



The Messenger Aldersgate UMC

April 2025

A significant place where disciples are made



THE CATALYST INITIATIVE

The Catalyst Initiative that started last April is scheduled to end in May with a final retreat in Fulton, Maryland. However, we are being challenged to apply our learnings at Aldersgate for the long term to ensure that we are a thriving congregation and a vital presence in our neighborhood for years to come. The Catalyst Team will be working with the Lead Team to examine how we currently structure our mission to build disciples and how we might refocus our mindset and enhance our operations to best live into God's call for Aldersgate. There are several modules from the Catalyst curriculum that we plan to share with the Lead Team to help us "be the church" in the most effective way.



SEE ALL THE PEOPLE

We are called by God to serve the community within which we live. The Catalyst Initiative provided us with a high-level socio-economic view of our surrounding neighborhoods. Just as important is having 1-on-1 conversations with our neighbors to understand their hopes and concerns. We are also keeping track of Aldersgate's strengths and assets. The Catalyst Initiative has given us the opportunity to do all of these things during the past year and we need to find ways to keep on doing these things long term because our context is always changing.

MISSIONAL ALIGNMENT

Because our context changes, we need to prayerfully and continually examine our ministries to ensure that our strengths and assets are being applied for the maximum impact. Through our current experiment interviewing older adults in our neighborhood, we are learning the process on how to start new ministries by starting small, measuring success, and making changes when we identify a better way to use our strengths and assets. This "design thinking" technique allows us to learn quickly and pivot to stay in alignment with our purpose and mission. We will continue to train church leadership on this technique and support the creation of new experiments.

PATHWAY TO DISCIPLESHIP

The purpose of Aldersgate is "to be a significant place where disciples are made." Our mission is "With God's help and through prayer we GATHER as God's people, GROW in faith and love and GO into the world as Jesus' disciples." The Catalyst Initiative encourages us to clearly define what a disciple is, how the ministries at Aldersgate align with that definition, and the pathway that members of the congregation can follow to mature in their personal discipleship. The Catalyst team will work with the Lead team to refine our discipleship pathway so that current members and prospective members will be able to identify their current status of their faith journey and find concrete ways to deepen discipleship. This will help ensure that the work of Aldersgate always supports our purpose.

SUMMARY

While the Catalyst Initiative is drawing to a close, the work to keep Aldersgate a vital congregation will continue. The Catalyst Team will support our church leadership in the above areas to facilitate growth. Please continue to pray for Aldersgate as we live into God's unique call for us.

Catalyst Core Team



Congregational Care April 2025 – Card Ministry

"I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer..."

Philippians 1:3-4

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 **Card Ministry**.

There's something truly special about receiving a handwritten card in the mail. The surprise in your mailbox, the anticipation of opening the envelope, and reading a heartfelt message can bring instant joy to your day. It's a tangible reminder that someone cares about you.

Thank you to our Altar Guild, Crazy Ladies, United Women in Faith and Aldersgate Staff who routinely send out cards to our members. If you would like to help us spread some joy through creating handmade note cards or sending notes to our members and friends, please send me a message at: cheryl.merritt@aldersgatede.org or leave a message with the church office 302-478-2575. **You could start today by selecting one name from our prayer list and write a note to that person letting them know that you're praying for them.** Leave the sealed envelope with the person's name on it in the Congregational Care Mailbox #4 in the HUB. I'll make sure that it gets mailed to the correct address. Let's continue to share God's love and healing presence with one another.

-Cheryl Merritt, Director of Congregational Care

PALM/PASSION SUNDAY

Sunday, April 13, 2025
9 AM Contemporary Service

Experience a special Musical Reflection by the Journey Band. Come for a time of inspiration, prayer and powerful music.

Experience a special musical reflection by the Journey Band during our **9 AM Contemporary Worship Service on April 13th.** Come for a time

inspiration, prayer, and powerful music. We look forward to worshipping with you!



