



May 2025

The Messenger Aldersgate UMC

A significant place where disciples are made



Pentecost & Confirmation Sunday



JUNE 8- ONE UNIFIED
WORSHIP SERVICE
COMMUNION SUNDAY
WEAR YOUR RED!!

Unified Worship--Pentecost
SUNDAY, JUNE 08, 2025, 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Confirmation classes journey together toward their first profession of their intent to live as faithful disciples of Jesus Christ. To facilitate this, we offer a confirmation class each year for our youth in grades 7-12. In the class, we spend time learning about their faith. This includes topics like the Bible, how we read Scripture, salvation, the general rules of the United Methodist Church, the sacraments, our unique Wesleyan heritage, Church organization and our faith practices. The classes are designed to be creative, interactive, and faith nurturing.

The 2025 Confirmation Class met as a class on scheduled Sundays, enjoyed a retreat at Pecometh, a visit to Barratt's Chapel, and a lovely luncheon with Sponsors.

Please hold our confirmands in prayer as they continue this journey. They are working on the Confirmation Service to make it a special occasion.

Our 2025 Confirmation class and their Sponsors

Morgan O'Hanlon	Julie Harrington
Sienna Schott	Sharon Owens
Benjamin Lassiter	Henry Daum
Daniel DiGiacoma	Diane Shea
Juliette Erskine	Nitasha Smith/Julia Shay



**Congratulations
Aldersgate on a
successful
Rummage Sale
2025**



Share The Journey.

From Your Lay Leaders
Diane Shea and Anne Murray

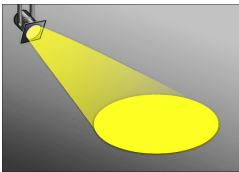


The past two months have been a time of uncertainty for the staff and congregation of Aldersgate while Pastor Kyung-Hee has been away. We have all been praying for her to recover and return to us. She and Jung Moon have been missed.

Our church staff and lay leadership have shown their strength and determination to ensure that our worship activities and our ministries have continued. *Perhaps they felt that they could do anything through Christ who strengthened them!*

I hope they felt our prayers for them and our gratitude for all they have done and with love. Spring is a time for hope and renewal. May it be so for Aldersgate.

Blessings from Anne and Diane



STAFF SPOTLIGHT - Pam Downey

Pam Downey – Director of Youth and Children’s Ministries
Aldersgate United Methodist Church

Pam Downey has served as the Director of Youth Ministries at Aldersgate United Methodist Church since November 2023. In 2024, she expanded her role to also serve as Director of Children’s Ministries, a position she has embraced with passion and excitement. Pam brings a deep sense of calling and care to her work, saying she feels her role is to “nurture and affirm the faith of our young people.” Her guiding principle when working with youth is to always “listen purposefully and carefully.”

Prior to joining Aldersgate, Pam was the Youth Director at Chesapeake City United Methodist Church. She holds a degree in Bible and Spiritual Life Renewal from Lancaster Bible College, guiding her ministry with both knowledge and conviction.

Pam lives in Elkton, Maryland with her husband, Eric. They have been married for 39 years and are the proud parents of three sons—Jonathon, Tyler, and Mark. They are also blessed with three grandchildren.

At Aldersgate, Pam's responsibilities include planning and running Vacation Bible School (VBS), coordinating the annual youth mission trip (this year to Appalachia), organizing weekly youth Impact gatherings, preparing college care packages, teaching Sunday school for middle and high school students, serving on the Lead Team, reviewing the children's Sunday school curriculum, and preaching on occasion.

Pam is especially grateful for the dedicated volunteers who help support the children and youth ministry and she looks forward to seeing how this important part of the church can continue to grow and flourish. With a heart for ministry and a love for the next generation, Pam serves as a steady and inspiring presence in the life of Aldersgate UMC.



Catalyst Initiative

The Catalyst Core Team is preparing for the final retreat with our cohort churches which is scheduled for May 17 in Baltimore. During this year we have learned a lot about Aldersgate and our community. While this retreat will mark the end of our work with Jack Shitama and our three cohort churches, Catalyst work at Aldersgate will continue. We ask for your prayers to help guide Aldersgate's next steps.

Catalyst Core Team

Dan Shay
Lynne Conlan
Cheryl Merritt
Henry Daum



Special Thank You to Martha Weldin

Martha has been volunteering her time for months helping to improve the computer systems at Aldersgate. The move to Cloud Storage has been a big improvement. Martha has worked with the staff and leads of many church committees to provide directions for access to file storage. Thank you for your time and patience for such a major accomplishment.



HOPP Food Distribution - Friday, May 23, 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. 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.



