

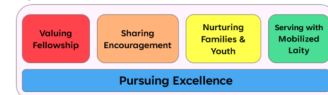


October 2025

The Messenger

Aldersgate UMC

A significant place where disciples are made



Greetings of joy, justice and peace in Jesus to you of the Aldersgate church family!

I look forward to meeting you in worship and fellowship, in meetings and the multitude of ministries in which you engage! Your church has experienced a significant amount of change in the last several years, particularly regarding your pastoral and staff leadership. You may be weary of so many changes over that time. You may be wishing to hear that I will be with you for a long stretch so that you won't have to go through further transitions. Yet, I come to you, appointed by the Bishop and Cabinet, to serve as an *intentional interim minister*; not one who is here by the winds of circumstance but by prayer-led choice to thoughtfully and carefully assist in building bridges between "what has been" with "what will be" in the life of this congregation.

You have been faithful in your continuing ministry to this community. You have walked compassionately with those who have come and departed. You have weathered storms and come through to God's safe harbor. Now, together, we will look at a wide range of how and why Aldersgate does what it does, and we will seek deep discernment of what is needed. We will do so with much tenderness, great respect for traditions and a sense of holy curiosity for what might be. In all of this, we will trust the presence and leading of God's gracious Holy Spirit.

William Bridges, author of *Managing Transitions; Making the Most of Change*, writes that "Change is not the same as transition. Change is situational...Transition is the psychological process people go through to come to terms with the new situation. Change is external, transition is internal." Our time together will be a time of uncertainty, a time of anticipation of the future, a time of preparation, a time of apprehension, and a time of hope. We will mourn the losses you have sustained. We will seek healing for hurts that linger. We will breathe deeply of God's sweet, sweet Spirit to renew and revive our spirits. We will celebrate all the good gifts that God has continued to shower on this place.

In all of this, I invite you to take on an attitude of open-hearted questing, trusting that God is already at work within us and among us. We begin with the wonderful words of assurance and encouragement from Romans 8:28, *And we know that in all things, God works for the good of those who love Him, who are called according to His purpose.*

By God's grace,
Rev. Jennifer Kerby



Our terrific September crew served up 180 meals at the Emmanuel Dining Room! So grateful to Ellen, Marie, Nancy and Wendy. Pictured with Debbie one of the site managers.

Contact Anne Murray at asmpelican@gmail.com for information about this ministry

HOPP Food Distribution – Volunteers Needed

Friday, October 24, 2025

Location: Aldersgate Parking Lot

Set-Up at 12:15 p.m.

Distribution from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m.



We're looking for volunteers to help distribute free food boxes and bags to members of our community in need. This effort is part of the HOPP Ministry, supported by the Longwood Foundation.

How You Can Help:

- * Hold signs at the curb on Concord Pike
- * Direct the flow of cars into the parking lot
- * Place food boxes/bags into car trunks

This is a meaningful, hands-on opportunity to serve, connect, and show compassion to our neighbors. No experience necessary—just a willing heart!

Join us in making a difference!

SCOUTING CORNER

Aldersgate is proud to serve as the chartering organization for Boy Scout Troop 67 and Cub Scout Pack 67. Each currently has 26 active members, and both groups continue to thrive thanks to the dedication of their leaders and families.

Troop 67 Highlights

Congratulations to **Joseph Zogheib**, who recently achieved the rank of Eagle Scout—the highest honor in Scouting! Joseph is the 71st Eagle Scout in the 25-year history of Troop 67, a remarkable milestone that reflects the guidance of Scoutmaster John Walker and the troop's adult leaders.

The troop is currently in the middle of their annual fundraising campaign. You may have seen **Ben Lassiter** selling popcorn after worship in the Narthex—he reports that sales are going strong. Thank you to everyone who has supported this effort!

On **August 23rd**, the troop completed their annual mulching service project, spreading fresh mulch across the Aldersgate playground to keep it safe and welcoming for children.