Join us for a moving performance of Gabriel Faure's Requiem during **11 AM service on April 13th**, featuring Chancel Choir, Sam

Stein as a Baritone Soloist, JoJo Schlecht as a Soprano Soloist, accompanied by Mark Sobol on the Organ and special guests from The Curtis Institute of Music: Maya Buchanan-Violin, Annis Ma-Viola, Ania Lewis-Cello, Dimitrios Mattas-Bass.

PALM/PASSION SUNDAY

Sunday, April 13, 2025
11 AM Traditional Service

Requiem Op.48 by Gabriel Fauré
Presented by Aldersgate Chancel Choir
JoJo Schlecht as a Soprano Soloist

Sam Stein as a Baritone Soloist

*Accompanied by Mark Sobol on the Organ
and a string ensemble of students from The
Curtis Institute of Music:*

Violin- Maya Buchanan

Viola- Annis Ma

Cello- Ania Lewis

Bass- Dimitrios Mattas

Holy Week +

April 13 - Palm Sunday	9 AM 11 AM
April 17 - Maundy Thursday	7 PM
April 18 - Good Friday	7 PM
April 20 - Easter Sunday	6:30 AM - MT. LEBANON 9 AM - ALDERSGATE 11 AM - ALDERSGATE

www.aldersgatede.org
<https://www.facebook.com/AldersgateDe/>
www.youtube.com/c/aldersgatede



ALDERSGATE UMC EASTER EGG HUNT & CELEBRATION

SATURDAY APRIL 12, 11AM

IN THE ALDERSGATE STUDENT MINISTRY CENTER

Easter Bunny photo opp

PLUS - Easter Egg Hunt, Games, Crafts and soft pretzels

All families invited!

Register your names and ages by 4/8

pam.downey@aldersgatede.org

or call 478-2575 www.aldersgatede.org

**2313 Concord Pike
Wilmington, Delaware 19803**

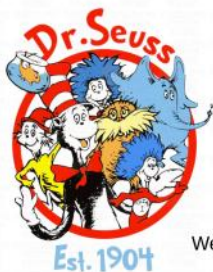


**Scan QR Code to
Register!**



Youth Activities

Join us for IMPACT as we start a new series:
The Gospel According to Dr. Seuss



Wednesday Evenings
6 - 7:30 pm
Dinner Provided

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

Spotlight on Confirmation



Sandy Anderson leads our confirmands in creating their Confirmation class banner.

Do you know a college or graduate student who would be blessed by an end of semester care package?

Please forward name and address to
pam.downey@aldersgatede.org



What: Mission Trip

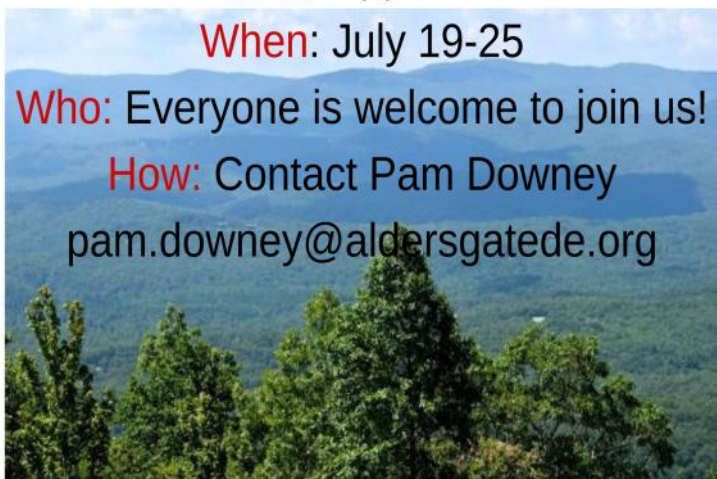
Where: Appalachia

When: July 19-25

Who: Everyone is welcome to join us!

