



# The Messenger Aldersgate UMC



January 2025

*A significant place where disciples are made*

## Journey From Advent to Christmas: To Return Anew

The Rev. Dr. Kyung-Hee Sa

I started my own Advent and Christmas journey with the words from Dr. Marcia McFee: *"We are so often focused on the destination in our travels. 'Where are you going?' is the most common question upon hearing that someone is heading out of town. While the destination is perhaps the impetus for deciding to 'go,' it is often the journey itself that offers the most memorable moments—frustrating or delightful."* As the old saying goes, *the journey is the destination*. This is the way to Christmas, I believe.

On our journey to Bethlehem or Christmas with the decree from Rome, my hope was to understand the meaning of "journey". The journey to the places where events occurred that led to a starry night on which the Holy Child was born changed the world: from Rome: A Place of Longing (Hope), to Jerusalem: A Place of Waiting (Peace), Nazareth: A Place of Simplicity (Joy), Bethlehem: A Place of Humility (Love), and The Manger: A Place of Care, as we reflected on in our worship services. Our life journey continues after Christmas. As three Magi or "seekers" sought after the newborn Christ, we make a faithful journey with contemplation on the Christmas story and keep discerning with questions like "What are we seeking? Where is our attention focused?"



What was your return from the journey like this Christmas? Did you bring back new discoveries that you want to make a permanent part of who you are? In his book, *On the Way to Bethlehem*, Rob Fuquay points out there are some journeys that don't bring us back to where we started. They permanently take us to new locations, whether that be physical places or emotional ones. Although most of the time our journeys return to where we started, this doesn't mean they return us the *same* as we started. They always shape and change us. Did you experience an expanded understanding of the places you traveled with God? There must be a good return to make a good journey. Fuquay says, "When we re-turn home a different way, it's hard for home to stay the same." Examine yourself closely where you are.

We are usually seeking something at any given time. We are made to search for more in life, as **"God has planted eternity in the human heart."** (Ecclesiastes 3:11) The Messiah from Bethlehem speaks aloud about "no return without re-turning" since God is born anew in each one of us. So this Holy Season, dare to yearn for changes God is going to make rather than fearing that things won't be different. Ask yourself, what is the change you can bring to your home? What is the compassion, energy, love, and hope you can bring to your life's places? As Fuquay says, the way *to* Bethlehem changes the way *from* Bethlehem. Let's continue on our faithful journey yearning more for God.

Director of Children and Youth

Ministry

Pam Downey

[pam.downey@aldersgatede.org](mailto:pam.downey@aldersgatede.org)

# Mission Trip

We are headed to  
Appalachia!

July 19 - July 25, 2025

All are welcome.

Questions:

[pam.downey@aldersgatede.org](mailto:pam.downey@aldersgatede.org)

## YOUTH GRADES 6 - 12



# IMPACT

WEDNESDAYS

6:00 - 7:30 PM

**FUN - FOOD - FELLOWSHIP**

DINNER SERVED

QUESTIONS:

[PAM.DOWNNEY@ALDERSGATEDE.ORG](mailto:PAM.DOWNNEY@ALDERSGATEDE.ORG)



It's more than bands and speakers.  
It's about a generation.  
A generation united for Jesus Christ,  
and welcoming to all.



IGNITE OCEAN CITY, MD

MARCH 7-9, 2025

[igniteforyouth.com](http://igniteforyouth.com)

RSVP [pam.downey@aldersgatede.org](mailto:pam.downey@aldersgatede.org)

## Youth Sunday School

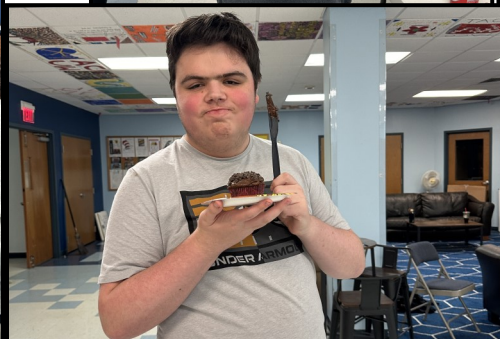
Grades 6 -12

10:05 am - 10:55 am

## MINOR PROPHETS



**HOSEA - JOEL - AMOS - OBADIAH  
JONAH - MICAH - NAHUM - HABAKKUK  
ZEPHANIAH - HAGGAI - ZECHARIAH - MALACHI**



Bible Study, Cupcake  
Wars and Sundaes





## Christmas Pageant

Come be a part of the service.

