

THE
GATEPOST

DECEMBER 2022



In This Issue

Christmas Cantata
A Night in Bethlehem
Financial Brief

December 4

Olivewood Sales After Services
Fusion Christmas Party 6:00 PM

December 7

Charity Sewing 1:30 PM
Confirmation Bell Ringing 6:30 PM
Cantata Rehearsal 7:35 PM

December 8

Stephen Ministry Christmas Party 6:30 PM

December 9

Crossroads & Sojourners Potluck 6:00 PM

December 10

Cantata Rehearsal 9:00 AM
Olivewood Sales 6:00 PM
Cantata Presentation 6:00 PM

December 11

Olivewood Sales After Services
Cantata Presentation 8:15 & 9:45 AM
Children's Christmas Choir 11:11 AM
Joyful Noise Singers 2:30 PM
Middle School Christmas Party 5:00 PM

December 13

Trustees Meeting 6:30 PM

December 14

A Night in Bethlehem 6:30 PM

December 18

Church Council Meeting 12:15 PM
Online Hymn Sing 5:00 PM
NOVA Christmas Party 6:00 PM

December 21

Travelers Christmas Service 6:30 PM

December 23

Office Closes at Noon

December 24

Christmas Eve Services
3:00 PM, 5:00 PM, 7:00 PM, 11:00 PM

December 25

Christmas Service 11:11 AM
No Sunday School Classes

December 26

Office Closed

December 30

Office Closes at Noon

January 1

First Service of the Year 11:11 AM

Weekly Calendar

Mondays

Ladies' Bible Study Morning 9:30 AM
Ladies' Bible Study 1 & 3rd Weeks 6:30 PM
Men's Bible Study 7:00 PM

Tuesdays

Volleyball 6:00 PM
Aldersgate Time of Prayer 6:30 PM

Wednesdays

Fusion Praise Team Practice 5:00 PM
Dinner 5:30 PM
Choir Rehearsal 6:30 PM
Pastor's Bible Study 6:30 PM
Grow Group 6:30 PM
ARK Club 6:30 PM
Biblical Beauties & King's Men 6:30 PM
Confirmation 6:30 PM
7th & 8th Grade Small Groups 6:30 PM
Fusion Gathering 6:30 PM

Thursdays

Bible Study - The Book of Signs 9:00 AM
Knitwits 10:00 AM
Stephen Ministry Meeting 2nd & 4th 6:30 PM

Saturdays

Body and Soul Workout 10:00 AM

Sundays

Handbell Rehearsal 11:15 AM
NOVA Lunch 12:15 PM
Fusion Core Small Group 6:00 PM

Sunday School Classes

Sundays

Crossroads Sunday School 8:15 AM
Sojourners Sunday School 8:15 AM
Club Aldersgate 9:45 AM
Seekers Sunday School 9:45 AM
Youth/Children Sunday School 9:45 AM

Sundays at Aldersgate

Services

Traditional Service 8:15 AM
Contemporary Service 9:45 AM
Simply Grow Service 11:11 AM

Moving Forward, Loving One Another

PASTOR DENNIS - LEAD PASTOR

December 2022

As we enter the season of Advent this year we are reminded of the incarnation of Jesus Christ and the redemption of all who would choose to follow him. We will continue the transition resulting from our disaffiliation vote on November 13th. We will continue to be faithful in our mission, to be who we are in Jesus Christ, to be Christ in the world. The unity that springs from Christ's love in us is so different from the love the world offers. May we truly seek righteousness in our lives and discernment as the community of Christ.

Our way forward is looking for revival to wake us all and to "seek and save the lost". As we focus on a silent night this Advent may we be more inviting and take action to bring those who are lost to encounter the truth of Jesus our savior. We will have the cantata and a children led worship service. A chance to invite neighbors and family who need to hear the gospel.

We also need to finish this year with generosity for the church in our giving. The challenge we face is as great as it was last year and again God will have to help make it happen if we are to meet our current year's obligations, including paying all apportionments to the Annual Conference. We will continue to answer any questions regarding our way through the Disaffiliation process.

Remember to pray for our church's leadership as they help us move forward. Through all this, we will love one another!

See You Sunday in Worship (here or where you are!)

