We just wanted to take a moment to say **THANK YOU**.

On behalf of Shalom House, please extend our thanks and appreciation for all that you and Aldersgate did to help women and children in our housing programs have a hopeful and happy Christmas!

From the hearts from a couple of the women (and families) blessed by your generosity:

From Monica – "Everything I received, I needed. I was overwhelmed that there was so much that was shared with me. Thank you so much!"

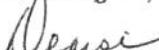
From Rose – "God bless you all for thinking about someone like me going through this difficult time. The kindness of others has touched my heart; I am so grateful!"

From Melissa – "My children and I are so thankful for all that you have done. 2017 has been a difficult year. Thank you for giving us hope for what is in store in 2018!"

With your commitment to Shalom House and to those we serve, 28 women and 26 children benefitted (during the 2017 holiday season) through from the kindness and support of people like you and everyone at Aldersgate who continuously demonstrate their caring and compassion to those in need.

On behalf of Shalom House and all those we serve, we wanted to take a moment to **THANK YOU** for your generosity, compassion and support that you demonstrate all the year long. Happy New Year!

With best regards,


Denise Britton
Executive Director



Aldersgate Church
A United Methodist Congregation
1480 Jerusalem Road
Mechanicsburg, PA 17050

*"Reaching with the Heart of God
for the Lives of Our Community"*

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**Return Service
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Dated Material Inside**

February 2018 Edition

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