

Aldersgate United Methodist Church



8:30 a.m.

With Pastor John Goldrich serving
Newman U.M. Church
Videographer: Nancy Taylor
Song Leaders: Dan and Kara Steward
Greeter/Usher: Gaylene Nutzman

December 29, 2024
Christmas Carol Sing

11:00 a.m. Service

Greeter/Usher: Larry & Pat Ruth
Lector: Julie Clopper-Smith

Ministers: All of Aldersgate's Members
Pastor: Joseph Rafique
Keyboardist : Deanna Steward
Organist: Jan Malone
Director of Music: Julie Clopper-Smith
Digital Media Specialist: Nancy Taylor
Administrative Assistant: Stacey Lienemann
Child Care Attendant: Katie Softley
Custodian: Scott Hoyt

**Aldersgate
United Methodist Church**
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*Worshippers are welcomed to use their own terminology for God.
If you are considering membership, please contact our pastor, 402-489-1510.*



December 29, 2024

Greeting and Announcements (8:30 *Joseph, 11 Julie*)

Opening Truth (8:30 *Joseph, 11 Julie*) Psalm 96:1

LEADER: O sing to the Lord a new song;
ALL: **sing to the Lord, all the earth.**

Hymn #220 (red, vs. 3-4) **“Angels from the Realms of Glory”**

Call to Worship (8:30 *Joseph, 11 Julie*)

LEADER: God’s Word; gift and troublemaker.
ALL: **Perhaps our adoration will keep you at a safe, heavenly distance?**
LEADER: God’s Word; flesh among us,
ALL: **causing us to reexamine and decide who we are and what we stand for?**
LEADER: God’s Word; grace upon grace,
ALL: **inexhaustible love beckoning us forward.**
LEADER: We, your children, take our first, uncertain steps all over again,
ALL: **in joy, in awe, in praise.**

Opening Prayer (8:30 *Joseph, 11 Julie*)

LEADER: Generous God, we move into this Christmas season thanking you that the wonder of the Shepherds, the joy of the angels, and the peace of the manger all point to your will and purpose for the world. As we live forward into the fullness of your kingdom, help us to continue to respond to your gift of love in Christ by sharing that gift with others.
ALL: **God, you loved the world so much that you gave yourself to us in a new way in the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Increase and strengthen our faith so that in our lives good may triumph over evil, through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.**

Hymn #240 (red, vs. 4-5, 8:30 *Kari, 11 Julie*) **“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”**

INTRO: During his lifetime, Charles Wesley wrote over 6,000 hymns. One of his best-known, “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing,” was composed in 1739. The first three verses are quite familiar to most of us. There is plenty of rich theology in those first three verses. But there is even more in verses four and five. How many Christmas carols discuss the protoevangelium — the first proclamation of the Gospel, in Genesis 3:15, where it is promised that the seed of the woman will crush the serpent’s head? Then this, from I Corinthians 15:45-49: So it is written: “The first man Adam became a living being”; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit. The spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and after that the spiritual. The first man was of the dust of the earth; the second man is of heaven. As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the heavenly man, so also are those who are of heaven. And just as we have borne the image of the earthly man, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly man.

Hymn #219 (red, vs. 2-3) **“What Child Is This?”**

Prayer of Confession and Words of Affirmation (*John*)

PASTOR: We confess to you, God of our ancestors, that we have heard your word but ignored its witness. We have nodded agreement with your truth, but we follow our own ways. Your commands are frozen on paper, and your grace sometimes taken as cheap grace by us, for we do not warm to its possibilities for our lives.
ALL: **As the Word became flesh in Christ, we pray it may come alive in us. Melt our rigid perceptions and prejudices. Break down our resistance to change. Link us together in a com-**

munity of faith, boldly receptive to your grace and truth. We want to be a communion of forgiven and forgiving sinners.

PASTOR: To all who receive Christ, who believe in that name and trust in that love, God gives power to become children of God. When we are born of the Spirit, we receive grace upon grace. Light shines into our lives to drive away the darkness of sin. In the goodness of God know and believe that you are forgiven. Amen.