Love In Christ,
Pastor Dennis



CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Travelers Service: December 21 at 6:30 PM

Christmas Eve Service: December 24

3:00 PM, 5:00 PM, 7:00 PM, and 11:00 PM

Christmas Day Service: December 25 at 11:11 AM

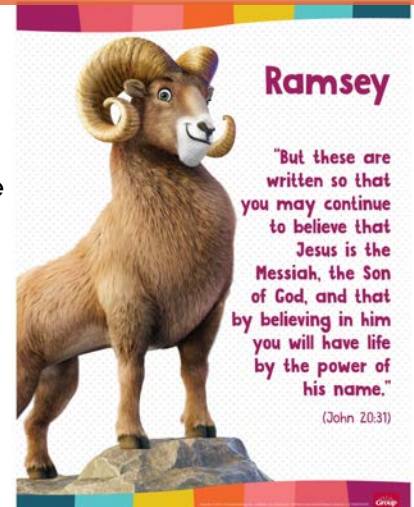
(Christmas Hymns at 10:50 AM)

New Year's Day Service: January 1 at 11:11 AM

A.R.K. Aldersgate Righteous Kids

THIS MONTH'S BIBLE VERSE

For the month of December, our ARK Kids will be memorizing John 20:31 - "But these are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God and that by believing in him you will have life by the power of this name." Our Bible Point is Jesus is good news and our Bible Buddy is Ramsey the Bighorn Sheep. Be sure to join us Sunday mornings at 9:45 AM to hear all about it. Once you memorize your Bible verse, you get put on the star wall!!



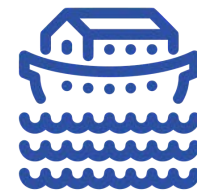
CHILDREN'S CHOIR FOR CHRISTMAS

It has been a couple of years since we had our children's choir for Christmas but we are bringing it back this year! We will not have a program, but a choir that will sing at the 11:11 AM service on December 11th.

The choir will be open to PK-6th Grade and we will have a younger choir and an older choir. We would love to have all the kids participate. We will continue practicing on Wednesday nights at 6:30 PM and Sunday mornings at 9:45 AM until the program. We will spend a little time each week on the songs before class starts.

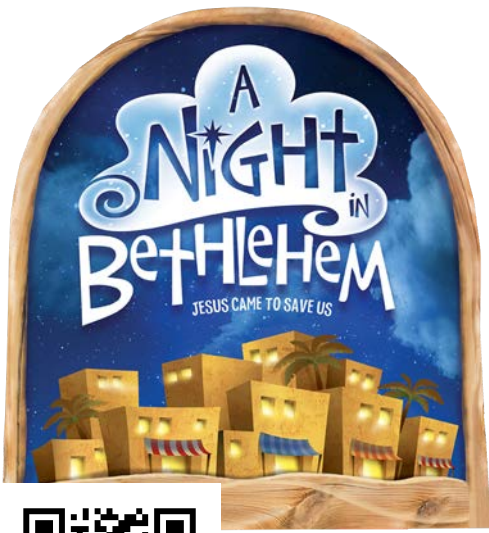


ARK Preschool is an outreach ministry to families. We provide a safe, loving, Christian-based program for early childhood development Monday through Thursday 9 am to 1 pm. We have such a great program that more families want to come to join the fun, and we are excited to be opening another room in January. With more families come more financial needs, as these are challenging times for many in our community. There is now an option to give online to a scholarship fund for students whose families may not otherwise be able to send them to preschool. Our wish is for every little one to be able to come grow in God's love with us, and anything you are called to give will be a huge blessing whether it is a one-time donation or a monthly recurring gift. If you have any questions about our ARK Preschool, please contact Shannon Dodson at sdodson@aldersgatechurch.com or call the office at 417-725-4949.



Aldersgate Righteous Kids
PRESCHOOL

A Night in Bethlehem

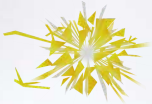


SCAN
ME 

You are invited to join us for *A Night in Bethlehem* on Wednesday, December 14 at 6:30 PM. Kids and their families will explore the city at the time of Jesus' birth. Through hands-on experiences, they'll find out about the most important baby ever—and learn that Jesus came to save us.

In this festive event, families are transported back in time to experience Bible-times Bethlehem. They'll visit the marketplace where they'll create their own unique keepsakes and interact with local shopkeepers who share the Christmas story. They'll also get to meet Mary and Joseph and hear about the miracle of Jesus' birth. Register your family to attend at vbspro.events/p/aumcchristmas

Middle School and High School



spark

Christmas Party!!!

All 5-8th grade students are invited.

Date: Sunday, Dec. 11

Time: 5:00 - 7:00 PM

Where: CLC Gym

ignition

We will provide pizza for dinner.