Pack 67 Highlights

Pack 67 is excited to announce that it has adopted the **Family Scouting model**. This means that both girls and boys can now join the Pack, with a strong emphasis on parental involvement to create a meaningful and family-centered Cub Scout experience.



Harvest Food Collection

Sunday, October 5th



We're excited to announce that we will be collecting for our annual **Harvest Food Festival** again this fall with St. Mary Magdalen. This is a wonderful opportunity for us to help provide emergency food to families in need in our surrounding community.

Aldersgate will be collecting financial donations as well as non-perishable food items again this year.

Our donations provide support to several food pantries in the Wilmington area, including Neighborhood House, Ezion-Mt. Carmel, St. Helena's, Jewish Family Services, St. Patrick's Center, and Claymont Community Center.

Please prayerfully consider making a generous donation this year to help our Wilmington families in need. Last year, we collected 260 bags of food and received a total of \$6,000.00 for this important Aldersgate outreach. We were able to provide over 30 bags and \$750.00 for each agency. **THANK YOU!!**

There are three ways to donate:

For those wishing to donate food, bring your non-perishable donation to the church on or before Sunday, October 5th. We will distribute bags for your use on September 21st and September 28th.

For those donating with a check, make the check payable to Aldersgate UMC and write 'Harvest Food' in the memo line.

You can also make an online financial donation by visiting <http://aldersgatede.org/donate>

*Please join with your "Go" Team and our neighbors at St. Mary Magdalen in this **especially important** mission to help those in need and to "... live out Christ's teachings as we meet the needs of our local ... community!"*



THANK YOU

For sixteen years, Aldersgate has partnered with Family Promise of New Castle County serving families experiencing homelessness. The program has evolved over the last decade and Aldersgate has remained flexible providing support where we are

called. Sixteen years ago we hosted families overnight in our church building. During the COVID pandemic, we dropped off socially distanced meals to the Jesus House cottages. This fall, our in-person service at Jesus House Property on Kirkwood Highway occurs next to active construction of a new hospitality center. The week of September 7th, we partnered with Trinity Community Church to prepare dinner and dine with 7 adults and 20 children each evening.

Thank you to our September servants: Jennifer & Ray Pendley, Diane Shea, Kristen Facciolo, Iva Boardman & Mt. Lebanon UMC, Mary Johnston, Carey Brannigan, and Alpha Xi Delta at UD.

Family Promise provides families with daily case management support from professional staff in their search for gainful employment and sustainable housing. Staff keep in touch with families who graduate from the program to ensure lasting independence. Over 90% remain housed one year post-transition. Aldersgate is just one congregation in the Interfaith Hospitality Network that makes this program possible by providing support for 1 week, 4 times a year.

Our next opportunity to serve is the week of December 14th. To volunteer or find out more please contact Brian at bjmerritt@outlook.com.

ARTS AT ALDRSGATE

SUNDAY 2PM
CONCERT SERIES
ALL CONCERTS ARE
FREE AND OPEN TO
THE PUBLIC
LOVE OFFERING
GREATLY
APPRECIATED

26

OCT, 2025

ORGAN SPOOKTACULAR

GABRIEL
BENTON, ORGAN

CHANCEL CHOIR, GATEWAY
RINGERS, JUNIOR CHOIR, CHERUB
CHOIR, VOCAL IMPACT

14

DEC, 2025

CHRISTMAS CONCERT VIVALDI: GLORIA

CHANCEL CHOIR
STRING ENSEMBLE

ALDRSGATE BRASS, GATEWAY
RINGERS, JUNIOR CHOIR, VOCAL
IMPACT, JOURNEY BAND

1

FEB, 2026

SONGS OF HOPE & UNIVERSAL LOVE SHARON SABLE & FRIENDS

19

APR, 2026

SPRING CONCERT: BOB CHILCOTT'S A
LITTLE JAZZ MASS WITH THE POETRY OF
EMILY DICKINSON

CHANCEL
CHOIR

ALDRSGATE BRASS, JUNIOR CHOIR,
VOCAL IMPACT, JOURNEY
BAND, GATEWAY RINGERS

2113 CONCORD PIKE, WILMINGTON, DE 19803

ALDRSGATE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

ORGAN SPOOKTACULAR

OCT 26

COSTUMES ENCOURAGED

GABRIEL BENTON-ORGAN
CHERUB CHOIR, JUNIOR CHOIR, VOCAL IMPACT,
CHANCEL CHOIR, GATEWAY RINGERS

AT 2:00 PM
FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC!
ADDRESS: 2113 CONCORD PIKE
WILMINGTON, DE 19803

COME FOR THE MUSIC, STAY FOR THE CANDY!