Red Shopping Cart Food Collection - The red shopping carts outside the church office are available at all times to donate non-perishable foods. Items in these carts are used to fill the Aldersgate Free Little Pantry. Our pantry is available to the community 24 hours a day. Currently our pantry is being restocked 3 to 4 times per week. We are in great need of donations. The most needed non perishable items are: pop-top cans of soup or pasta meals, cereal, peanut butter, jelly, boxed mac & cheese, granola bars, apple sauce, crackers and shelf-stable milks. Expired items cannot be accepted. For more information contact Stacie DiGiacoma (staciedigiacoma@msn.com)



Thank you

to
Anastasiia Sidorova,
Director of Music Ministry, the
Choir, Mark Sobol, the musicians
and the Journey Band who all
made Palm Sunday services full of
special music. The Journey Band
played multiple pieces during the
9:00 service and the Choir and
musicians presented the Faure
Requiem at the 11:00 service. The
sanctuary was filled
with beautiful music.



Heal the World



Sunday, May 4, 2025, at 2 PM

*Doors will open at 1:30 PM

Featuring our Chancel Choir,
Aldersgate Brass, Gateway Ringers, Junior Choir,
Vocal Impact, and Journey Band



Please come on May 4 for a wonderful musical
experience and invite friends, family, and
neighbors.

May, June and Summer Schedule



Sunday June 1 - will be our regular worship Schedule
9 AM Contemporary
11 AM Traditional
*No Communion and no Sunday School

Pentecost & Confirmation Sunday



JUNE 8- ONE UNIFIED WORSHIP SERVICE
COMMUNION SUNDAY
WEAR YOUR RED!!



2025 SUMMER SCHEDULE

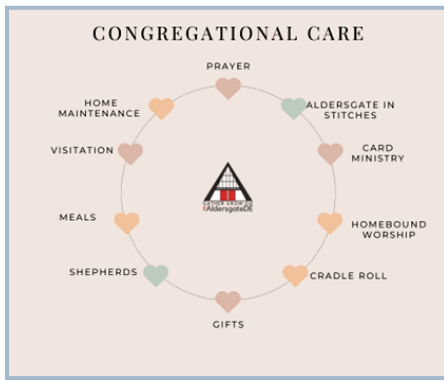
June

June 1 - Regular Worship Schedule, no communion
June 8 - 10 AM Unified Worship, Pentecost/Confirmation Sunday, Communion
June 15, 22, & 29 - Regular Worship Schedule

JULY & AUGUST

10 AM UNIFIED WORSHIP EVERY SUNDAY
www.aldersgatede.org





Congregational Care May 2025 – Homebound Worship

"Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs." Psalm 100:2

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. Each month I will highlight one of our teams. This month's highlight is **Homebound Worship**.

Aldersgate has a rich history of serving in senior living communities for several decades. Early leaders included Dave and Lorena Farrar and Sheridan Young. Kitty Lugar has been coordinating the Nursing Home/Retirement services since Fa (Fields) Lane left her position at Aldersgate. Three times per month, members from Aldersgate volunteer at Forwood Manor to lead a worship service.

Kitty first began leading worship at Foulk Manor South and has also provided special music for worship at Cokesbury Village and other communities for many years. When the need for a coordinator arose, Kitty stepped in. When asked why she continues to serve, Kitty states, "When I got to know the residents and established a relationship with them, I wanted to continue. It is gratifying to hear their stories about life and their spiritual journeys. Some have extensive knowledge of the Bible. They are very appreciative of our visits. I am inspired by them!"

Others who have led worship more recently include Jo Ann Bush, Cathy Hartwick, Bert and Betsy Diemer, Julie Harrington, David Zipse, Bonnie Rambo, Sherie Stiles, Antionette Yovonie, Nancy Eder and Martha Weldin.

Over the years, Aldersgate's music groups have been invited to senior living facilities to share special music in worship, theater, or concerts. Diane Shea recalls how in her 20s, she was first invited by Evelyn Swensson and Linda Moore to join in 'Sisters in Song' and other ensembles where she sang and performed with Kitty, Evelyn, Linda and Joanne Bodwell at Foulk Manor North and Cokesbury. Diane remembers when working with Evelyn and Linda "of course, the programs included props and choreography."

Diane began leading Aldersgate kids and youth in 2006, bringing smaller singing groups to Cokesbury. Diane continues to join opportunities to sing at our local senior living communities because "it's a joy to see our Aldersgate friends and worship with them!"

Most recently in March, the Journey Band sang a special concert for our friends at Mary Campbell Center and the cast of Finding Nemo Jr. from Aldersgate Youth Players sang at Shipley Living.