FUSION CHRISTMAS PARTY

- SUNDAY, DEC. 4
- 6:00 – 8:00 PM
- YOUTH BUILDING
- FOOD, FUN, & GAMES



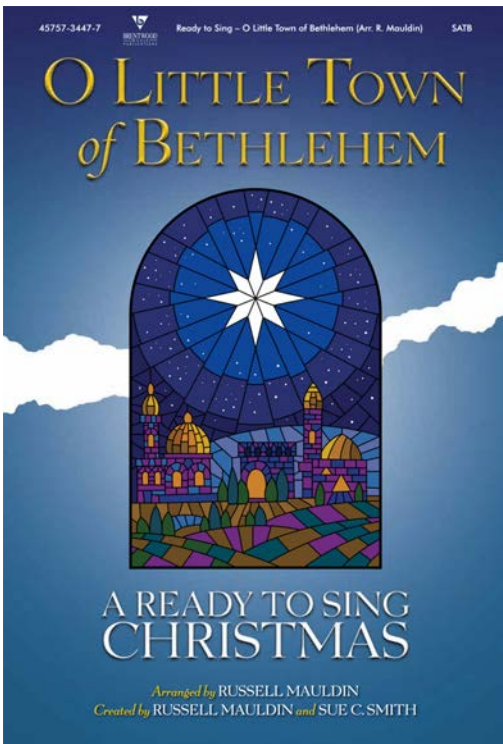
fusion

FUSION CORE - SMALL GROUPS

Fusion Core is discipleship small groups for high school students. The focus is on developing our relationship with God and with each other while enjoying food, games, and Bible study.

Join us on the 2nd and 3rd Sundays for a relaxed night. We rotate between the Mitchell's and Flannery's houses. Join us on the band app to keep up on all things Fusion.





Christmas Cantata is Back!

We are so excited to have a Christmas choir back to perform this year. You are invited to come to listen to "O Little Town of Bethlehem" on Saturday, December 10 at 6:00 PM and Sunday, December 11 at 8:15 and 9:45 AM.

On a quiet, calm night in Bethlehem, heaven's light broke through the darkness with the birth of Christ. Shepherds and wise men joined a host of angels to rejoice in this divine arrival on earth. 2,000 years later, we reflect on how this single event in a humble stable would change the rest of history.

Our choir has worked hard on this music and we are blessed to have such a large number of people participating in it. The Cantata will be directed by Sue Mundell with support from Peggy Preston.

 **HYMNS FOR 10** 

Christmas morning is on a Sunday this year we will start that service with classic Christmas hymns.

Please join us in the sanctuary as we sing hymns for 10 minutes from 10:50-11:00 am. This will be a wonderful way to celebrate Christmas morning. Bring your friends and family with you as we join together.




JOYFUL NOISE SINGERS

Join us on Sunday, December 11, to bring some joy to our community. The Joyful Noise Singers will sing hymns with residents at Bradford Court in Nixa on the second Sunday of each month at 2:30 PM. Singers arrive by 2:15 PM to prepare. If you would like more information please email Peggy Preston at ppreston@aldersgatechurch.com.

OLIVEWOOD SALES - DECEMBER 4, 10 & 11

Beautiful gifts of native olivewood and mother-of-pearl handmade by Christian artisans in Bethlehem will be for sale in the commons area just in time for Christmas.

The mission project began in 1996 as a way to both encourage and support Palestinian Christian families living in Bethlehem. The mission is a double blessing because

1. The purchase of olivewood products brings income to family artisans in Bethlehem.
2. The profit income is returned to Bethlehem Bible College and other Christian ministries in Palestine.

Thank you so much for supporting this wonderful ministry.



FINANCIAL BRIEF

By: Ben Stone

Year-to-date financial summary through October 31, 2022:

Revenue \$ 779,868
Budgeted Expenses \$1,024,154
Actual Expenses \$ 885,595
Net \$ (105,727)

The original amount of the loan for the new Learning Center was \$4,162,200. The current balance as of October 31, 2022, is \$3,391,052.

As we approach the end of an eventful year, we again find ourselves in the adverse position of having one month to catch up on revenues to meet our expenses incurred throughout the year. Part of this deficit is due to monthly giving not being enough to meet "normal" operating costs, but we have also been impacted by a few significant unexpected expenses, such as having to replace the large refrigerator in the CLC kitchen, and we've had about \$20,000 in excess HVAC repairs. These unbudgeted costs have contributed to a deficit of \$105,727, year-to-date through October 31.