If your child will be at the 4 o'clock service on Christmas Eve and wants to be in the nativity pageant please let the Sunday School teachers know so we make sure we have the right number of costumes. Ages 3 +.



## Supervision of Our Children at Aldersgate United Methodist Church

For the safety of our children, families and congregation, all children under the age of 12 (5th grade) are to be supervised by their parent(s) and /or designated guardian while at Aldersgate United Methodist Church.

We have childcare available during the worship services for ages up to 5th graders starting at 8:45 a.m. until Noon in Rooms 132 and 137 as an option if families are unable to supervise their children while attending worship in the sanctuary.

Families are to sign in their child(ren) into childcare and/or their Sunday School classroom with the required information. Child's Name, Parent's Name, where parents will be located, cell number and special instructions (allergies, pickup person, etc.,) will be noted each time a child is in our care.

Children will be cared for by two safe sanctuary teachers and/or volunteers appropriately.

Thank you for your support in keeping our children as safe as possible.



## Does your curriculum teach Jesus through all of the Bible?

GCP TEACHES THE COMPLETE PLAN FOR TEACHING GOD'S COMPLETE WORD:  
CHRIST IN ALL OF SCRIPTURE  
GOD'S GRACE IN THE COVENANT  
FAMILY PARTNERSHIP

The start of a new year brings a new children's curriculum. We are excited to be using the Show Me Jesus curriculum from Great Commission Publishing for Preschoolers - 5th Grade. The curriculum can be reviewed here <https://www.gcp.org/>

## Safe Sanctuaries Certification

You will need to be background checked if you have any involvement with children, youth or vulnerable adults. Think Youth Musical, Confirmation mentors, Sunday School, Impact, Music Ministry, visitation. You will need to be background checked with our new provider even if your most recent background check is still valid.

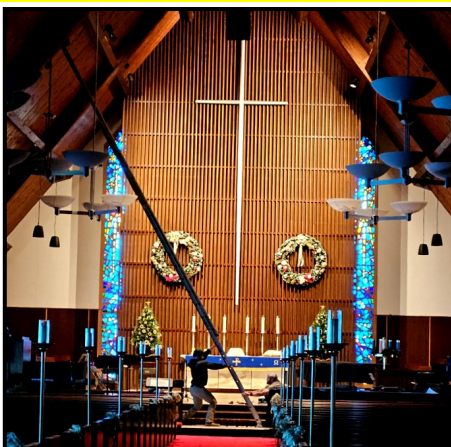
Safe Gatherings tracks everything online. Training is provided online at your own pace and timing. It does not need to be completed in one sitting. Background checks are valid for three years. We are going paperless and entering the 21st century!

There is no cost to you for a background check. Each background check is \$39, a considerable expense for the church, but this is not where we want to economize. With that said, should you feel led to pay for your own background check, we will not say no!

To request a background check, please contact Kevin Botbyl, Church Business Administrator, for an access code. [kevin.botbyl@aldersgatede.org](mailto:kevin.botbyl@aldersgatede.org)

## LET THERE BE LIGHT: Lighting over the Altar

A very tall ladder was used to access the lights over the Altar area to replace and reposition bulbs. The cross and stained glass windows are now more visible. All who are in the choir loft or Altar area can now see their music or readings. Thank you staff and Trustees for making this improvement and thank you congregation for supporting Aldersgate.



## Crazy Ladies Bible Study - Still Going in 2025

The Crazy Ladies will start out 2025 reading *Shetland Mist: A Shetland Family in the Methodist Movement* by Heather L. Hammer. This historical fiction title is from the UWF Reading List. We welcome all who are interested in joining in our book discussions! Questions? Call or text Betsy Diemer @ 302- 379-4770.



## HOPP Food Distribution

**Friday,  
January 24, 2025**

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.

## ALTAR GUILD ALTAR FLOWERS



Altar flower arrangements serve as a reminder of God's creation and the beauty of His handiwork. They are a way to show our love for God, commemorate a special person or event, or to honor a loved one. If you would consider placing a flower arrangement, please contact Beverly Barker (302-584-4509 or [macbhal@aol.com](mailto:macbhal@aol.com)) to discuss the dates you prefer and the type of flower you'd like ( or not like).

We are utilizing the talents of Marcus Hook Florist and the fee for an arrangement will be \$60. You can take it home after the services or leave it for the church office to share with another member.

I hope that you will consider continuing this lovely tradition that not only beautifies our sanctuary but gives Glory to God.