How: Contact Pam Downey

pam.downey@aldersgatede.org



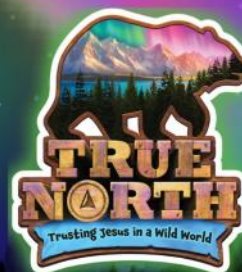
Aldersgate UMC - Vacation Bible School

June 16- 20

9 AM to 12 PM



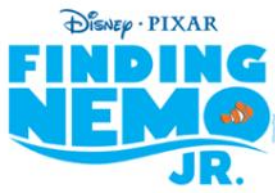
Scan QR Code to
REGISTER a
Child or Volunteer



2313 Concord Pike
Wilmington, Delaware 19803
302.478.2575

www.aldersgatede.org

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



THANK YOU to everyone who came out to support the Aldersgate Youth Musical and our production of ***Finding Nemo JR*** on February 28, March 1 and March 2. We had a wonderful turnout – almost 700 people attended the three performances - and the show was extremely well received.

I'd like to offer special Thank You's to the following people:

The Production Leadership Team: Sandy Anderson, Stacie DiGiacoma, Ramona Dowling, Nancy Hough, Jessica Ice, Cheryl Merritt, Sharon Owens, Dinah Schlecht, Diane Shea & Joanne Smeltz!

Production Worker Bees: Linsey Anderson, Peter Atwater, Cheryl Beeson, Bobbie Burtch, Jenn Davison, Frank Honisch V, Kym Kelly, Christine Lassiter, Tyler Merritt, Don Moyer, Debbie Mulrooney, Susan Ryan, Julia Shay, Nitasha Smith, Linda Sprogell, Rebecca Townsend, Becky Wang, and Mary Jean Wichmann.

The Aldersgate Team: Pastor Kyung-Hee Sa, Kevin Botbyl, Pam Downey, Ryan McKeever, Ron Romine, Susan Schrank, Anastasiia Sidorova, Kyle Smith, Taber Smith, Mark Sobol, Micaela Upcavage, the Altar Guild, DOVs and Aldersgate's congregation for their prayers & support.

Community Partners: Rick Neidig and The Tatnall School.

Aldersgate Angels: In the theatre, people who provide financial support to help underwrite the cost of a show are called "Angels." The following families and individuals have generously supported this year's production:

Sandy Anderson	The DiGiacoma Family	Bonnie Rambo
Janet & Peter Atwater	Nancy Hough	Marilyn Reiner
Cheryl Beeson	Randy Husbands	Carolyn & Bob Reis
The Browne Family	Jessica & Jeffrey Johnston	Shirley Rollins
Barbara Buckley	Mary Lou & Ned Landis	Kyung-Hee Sa & Jung Moon Kim
The Burket Family	Janet Leishman	The Schlecht Family
Bobbie Burtch	Wendy Lindsey	The Shea Family
Jay Conner	Gail Lodge	Joanne Smeltz
Ivanni & Frank Cortale	Jane & Royal Lowther	Tice Pediatric Physical Therapy LLC
Caroline Cross & Family	The Lucyk Family	Rebecca, Khris & Abbie Townsend
Bill Culliton	Meredith McGregor	Jane & Martin Wagner
Betsy & Bert Diemer	The Moyer Family	The Wichmann Family
Donnie & Doug DeVoll	Sharon & Ed Owens	United Women in Faith

And finally, to the Cast, Crew and all the parents and grandparents who brought their kids to rehearsals every weekend, contributed their time and talents, and provided encouragement every step of the way!

Janet Atwater, Director



2025 Rummage Sale – Saturday, April 26 from 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Donate your Extras – Buy something “New to You”



Sports / Tools Housewares Children's Items Vintage Treasures
Books / Games / Puzzles DVDs/CDs Unique Boutique Fashion Items
Garden Electronics Furniture / Rugs / Lamps Bake Sale Holiday

To volunteer: Come Saturday April 19th between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. or Monday through Friday April 21st through 25th between 9 a.m. and 7 p.m. (5 p.m. on Friday) as we prepare for the sale! You may work with a specific team or fill in where we need you. Come for as long or short a time as you have available. Let us know if you can help on Saturday April 26th sale day! There are many places we can use your help.