Janet and Peter Atwater serve at Cokesbury Village to provide music at their Sunday evening worship services 3-4x a year "or whenever we're asked." Janet recalls "We think that Evelyn Swensson was the 1st person to invite us, and in recent years it has been Don Moore. We love going to Cokesbury. It's wonderful to see so many Aldersgate members, along with the other Cokesbury residents, and it brings us tremendous joy to sing for everyone."

Kitty warmly invites anyone who wants to join this ministry. "We will arrange for them to have hymnals and resource materials and will provide as much support as the individual would like." If you would like to help, please connect directly with Kitty, send me a message at cheryl.merritt@aldersgatede.org or leave a message with the church office 302-478-2575. What a gift to worship outside our church walls and share God's love with our homebound neighbors!

-Cheryl Merritt, Director of Congregational Care

Children and Youth Ministries

Easter Egg Hunt a Hopping Success

This year's Easter Egg Hunt was a delightful success, bringing together families, friends, and neighbors for a day filled with laughter and excitement. Hosted in the Youth Ministry Center and Fellowship Hall, the event attracted children of all ages, baskets in hand, ready for the adventure.

Youth members hid over 1,500 colorful eggs throughout the YMC, each filled with candies, small toys and stickers. Children raced around the room, peeking under furniture behind cushions, and above their heads, their eyes sparkling with the thrill of the hunt.

In addition to the egg hunt, families enjoyed sand art, crafts, games, and soft pretzels. Of course, many hands are involved in a successful event. Many thanks to our youth members for hiding the eggs, and Aldersgate staff, who filled the eggs. Sandy Anderson, Julie DeRosa, Kathy Daum and Laura Honish, who supervised on event day. Thanks to Gregg Xenakes for donning the Easter Bunny suit again this year! A special thanks to Mic Upcavage for all her hard work in making the day a success.

The Easter Egg Hunt is a delightful Aldersgate tradition for our church and wider community. Let's look forward to next year's event being even bigger and better!



Appalachia Mission Trip July 19-25, 2025



We will be serving in Pikeville, Kentucky!
Pikeville experienced devastating flooding in February 2025.
We will be doing disaster relief and repair work.
All ages and skill levels are welcome to be a part of the mission trip.
Questions? pam.downey@aldersgate.org



Youth Sunday School has enjoyed the first Sunday of each month as 'Panera Sunday'. We meet from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. at Panera for food and fellowship. New faces are always welcome!



At one of our weekly staff meetings in early April, we did some Lenten self-reflection and discussed how we might restructure our meetings to better live into our mission, our core values, and our Wesleyan heritage. Every Wednesday, we meet in the chapel for a time of devotion and prayer and then move to Room 237 to conduct the business portion of the meeting. We decided that moving forward, we would take every other week to replace our business meeting with “means of grace” and specifically, “works of mercy”.

An article from United Methodist Communications defines the means of grace this way: “John Wesley taught that God's grace is unearned and that we were not to be idle waiting to experience grace, but we are to engage in the means of grace. The means of grace are ways God works invisibly in disciples, hastening, strengthening; and confirming faith so that God's grace pervades in and through disciples. As we look at the means of grace today, they can be divided into works of piety and the works of mercy.” [The Wesleyan Means of Grace | UMC.org](https://www.UMC.org)

The article describes works of piety as reading and studying scriptures, prayer, worship, sharing the sacraments, Christian conferencing/accountability to one another, and healthy living. Works of mercy include doing good works, visiting the sick, giving to the needs of others, seeking justice, and working to end oppression and discrimination.

Our chapel time has been a consistent practice in works of piety. It centers us and reminds us of “the why” before we engage in the business of the church. Every other week, we are now committing to engage in works of mercy during our staff meeting time, instead of our usual business meeting. So far, we have engaged in 3 works: picking up trash along the perimeter of our property (4 large trash bags full!), polishing the pews and woodwork in the Sanctuary for Easter, and filling Easter eggs for the Children’s ministry egg hunt (photos below!) Future work will include serving at Emmanuel Dining room, weeding, or tackling some of the smaller projects on the Trustees to-do list.

Aldersgate’s purpose is to be “a significant place where disciples are made!” We invite you to use this Easter season to examine your own discipleship journey and find ways to engage in “means of grace” in a new way. ---

The staff filling plastic eggs for the Easter Egg Hunt





United
Women
in Faith

Spring Program March 30th



In 1893 the Christian Endeavor Society opened in Wilmington to serve men in need with church on Sunday and a meal. This service grew to include shelter and help in finding work. Now known as Sunday Breakfast Mission, the vision remains to “provide rest for the body and peace for the soul”. Before the lunch and talk, Kamala Prasad lead attendees in a brief meditation as part of UWF Soul Care focus. Kamala teaches meditation at Art of Living.