ALL: **Amen. Praise and thanks be to God.**

Hymn #230 (red, vs. 3-4)

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

Prayers of the People and the Lord’s Prayer #895 (red, *John*)

PASTOR: God of overwhelming love and grace, in this Christmas season we come before you in prayer. We remember how you chose to live among us, declaring that our world was a worthy place for you, and we were the reason for Christ to come. And so, at this time, we pray for our world and for all who live in it. May we live in the realization of who and whose we are. For this we say,

ALL: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

PASTOR: We pray for our international, national and local leaders, for firefighters and law enforcement personnel, that they will turn to you for wisdom when making difficult choices. For this we say,

ALL: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

PASTOR: This day we think and pray for those whom this is a difficult time. For those who are missing loved ones who have died or are far away. For those who are grieving the loss of a job, the loss of a relationship, or the loss of hope. For this we say,

ALL: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

PASTOR: We pray for those who are unable to be surrounded by others and who struggle with all the emphasis on family and togetherness in this season. We especially pray for the refugees. For this we say,

ALL: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

PASTOR: We think of and pray for all for whom the emphasis on “stuff” simply underscores not having enough. And we think of how grateful we are that you have sent Jesus into our world and into our lives. So, in thankfulness we say,

ALL: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

PASTOR: What other prayer needs would you like to lift up? (pause)
For these and all other prayers in our hearts, we say,

ALL: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

PASTOR: How might we reflect his message of thankfulness in our daily living? How might we share with others the true joy that Christ brings into our lives? How can we — like all creation — offer God a new song? Open our hearts, loving God. Stretch our understanding of our world that we might find new ways to journey with others in the days to come. We ask this in the name of Jesus who taught his disciples to pray saying:

ALL: **Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

Hymns #218 (red, vs. 2-4)

“It Came Upon a Midnight Clear”

(vs. 4-7, 8:30 *Kari*, 11 *Julie*)

“I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day”

(Jan found the music and lyrics in her military hymnal published in 1974.)

INTRO: Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, one of the most noted American poets of the mid-1800’s, wrote the words to *I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day*.” His first three verses are familiar, painting pictures of bells ringing from steeples and belfries throughout Christendom, telling “of peace on earth, good will to men.” Hymnals then go to what we sing as verse 4:

And in despair I bowed my head “There is no peace on earth,” I said,

“For hate is strong and mocks the song of peace on earth, good will to men.”

Now that’s a dissonant transition! Or perhaps, it would be better to say it’s not transition at all.

How do you get from “A voice, a chime a chant sublime / of peace on earth, good will to men” at the end of verse 3, to the very next line being “And in despair I bowed my head”?

The answer is simple: You don't. You see, Longfellow wrote this lyric in 1864. He originally wrote seven verses. After his original verse 3, he wrote two verses that nobody sings today, for reasons which shall become obvious as we sing them. However, the final two verses will then make perfect sense.

4: Then from each black, accursed mouth the cannon thundered in the South,
and with the sound the carols drowned of peace on earth, good will to men.

5: It was as if an earthquake rent the hearth-stones of a continent,
and made forlorn, the households born of peace on earth, good will to men.

6: And in despair I bowed my head “There is no peace on earth,” I said,
“For hate is strong and mocks the song of peace on earth, good will to men.”

7: Then pealed the bells more loud and deep: “God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;
the wrong shall fail, the right prevail with peace on earth, good will to men.”

God's Word Proclaimed (8:30 *John, 11 Julie*) I Samuel 2:18-20, 26
(*Joseph*) Luke 2:41-52

Hymn #245 (red, vs. 4-5) “**The First Noel**”

Offertory Invitation (*John*)

How will the nations hear God's word if the church is unfaithful? Who will seek the lost if we do not care? Who will teach the young if we have no time for them? Who will uphold true values against the compromises that demean human life? What we return to God can make a difference.

(8:30)

“Mary, Did You Know?” — arr. Jack Schrader

(11)

“Carol of the Bells” — Ukrainian Carol

Prayer of Dedication of Gifts and Self (*John*)

PASTOR: Use our gifts holy God, to sound a word of hope in our world. You have asked us to care for those less privileged. Let our gifts reach beyond this place to care for lonely, frightened, hurting people. What we offer in these moments is a beginning.

ALL: **Extend these gifts among the children and youth who need to know someone cares. Lift up among us those lasting values that enrich lives and make them whole. To these ends, we dedicate our offering and ourselves. We will ponder again your amazing grace in granting us life, in offering the child Jesus to bring us back to you, and in giving us the name “Christian,” Praise be to you, O God. Amen.**

Hymn #254 (red, vs. 2-4) “**We Three Kings**”

Commissioning and Blessing (*Joseph*)

PASTOR: Go in peace, carrying God's word to the world. Praise God and tell the good news of a Savior.

ALL: **Our eyes have seen an amazing gift. Our lives will witness to our salvation.**

PASTOR: God sends the Spirit to be our companion. Welcome the Spirit's leading and guidance.

ALL: **We are heirs of amazing blessings. We are gifted to become a blessing to others.**

PASTOR: Amen. Go in the name of our Triune God as a blessed people to be a blessing to all you meet.
Amen.

ALL: **Amen.**

Hymn #3052 (green, vs. 3-5) “**God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen**”

(Thank you to those who have participated in today's worship.)

