



The Messenger Aldersgate UMC

June 2024

A significant place where disciples are made



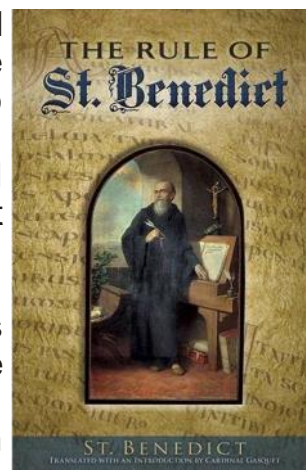
The Stance of Obedience

The Rev. Dr. Kyung-Hee Sa

These days, I often think of the meaning of 'obedience' in my so frazzled life. The root of the word "obedience" is found in *audire*, "to listen." For the monastic, obedience is putting into practice what is learned by listening to the other with the ear of the heart. The Rule of St. Benedict, Prologue 1 says, "Listen carefully, my daughter to the master's instructions, and attend to them with the ear of your heart." How difficult it is to practice it with so many distractions, selfish desires, and challenges in our lives!

I once had a prayer retreat at a Benedictine monastery. I terribly miss such time. I came to know the text of The Rule of St. Benedict, a 96-page volume that is the slimmest of all rulebooks for an order like theirs. I decided to stay there after I was influenced by the books of Kathleen Norris like *The Cloister Walk* and *Amazing Grace: A Vocabulary of Faith*.

Norris spent nine months at a Benedictine monastery in Minnesota. She signed on to become an "oblate" of the order. The word "oblate" comes from the old Latin for "offering", but in reality, it means someone associated with the order who tries to live by the Benedictine Way as much as possible, while maintaining their secular life. I was quickly in tune with her writing about her experiences with the Benedictine nuns and monks. She intently explored ways to find a closer and clearer meaning of her faith in such an honest and unassuming way.



To me the most interesting of the Benedictine principles was the order's deep engagement and focus on the Psalms. At their worship, they read the Psalms straight through, at least some portion of it each day. When they reach the end, they start over again, month after month, year after year, until the verses become as familiar to them as breathing. You get such a beautiful spontaneous gift of praise, reciting Psalms while watching a sunset one evening, or while in the midst of depression, suddenly appearing able to save you from yourself. Norris found such a gift. After staying with the monks, Norris returned home to South Dakota and started to attend her grandmother's church.

How do you practice the stance of obedience? During my short stay at the Benedictine monastery, I observed the Benedictine way of obedience by listening to God and to one another, and a willingness to submit to imperatives outside of the self, something that is never easy to do, but that is deeply rewarding. I realize my life is far from this stance of obedience. So, I pray and pray every moment, "God, help me listen to You and obey You." What about you?



Preschool Committee Report *
Mulrooney

Kathy Daum, Stacie DiGiacoma, Debbie

- Background information about Aldersgate Preschool, comparable programs in the area, and recent Aldersgate enrollment
- Current and next year enrollment, and current program structure
- 2024-2025 Budget Review

After discussion, a motion was made and approved to have Pastor Kyung-Hee and Kathy Daum lead a process to have the Preschool Board prepare a recommendation to the Lead Team for next steps for Aldersgate Preschool. The Preschool Board did present a recommendation to Lead Team at a special Hybrid meeting on Thursday, May 16.

**** Refer to the note and action below which occurred subsequent to this meeting***

Preschool Bathroom Project

Debbie Mulrooney

So far, the new estimates are coming in 30-50% higher than the original estimate of \$95,000. The Trustees are reviewing options and will make a proposal at our next Lead Team meeting.

Communications Committee

Betsy Diemer

The Communications Committee is recommending migrating from Cloversites to Ministry Brands for our web page hosting. Information included start-up/conversion costs, and operating cost comparisons. After discussion it was agreed that Bob Reis would prepare a cost comparison between our current Vanco program for on-line giving and the proposed rates from Ministry Brands. Based on this additional data, Betsy will make a motion to the Lead Team for approval via electronic vote.

* Aldersgate Family,

Aldersgate United Methodist Church has provided an early childhood education program for over 40 years. After a careful review process that considered staffing requirements, operating costs, and low enrollment, the **Lead Team** has made the decision to close **Aldersgate Preschool** at the end of this current 2023-2024 school year. While this decision was not easy, it is the right thing to do at this time.

