
ALDERSGATE INSIGHT
MARCH, 2020

Website: <http://aldersgateumcphx.org/>

Email: aldersgatephx@gmail.com

MAY I COME IN?

The Christian season of Lent began with Ash Wednesday on February 26. Just a quick review of what that season is to be about:

*“In the Christian tradition the season of Lent is a time
to make a special spiritual pilgrimage.
It is a time of introspection and self-examination
when we probe deeply and respond honestly
to how we are getting on with the process of transformation
into a new person in Jesus Christ.”*

In these weeks of Lent, leading us to Easter, we are to be about an inward spiritual journey. A time for each one to seriously reflect on who we are and what we are about in our relationship with Jesus Christ. Many of us who will be reading this, have been around for many years and may ask, “Why do I need to do this?” I know I should only speak for myself but I am going to speak for all of us. No matter what age we may be or how long we have professed our faith in Jesus Christ; we are in need “of introspection and self-examination.”

Think about it. Look at racism in our country; how awareness and our thinking has changed in our lifetime. We (whites) have realized the horror of it (which those of color lived it), the suffering and injustices that occurred, even by the church. Racism continues and in fact is surfacing its head in many ways today. We as a nation, we as Christians have had to own up to this and seek to end it. The plight of women; the issues they have endured at last “are on the table.” Finally, brought into the open, recognized so that finally we can work to end these injustices (even within the church). The LGBTIQ issue, which is splitting our church. Why/how could this injustice and hurtfulness even be an issue for the church “the body of Christ?”

Of course, the list could go on; immigration, capital punishment, welfare, health care, guns, etc. So many of us have had to self-examine where we were/are and where Jesus would call us to be over the years. Our thinking and actions in so many have changed for the better and, yet, there is so much work for each one of us to do in order to reflect Jesus in our lives.

Where is each one of us on these issues of life? Where would Christ want us to be? Ah, don’t say “well, Christ wants me to be where I am in my thinking.” There’s the problem for we humans; no matter what age we may be. We want to believe what we want to believe. After all, we want to think we are right!

The real questions for us are, what does Jesus teach and how does Jesus ask us to live in our daily lives?

This “inward spiritual journey” is difficult for all of us. It requires effort, time and serious thinking. Most of us don’t like the comeuppance. And, it doesn’t end there, the hardest part is changing ourselves to reflect Jesus’s love, mercy, justice and the quest for peace in our lives, our thinking about others and then living it?

Let’s get to work on our journeys.

In the Spirit,



Missing Anything?

Have you noticed, lately, that at the close of our worship we have not been joining hands and singing “Blest Be the Tie That Binds.” That has been a long time tradition for us. There is a sense of friendliness and community when we do that ritual. So, why are we no longer doing that?

There are a number of issues that, over time, have surfaced and resulted in this recent decision:

1. People are concerned about flu and other health issues.
2. For a number of our community it is difficult for them to stand and move to be a part of the circle.
3. In fact, it is cumbersome for most of us to make that move as quickly as needed.
4. Visitors don’t know what is going on and may not know the hymn, therefore, feeling uncomfortable / ill at ease.
5. There are those who just don’t feel comfortable with this tradition for any number of reasons.

Therefore, this seems a good time to end the tradition. We not only want those of our community to feel comfortable we want our guest to feel at ease. Wouldn’t you agree that If we are a friendly church each of us will promptly, at the close of the service, reach out to visitors welcoming them, inviting them to fellowship time and allowing our actions to show “*Blest Be the Tie That Binds.*”

Doing a new thing is exciting and scary and beautiful. In the fall of 2018, Aldersgate United Methodist Church (Phoenix) and Dayspring United Methodist Church (Tempe) began a journey to explore what becoming one church with two campuses would look like. These conversations began with a small group of representatives from both congregations, dubbed the “Elijah Team,” meeting frequently over the course of six months to share stories about the history of each church and to dream about what the future may hold. With the leadership of Rev. Susan Brims, East District Superintendent and Rev. Dave McPherson, Director of New and Vital Faith, as well as the clergy and laity of the Elijah teams, both congregations voted in the spring of 2019 to move into a cooperative parish relationship to share human resources and start laying the groundwork for combining the churches into one Dayspring with campuses in Arcadia and Tempe.

