



December

# ALDRSGATE HINGE

Volume 20, Issue 8

December 2017

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**Aldersgate  
United  
Methodist  
Church**

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## Special points of interest:

- Women of Aldersgate
- 55 and 3F's
- The Giver

## Michael's Minute

### From Settlers to Sojourners

Sitting across the room from a well-respected, deeply loved senior member of my congregation, I was surprised at how much my own feeling resonated with his. "It just feels like everything is changing", he said as he related his own grandfather's anxieties over the invention of the television. It was a cutting-edge invention at the time, but now we all take the television for granted and many of us carry its smaller distant cousin in our pockets and purses in the form of a smart phone. For his grandfather, it represented a changing world and was the source of much anxiety, "he refused to even sit in a room that had a television... maybe I've become just like him" he said.

His feelings of disorientation are not unique. Like Dorothy, many in the church feel like they are waking up in Oz, stumbling about to make sense of the seismic shifts taking place in the world around us. As one author put it, for the followers of Christ, our role has changed from "Settlers to Sojourners." Many can remember a world where we felt at home in a culture shaped by the Judeo-Christian story and common values, but now, in post-Christendom we are aliens, exiles, and pilgrims in a culture where we no longer feel at home. What is worse, as the local



church explores ways to reach the ever-changing world, those of us who were quite content in Christendom feel like we are being pushed to adapt and change in ways that are new and honestly offensive to us.

What if this feeling of dysphasia is actually God's plan to wake us up from business as usual so that we embrace our primary call of living out the mission of Christ? What if an unintentional mismanaging of our position as "culture shapers" over the past seventeen-hundred years has left people inoculated against the gospel rather than attracted by it? Then I say, let us embrace the anxiety we feel, let it push us to deep intimacy with God, and let it soften our heart to the purpose of Christ for our lives. Having grown comfortable at the center of culture and often ignoring the fringes, God is moving His church to the fringes so that His message will be delivered to those He has always longed to hear. Maybe, it is for such a time as this that we have been given the torch of faith to shine brightly in a frightened world. Are you ready for an adventure? I hope you'll say yes.

Because We Are Called,

**THIS IS THE VERY LAST HINGE, SEE PAGE 2 FOR DETAILS**

## MUSINGS OF THE EDITOR

It is with deep feelings that I write this column. It is my last and the last for the *Hinge* itself. It has been decided to end the *Hinge* as a publication of Aldersgate with this issue. I have been editor of this newsletter for the past 16 years so you can understand my feelings toward the publication.



On one hand it will be a relief to not have to edit this newsletter monthly and worry about my travels and other activities. On the other hand, I will miss the opportunity to discuss with you, my loyal readers, my feelings about God's world and Aldersgate.

Many changes have occurred in this publication while I have been editor and it has served its purpose of informing the congregation while recognizing those members who have contributed to the well being of the church as a whole both at Aldersgate and in the community. If I have missed your contribution over the years, please forgive me the omission.

Communication with the congregation in the future will be done through the bulletin at church and through the internet as you have seen in the weekly update emails sent out from the church office.

God has been good to me my entire life. I have been in Midland over 50 years and at Aldersgate about 45 years.

I joined the church from First UMC when Zack Clayton was in his second year of ministry at Aldersgate. God granted me a wonderful wife and four beautiful children. When Jan died, He brought Nancy into my life which has been a wonderful gift.

We are enjoying our lives and plan to stay in Midland in our home as long as we can. We have worked at joining our families and now have 5 children, 7 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren.

As I have said over the years, God made this wonderful world many years ago and set up the laws of nature to make it work. Nancy and I see this everyday in the wonders of our garden (our hobby) behind our house as the seasons come and go. It is a wonder to us.

And so I say goodbye to you as editor of the *Hinge*. I will be around the church working on other projects as I have done in the past and putting my two cents in to situations as I see them. Pastor Michael T has already heard from me and sometimes we agree and sometimes we don't. That is the way the world works.

Thank you all for allowing me the honor of being the editor of this wonderful newsletter all these years. Your comments and prayers have sustained me.

*Jack*

## WORSHIP SCHEDULE

### Open Before Christmas

When you were young, were you allowed to open even one Christmas present before Christmas? As children we could hardly wait to see what lay beneath the tree and for some very lucky children, family tradition gave them the right to some presents early. In this holiday series, Pastor Michael will invite us to open our Christmas presents early and as we do, our hearts will be ready to receive the greatest gift of all; our Savior Jesus Christ.