We want to recognize the dedication **Sharon Jennelly** has had for this ministry over the years. She has been truly committed to the young people who have attended the pre-school. We want to take this opportunity to celebrate the season and all the lives touched by this ministry over the many years.

Please note that this does not affect the Montessori Preschool.

Blessing,

Sharon Owens & Anne Murray
Co-Lay Leaders

Spotlight on Youth Retreat

We had a wonderful April retreat at Pecometh. Two of the youth that attended the spring retreat, Laura Honisch and Lydia Shay, shared in worship their thoughts and impressions about the weekend.

Pam Downey, Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries



My name is **Lydia Shay** (right in photo). Two weeks ago I had the awesome opportunity to attend the girls youth group trip to Camp Pecometh. It was an amazing experience and I hope it's the first of many trips with the youth group. Highlights of the trip were late night nails and tattoos, watching Mama O bravely climb up the zipline tower, and bonding with the other girls in the group.

On Saturday morning, Pastor Kyung-Hee joined us to talk about her story and our faith. It was shocking for me to hear that women are not allowed to be pastors in Korea, which is what led Pastor Kung Hee here. She shared about how to be faithful young girls like the importance of praying, and how she prayed every day using her journal. She also gave us some good tips about skin care.

After this conversation, we moved on to the outdoor activities.

Laura and I played rock paper scissors to decide who got to be first on the zipline and she won, but she let me go first. It was so much fun! We ate lunch together (hotdogs and snacks), and then moved on to the bounce house. I can be shy around new people, but being with the youth group, I was able to step out of my comfort zone and we played with a group of other kids that were there. This is one thing I am finding that I really love about being in youth group. Being with these other kids gives me a different type of confidence. We had fun with a hayride and face painting, being blanket burritos, and playing games, before having a dinner of delicious steak and ice cream sundaes. After dinner we drove back home to conclude the weekend away.

This is my first year in youth group and honestly, it has been amazing. I have been attending this church since I was born, but this is the first time I have truly felt a connection to the church. Being a part of this group has given me a sense of belonging, and a greater understanding of my faith. I can't wait for more experiences like this with the youth group.

Hi, my name is **Laura Honisch** (left in photo). As many of you know, I am the only daughter in my family. So when I learned that the 2024 Youth Retreat included just girls, I was excited to go! When you put a bunch of girls together for an overnight retreat experience at Camp Pecometh, of course you would expect they would want to see the sunset over the Chester River, and take lots of pictures. And you'd predict that there would be nail polish... it was there! You could have guessed that there would be instant tattoos... nope, GLITTER tattoos! Candy? Yup, that too. Finding a pair of dead mice in our cabin, well, that wasn't quite as much fun at the time, but funny to look back on. And that was just the first night! After bedtime prayers from Pam, we bundled up and bedded down for a chilly night.

The next day, we spent time getting to know each other better. There were 6 girls plus 3 adults to learn about. Pastor Kyung-Hee spent the morning with us, sharing her past career and experiences. She showed us how to write her name in both Korean and Chinese. As for Mamma O, we learned how brave she could be as she persevered and climbed the zipline tower, put on a harness, and zipped on down on the zipline. And Pam kept our group organized and together as we were moving all day long to do so many activities, in and out of buildings on one of the rainiest Saturdays this spring.

Besides the zipline, where I felt like a bird and could see far away, we roasted S'mores over a real campfire, ate our lunch on the pier, jumped in inflatable bouncy houses and slid on a giant inflatable slide, went on a hayride, shopped in the Gift Shop, and ended the day getting face paintings - but just us girls, not the adults.

I had a lot of fun. I got to bond with church friends that I already knew and made new friends, too. I didn't think about it until later, but there were moments when I knew God was there. Now, I had been to Camp Pecometh last summer, so I was familiar with the place. But this was a chilly, wet, spring day, and there was no swimming in the pool or singing our grace before each meal in the dining hall. Yet the river was still there, the cabins were there, we walked a lot to get to the activities, and I saw God in action as we all grew closer together.

Getting To Know Our Youth Series



Tell us about yourself

My name is **Fiona Kelly**. I play volleyball and basketball and I'm in the 8th grade going into 9th.