To Donate: Be sure items are clean and in good, saleable condition. Tax receipts are available when you drop off at the church:

Saturday April 19th from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Monday and Tuesday April 21st & 22nd between 9 a.m. and 7 p.m., or

Wednesday, April 23rd from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

See the March Messenger for details of the types of items we accept for donation.

To Bring Baked Goods: Any type of baked goods are great for our bake sale. We won't be serving our hot breakfast and lunch this year, so breakfast pastries, breads, muffins etc. would be a great addition to our usual cookies, cakes and other delights. Deliver them on Friday afternoon or first thing Saturday morning. **Contact** Dinah Schlecht (dinahschlecht@yahoo.com) to arrange your delivery.

Please use the Rainbow Room ramp entrance across from Fairfax Shopping Center to donate and to volunteer.

Contact Stacie DiGiacoma any time (staciedigiacoma@msn.com, 302-598-5025) or Nancy Hough (**ONLY AFTER** April 12th at houghn1@hotmail.com, 302-762-5321)

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

Spring Concert:

Join Us for the Spring Concert "Heal The World" on May 4th at 2 pm in The Sanctuary, featuring Chancel Choir, Gateway Ringers, Aldersgate Brass, Junior Choir, Vocal Impact and Journey Band. We invite you to join us for an unforgettable afternoon of music, unity, and hope, where we will come together to address the destructive power of hate and urgent need for healing in our country and in our world. Come be part of this transformative experience as we stand together for a better, more peaceful world.

Anastasiia Sidorova



Matthew 25:35 "For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home."

Please join us in thanking our Family Promise March volunteers and partners! Aldersgate fed 8 families/34 people at each dinner. Thank you Hoskin family, Shenk family, Jennifer and Ray Pendley, Diane Shea, Heather Burket and Girl Scout Troop #286, Nancy Hough, Don Temme, Kristin Facciolo & James, Limestone BBQ, Mt Lebanon UMC, and RiverCross Fellowship. Thank you, Aldersgate, for covering the families and volunteers in your prayers!

In 2024, Family Promise of Northern New Castle County served 109 families with children experiencing temporary homelessness. Eighty-four percent of families secured housing in an average of 112 days, 93% of those established permanent housing. 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 June 1-7 2025! We will be partnering with Grace Lutheran. 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 for more information. Thank you, Aldersgate, for being the hands and feet of Christ for our neighbors in New Castle County.

- *The Merritt Family*



*Shrove Tuesday
Pancake Dinner*



Peninsula-Delaware Conference

On February 24, 2025, I attended the Delaware District Meeting of our Peninsula-Delaware Conference led by our District Superintendent Rev. Tom Passmore. I represented Aldersgate as our Reserve Lay Member. The meeting was intended to share with us some updates on activities in our District.

1) Marsha Johnson of Simpson UMC and Rev. Chelsea Spyres of Riverfront Ministries gave a presentation on Urban Center Ministries. Urban Center Ministries was a short term ministry who was tasked in 2019-2024 with dividing the monies from the sale of Silverbrook Church in Wilmington among city congregations that were in need of funding for capital improvements or emerging ministries. \$1,324,834 was divided and issued for the following projects:

- Mt. Joy UMC - undergoing an extensive capital project to acquire the space around the current church footprint - creating multiphase construction of education buildings, historic marker, cleaning up brownfield space, other community engagement partnerships in new buildings.
- Neighborhood House - program funding for summer camps including visual arts, a children's choir and children's drum circles.
- City of Love - a new and growing congregation on 22nd and Market included purchase of Jackie's Home a transitional home for women.
- Learning Pods were created at Mt. Joy and Ezion Mt Carmel during pandemic/post pandemic years 2021-2023.
- Mt. Salem UMC - ministering to Rockford Park users - "Advertising Jesus". They have a 5K coming up 4/19/25 at 10 a.m. through the park.

2) Rev. Karin Tunnell presented on her trip to Nicaragua. She met with 22 pastors there who serve without pay. Churches from our district provided funding for the pastors to have \$100 each for 3 months. They shared our discipleship ministries website in Spanish to give them resources. Under dictatorship, therapy instruments and supplies are frequently seized, and musical instruments and other items have been stolen.