Arts at Aldersgate Presents: Organ Spooktacular with Gabriel Benton

Sunday, October 26 • 2:00 p.m.

We're thrilled to welcome organist Gabriel Benton, Director of Music Ministries at Grace Church UMC in Wilmington, DE, for an inspiring afternoon of organ masterworks. Benton enjoys a multifaceted career as an early-music specialist, accompanist, and church musician. He studied harpsichord at Oberlin Conservatory and The Juilliard School, frequently performing with his ensemble Corda Nova Baroque and with groups nationwide, including American Baroque Orchestra and American Bach Soloists—with whom he has recorded two CDs. Past performances include concerts with Venice Opera Project, Juilliard415, Yale Baroque Opera Project, York Symphony Orchestra, and New World Symphony. He later pursued organ at Yale University's Institute of Sacred Music, serving as organist at the University Church and receiving the Charles Ives Award.



This family-friendly Spooktacular features Cherub Choir, Junior Choir, Vocal Impact, Chancel Choir, and the Gateway Ringers. Program highlights include the Gateway Ringers in Grieg's "In the Hall of the Mountain King," alongside iconic organ works such as Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D minor, Buxtehude's Prelude and Fugue in G minor, and Léon Boëllmann's Suite Gothique.

Bring the whole family—this concert is designed to be fun and engaging for all ages. Kids are warmly invited to wear costumes, and yes... there will be candy. Come for the music, stay for the candy!

Journey Service is BACK in the Auditorium!

Our first gathering on September 14th drew over 90 people—great spirit, lots of kids and our Journey Band leading with amazing energy. We were honored to have Rev. Mesick join us with a clear, easy-to-understand message that encouraged and united our whole community. We thank God for this move and for everyone who made the move happen. If you've been looking for a flexible, family-friendly worship space, come as you are!

The Journey Continues and we're so excited!



Journey Moves to the Auditorium

On August 27, Seth and Tony from Mid-South Audio installed a new soundboard in the Auditorium as part of the preparations for the move to the Auditorium. Along the way they provided explanations of what they were doing and why.

You can see in these pictures that they are both smiling, and watching them work, it was easy to see they love their jobs! Before they left, all the new connections were tested out, and the results were heard for the first time on September 14.



Now's The Perfect Time To Sing!

Join the Aldersgate's UMC Chancel Choir!

We are welcoming new singers—no experience or audition required!

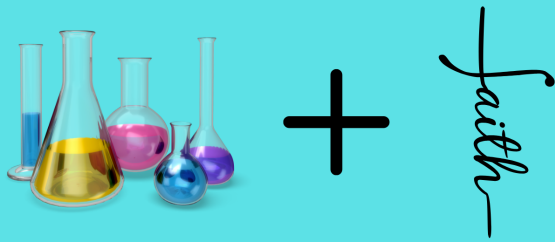
If you've got musical talent (of any kind) and a heart for community, come make music with us! We're preparing for our first concert "Organ Spooktacular" on Sunday, October 26 at 2 pm, and we're seeking all voice parts (soprano, alto, tenor, bass—"not sure yet" is welcome too!)

Rehearsals: Wednesdays, 7:00–8:30 pm.

Worship: We sing Sundays at the 11:00 am service.

For more information, please email our music director at anastasiia.sidorova@aldersgatede.org
Come as you are—leave humming!