Can you tell us a bit about your faith life and relationship with God?

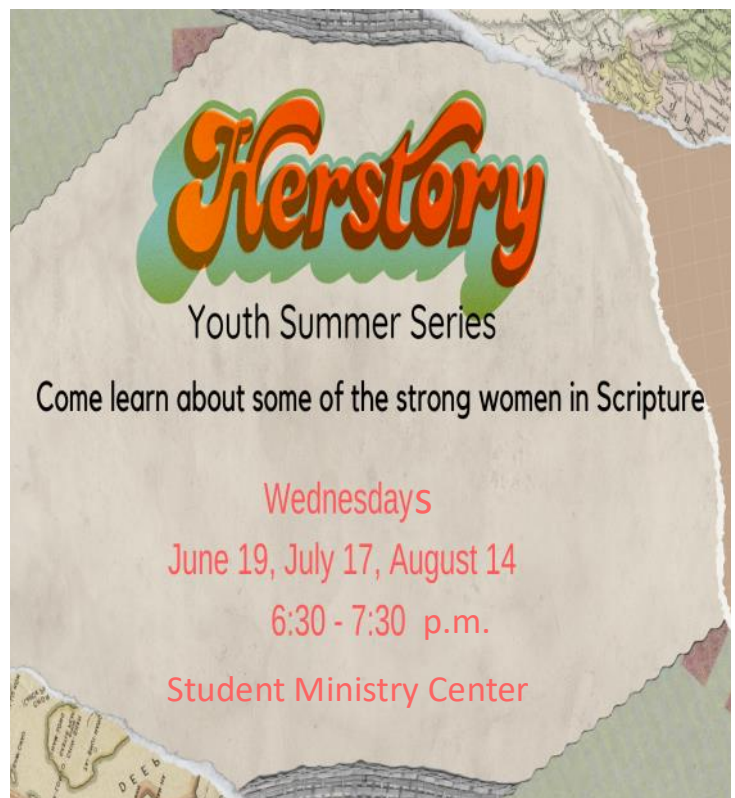
I have a strong connection with God, and I find Him every day in my life.

Where do you feel connected with this church?

I feel connected through Pam and Pastor Kyung-Hee and through the youth group and Sunday School.

What do you think is the biggest challenge for young people today?

Too much social media.



Aldersgate Preschool & Children's Ministries

Touch-A-Truck and the Preschool Open House was a success with our local community families attending and community helpers! Thank you DonutsNV, Uncle John's BBQ, Opdenaker Trash truck, Talleyville Fire Company, New Castle Police, 3 Del Dot trucks, Padfoot Mobile Vet Mobile, Brooks Courier Service, Davey's Tree Service and Mr. Marshall's vintage car, too! Always a great community event!



Vacation Bible School

Ages 3-10

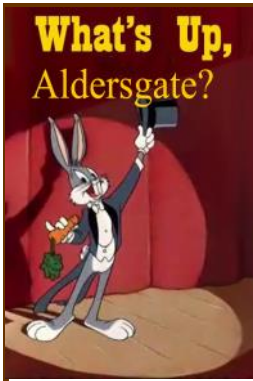
AUGUST 5-9, 2024

Optional 5:30 p.m. Dinner &
6 p.m.-7:30 p.m. Program

Join us for Scuba Music, Deep Bible Adventures, Sticky Scripture, Imagination/Crafts, Reef Rec Games, Sing & Play Splash Opening, Fin-tastic Finale, & Tide Pool Preschool!

<http://www.aldersgatede.org/>, for youth & adult volunteers, registration, & free will offerings.

sharon.jennelly@aldersgatede.org 302-562-5808



What's Up? Dinner & Discussion Nights

On April 22 the first **What's Up? Church Vitality** was held in the auditorium. Sponsored by the Gather & Communications teams, the evening began with a light supper of meatball sandwiches and salad.

Henry Daum presented the results of our churchwide survey and explained how the results led to our team's involvement with Readiness 360. He also explained our next move into the Catalyst initiative. Henry was kind enough to allow questions during his presentation that led to greater understanding of the material he presented. This was followed by table discussions that were lively and inspired reflections on church vitality, and what we could do to move our congregation forward.