December 3 Galatians 3:26-4:7 Your Present  
 December 10 Psalm 23 Peace at Home  
 December 17 Luke 1:46-56 Proper Perspective



December 24 Hebrews 12:1-3 Joy That Lasts  
 Candlelight Service Luke 2:1-7  
 The Meaning of Christmas

### Christmas Eve Worship Schedule

December 24  
 10:00 am Worship Service  
 6:00 pm Contemporary Candlelight Service  
 8:00 pm Traditional Candlelight Service with Communion

## ADDIE'S LINE

*That night there were shepherds staying in the fields nearby, guarding their flocks of sheep. Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord's glory surrounded them. They were terrified, but the angel reassured them. "Don't be afraid!" he said. "I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. The savior – yes, the Messiah, the Lord – has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David!"*

*Luke 2:8-11*

In the busyness of life...I pray that you live your life expectantly as we approach the Season of Advent & await the celebration of Christ's birth. Do you personally claim the "Good News" that Jesus Christ was born & provided the only way for you to have eternal life through His death & resurrection? How will you share the Good News during the coming days? And how do you & I live it out each day?

As our year draws to a close I would like to thank the many who have served faithfully in so many areas within Christian Education. I appreciate all the care and support you give to the Christian Education Ministry Area, especially from our amazing volunteers. As true followers of the Lord Jesus Christ we have the responsibility and privilege of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Without those who have said "Here I am Lord" we could not provide the offerings that we do and with an increasing passion that others would grow in their maturity as Christ Followers.

### Looking Ahead:

**Sunday, December 3, 10 & 17** – Nursery Care, Toddler/Preschool and Children's D.I.G classes will meet at 9:30.



Nursery and Toddler-First Grade Care will be at 11:00 am.

Youth and Adult D.I.G classes will also meet at 11:00 am.

**Sunday, December 24** - Nursery Care, Toddler/Preschool & Children's D.I.G classes will meet at 10:00 am. There is no Youth or Adult D.I.G classes.

**Sunday, December 24** – Nursery- First Grade Care will be available at the 6:00 and 8:00 pm Christmas Eve Worship Services.

We are seeking two Approved Leaders for the 6:00 and 8:00 pm worship services. A volunteer sign-up sheet is located on the "What's Up" board or you can contact Addie Maxwell at 708-1758 or [akdmax67@gmail.com](mailto:akdmax67@gmail.com) if you would like to volunteer or have questions.

Please know the Christian Education Area welcomes your input, questions and suggestions.

As I close...I am reminded that each of us has the choice to make Christ the center of our daily lives. Would you ask God to give you this desire and ability through the power of the Holy Spirit? In doing so may those you meet experience the love of Christ because they have met YOU. Prayers that you will experience a Christ filled Christmas and New Year in 2018.

Serving the Christ of Christmas,

*Addie*

*"This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins."*

*1 John 4:10*

## A HOLINESS INVASION

Advent" means "coming," of course, and the promise of Advent is that what is coming is an unimaginable invasion. The mythology of our age has to do with flying saucers and invasions from outer space, and that is unimaginable enough. But what is upon us now is even more so — a close encounter not of



the third kind but of a different kind altogether. An invasion of holiness. That is what Advent is about.

Frederick Buechner, *The Clown in the Belfry*

## JEFF'S JOURNAL

*Luke 2:8-12 (NIV)*

<sup>8</sup> And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. <sup>9</sup> An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup> But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. <sup>11</sup> Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup> This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

Merry Christmas! I hope you are all able to spend this Christmas season with family and friends.

The month of December will find Remedy busy as usual. On Dec. 1<sup>st</sup>, along with the UMK (United Methodist Kids) and a few others, we'll be heading down to Simpson Park Camp for their 3<sup>rd</sup> annual 1865 Starlight Christmas. This is a fun event celebrating Christmas as if it were the year 1865. We (Remedy and UMK) are signed-up to sing Christmas Carols at this event from 7:30-9:30. If you're interested in going or just want more details/information



please go to [www.simpsonparkcamp.org/events/starlight-christmas-1865](http://www.simpsonparkcamp.org/events/starlight-christmas-1865). Dec. 17<sup>th</sup> we'll be having our annual Red Hat (Christmas) Party. This is one of the highlights of the year as we have lots of fun doing things such as trying to

eat a very challenging meal (if you want to know more ask one of the teens), shopping at the dollar store to buy gifts for each other followed by a gift exchange and tons of laughs.

Look for the Youth Jazz Band to be playing on Christmas Eve between services from 7:00-8:00. As well as a few of them playing solos during the Christmas Eve services at 6:00 and 8:00.

As far as our studies go, we'll finish the year with our study of the book of Jonah. This truly is my favorite time of the year!

God Bless,

*Jeff Tefft*

## 55 AND 3F'S

Our senior's group will meet for a potluck on December 11 at noon in Fellowship Hall. Our speaker will be Kyle Bagnall, Program Manager for Whiting Forest. Kyle will tell us about the changes occurring at Whiting Forest and how those changes will affect our viewing of that area and Dow Gardens.

This group is for those 55 years of age or older and/or retired. We meet for the 3 F's, fun, fellowship and of course food. In fact we all bring a dish to pass. Coffee, hot tea



and ice water is provided and deserts are always welcome. We also provide place settings for each person.