Beverly Barker



Please join us in thanking our Family Promise December volunteers and partners! Aldersgate fed 8 families/34 people at each dinner. Thank you Simpson UMC, Nancy Hough, Sarah Hopkins and Max Goss, Mt Lebanon UMC, Barbara Buckley, Joanne Smeltz, Kristin Facciolo, Diane Shea, Carey Cross, Don Temme, MJ Cash, Becca from University of Delaware, and our on-call shoppers, Betsy Diemer, Laura

Parrish, Kathy Daum! Thank you, Aldersgate, for covering the families and volunteers in your prayers!

In 2023, Family Promise of Northern New Castle County served 135 families with children experiencing temporary homelessness. Ninety-three percent of families secured housing in an average of 97 days. Aldersgate is one of over 45 local congregations who join together to serve families in our area.

**We hope that you will prayerfully consider joining our volunteer team and sign up to help our next turn March 2-8 2025!** We will be partnering with River Cross Fellowship. This is a great opportunity to invite friends or family outside our church who may be looking to give back to our community. Families or friends with young children are also invited to serve as there is no age restriction for volunteers with Family Promise.

Please reach out to Brian at [bjmerritt@outlook.com](mailto:bjmerritt@outlook.com) for more information. Thank you, Aldersgate, for being the hands and feet of Christ for our neighbors in New Castle County.

- The Merritt Family



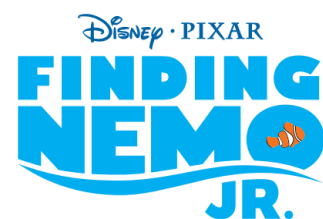


## Save the Date!

### Aldersgate Youth Players Performances 2025

Friday, February 28<sup>th</sup> @ 7 p.m. and

Saturday, March 1<sup>st</sup> & Sunday, March 2<sup>nd</sup> @ 2 p.m.



### Become an Aldersgate Youth Musical "Angel"!

In the theatre, people that provide financial support to help underwrite the cost of doing a show are called "Angels." All contributions are tax deductible.

If you would like to become an **Aldersgate Youth Musical "Angel,"** please:

Donate online at [www.aldersgatede.org](http://www.aldersgatede.org) by selecting Youth Musical and put "Angels" in the Notes.

Fill out the form below with a check made payable to Aldersgate UMC with Youth Musical in the subject line.

Forms and checks may be:

Given to Janet Atwater or placed in her box in the Hub (Youth Musical Director)

Mailed to Janet Atwater c/o Aldersgate: 2313 Concord Pike, Wilmington, DE 19803

**THANK YOU SO MUCH!**

### Aldersgate Youth Musical "Angels" Program

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Donated: ☐ \$25 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$250 ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

May we list your name in the program as an "Angel"? ☐ YES ☐ NO

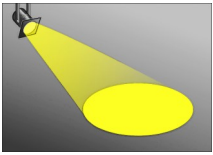
### Joyous Giving

Christmas is a great time for giving—and receiving—gifts of ALL kinds! Let's be honest, who does not like to be handed a beautifully wrapped package or get a phone call with exciting news?

Aldersgate recently received an exciting gift, too. Bill and Elyn Schmitz, long-time members of the church, gifted the church with a significant memorial financial gift. Aldersgate is excited to receive such a generous gift, but the conversation clearly indicated that they were excited to give it to the church and its people whom they dearly loved.

Make no mistake, we value your gifts of attendance and service; those cannot pay the electric bill, though! We rely on your God-directed pledge to support and sustain the facilities, staff, and ministry projects of the church. Would you also consider a gift to bless the church after you have left to "sing with the angels and archangels?" Your financial planner will know the best options for your particular circumstances and financial position, but the reality is that NO gift is too small (see Mark 12: 41-44).





## Staff Spotlight – Kevin Botbyl

Kevin Botbyl has been our Church Business Administrator for the past eight years. That is a big title, but what does Kevin do?

If you have come to the church for an event, he has had a hand in it. Kevin coordinates room reservations, access to the church, event set up, and makes sure we have a clean facility to gather in. Another responsibility is coordinating with the Trustees for oversight of the property, addressing maintenance and project issues. Additionally, Kevin handles staff payroll, monthly bill payment, vendor payments, and works with the Finance Committee on church budgeting issues, as well as dabbling in other responsibilities to meet the needs of the church. If you follow the Aldersgate UMC Facebook page you will have seen cameos from Kevin in some of the posted videos.

For Kevin, the most enjoyable part of his job is feeling a sense of connection and fulfillment by helping Aldersgate accomplish its mission.