The second event was held on Monday, May 20. **What's Up? General Conference** began with a Taco Bar meal.

Cheryl Merritt showed a short video and summarized the results of the 10-day General Conference that closed May 3. Particular topics included the approval of Regionalization Petitions, Removal of Restrictive Language relating to LGBTQ People, and Adoption of Revised Social Principles. Anne Murray reviewed the history of AUMC's original adoption of a Welcoming Statement that evolved into Aldersgate's becoming a Reconciling Church with our vote in 2019.

Once again, the table discussion was lively and respectful. Many positive responses and ideas for action were captured. Attendance increased by 66% at this event from the first one.

We give thanks for the contributions of so many people who are helping make these events happen. In particular, Amanda Moyer's meal provisions, Henry Daum, our speakers Cheryl and Anne, Susan Schranck, Pam Downing, Kyle Smith, and Fiona Kelly.

The next **What's Up? Communications** will be held on Monday, June 17. Hope to see you there!

Betsy Diemer,



James & Shannon Garrity	June 1	22 years	Andrew & Renee Shenk	June 22	28 years
Jay & Kathleen Doughty	June 3	29 years	Matthew & Linsey Anderson	June 23	12 years
Steven & Sharada Manns	June 3	24 years	William & Barbara Bareford	June 23	62 years
Richard & Kathryn Gerard	June 4	41 years	Bert & Betsy Diemer	June 23	51 years
Dan & Anne Murray	June 7	49 years	Steven & Ohanna Moore	June 23	11 years
Taber & Kyle Smith	June 8	28 years	Martin & Peggy Tracy	June 23	51 years
Craig & Janice Tunell	June 8	39 years	David & Sara McFarland	June 24	13 years
Jason & Lyn Bobiak	June 11	30 years	Joseph & Judy Setting	June 25	19 years
Barry & Margaret Siple	June 13	65 years	Chris & Heather Burket	June 28	16 years
Tim & Karen Browne	June 15	39 years	Paul & Deborah Montigney	June 28	49 years
Jack & Melva Smith	June 17	48 years	Steve & Deborah Davis	June 29	50 years
David & Cathy Penkrot	June 20	37 years	Bonnie Rambo & Martin Ollenschleger	June 29	33 years



Jim Gleason passed away on April 22, 2024

HOPP Food Distribution - Friday, June 28, 2024

Volunteers are needed to distribute free food boxes/bags provided by the Longwood Foundation's HOPP Ministry to anyone in need in our community. We gather in the Aldersgate parking lot at 12:15 p.m. to set up and get organized, and then distribute boxes from 12:30 p.m. until 1:30 p.m. Volunteers are needed to hold up signs at the curb on Concord Pike, direct the flow of cars to our distribution point as they come in, and place boxes/bags into cars. This is a rewarding, hands-on ministry that directly serves our local community and also provides opportunity for fellowship.

Emmanuel Dining Room- the 16th of every month



Thank you Aldersgate staff Kyle, Susan and Pam for preparing the meal at EDR in May. And.... Special shout out to members of **Mt Lebanon UMC** for making all the desserts for us! They did a wonderful job.

So grateful for response to this ministry at Ministry Fair! We only have August and September still needing a crew in 2024. Amazing!! If you'd like to help us prepare a meal or bake cookies once during the year please reach out! I'll fill you in on the details.