3) Annual Conference is May 20-22 in Ocean City, Maryland. I will attend as our Reserve Lay Member.

If you have questions, I'm happy to chat with you anytime!

Blessings, **Cheryl Merritt**

A Message from Bishop LaTrelle Easterling

'Be still, and know that I am God!

I am exalted among the nations, I am exalted in the earth.'

The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. - - Psalm 46:8-11 (NRSV)

Just a few short months ago, The United Methodist Church gathered in Charlotte, NC, to hold our General Conference. Our scriptural theme, ...And Know That I am God, was taken from Psalm 46. Perhaps the first thing one noticed was the absence of the two words that preceded the theme: Be still. Be still. Be still.

In these days fraught with increased anxiety, vitriolic conversations, litigious battles, relentless accusations, systemic deconstruction and compounded loss, one of the most important actions we can take is to be still. Be still for a time without listening to the talking heads. Be still without mindlessly doom-scrolling. Be still without even engaging in a conversation with our beloveds. Just Be Still. And in our being still, the power of the succeeding words from the Scripture will become ever more compelling – and know that I am God.

God is still God even as the earth shakes and the seas roar. God is still God, even as the familiar gives way to the disconcerting. God is still God, even as hard-won rights are erased with the stroke of a pen. God is still God, even in the face of economic uncertainty. God is still God, even as the things we have taken for granted are now in jeopardy. God is still God even, as trials come on every hand. God is still God, and the truths of God do not change:

God is love.

God is good.

God will never leave us nor forsake us.

God is our rock and refuge.

God loves us; God loves you.

God is.

These immutable truths do not change and will sustain us as we walk through these tumultuous days. There are times that the only way out is through, and we are in such a time. In such days it is impossible to avoid strong emotions. This is all the more reason to remain rooted, grounded, planted, and centered in Almighty God. As everything around us becomes like sinking sand and we feel unmoored, the steadfastness of God is our anchor. Be still and know that I am God.

Beloved, I encourage you to be intentional about when and where you engage the news. Be mindful of what a steady diet of news and social media are doing to your well-being. Be mindful of what constant conversations about our political milieu are doing to your peace of mind. We cannot avert our eyes from the disturbing and sometimes evil things unfolding around us; but neither can we allow them to unsettle us to the point that we lose our equilibrium and our trust in the goodness and power of God.

I encourage you to be intentional about when and how you engage in acts of advocacy, protest and resistance. I've shared with you many times the advice I received from a wise supervisor – You cannot swing at every ball. While the church must not be silent in times of injustice and oppression, no one can singlehandedly fight the good fight. We must be intentional about when we will speak, write, advocate or march. Otherwise, we will find ourselves succumbing to justice fatigue. Be still and know that I am God so that:

We act and not react.

We rightly divine the Word of Truth.

We wait upon the Lord.

We renew our strength.

We remain within the will of God.

We do not know what trials await us in the coming days or how we will be called to respond as the people of God. But we know that the God of our salvation will be as close as breath. As we live our faith and embody our baptism, also take time to be still and know that God is God.

Beloved, know that I am praying for you, our nation and our world. You are precious in God's sight and at the very center of the heart of God. You are strong, you are resilient, and you are blessed. God will sustain us, and we will surround one another with love, comfort and unyielding hope.

Life...and Life FOREVER!

One of the basic tenets of the Christian faith is that death is not our eternal end; rather, it is the end of our earthly life and the start of our eternal life. Where we are buried can tell future generations what we professed while here on Earth. Members of Aldersgate are encouraged to consider the Aldersgate Columbarium as the place they will be remembered by countless generations of their own family and extended Aldersgate family.