If you have committed to tithing, please check your giving for the year and get caught up, if needed. If you want to double-check what you have given so far, please call the church office and Brenda would be happy to look this up for you! Please consider making an extra gift in December, if you're led. In recent years, we have been extremely blessed to have received a few large gifts at the end of the year. If circumstances have provided you with the means to make a large one-time gift, please consider using it to support the church's ministry. But we can all help; the deficit would be made up if, on average, every family gave an extra \$500. Finally, please pray for our church, its members, the many volunteers who make the church's ministries happen, and our excellent pastors and staff who serve so selflessly, passionately and honorably.

Best wishes to all for a merry Christmas, and a joyful and prosperous holiday season and new year!

ORDER YOUR POINSETTIAS

Help us decorate the sanctuary for Christmas by purchasing a poinsettia plant in honor or memory of someone you love. Plants are \$7.00 each and will be on display Dec. 21-25. You may take home your plant after the services on Christmas weekend or you can leave them to be donated to our homebound church members. Sign up on your connect card or in the app. Please note "Poinsettia" on your check or envelope.



amazonsmile
You shop. Amazon gives.

While you are shopping online this season, please hop over to Amazon Smile and set up Aldersgate United Methodist Church as your charity. There is no added cost to you but they make a donation to the church from your purchase. This is a wonderful way to give back without even trying! Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays.

NEW MEMBERS



Barbara Purrington



Bill and Lucy Mumaw



Brennan Quick



Bill and Peggy Roark



Ken and Christi Waugh



Renee Stallings



Richard and Carolyn Hill



Rick Giesen



Ryan and Janelle Hurn
with daughters Alannah
and Alyssa



Terry and Marsha Bauer



Bobby, Candice and Carter
Eddington



Brett Click with wife Sheila



Dudley and Melinda White

NEW MEMBERS



Dustin Anderson



Garrett Bakken with wife Ellie



Jeff Hessee



Kelly Dobbs



Ken and Carol Tracy



Manda Burk



Tina Garner



Rich and Pam Wilson



Tracy O'Hara



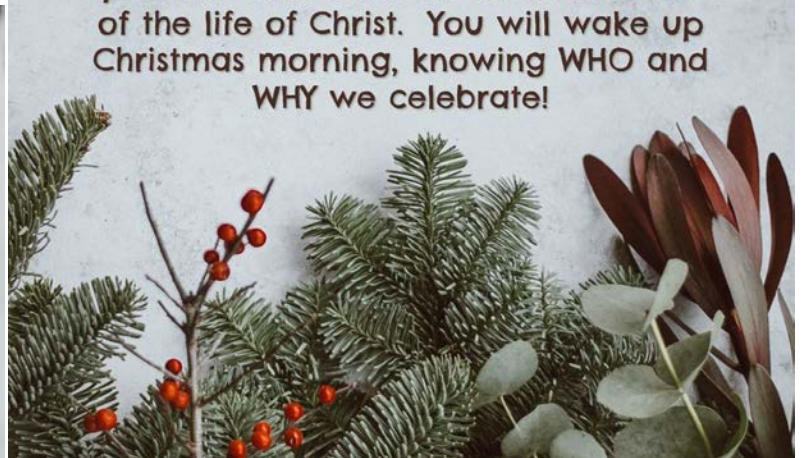
Michael and Brittany Russell

READ

Beginning December 1st, read one chapter of the Book of Luke, in the Bible, each day. There are 24 chapters. By the time you reach Christmas Eve, you will have read an entire account of the life of Christ. You will wake up Christmas morning, knowing WHO and WHY we celebrate!

SNOW REMOVAL TEAM

We are looking for people to join our snow removal team for the winter. If you would like to join or have questions about what it involves please email Brenda at bclark@aldersgatechurch.com.



PASTOR AND STAFF CHRISTMAS

The Staff Parish committee would like to thank and encourage ALL our Aldersgate staff and now through December 11th, we will be collecting cash funds to be presented to all staff members in December. We ask that you contact a Staff Parish Committee member, as listed below, should you have questions or would like to arrange a time to provide the funds to one of them in person. We ask that you please place the funds in a sealed envelope and give to an SPR committee member or you can place the sealed envelope in the offering, marking it for Staff Appreciation or SPR. SPR cannot take a check for this offering as it would have to be deposited into the church bank account and the funds allocated to church expenses. In addition to our Pastors Dennis and Sarah, Aldersgate would not function without these wonderful staff members.

- Candice and all her nursery staff
- Amber and Shannon with our children's ministries
- Evan and the new Middle School Director (TBD) with our youth
- Peggy, Christian, Tasha, Colette, and Jared with our music ministry
- Brenda, Bethany, Casey, and Mike, our superior office staff

All deserve a magnitude of appreciation and we hope you will find it in your hearts to help us show just how much we appreciate everything they do for our church, our families, and our growth as Christians!