Youth Sunday School
Grades 6 - 12
10:05 - 10:55 am



Join us for a series on Science and Faith
pam.downey@aldersgatede.org

Spotlight on Youth Sunday School

We explored contract vs. covenant in Youth Sunday School, and our youth wrote their covenant for the year.

1. Always be respectful and kind.
2. Be open to others' opinions.
3. Always be responsible.
4. Keep each other alive and safe.
5. Accept people for who they are and how they are.
6. Be accepting if someone is having a bad day.
7. Don't talk over one another.

Children and Youth Ministry Pam Downey, Director



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



IMPACT
Wednesdays
6:00 pm - 7:30 pm
Youth Grades 6 - 12

Get ready for some lively conversation with our *What If?* series
What if... *Ananias hadn't healed Paul?*
... *Eli had not recognized God?*
... *Judas had not betrayed Jesus?*
and many more!

Dinner begins at 6:00 pm

Please prayerfully consider volunteering in Youth Ministry.
pam.downey@aldersgatede.org



You are invited
*Confirmation
Information
Meeting*

Sunday, September 28, 2025
12 Noon Room 236

FOR STUDENTS ENTERING GRADES 7-12 WHO HAVE
NOT YET BEEN CONFIRMED AND THEIR PARENTS
QUESTIONS? PAM.DOWNEY@ALDERSGATEDE.ORG

Commit to US! We Are Aldersgate Our Annual Fundraising Campaign

A Message from the Stewardship Team

"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." – Matthew 6:21

When people ask, "What makes Aldersgate special?" we don't point to a building or even a pastor. We point to YOU. The members and friends of this church who live out the gospel in visible, tangible ways every single day.

Whether it's through singing in a choir, serving at Emmanuel Dining Room, teaching Sunday School, or offering a warm smile to someone new, YOU are what makes Aldersgate the church it is.

Yes, we are in a season of leadership change as we welcome Pastor Kerby as our interim senior pastor—and yes, transitions can be hard. But this is not the first time Aldersgate has experienced change, and through it all, one thing has remained constant: *The strength, generosity, and faith of our congregation.*

This fall, we launch our 2025 Annual Giving Campaign entitled **Commit to US!** and we invite you to join in committing to us – our Aldersgate family.

Your giving doesn't just fund programs. It fuels connection, compassion, and transformation. It helps us:

- Welcome all in worship
- Equip children and youth with a strong foundation of faith
- Care for the vulnerable in our community
- Offer space for spiritual growth, justice, and joy

Over the coming weeks, you'll hear more about how to make your pledge and why it matters. We hope you'll be inspired by others who will share stories of their commitment and why they give, and return your pledge card one of two ways: by November 14, 2025 via mail or on November 30, 2025 during worship. Thank you in advance as we prayerfully **Commit to US!**

You've shown up—in times of joy and uncertainty alike. You've served, prayed, sung, taught, built, priced, repaired, cooked, and cared. You've been the church – our church.

Now let's commit to us and continue to gather, grow, and go—as disciples of Jesus Christ, together.

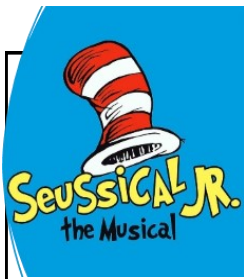
WHY I COMMIT TO US! (Aldersgate)

"Betsy and I joined Aldersgate about 25 years ago. It was close to home. We were friends with Pastor Jonathan Baker and his wife Donna. We were enthused by Evelyn Swensson's music program. So all of that got us in the door. But pastoral and music program leadership has changed. Why stay committed?"

I think it comes down to choosing to surround ourselves with people of Christian values in a community where we can form bonds of trust, and continue to grow in our faith journey. We want God in our lives, and we don't understand how that can happen without the church. And we've learned that you only reap what you sow, so to maximize the benefits of membership, we need to live out our membership vows and contribute to the community we value.