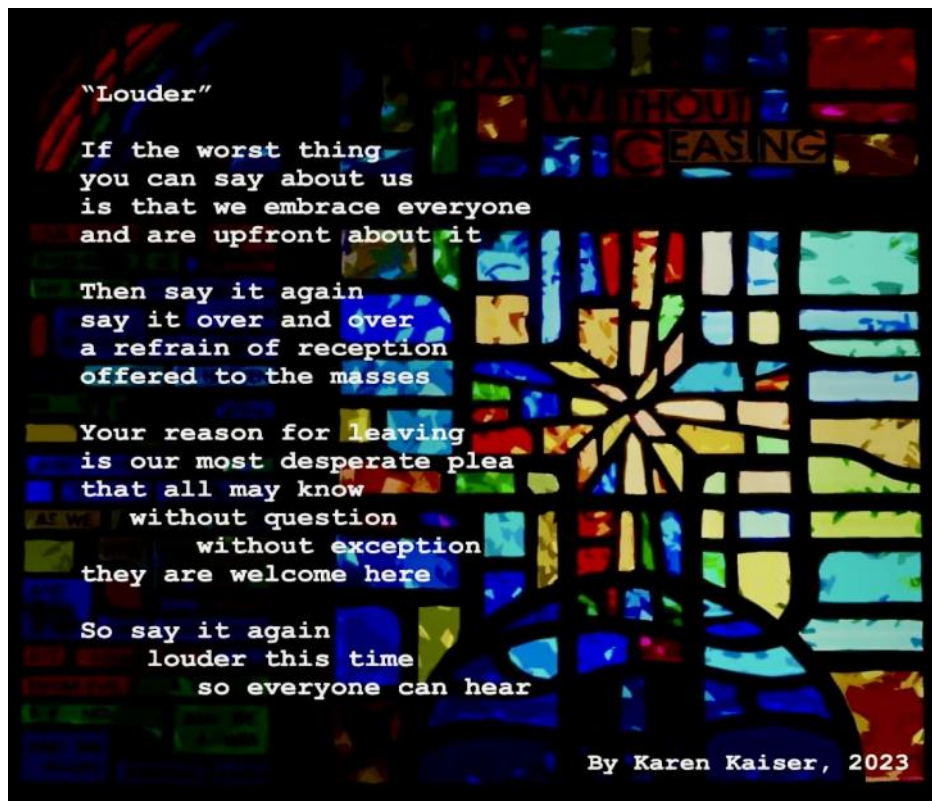
Anne Murray

Message from your Lay Leaders

Proud to be a member of the UMC and a member of Aldersgate!

Anne Murray and Sharon Owens

layleader@aldersgatede.org



Our Financial Stewardship Scorecard for the Operating Budget Fiscal Year July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024:



Giving Income Budgeted through April:	\$537,500
Giving Income Received through April:	\$591,735
Budgeted Income through April:	\$880,804
All Income through April:	\$875,389
Budgeted Expenses through April:	\$881,163
All expenses through April:	\$807,427
Operating Surplus through April:	\$67,963

We are looking good Aldersgate! As summer approaches we have a surplus. Taking a contingency item of \$60,000 from income that we planned to transfer from investment funds, we still have a small surplus. Thanks to all for the continued support and the control of expenses that made this possible.

Wouldn't it be fantastic if we could avoid a large transfer in June to balance the books for this fiscal year. We can! Before going away this summer, make sure your giving is up to date. Electronic payments may be a good option if you have not considered that before. Or, increase your giving in early summer by sending in a check or stopping by to say hi and dropping one off. The needs and our ministries never take a vacation, so our budget cannot either.

Changes being considered

In association with an updated web page and other improvements, we expect to switch from Venmo to another electronic payment vendor later this year. This should not present any complications for those using this service. Any needed changes will be communicated as soon as we know of them.

If you have examined the giving list on our website recently you have seen that our giving options have increased significantly over the years. While we want to offer options and provide comprehensive statements to all givers annually, the accounting complexity and time for doing this has become a concern. Finance is considering how we might reduce the list and still provide the desired level of options. Please send us feedback on those giving options you use and want to see continued, or conversely what options might be combined or should be eliminated (email a note to Finance.Chair@aldersgatede.org)



To see the current options available go to our website: [Aldersgate United Methodist Church](https://aldersgateunitedmethodistchurch.org) | [Donate \(aldersgatede.org\)](https://aldersgatede.org) and click on "MAKE A DONATION"



Spring Program May 5th

Deacon Connie Hastings spoke about her forthcoming book, *The Trouble with Jesus, Considerations Before You Walk Away*.

Deacon Hastings is from Delaware and has engaged with AUMC before, in fact, a previous bible study with UWF (previously UMW) inspired the new book. In it, she aims “to express ideas, questions, beliefs and challenges in fresh expressions.”

To learn more, visit <https://www.constancehastings.com/> for thought provoking and inspiring thoughts from her blog.

Thank you to all those who set up, brought food, donated generously and spent time with one another during this program. And a special thanks for the donations received for Aldersgate’s Free Little Pantry.