Bruce Davison, Church and Community Relations Manager from Sunday Breakfast Mission gave a terrific talk about services provided to women and families in our area. Women’s under garments were collected and donated as part of our mission project. To learn more visit <https://sundaybreakfastmission.org>.



United
Women
in Faith

UWF and
Sarah Circle

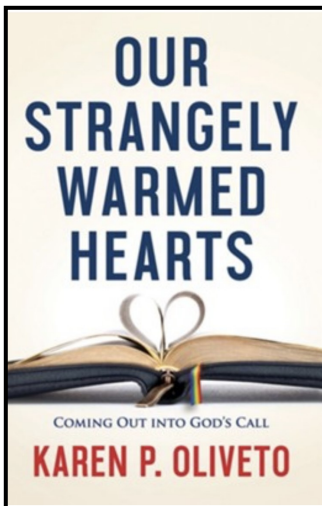
THANK YOU FOR THE EASTER EGG SUCCESS

Over \$3250
was raised!

proceeds benefit
ministries for
women, children
and youth







Reconciling Ministries

Our Strangely Warmed Hearts

By Bishop Karen Oliveto

Karen Oliveto has written a book on the long struggle surrounding homosexuality within the United Methodist Church. It has been difficult and denomination changing. The book begins with a detailed history of the LGBTQ equality movement in the UMC and in society. A debate has raged for many years over the sacred worth of LGBTQ persons in our lives and in the church. She asks, "is there any other group that we would marginalize this way"?

In addition to the very thorough and illumination history, Bishop Oliveto's book includes moving personal stories of LGBTQ persons who have been called to serve God in the church and how individuals and churches responded to them. Sometimes with grace and love, but often with rejection. The stories reveal courage and strength of an ostracized group of Christians and how they experienced God's call to serve.

Bishop Oliveto, a former pastor, now serves as a Bishop of the Mountain Sky Episcopal Area for the UMC.

Copies are available on the United Women of Faith bookshelf in our library courtesy of members of the Crazy Ladies study group.

Aldersgate UMC
June 16- 20
9 AM to 12 PM



Scan QR Code to
REGISTER a
Child or Volunteer



See Pam Downey for more information
pam.downey@aldersgatede.org





Thomas Price
March 20, 2025

Virginia Lipford
April 4, 2025



March 30, 2025

Rhys Joseph Harding,
son of John Harding, Sr and Paige
Harding, Grandson of Robert and Kathy
Harding, Great-grandson of
Jean Harding

Colin Zolnowski
Brett Zolnowski
Jack Zolnowski,
sons of Michael and Michelle Zolnowski



Luke & Jessica Fresconi	May 2	16 years
Ed & Sharon Owens	May 4	34 years
Al & Sherie Stiles	May 6	47 years
Ferris & Erin Wharton	May 7	3 years
Henry & Kathy Daum	May 10	45 years
Ron and Eleanor Kelly	May 10	50 years
Ron Hunsicker and Kathy Seibert	May 10	11 years
Bill and Cathy Holloway	May 12	41 years
Gary & Betty Lu Ireland	May 14	65 years
Joseph & Sheena Gladden	May 17	28 years
Nicholas & Jenna Fearn	May 21	3 years
George & Julie Koffenberger	May 21	42 years
Ron & Jill Teixeira	May 21	20 years
William & Mary Johnston	May 29	41 years

Serenading Judy Morton

The cast and crew of Finding Nemo Jr.
surprised Judy Morton with songs from the
show.



Worship Schedule

Contemporary Service with Journey Band in Sanctuary at 9 a.m.

Sunday School at 10:05 a.m.

Traditional Service with Choir in Sanctuary at 11 a.m.

You can find the live stream

https://www.facebook.com/AldersgateDE/live_videos/

Or YouTube

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCnZoqyVVH4kvH_BknkW3y3w

Upcoming Events

Sunday, May 4 - Heal the World Spring Concert, 2 p.m.

Sunday, May 18 - Graduates Recognition Sunday

What's Inside...

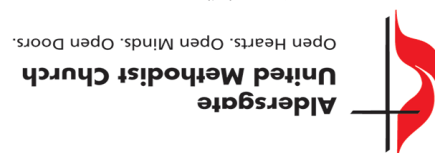
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Aldersgate United Methodist Church—A significant place where disciples are made!

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