*We're still involved in the music program, but have also taken leadership positions as well as running study groups or Sunday School classes. **From all of that come the friendships based on working alongside one another in faith. So, we are by now so embedded in the Aldersgate community that it would take a lot to make us look elsewhere. We've even purchased slots in the Columbarium for our ashes. There's commitment.*** – Bert Diemer





2026 Aldersgate Youth Musical Save the Date!

Aldersgate Youth Musical Auditions (Music Center)

Friday, November 21 4:30 pm – 6:30 pm
 Saturday, November 22 10:00 am – 1:00 pm
 Sunday, November 23 12:30 pm – 2:00 pm

Callbacks (if needed): Saturday, December 6 10:30 am – 12:30 pm
 Sunday, December 7 1:00 – 2:00 pm **Hand out Seussical Scripts + Parent Meeting**

Rehearsals begin on January 4, 2026

Most rehearsals until Tech Week will be on Sundays from 1:00 – 4:00/5 pm.*

*If needed, there may be some Saturday rehearsals, especially for leading roles.

2026 Performances:

Friday, March 6 @ 7 pm Saturday, March 7 @ 2 pm Sunday, March 8 @ 2 pm

AUDITION INFORMATION:

Anyone in 2nd grade or older is eligible to audition.

There are MANY singing AND non-singing roles, and everyone from AUMC who auditions will be cast.

Audition Signups: The November Messenger and worship folders will have a Signup Genius Link and QR Code that can be used to sign up for an audition time.

You MUST Sign up for an Audition time to be guaranteed an audition.

Crew: You do not need to audition if you would like to be in the Crew, but you will need to fill in a Crew Form, which will also be found on the Signup Genius link or QR Code, and submit the registration fee.

*For additional questions, or if you cannot attend the audition dates listed above but would like to be in the show, please contact Mrs. Atwater to arrange an audition at Janet@JanetAtwater.com

Saturday of Service

Children and Youth participated in Saturday of Service sewing capes for children at Nemours Children's Hospital, landscaping, and painting a chalkboard wall in the Student Ministry Center.



Thank you to the team of painters on Saturday of Service who painted our chalkboard wall in the Student Ministry Center. We are already enjoying it!





Order Pecans with link below

<https://eeumw.wufoo.com/forms/2025-uwf-pecan-orders/>

Fall Program September 15th

We appreciate all who attended UWF annual PotLuck and Educational Program!

Speaker: **Victoria Lissong Richards-Ohwotu, Director of Sunu Reew Medical Mission**

Victoria, a member of the Aldersgate community, is from a family of medical and education professionals. She herself is an Occupational Therapist by profession with a background in science education. Three of her grandparents were born in The Gambia in Western Africa. Victoria has seen first hand challenges in providing quality medical care to The Gambia so in 2021 she started Sunu Reew Medical Mission.

Sunu Reew means "We are taking care of our people" in the Western African language of Wolof. This is the guiding principle leading to her work with a team of healthcare professionals to serve Gambia's Healthcare system, support sustainable healthcare practices and healthier communities while supporting medical students and providing equipment. Victoria emphasized her focus on equitable access to care with sensitivity to the culture and sustainability of solutions provided to The Gambia.

Sunu Reew has conducted three missions where medical equipment and lap tops have been donated, medical testing and care provided and educational events held.



To learn more and if you wish to donate, go to <https://www.sunureew.org/>



Thank you to all those who set up, brought food, donated generously and spent time with one another during this program.





THE CATALYST INITIATIVE **UPDATE**

The Catalyst Initiative is all about bringing fresh energy and focus to the life of Aldersgate. It helps us look at our community with Spirit-led eyes, put our faith into action, and encourage one another to follow God's call in our lives and in our church family.

Right now, we're walking alongside the Lead Team as they get more comfortable with the tools and ideas we've been learning over the past year. And when Pastor Kerby arrives in October, we'll introduce her to Catalyst so she can join us in this exciting journey from the start.

This has been a season of change for Aldersgate, and change can be challenging—but it's also an opportunity. As we move forward, let's hold onto the spirit of Catalyst: staying open, flexible, and prayerful as we discover together the best ways to live

Lay Leaders

We continue to be a church in transition!

We are so grateful for Rev. Metty Mesick's leadership, care, support, and wonderful messages on Sundays. What a blessing she has been!