Announcements

Today, December 29

- 8:30 a.m. Worship — Worship Center and online <https://www.youtube.com/@aldersgateunitedmethodistc8463>. Or at your convenience at www.aldersgatelinc.org or by searching YouTube for Aldersgate United Methodist Church, Lincoln, Nebraska.
- 9:30 a.m. Fellowship and coffee — Fellowship Hall
- 9:45 a.m. Middle School/High School Youth Sunday School — Room 1.
- 9:45 a.m. Children's Sunday School — Room 2.
- 11:00 a.m. Worship — Worship Center

Monday, December 30

- 7:00 p.m. Worship Planning and Spiritual Living Team — Room 4

Tuesday, December 31 New Year's Eve

- 9:00 a.m. Artisans

Thursday, January 2

- 12:30 p.m. Prayer and Worship Service — Theater, Legacy Estates, 7200 Van Dorn
- 4:00 p.m. Staff/Parish Relations Committee — Room 4

Friday, January 3

- Office is closed.
- 8:45 a.m. Take Off Pounds Sensibly — Room 4

Saturday, January 4

- 11:00 a.m. Mary Schuerman Celebration of Life — Worship Center and online. Lunch to follow — Sunshine Room

Next Sunday, January 5 Epiphany Sunday

- 8:30 a.m. Worship — Worship Center and online
- 9:30 a.m. Fellowship and coffee — Fellowship Hall
- 9:45 a.m. Middle School/High School Youth Sunday School — Room 1.
- 9:45 a.m. Children's Sunday School — Room 2.
- 11:00 a.m. Worship — Worship Center

Tuesday, January 7

- 11:30 a.m. Grand Generation — Stauffer's Café, 5600 S. 48th St. Seniors fellowship over lunch ordered off the menu.
- 7:00 p.m. Lasting Legacy Series — Worship Center and online. Andrew Loudon and Lorrie Benson, attorneys discussing how to gather the details of your life (including your digital footprint) so your family/estate executors can take care of your affairs.

Wednesday, January 8

- 10:00 a.m. A.R.M.S. (Retired Ministers and Spouses) — Fellowship Hall
- 1:30 p.m. Book Club *The Women* by Kristin Hannah — Room 4
- 7:00 p.m. Choir Practice — Worship Center

Friday, January 10

- 6:30 p.m. Friday Fling — Fellowship Hall. Bring a snack to share and enjoy playing 10 Point Pitch.

Wednesday, January 15

- 1:30 p.m. Stitcheroos — Room 4. Tie quilts for missions.

Spirit of Giving



In memory of Bill & Sally Perkins, David & Evelyn Burns, Mr. & Mrs. Harry T. Burns and Dr. & Mrs. C.A. Medlar by Mary K. Burns and David Perkins

In honor of Joe Gores and in memory of Larry & Nancy Walsh, Mark & Gladys Gores, Theresa & Al Grohsman and Baby June Mary Grohsman by Sandy Gores

In honor of Crosley, Fulton and Sophie by Stacey Lienemann

In memory of Marcy B. Miller by Ron L. Miller

In memory of Walter & Dorothy Nelson, Howard Sr. & Mildred Howser and Dave Baisinger by Bill & Phyllis Nelson

In memory of LeRoy & Jean Nielsen and Richard & Elva Janak by Colleen & Dave Nielsen

In memory of Linda Schafer, Ruth & Jacob Schafer and Theo & Guy Stocks by Steve Schafer

Prayer List

Anniversaries and Birthdays This Week

29 Grace Pearson (20)

30 Nancy Collicott

1 Joe & Sandy Gores

2 Ethan Atkinson

3 Brian Stine (60)

Dave Owen

Tim Stohlman

Dick Easley

Shirley Hanley

Laura Marshall

Roxie & Richard Swyers

Arlene

Judy Faubel

Keller Hustad

Lynda Nordyke

Zach Steward

John

Dennis Frederick

Dallas Huston

Loyal Park

Jacob

Skip, Katrena Anton's friend with colon cancer

Jody Anderson, Hayley Jambor's mother who has a brain tumor

Nadyne Bauer is on hospice

Sister Judith Healy is the 82 yr. old cousin of Katrena Anton, rehabbing in Omaha after a fall.

Iva Maxey, Reba Wysocki's sister, who is undergoing dialysis treatments

Ava Miles, Phyllis Nelson's niece, was diagnosed with gastroparesis.

Jennifer Miles, Phyllis Nelson's niece

Tim Murphy, a veteran with memory issues

Isaiah Pierce, Karen Pierce's grandson who was born 12/13/22 with heart issues

Alex Ronne, Pat Ruth's cousin, a 7-year-old girl living in Colorado diagnosed with MLD, a rare, incurable, genetic disease.

Ross Teske and his missionary work in Talavera de la Reina, Spain

People in Ukraine, Israel and Palestine