When Kevin is not working at Aldersgate, he enjoys being involved at his home church Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Newark, where he is an ordained deacon who helps with Mercy Ministries and chairs the First Impressions committee. He is also involved in the youth ministries there, teaching the 4- and 5-year-olds Sunday school class and helping with the Youth Group. For the last 25 years Kevin has been responsible for the church decorations at Christmas and Easter! Beyond church activities Kevin also enjoys cooking, baking, and gardening.

The best way to reach Kevin is via his email, [kevin.botbyl@aldersgatede.org](mailto:kevin.botbyl@aldersgatede.org)



---

## **April 26, 2025 Rummage Sale!**

It is a new year and so the Rummage Sale is fast approaching. The Rummage Sale supports the community, local missions and Aldersgate. It's also a great opportunity for fellowship. Volunteer sign-ups will start in January, so watch for sign-ups after services or contact Stacie DiGiacoma ([staciedigiacoma@msn.com](mailto:staciedigiacoma@msn.com)) or Nancy Hough ([houghn1@hotmail.com](mailto:houghn1@hotmail.com)) to volunteer.



Donation Dates: Saturday, April 19th and Monday through Wednesday, April 21st – 23rd.

Note: The Unique Boutique seeks donations of jewelry early, so that the team can process them well in advance. If you wish to make a donation, please contact Kitty Lugar now to arrange delivery or pick-up ([kittyannlugar@msn.com](mailto:kittyannlugar@msn.com)).

Set-up and Sorting Dates: Saturday, April 19th and Monday through Friday, April 21st – 25th.

Sale Date: Saturday, April 26th 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Clean-up and loading leftovers to other nonprofits: Saturday, April 26th 2 – 5 p.m.

There are volunteer opportunities for everyone, so contact us if you want to get connected now. It is great fun to work together on this project! Last year we had 150 people participate. Let's join together again.

Thanks from Co-chairs Chris Burket, Stacie DiGiacoma and Nancy Hough

## Aldersgate United Methodist Church Officiary Leadership January 1, 2025– December 31, 2027



### Our Purpose as a Church is:

To be a significant place where disciples are made

### Our Mission as a Church is:

To **GATHER** as God's People;

To **GROW** in Faith and Love;

To **GO** into the World as Jesus' Disciples

## Lead Team ~ 13 Members

Senior Pastor	Rev. Dr. Kyung-Hee Sa
Co-Lay Leader	Anne Murray (December 31, 2025)
Co-Lay Leader	Diane Shea (December 31, 2027)
Board of Trustees Chair	Debbie Mulrooney
Finance Committee Chair	Bob Reis
Staff Parish Relations Rep.	Kathy Daum
Communications Chair	Betsy Diemer
Director of Children and Youth Ministry	Pam Downey

		Term Ends
Gather Coordinator	Henry Daum	December 31, 2025
Grow Coordinator	Ellen Leonzio	December 31, 2025
Go Coordinator	Stacie DiGiacoma	December 31, 2026
Co-Chair	Bill Culliton	December 31, 2026
Co-Chair	David Harrington	December 31, 2027

## Gather † Grow † Go † Support Teams

### *Gather as God's People*

Team Leader	Henry Daum
Fellowship Leaders	Mary Jean Wichmann & Renee Shenk
Worship Committee Leader	Amy Honisch
Director of Music Ministry	Anastasiia Sidorova
New Members	
Hospitality Team	Kyle Smith & Sandy Anderson
Members at Large	Sandy Anderson, Rebecca Townsend, Heather Burket, Karen Moore, Kitty Lugar, Amanda Moyer

~ Everyone in Service ~

### ***Grow in Faith and Love***

Team Leader	Ellen Leonzio
Director of Congregational Care	Cheryl Merritt
Discipleship Leader	Hal Barker
Director of Children & Youth Ministry	Pam Downey
Members at Large	Brian Erskine

### ***Go Into the World as Jesus' Disciples***

Team Leader	Stacie DiGiacoma
Community Engagement	Rachel Domenick
Homeless & Campus Ministries	Brian Merritt
National & World Missions	Judy Morton
Nutritional Outreach	Anne Murray
Social Services	Diane Shea
Reconciling Ministries	Anne Murray
Go Finance	Bob Reis

### **Board of Trustees (Succession permitted, three members must be female)**

Chair - Debbie Mulrooney [Trustees elect]

December 31, 2025	Jane Wagner, Brett Landis, Taber Smith
December 31, 2026	Debbie Mulrooney, Mark Wichmann, Dan Shay
December 31, 2027	Barbara Johnson, Steve Davis
Ex Officio – Church Business Administrator, Kevin Botbyl	