Messenger Survey Provides Valuable Feedback

Thank you to everyone who shared insights and feedback on the church newsletter, The Messenger, in a recent survey. Aldersgate's Communication Committee sent the survey to slightly more than 410 members and attendees of the church to learn more about how many of you read the Messenger, what you like about the Messenger and what topics you would like to see featured in future issues.



The Messenger Survey 105 participants – with 70 percent stating they ALWAYS read the monthly newsletter. We obtained the additional feedback:

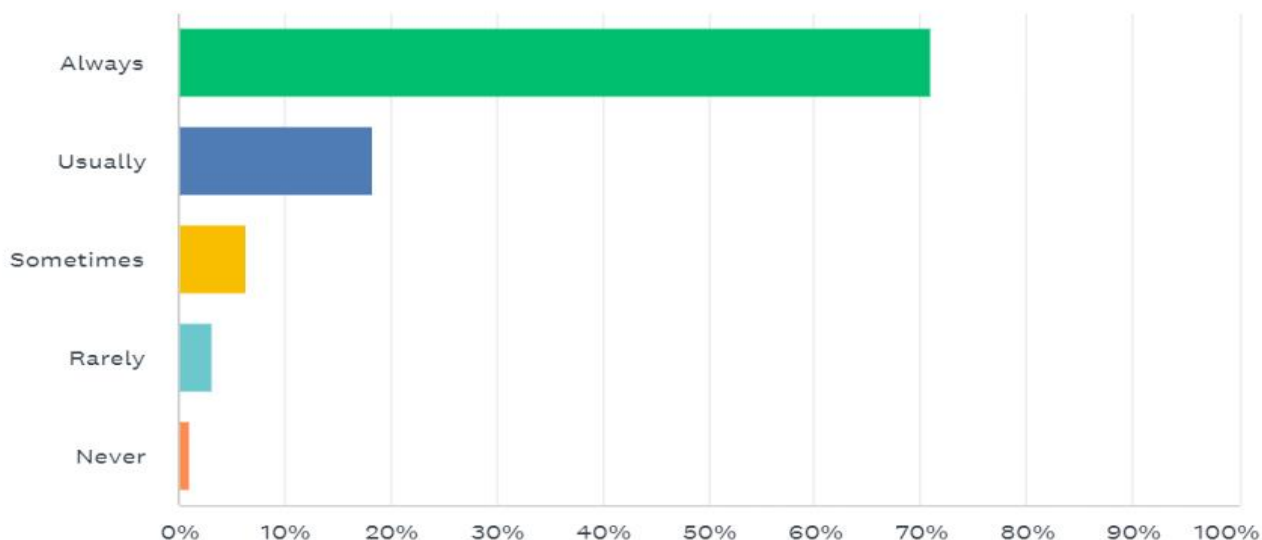
- * 48 percent said they ALWAYS read the entire Messenger
- * 59 percent said they STRONGLY AGREE that the Messenger helps them stay connected to Aldersgate
- * 92 percent said emails is the TOP source of information, in addition to the Messenger
- * Messenger Topics that readers enjoy the MOST include Church wide events, Life Milestones and Trustees Update

Survey participants provided outstanding feedback on topics you would like to see in future Messenger. A few suggestions included an actual calendar of events by month; Bible scriptures; subcommittee or outreach features, and the history of Aldersgate. We will continue to share the full list of suggestions and feedback in future Messengers.

Thank you for your readership and survey feedback. For additional feedback, contact Betsy Diemer, Communications Chairperson

How often do you read the Messenger?