In October we welcome Rev. Jennifer Kerby who will be our interim pastor. Let's be sure to pray for her leadership and for our leaders, staff and each other.

Trusting Jesus, we look forward to an exciting Fall and beyond where we can all be in service helping Aldersgate be a significant place where disciples are made.

Blessings to all!

Anne and Diane

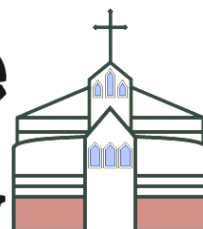


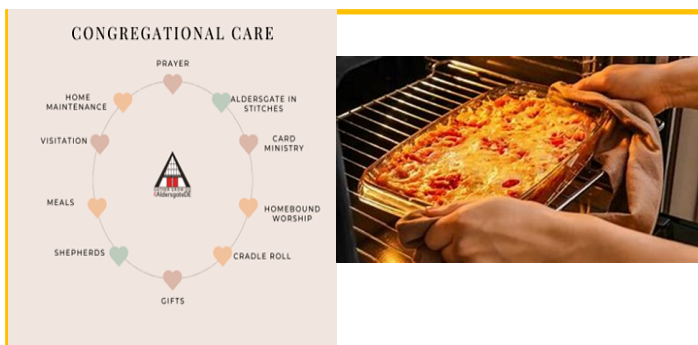
*Thankful
&
Grateful*

Thank you,
Rev. Metty Mesick

Rev. Jennifer Kerby,

**Welcome
to our
Church Family**





Congregational Care

October 2025 – Meals

“Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another.” – 1 John 4:11 (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. This month's highlight is **Meals**.

When members and friends are home recovering from surgery, welcoming a new baby to the family, or going through a rough season in life, a hand delivered meal to the home can be a welcome blessing and comfort. Do you have the gift of cooking? A heart for showing love through food? Join our meal team and I'll email you a sign-up genius when a need for meals comes to the church. Details on dietary needs and delivery directions are included. If you're available to help, you sign up for the day of delivery that is convenient for you. For more information about how to bless others with a meal or if you know someone in need, please reach out to Cheryl Merritt, cheryl.merritt@aldersgatede.org or call the church at 302-478-2575.

–Cheryl Merritt, Director of Congregational Care



Adam and Amy Gibbs	Oct 1	9 years
Kevin and Cheryl Botbyl	Oct 5	29 years
Don and Mary Blythe	Oct 6	52 years
Mike and BJ Houser	Oct 9	54 years
David and Gail Simpson	Oct 10	38 years
Jim and Pamela Armistead	Oct 12	40 years
Craig and Katie Spangler	Oct 16	15 years
Jim and Kerry Halbedl	Oct 17	16 years
Owen and Kitty Lugar	Oct 17	61 years
Jonathan and Natalie Dyke	Oct 20	35 years
Willis and Martha Weldin	Oct 21	31 years
Joe and Barbara Seningen	Oct 23	43 years
Scott and Eliza Lugar	Oct 28	30 years
Peter and Lisa Lugar	Oct 31	27 years



August 16, 2025

Alice Ritzinger



Sunday, November 2, 2025

Worship Schedule

In-Person and Live Streamed

9 a.m. Contemporary Service in Auditorium

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 and hit SUBSCRIBE!

10 a.m. SUNDAY SCHOOL

Upcoming Events

Harvest Food Drive - Sunday, October 5

HOPP Food Box Distribution - Friday, October 24

Trunk or Treat - Saturday, October 25

Arts at Aldersgate—Spooktacular—Sunday, October 26, 2 p.m.

October is Pastor Appreciation Month

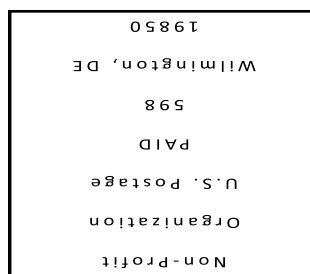
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Aldersgate United Methodist Church—A significant place where disciples are made!

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