### **Finance Committee (Succession permitted)**

Chair - Bob Reis

December 31, 2025	Bob Reis, Bert Diemer, Bill Culliton
December 31, 2026	Kendra Hastings, Jocelyn McCord, Henry Daum
December 31, 2027	Don Blythe, Matt Anderson, Wendy Lindsey
Ex Officio – SPRC Jack Smith, Trustees Chair Debbie Mulrooney, Lay Leader Anne Murray/ Diane Shea, Church Business Administrator Kevin Botbyl, PG&M Chair Bill Culliton, Rev. Dr. Kyung-Hee Sa	

### **Staff Parish Relations Committee (One succession permitted)**

Co-Chairs - Kathy Daum & Jack Smith

December 31, 2025	Kathy Daum*, Jack Smith, Linsey Anderson
December 31, 2026	Kitty Lugar*, Bill Harvey, Sarah Hopkins
December 31, 2027	Karen Browne, Sharon Owens, Henrik Maansson
Ex Officio – Lay Leader Anne Murray/ Diane Shea (* = second term)	

~ Everyone in Service ~



## **Committee on Nominations & Leadership Development (Succession prohibited)**

Chair - Rev. Dr. Kyung-Hee Sa

Vice Chairs - Anne Murray & Diane Shea

December 31, 2025

Betsy Diemer, Kyle Smith, Sandy Anderson

December 31, 2026

Henry Daum, Cheryl Beeson, Lynne Conlan

December 31, 2027

Hal Barker, Ferris Wharton

Ex Officio – Membership Secretary Susan Schranck

## **Lay Members to Annual Conference (Succession permitted)**

Debbie Mulrooney (December 31, 2025)

Reserve Member Cheryl Merritt

## **Communications Team**

Chair - Betsy Diemer

December 31, 2025

Andy Shenk, Julia Shay, Tyler Merritt

December 31, 2026

Nancy Hough, Betsy Diemer, Amanda Moyer

December 31, 2027

Kym Kelly, Fiona Kelly, Natalie Dyke

Ex Officio – Administrative Assistant Kyle Smith

Newsletter Editors Kathy Daum & Preston Cooper

## **Treasury Committee**

Finance Chair Bob Reis, Trustees Chair Debbie Mulrooney,

Lay Leader Anne Murray/ Diane Shea, PG&M Chair Bill Culliton, Rev. Dr. Kyung-Hee Sa

## **Stewardship Committee**

Rev. Dr. Kyung-Hee Sa, Bert Diemer, Karen Browne

## **Planned Giving and Memorials (PG&M)**

Chair – Brian Merritt

Members - Steve Davis, Peter Atwater, Barbara Buckley

Ex Officio – Rev. Dr. Kyung-Hee Sa, Kevin Botbyl- Church Bus Admin, Brian Merritt - Finance, Taber Smith - Trustee

## **Bequest Committee**

Chair Bill Culliton, Trustees Chair Debbie Mulrooney, Lay Leader Anne Murray/ Diane Shea, PG&M Chair Bill Culliton, Rev. Dr. Kyung-Hee Sa, Chair of the Finance Committee Bob Reis, Business Administrator Kevin Botbyl

## Lead Team November 26 Meeting

Henry Daum from the Catalyst Core Team reviewed their draft agenda for the January 11 Lead Team Retreat. The Catalyst Core Team will review how the Catalyst program got to its current status, the details of the current status and what's coming next.

This was the last meeting of 2024 and we recognized those who will be leaving the Lead Team and the contributions they've made:

Melva Smith - Tri-chair / Member at Large

Ferris Wharton - Tri-chair / Member at Large

Sharon Owens - Co-Lay Leader

## Troop 67

## Boy Scout Week

## February 3 - 9

February 6 marks the 115th anniversary of the Boy Scouts of America, an organization that has been instilling morals, skills and values that have helped several generations of boys to become strong leaders and active citizens in adulthood. On February 9, Boy Scout Troop 67 will be pleased to join Aldersgate in Sunday worship. We are gratified by the strong and steadfast support you have shown the troop as we begin our 29<sup>th</sup> year of providing scouting to North Wilmington youth.

This year the Boy Scouts of America is rebranding itself as Scouting America, reflecting the organization's ongoing commitment to welcome every youth and family in America to experience the benefits of Scouting. Scouting America provides the nation's foremost youth program of character development and values-based leadership training, which helps young people be "Prepared. For Life".