The past six months have been filled with the seeds of new relationships, the sorrow and concern that comes with change, and the excitement that comes with discovering new possibilities. There have been several important steps in the process so far. In July, Aldersgate welcomed a preaching team from Dayspring to lead worship. This step has been helpful in both creating some similarities in the services, but more importantly, a chance for Dayspring and Aldersgate folks to spend time together in fellowship. Another important piece of work has been to reengage in the changing neighborhood around Aldersgate. The intersection of Arcadia, East Camelback Village, and the Biltmore neighborhoods has a wealth of ethnic, religious and socio-economic diversity where there are amazing people and organizations serving the neighborhood. Building on Aldersgate’s legacy of personal care for people in need and Dayspring’s emphasis on social justice, we’ve started meeting the community leaders who know the area best as we develop a contextualized church that will be relevant and vital.

Looking forward, we are excited by the possibilities and our groundwork coming to fruition. Both churches will be working diligently through the myriad of logistical considerations in the coming months with the intent to become one Dayspring this summer. The relationship building between both congregations will continue the Elijah team expands into a “Launch Team” with involvement from both legacy churches. This team will form the foundation to transition to the Dayspring Arcadia presence, while incorporating the sense of family, history and mission that is Aldersgate United Methodist Church.

District/Conference Newsletter

2.19.20

Amy Notbohm

COMING UP IN MARCH



| | | |
|-----------------|------------------------------|------------|
| Every Sunday | Choir Practice | 10:30 a.m. |
| Every Sunday | Worship Service | 11:00 a.m. |
| Every Sunday | Fellowship Hour | 12:00 NOON |
| Every Monday | Bible Study (Starbucks) | 6:30 p.m. |
| Every Tuesday | Bible Study (March 3 & 10) | 10:00 a.m. |
| Every Wednesday | TOPS Meeting | 9:00 a.m. |
| Every Wednesday | Men’s AA Meeting | 7:00 p.m. |
| Every Friday | Tai Chi First 17 Moves Class | 9:00 a.m. |
| Every Friday | Tai Chi Continuing Class | 10:15 a.m. |

| 2020 LENT AND EASTER SCHEDULE | |
|--|------------------|
| Worship Service Date | Sermon Presenter |
| March 1, 2020 [+communion] | Thomas Kiracofe |
| March 8, 2020 | Jane Baker |
| March 15, 2020 | Jim Fountain |
| March 22, 2020 UMCOR Special Offering | Joel Bullock |
| March 29, 2020 | Amy Notbohm |
| <u>Palm Sunday</u> [+communion] - April 5, 2020 | Amy Notbohm |
| <u>Maundy Thursday Service with Joel Bullock</u> – April 9, 2020 @ 6:30 p.m. | |
| <u>Good Friday Service of Lectio Devina</u> - April 10, 2020 @ 3:00 p.m. Lectio Devina is a Benedictine practice of scriptural reading, meditation and prayer intended to promote communion with God by letting the scripture speak to you. It has four separate steps: read; meditate; pray; contemplate. First a passage of Scripture is read, then its meaning is reflected upon. This is followed by prayer and contemplation on the Word of God. | |
| Worship Service Date | Sermon Presenter |
| <u>Easter Sunday</u> - April 12, 2020 | Thomas Kiracofe |



BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH

For March:
Marion Haggard – 03-04
Betty Benson – 03-23

Springtime flowers and lilies for our Easter service will be & the costs are being covered by the church. If you wish to make a memorial, please complete the form from the bulletin & turn it into the church office.



DEADLINE IS APRIL 3, 2020, SO TURN IN THE FORM TODAY!

*Celebration Legacy Special Sunday
Morning Church Service - April 19, 2020
at 11:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary*



Join us for a special Easter Egg Hunt after the 11:00 a.m. Easter Sunday



Morning Service.

All children are invited to come and participate. If you would like to donate treats and toys to place inside the eggs, please bring them to the Aldersgate church office by Palm Sunday, March 8th. Please feel free to contact the Easter Egg Hunt director, Stacey O'Rourke, to volunteer to help out.

Continuing Session: Bible Study on Compassion is meeting with Amy Notbohm on March 3 & 10 at 10:00 a.m. in the bible study room: We will be studying excerpts from "12 Steps to a Compassionate Life" by Karen Armstrong. Hope to see you then.