This is an opportunity for our more senior generation to become acquainted and to enjoy the company of others in their age bracket. We would appreciate it if you would sign the sign up sheet on the "What's Up at Aldersgate" bulletin board outside Fellowship Hall so we have a good idea how many to expect. John and Dorothy Peters are the host for this meeting.

## GREATEST WORTH

He came a babe of lowly birth.  
He was God's Son of greatest worth.  
We, like the angels, sing with mirth  
because God sent his Son to earth  
to ransom us and claim our worth.  
Praise God this babe of lowly birth!



## PRAYER NEEDS

### Get Well Wishes & Prayers: Hospitalizations:

Charlie Longsdorf – 10/10/17

Cassie Cuthbert – 11/1/17

May the God who “heals all our diseases,” grant healing to these friends.



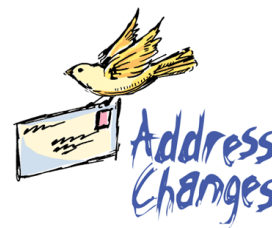
## ADDRESS CHANGE

Nick Bedbury  
481 S 168<sup>th</sup> Ave  
Holland MI 49424-2390

Lindsey (Licht) & Tyler Losinski  
16 Longyear Drive  
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Jim & Alice Morgan  
2325 Rockwell Dr. Apt. 211  
Midland MI 48642-9333

Sandra Doring  
1405 Wyllys Street  
Midland MI 48642-5125



## AS GOOD AS DONE

Upon the birth of the one who’d become known as John the Baptist, his father, Zechariah, praised God. Zechariah broke his nine-month inability to speak with these words: “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them. He has raised up a mighty savior for us in the house of his servant David, as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old” (Luke 1:68-70, NRSV).



Notice how Zechariah describes God’s actions as if they had already happened! In *Good News of Great Joy*, John Piper writes, “Nine months earlier, Zechariah could not believe his wife would have a child. Now, filled with the Holy Spirit, he is so confident of God’s redeeming work in the coming Messiah that he puts it in the past tense. For the mind of faith, a promised act of God is as good as done.

## WOMEN OF ALDERSGATE

Have you seen the certificate (pink) that the Aldersgate UMC unit of United Methodist women is a Five Star Unit for the year 2017?

This giving was through all five channels of undesignated giving: pledge to mission, special mission recognition, gift to mission, gift in memory, and world thank offering.

Thank you ladies for sharing your concerns and financial gifts to and for others.



*Marge Klashak*

For Women of Aldersgate.

## THE GIVER

Many Christian families struggle with what role — if any — Santa Claus should play in their Christmas celebrations. No matter what you decide, it's fascinating to know the history of the real-life St. Nicholas.

Born about 270 A.D., Nicholas was a bishop in Myra, or modern-day Turkey. In the year 325, he was part of the Council of Nicaea, which produced the Nicene Creed.

Nicholas, known for his generosity, often gave away his money anonymously. According to tradition, he secretly provided dowries for the three daughters of a bankrupt merchant. Nicholas threw two bags of gold through open windows and placed the third in a stocking hanging by the fireplace to dry. Thus began the Christmas tradition of placing gifts in stockings.

St. Nicholas is quoted as saying, "The giver of every good and perfect gift has called upon us to mimic God's giving, by grace, through faith, and this is not of ourselves."

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## SEEN AROUND CHURCH

- Sam Yoder singing with the Meister Singers from Midland High School and also planning drums in the Contemporary service band at church
- Jeffery Root playing base in the Community Orchestra.
- Aubrey Root giving the sermon at church service on November 26 and leading the Midland High School band during football season
- It's great to see our youth out in the community.
- All the food brought in for the Thanksgiving Basket program again this year. It is wonderful that we can host this great event at our church to help others in the community
- Although Sharing Tree changed somewhat this year, it is really good to see the tree at our church with all of us gathered around looking for a tag to give someone else a gift for Christmas.
- Church members helping to decorate the church for Christmas. As the pastor said, the church looks really good with all of the special decorations for the Christmas season.
- The list of all our loyal members who passed on to



victory during the past year. We miss you all. In addition, the lasting remembrance that was left for the church to remember the many who have passed before us.

- The cookies for hope ministry. It is so nice to remember those in recovery with a cookie when they visit our church each week.
  - Our church conference. It was a success and we have an enthusiastic group of volunteers leading our church business in 2018. Thanks for volunteering,
  - Our thanks to those who give their time and talent to coffee fellowship between services.
  - Our thanks to those greeters and ushers at each service.
  - Youth participating in Operation Christmas Child in October. A wonderful mission of the youth for the church in the community.
  - Our missions committee provided \$3838 to UMCOR Hurricane relief both from our budget and individual giving.
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