Troop 67 has 24 scouts and 21 registered adults, several of whom are Aldersgate members. Last year, in addition to traditional summer camp at Camp Horseshoe, we sent several scouts and leaders to Philmont Scout Reservation in New Mexico for 2 weeks of backpacking and scouting adventure. In 2024, Troop 67 embarked upon many exciting outings with activities such as canoeing, fishing, backpacking, orienteering and touring Annapolis and the US Naval Academy.

Service is a key aspect of Troop 67 program; we provided over 1000 hours of community service including Aldersgate mulching, rummage sale support, garden bed construction at Claymont Community Center, kiosk and sign at Jester Art Space, and courtyard reconstruction at Tennis Rocks facility.

Troop 67 once again earned the highest level of achievement in BSA's Journey to Excellence quality unit program. Regarding advancement, 21 scouts advanced in rank and 61 merit badges were earned. 70 scouts have earned Eagle since we began in November 1996. Troop 67 meets on most Monday nights at 7:00 in the Fellowship Hall.

We are increasing our efforts to attract more boys to join our Scout troop and Cub pack and we are asking for your help. If you know any scout-age boys or their parents who could be interested in the fun and benefits of being a Scout, please reach out and tell them about Aldersgate's amazing Scouting America program. For additional information call John Walker, Scoutmaster, at 302-981-3711. Check out our web site at [www.troop67de.com](http://www.troop67de.com).



Christmas  
Concert  
December  
15





## Congregational Care

"For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you." (John 13:15, NRSV)

Being a caring congregation means following Jesus' example of servant ministry. We support one another experiencing grief and loss, easing life transitions, or caring for physical or mental illness. Aldersgate is blessed with gifted and compassionate laity who serve one another in need. Congregational Care is comprised of many care teams. If you are interested in helping a team or have an idea for a new team, please send me a message at

[cheryl.merritt@aldersgatede.org](mailto:cheryl.merritt@aldersgatede.org) Let's continue to share God's love and healing presence with one another.

-Cheryl Merritt, Director of Congregational Care

**Aldersgate in Stitches** – Knit or crochet prayer shawls to be delivered during care visits

**Card ministry** - Send cards to members needing encouragement or to celebrate birthdays and anniversaries

**Cradle roll** – Donate layette items, make meals, or deliver gifts for families with newborns

**Gifts** – Make baked goods, donate devotional books, create handmade items to be delivered during church visitation

**Homebound worship** – Lead or assist with leading worship services at senior living communities

**Home maintenance** – Help members with light home repair or yardwork

**Meals** – Prepare a hot meal or frozen meal to be delivered to a member's home

**Prayer** – Pray daily at 3:33 for our church prayer list needs. Or join our Catalyst intercessory prayer team.

**Shepherds** - Call and check-in on our members who we have not seen in church or members who need additional support and care.



**(LEFT) Card Ministry** in action—Christmas Cards for those unable to attend church.

**(RIGHT) Visitation** in action -In November, Aldersgate friends at Cokesbury Village met for Fellowship and Communion with Pastor Kyung-Hee Sa and Cheryl Merritt, Director of Congregational Care. We are looking forward to connecting again at our next visit in March!





## Cookie Walk !

### Thank You

The Cookie Walk was a success! It is exciting that this event brings in many people from the community along with our faithful "Aldersgaters". Hats off to our congregation for your support!

The UWF would like to express our thanks and gratitude to all of you who contributed or helped in any way - Thank you bakers, volunteers and shoppers!!! Your efforts make a huge difference in the success of this event, but more importantly, in the lives of many. We raised over \$4,700. This year's proceeds will benefit missions for women, children and youth and be distributed to Neighborhood House, the YWCA and Sunday Breakfast Mission.

Again, thank you so very much for your generosity, your prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness in relation to our Cookie Walk. You exhibit the miracle of Christ at work! Friends, this is what it is all about. Thank you one and all!

## From the Church Staff

The Church office is closed December 24 – January 1. We will be checking the mail and voicemail daily. Please utilize the secure mailbox, next to the door on the Fairfax side of the building, for church paperwork. All 2024 pledges need to be in by Friday, December 27!

The New Year is coming- now is a good time for all group and activity leaders to check your 2025 room reservations with Kevin Botbyl and make sure they are on the calendar!



*Happy Birthday*



*Kyung-Hee*

Head Usher, Steve Davis, surprised Pastor Kyung-Hee Sa on Sunday, December 8 with Happy Birthday Wishes and a card signed by the congregation and the above photo prepared by Al Moore.