With Love in Christ, Staff Parish Committee: Tara Conley-SPR Chair, Mark McClanahan, Jenaleigh Lathrop, Gary Jacobs, Jeff McCurry, Pam Johnson, David Hayes, and Julie Ellis

LIFE IS BETTER TOGETHER

By: Cindy Hughes

Over a year ago, God placed it on our hearts to start Life Groups as a way of becoming more acquainted with our Aldersgate family. Steve and I approached Joe and Grace Bryson, who were excited about the idea. We all began praying about how to proceed on this journey. Pastor Dennis and Pastor Sarah were both excited and very supportive of this new opportunity for ministry.

Last spring, we began the process of surveying the congregation for interest in joining a life group. After receiving so many positive responses and continued prayer, we began informational meetings and training facilitators for each group. We launched 6 life groups with 6 – 11 members in each group. There are currently 2 more groups in the process of forming. We are extremely excited to watch God's hand move in this ministry, and witness people who have the desire to grow in their faith with other Christians and support each other in growing in their own spiritual walks. Our continued prayer is that these groups not only have the chance to grow but also have the ability to multiply in the future.

God has laid on our hearts to promote:

Intentional Fellowship

Growing in the Body of Christ

Supporting each other while developing a personal identity in Christ



If you are interested in joining a life group, please complete the survey available on the church website. Another option is to pick one up at the welcome desk in the commons area at the church. You can call the church office with any questions.

What is a Christian?

By: Ed Vigneaux

To the readers of The Gatepost:

Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.

I placed an article in the Gatepost recently that asked the question, "What is a Christian?"

First, to be a Christian requires a belief that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and that's a big first step. If in fact Christ is God, then that changes everything about how we live our lives.

Jesus spoke at great length about God's expectations, our values, and how we are to live in this world. So, is God only asking about church attendance and prayer and living a good life? Or is He asking more? Much more.

I believe Aldersgate has been struggling with this question for the past few months. I've been struggling over the past few weeks wondering what it means to be "Christ in the World".

For me, being Christ in the world means that what I say or do is what He would say or do. Wow, that's some responsibility and some tasks. And I don't believe it would be possible without the help of the Holy Spirit. As Christians, we are called to love as Jesus Christ loved and only as He loved. John 15 says if we love God, we will love others, and if we don't love others, then we don't love God. We love God because He first loved us. And we love others because He first loved us.

Let us love one another. Let us Be Love.

We are blessed to be a blessing.

JOIN THE TEAM

We are expanding our volunteers in the booth for Sunday mornings. We really need to have 3 people in the booth to make sure everything works together right.

The great news is we can train you. We just need you to come and be willing to learn. We need sound techs, computer/screen tech, and livestream tech. We have a rotating schedule so you are not required to work every Sunday. Email Christian Barnard for more info at cbarnard@aldersgatechurch.com



WINTER WEATHER POLICY

**WHEN WEATHER CLOSES
NIXA SCHOOLS,
OUR ACTIVITIES ARE
CANCELLED FOR THAT DAY.**

**SUNDAY SERVICES
ARE NEVER CANCELLED.
IF IT'S NOT SAFE TO DRIVE
PLEASE WATCH ONLINE.**

**STAY CONNECTED
ON SOCIAL MEDIA
FOR THE LATEST INFO
ON CANCELLATIONS!**

Community Impact

STUFF THE TURKEY



Aldersgate Righteous Kids, you are amazing! We raised \$81.81 during the month of November to donate to Least of These, Inc. so that families can have meals for the holidays!



SOCKTOBER

Way to go Aldersgate Righteous Kids, we donated 130 pairs of socks to Abundant Blessings from our Sock-tober drive!



CONCERT 4A CAUSE

This year we had 24 performers from our church and we raised a little over \$1,700.00 for Least of These. We are so blessed with so many talented and giving members of our church.

COATS FOR KIDS

We collected 62 coats this year for the Christian County Optimists Club for their Coats for Kids this year. We are so grateful for the many donations that we received. They were thrilled that they surpassed their goal and collected the most ever at 1015 coats and still climbing.



UPCOMING COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Angel Tree - We are currently out of tags on our Angel Tree and should be seeing the presents returning soon. This year, we are sponsoring children from the Milano House. Gifts need to be returned Sunday, December 4.

Dec. 3 - Middle School and High School Tea Fundraiser at the Nixa Christmas Craft Fair.

Dec. 7 - Confirmation class bell ringing for the Salvation Army at Nixa Walmart.