Another Compassion bible study Class: A 4-week exploration of Karen Armstrong's book will be offered by Amy Notbohm in partnership with Dayspring UMC as we move into further cooperative ministry. Classes will take place at the Starbucks at 2802 East Indian School Road, Phoenix, starting Monday, March 2nd from 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

For lent, we give up something we like, it could be Starbucks, cookies or that chocolate bar. Look for the pink pig and ark in the Narthex to put your money in to collect for Heifer to purchase rabbits and maybe even chickens, if we collect enough. Let's Feed the Pig. Rabbits multiply quickly, so a family can pass on the gift sooner and keep the gift going. 2 Corinthians 9:9 "The godly man gives generously to the poor, his good deeds will be an honor to him forever." -- sharing our blessings is a perfect way to show the love of Jesus. Heifer International has been working for 75 years with the goals to end poverty and hunger while caring for the earth and raising awareness of the issues involved throughout the world. Heifer is different, they look to offer those they serve a hand up not a hand out. Not only ending hunger and poverty, but caring for the environment. Heifer provides generations to become more self-reliant. One person can make a difference, the gift animal is passed on so the gift keeps going - your gift does help people break free from hunger and poverty. Let's share blessings with others in need. Hebrews 13:16 "Don't forget to do good and share what you have with those in need, for such sacrifices are very pleasing to God." Blessings, Darlene

Borderlands P.O.W.O.W. March 21: This food event, is scheduled once per month for each third Saturday from December through next June, 2020. Event time is 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. **We received a check for \$864 from Borderlands for our scheduled events over the past six months.** Please let your friends and neighbors know about these sessions during the fall and spring. If you are able to volunteer to help out, please contact the church office regarding your availability.



Thanks to Richard Starmer for participating in the monthly food pantry distributions. March 17th is the next scheduled dispersal date.

Remember to volunteer to be liturgists and bring fellowship refreshments! Some vacancies remain, so sign-up on the sheet in the Narthex.

Our utmost appreciation to all for your patience with the Sanctuary's heating system - fortunately, it has finally been fixed to hopefully make everyone comfortable.

Note from special visitor from North Carolina: Dear Reverend Tom, I have had the absolute pleasure of attending Aldersgate Methodist Church for three consecutive weeks. Although few in number, the members have been kind to me. Thank you for the warm welcome you gave me. And, though you shared that this church is struggling, I felt the presence of God here. Praise Jesus! Karen Andrew

Missions: Thank you to all who contributed with the supplies we needed to fill the move in bins for Justa Center. Also, thank you to the people who took time to sign Valentine's cards for Justa Center. Valerie has arranged for the Justa Center pick-up. Thanks to the Justa Center packing team of Sarah Burke, Gail Everts, Valerie Lintz, Megan O'Rourke & me. We successfully packed ten move in bins. What joy it brings to show God's love for others and having FUN doing it. We received another thank you from UCM for the sale of Christmas cards and for Aldersgate's support that we have given in all our donations for the homeless. I pray that Missions will continue with projects that show God's love full of joy.

Blessings, Darlene

Coming Up: The Spring Festival will be Saturday, April 4th in our church courtyard. We are planning our annual Easter Egg Hunt for this event. Feel free to attend this fun festival for the preschool children & help us hide eggs.



The preschool has a need for plastic grocery bags – Do not throw them away – save them and donate them to the preschool. You may bring them to the church office when you are on campus.

Justa Center provides many services. Want to help? Here are a few essential resources needed to sustain the day-center activities while seniors await the return to housing:

Nurse's Clinic: reader eye glasses - 2.5 and stronger, snack-sized resealable bags, sugar-free cough drops, analgesic cream, \$-size petroleum jelly, insoles - men and women;

Nutrition & Food Service: bulk plastic forks, bulk plastic spoons, sugar packets, powdered creamer, 8 oz. foam cups, lightweight napkins, individually wrapped snacks, individual sized juice or punch, and bottled water.