*Join us!*  
**UWF Epiphany Meeting**  
 January 5th 2025  
 in the auditorium  
 12:15 pm  
 Lunch provided  
 see sign up link below

 **United Women in Faith**

*all are welcome!*  
 Guest speaker and music program:  
 Anastasiia Sidorova  
 accompanied by  
 Mark Sobol and JoJo Schlecht

<https://eeumw.wufoo.com/forms/uwf-epiphany-luncheon-sign-up/>

## We Give!

Our congregation is a very generous one. Over the past several decades we steadily increased the causes we support and the opportunities to give in support of those ministries. We simply tried to support everything that was suggested. In doing so we spread out our giving, diminished our impact and created a great deal of extra work for those tracking our finances.

With our annual contributions to the Operating Fund, we support all of Aldersgate's missions. They would not be possible without the staff, building, United Methodist apportionment and so much more that we need that is part of the Operating Fund. Many of us go beyond that and support missions with which we might have a special connection.

With our new and revised accounting systems, we will have nearly as many opportunities for targeted giving with the tools to assure all donations go where directed and support the mission and strategic plan Aldersgate has in place. Whether you bring or send in checks or donate electronically, the recognized opportunities beyond our Operating Fund include the following:

**Memorial Gift** – A donation made in memory or honor of a person or group intended to last more than one year Administered by the Planned Giving and Memorials Committee, these gifts are used for designated purposes. Some are endowed, meaning we use only the investment income each year. Contact PG&M Chair Brian Merritt for additional information and assistance with this type of gift.

### Capital Fund

Administered by the Trustees, these funds are devoted to building and property improvements costing \$2,500 or more. We budget some replenishment for this fund annually and gladly accept additional gifts to enhance our building and grounds. Contact Trustees President Debbie Mulrooney for more information and needs.

We collect and send funds to a number of ministries supported by UMC special offerings and other giving efforts:

**UMCOR** – The annual envelope offering supports administration of the United Methodist relief agency for the year.

**UMCOR 901670** Supports US - based emergency relief work.

**UMCOR 982450** Supports international relief efforts

**Bishop Weaver Congo Partnership**

**Human Relations Sunday**

**Native American Awareness**

**World Communion Sunday**

**Peace with Justice**

**Student Day**

**Christian Education Sunday**

Donations can be targeted to Aldersgate Ministries:

**Gather Ministries** – Our worship and fellowship programs including music and care for each other.

**Grow Ministries** – Our learning and associated experiences at Aldersgate and beyond.

**Go Ministries** – Our witness for all neighbors.

Special envelopes are circulated at different times. We are happy to have donations at any time to remember these important days in our year. They enhance our Operating Budget.

**Ash Wednesday**

**Christmas**

**Easter**

**Good Friday**

**Maundy Thursday**

**Thanksgiving**

Special Aldersgate events and causes can be designated for gifts:

**Altar Flowers** – Many of us enjoy fresh flowers on the altar every Sunday. Arrangements can be made to dedicate flowers on a chosen Sunday with the Altar Guild for a current fee of \$60. This fee and any other contributions for flowers on non-committed Sundays are welcome.

**Easter Flowers** – Just as for Altar Flowers, arrangements need to be made. The fee can be directed from planned giving.

**Arts at Aldersgate** – a Gather ministry that brings performances to Aldersgate throughout the year

**Mission Trip** – The annual trip that takes our witness into the world is supported by participant fees, the annual budget and memorial funds.

**Youth Musical** – Angel contributions and other gifts support this annual showcase of our youth talent.

**Christmas Joy** – Gifts are usually given to the Love Does Class but can be done as part of an annual giving plan.

**Harvest Food Drive** – In addition to collection of non-perishable food, we welcome cash which agencies can use to buy more than we can. We channel designated gifts to this drive.

**Souper Bowl** – A Harvest Food Festival like effort at Super Bowl time every January. Any contributed funds are sent with the cans of soup collected.

**Good Samaritan Fund** – Our special green basket offering each Communion Sunday is devoted to filling immediate needs in our community. Contributions are always needed and welcome.

Our collections go to the Operating Fund unless designated. To designate an additional ministry for a portion of your gift, simply place a note with your check or advise Susan Schranck ([susan.schranck@aldersgatede.org](mailto:susan.schranck@aldersgatede.org)) by email or note with an electronic payment as to how you wish the donation divided. Some of Aldersgate's small groups conduct their own ministries seeking donations or selling goods (Cookie Walk, Chocolate and Chili, Altar Guild projects and others). Any donations or fees for these should be made directly to those groups.

If you feel Aldersgate should support another cause, please gather the details and need and see our Gather, Grow or Go teams to investigate further.

Thank God for all who support Aldersgate and we do together!