Built securely into the wall directly beneath the Hughes Chapel, visitors look eastward as they view the granite niche markers etched with the names and dates of fellow church members. The east, where the sun rises, is frequently associated with beginnings, renewal, and the light that dispels darkness. In the Bible, the East is sometimes associated with the presence of God; for example, the Garden of Eden was placed in the east (Genesis 2:8), and the glory of God was seen coming from the East in Ezekiel's vision (Ezekiel 43:2). The cross by the memorial fountain reminds us that we are buried with Jesus in His death—with the expectant promise that we will be raised to new life with Him one day.



The Columbarium Courtyard

The Columbarium Courtyard is a tranquil and quiet place where you may come to remember, reflect, and pray. Benches offer a peaceful place to sit and meditate on the words of Jesus and fond memories of friends and loved ones who have already entered into their rest. The Board of Trustees maintains the Columbarium in perpetuity and ensures proper attention to its use and appearance. You are welcome to leave natural flowers in remembrance, but these will be removed after two days. Memorial arrangements are provided a minimum of five times per year: Easter, Memorial Day, All Saints Sunday, Veteran's Day, and Christmas. Additional arrangements, at the discretion of the Columbarium Administrator, may include Mother's Day and Father's Day.

For more information, please contact Kevin Botbyl, Church Administrator, by telephone at 302.478.2575 or email at kevin.botbyl@aldersgatede.org.

Emmanuel Dining Room

Many thanks to our March team The Browne family and Barbara Johnson. What a wonderful job they did preparing a delicious meal. Such a great day! Please contact Anne Murray if you'd like to help with this ministry even once during the year- our day is the 16th of the month!

Details will be provided. asmpelican@gmail.com

Anne Murray



Tim Browne Barbara Johnson Hanna Browne
Anne Murray Alexandra Browne Karen Browne

It's time to Order your Easter Eggs!!

Pre-order for best selection:

<https://eeumw.wufoo.com/forms/uwf-easter-egg-preorder/>

Proceeds benefit Ministries for Women, Youth and Children. Brought to you by Sarah Circle and the United Women in Faith.



United
Women
in Faith

Join us for our UWF Spring Program! Our guest speaker is from the Sunday Breakfast Mission, come learn about services provided for women and children. Lunch will be provided. ALL ARE INVITED!

Please sign up after service or <https://eeumw.wufoo.com/forms/uwf-spring-luncheon-sign-up/>

We will be collecting women's undergarments (panties and bras - all sizes) for this important mission.

Sarah Circle
EASTER Eggs

single eggs \$12 (1/2 lb)
sampler box \$12 (1/2 lb)

preorder for the best selection!

butter cream
peanut butter
coconut cream
chocolate pecan

pick up / sale dates
after services
4/6 & 4/13
proceeds benefit ministries
for women, children and
youth

United Women in Faith

All are invited to attend
SPRING PROGRAM
SUNDAY MARCH 30, 2025
12:15 PM

Guest Speaker from
Sunday Breakfast Mission
Wilmington Delaware
on services for Women and Children

LUNCH PROVIDED

Collecting womens' undergarments
bras and panties - all sizes - for this mission

SIGN UP AFTER SERVICE

Hannah Circle

SOUPER BOWL

FINAL SCORE: 6,162
DONATIONS IN CANS OF
SOUP AND DOLLARS

NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE
JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES
EZION MT CARMEL
HOPP DISTRIBUTION

THANK YOU!

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

Robert and Kathy Harding	Apr 15	47 years
Todd and Sandra Wakai	Apr 16	31 years
Don and Amanda Moyer	Apr 18	16 years
Kevin and Laura Brace	Apr 21	30 years
Tony and Susan Firmani	Apr 22	36 years
Randy and Rena Husbands	Apr 23	3 years
Preston and Mary Cooper	Apr 25	43 years



Annual Rummage
Sale



8 a.m.-2:30 p.m.



Spring Concert: Mary 4, 2025 at 2 p.m.

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Worship Schedule: In-Person & Live Streamed

Journey Service at 9 a.m. in the Sanctuary

Sunday School at 10:05 a.m.

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



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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
598
Wilmington, DE
19850

Aldersgate United Methodist Church
Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.
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