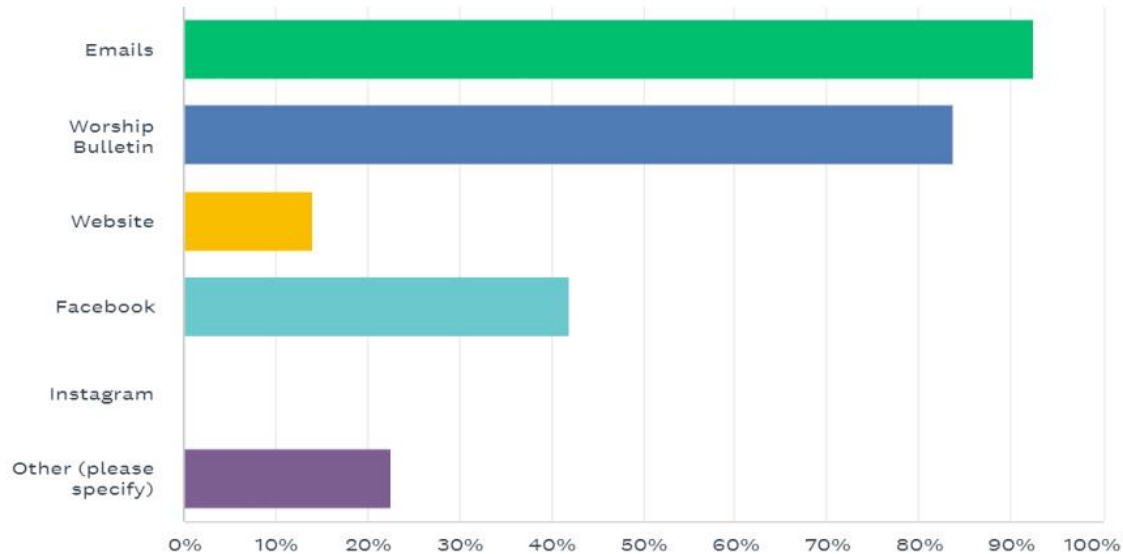
Answered: 93 Skipped: 1



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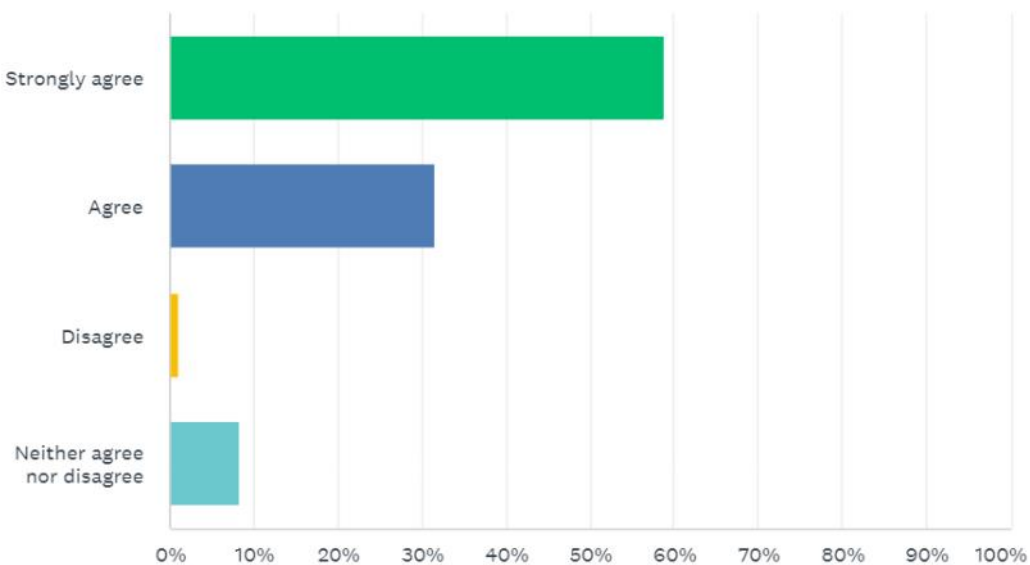
What additional sources of communication do you rely on for Aldersgate news?
(Select all that apply)

Answered: 93 Skipped: 1



Share your response to this statement - The Messenger helps me stay connected to Aldersgate United Methodist Church.

Answered: 95 Skipped: 0



**Worship Schedule: In-Person & Live streamed
Journey Service at 9 a.m. in the Sanctuary**

Sunday School at 10:05 a.m. (but most classes off for the summer)

Traditional Service at 11 a.m. in the Sanctuary

You can find Live-Stream at:

<https://www.facebook.com/pg/AldersgateDE/videos/>

Or YouTube at: [AldersgateDE - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCnZoqvVVH4kvH_BknkW3y3w)

Or

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCnZoqvVVH4kvH_BknkW3y3w

And hit the subscribe button

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**Don't forget that
on June 2nd there
is just the one
Unified Service at
10 a.m.**



June 2024						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						



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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