Valerie Lintz



We received this message via email recently:

My name is Betty Crunk. My husband, Ben, and I live in Beavercreek, Ohio. My parents were David and Mabel Strivings. My grandfather was Roscoe Strivings. I was just searching the web and thought I would look up the church and see how things are going there now. I have many fond memories from my childhood of Aldersgate. I remember the pews full of people listening to grandpa preach (on occasion). I remember sitting next to grandma Shirley ~ listening to her sing the hymns ~ (as I remember it was loudly and off key as well). I remember attending their 50th wedding celebration in Strivings hall. My mother made the cake and brought it from Flagstaff as that is where we lived. There is also the memory of grandpa's funeral. A sad day for sure. Grandpa had such a wonderful sense of humor and a kind spirit. Then there is the beautiful stained glass window. What a beautiful tribute to our Lord. (It put a smile on my face to see his picture still hanging in the church). It also makes me sad to see that the church is struggling. It's a sign of the times. People are searching for more than the way things have always been. In this day and age churches have to make worship services alive with more than traditional sermons, and traditional hymns. I think this is something that some churches are struggling with more than others. There is a Methodist church here in Beavercreek, Alley Methodist church, that has found a way to connect the old traditions and meet the needs of the new younger people as well. They are thriving. I will pray that God will guide Aldersgate in the direction He wants it to take. His word needs to reach those in the local area that still need to be reached for Christ. I believe Aldersgate is God's church and he has a great work to be done there. My parents stopped going to the Methodist church when I was a young child. We began attending a Baptist church. We only attended a Methodist church when we went to Phoenix to visit grandpa and grandma Strivings. Of course, the church we attended then was Aldersgate. My husband, Ben, and I attend University Baptist Church here in Beavercreek. It is a very dynamic church and we're growing by leaps and bounds. We now have to have four services every Sunday to accommodate everyone. God is good.

I hope my words have not offended you, or anyone there. That is not my intent. Just the perspective of a granddaughter of her grandfather's passion....reaching people with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Here is a link to Alley Methodist Church <https://www.aleyumc.org/home> and our church Beavercreek Baptist Church <https://universitybaptistchurch.com/> you should check them out. God is alive and his gospel is being preached in Beavercreek, Ohio. As I said before, I will be praying that God will guide Aldersgate in His path so that the lost may find hope in Jesus. The only one who can give true lasting peace. Isaiah 40:31 - But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength: they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint.

In His service, Betty Crunk



THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

PHOENIX AREA
1550 E MEADOWBROOK AVENUE
PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85014-4040



Dear Members and Friends of the Desert Southwest Conference,

I greet you in the name and spirit of Christ who brings assuring comfort and peace amid chaos.

Over the last few months the world has been closely monitoring the news of the novel coronavirus COVID-19. As expected, the Faith community immediately responded with calls for prayers for all impacted by COVID-19. Christians must call for calm and measured precautions as we learn how to manage and treat this virus.

First and foremost, we cannot blame any ethnic group, particularly Asians, for the advent of COVID-19. Such targeting or racial profiling, such as instances of verbal and physical assault, on those who are from countries where the virus has appeared is unacceptable behavior by Christ-followers.

Secondly, accurate knowledge is essential. Our Desert Southwest website is a great place to find such resources at <https://dscumc.org/disaster-response-resources/>.

Thirdly, preparation is critical. Post information in key areas of your church campus. Implementing small changes at your church now can make a critical difference down the line. Please use our [Local Church Guidelines](#) to make common sense changes. Our conference is also working on a "Conference COVID-19 Response Plan" which will be guidelines for pastors and staff and will make those available on our website this week.

Fourth, there are some mitigating measures that may be easily instituted in our congregations. These are some things we hope our churches and members will do immediately.

- Stay home if you are not feeling well, and especially if you are coughing.
- Wash your hands often and use hand sanitizers.
- Have hand sanitizers readily available around the church property, not just in restrooms.
- Have facial tissue (Kleenex) and trash receptacles available throughout the church property.
- Discourage hugging and handshaking, as an alternative use an elbow bump or the Asian tradition of bowing.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Cough or sneeze into a tissue or your elbow, not into your hand or fist.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects such as door handles, cell phones, table surfaces, offering plates, and chairs.

We will be offering updates and links on our conference website at:
<https://dscumc.org/disaster-response-resources/>.

As people of faith, let us keep praying, as we prepare and respond to this global concern. In faith, let us remember that God is with us and we are not alone.

In Christ,
Bishop Bob