Bob Reis  
Finance Chair

## Catalyst Initiative

The Catalyst Core Team is now embarking on the most challenging part of the work that we've encountered so far. Having received input from the congregation and members of our surrounding community, we are working to discern the one thing that our congregation is uniquely positioned and called to do in addressing the needs and wants of our community members.

The Catalyst Initiative is asking us to discern what we can do with community members to help address their needs and wants. This is different from doing something for community members. That's where the challenge comes in.

We will be communicating more with you about this work in January. We value your continued prayers and support.



## Chili & Chocolate XXIII

Saturday, Feb 1, 2025, 5 PM - save the date!

2025 wildcard category: **GRAINS**



## Gardener Extraordinaire

Elaine Chester volunteered all summer tending the garden on the Fairfax side of church. She weeded, purchased tomato, zucchini, pepper plants and more. She planted and lovingly watered the plants during the summer.

Elaine brought some of the harvest into church to share with the congregation on Sunday mornings. She also left some by the Little Food Pantry. Thank you, Elaine, for your generosity to the community and to the church.





Brien and Sherrie Graveline	Jan 1	24 years
Brian and Cheryl Merritt	Jan 12	23 years



We are thrilled to announce the resurrection of The Cradle Roll at Aldersgate. The Cradle Roll supports new babies in our Church and connections for their families. This ministry shepherds babies to baptism and into children's ministry.

If you would like to help with this ministry, we need people to provide meals when needed, donations of baby items, and most importantly prayers.

Contact the Church office if there is a new child/parent(s) we should be adding to offer a warm Aldersgate welcome. Two of the newest members of our Cradle Roll are:



Hunter Timothy Sanchez  
Parents: Emma Detwiler  
& Tony Sanchez



Oliver Reeve Berto  
Parents Victoria Kelly & Robert Berto  
Grandparents: Kim & Jim Provo

Please reach out to Cheryl Merritt,  
[cheryl.merritt@aldersgatede.org](mailto:cheryl.merritt@aldersgatede.org) or Sharon Owens,  
[sdowens@verizon.net](mailto:sdowens@verizon.net) with any questions.

## From Your Lay Leaders

*Anne Murray and Diane Shea*

[layleader@aldersgatede.org](mailto:layleader@aldersgatede.org)

Grace and Peace to you in 2025! I'm excited to join Anne Murray as a Lay Leader for Aldersgate. I look forward to working with Pastor Kyung-Hee, the church staff and leaders, and all of you as we strive to live into Aldersgate's vision and mission both for our church family and for our surrounding community.

Blessings to you and your families in the new year,  
Diane Shea

Christmas Concert, December 15: Choir and Wilmington String Ensemble



## Worship Schedule

**In-Person and Live Streamed**

**9 a.m. Contemporary Service in Sanctuary**

**11 a.m. Traditional Service in Sanctuary**

**Live Streamed at**

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AldersgateDe/>.

\*\*\*If you do not have Facebook: Click link and choose the option of "NOT NOW" to be taken to the live feed.

YouTube: [www.youtube.com/c/aldersgatede](http://www.youtube.com/c/aldersgatede) and hit SUBSCRIBE!

**10 a.m. SUNDAY SCHOOL**

### Upcoming Events

**Christmas Eve Services - 4 p.m. and 9 p.m.**

**Sunday, December 29 - One Service at 10 a.m.**

**Sunday, January 5 - UWF Epiphany Meeting /Lunch**

**Saturday, February 1 - Chili and Chocolate**

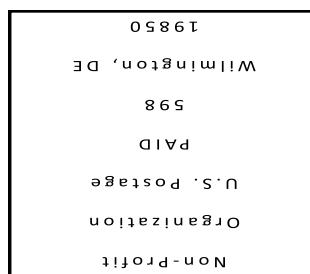
## **What's Inside...**

Pastor Kyung-Hee's Message	1
Children & Youth Ministry	2,3
Crazy Ladies Bible Study/ Altar Flowers	4
Family Promise	4
Youth Musical Audition Information	5
Staff Spotlight -Kevin Botbyl	6
Rummage Sale	6
Aldersgate Leadership 2025-2027	7-10
Lead Team	10
Congregational Care	11
United Women in Faith	12
Giving	13-14
Life Events/Cradle Roll	15



Aldersgate United Methodist Church—A significant place where disciples are made!

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



**Aldersgate United Methodist Church**  
Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.  
2313 Concord Pike  
Wilmington, Delaware 19803  
(302) 478-2575  
[www.aldersgatede.org](http://www.aldersgatede.org)

