

Aldersgate United Methodist Church



7:00 p.m.

Videographer: Nancy Taylor
Usher/Greeter: Char & Tom Haggar
Lector Carol Clymer

March 5, 2025
Ash Wednesday

Ministers: All of Aldersgate's Members
Pastor: Joseph Rafique
Director of Music: Julie Clopper-Smith
Keyboardist: Deanna Steward
Organist: Mary K. Burns
Digital Media Specialist: Nancy Taylor
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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.*



March 5, 2025

Greeting and Announcements (*Carol*)

Music for Centering Prayer #2138 (black) “Sunday’s Palms Are Wednesday’s Ashes”
(Please meditate on the words of the first verse.)

Sunday's palms are Wednesday's ashes as another Lent begins;
thus we kneel before our Maker in contrition for our sins.

We have marred baptismal pledges, in rebellion gone astray;
now, returning, seek forgiveness; grant us pardon, God, this day!

PASTOR: The grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord be with you.

ALL: **And also with you.**

Call to Worship (*Carol*)

LEADER: Surrounded by the world, we gather to ready ourselves,

ALL: **to confess our dishonesty and seek Christ’s light.**

LEADER: Surrounded by the world, we gather to ready ourselves,

ALL: **to confess our sins and know Christ’s forgiveness.**

LEADER: Surrounded by the world, we gather to ready ourselves,

ALL: **to confess our brokenness and receive Christ’s healing.**

LEADER: Surrounded by the world, we gather to ready ourselves,

ALL: **to confess our old lives and be renewed in Christ’s love.**

LEADER: We take the hurts, the pains, the sins of the past (ashes) and this powerful symbol of God’s healing (cross). God holds all we have done, and heals it giving it a new shape in love. God raises us up from the ashes of all that we seek to leave behind and gives us a new birth through forgiveness.

ALL: **Thanks be to God. Amen.**

Opening Prayer (*Carol*)

LEADER: Gracious and loving God, we gather together and offer our prayer of thanksgiving for your care and compassion in which you do not take pleasure in the death of the wicked. Rather you wish the wicked to turn from their evil ways and live.

ALL: **May we share that same care and compassion with one another, friends or stranger. Keep our hearts and minds on you so that as Christ-centered servants we can make a difference in your world doing your work with our hands and voices. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.**

Hymn #331 (red)

“Holy Spirit, Come, Confirm Us”

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

PASTOR: Christians are sometimes labeled hypocrites. Do we appear pious only in church? Do we call attention to our good deeds for recognition and reward? How do our private lives and working relationships fit the picture we want others to see? God invites honest self-reflection and struggle toward authentic living.

ALL: **Help us, awesome God, to be honest with ourselves and with you. We want to change our wasteful, destructive ways. We want to be rid of the evil that weighs us down, the guilt that crushes our spirit. Have mercy on us as we remember and confess our sins in these moments of silent struggle. Purge us of all the garbage from our past. Wash us in the flowing streams of your forgiving love. Create in us clean hearts, O God, and fill our lives with a**

new and right spirit. Sustain our hearts day by day in renewed focus on your steadfast love. Amen.

PASTOR: Do you sense changes happening deep inside you? Can you feel new life surging among us? God's forgiveness is real. God is gracious and merciful, restoring us to the joy of salvation. The one who created us sees our brokenness and helps us put the pieces back together. God works with us on new designs for living. We are free to become new people. Praise God.

Word of God Proclaimed (*Carol*)

II Corinthians 5:20b – 6:10

Shine On (*Joseph*)

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In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. In him was life, and the life was the light of all people.

The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not understood it.

Not comprehended, not grasped the full meaning of the light of God brought close in his Son.

The light shines on and the darkness struggles to know it, the darkness in me, the darkness in you.

The light hounds us, chases us with its concern and laughter, nudges us like an interested puppy, butts up against us in the quiet, jostles us in a crowd.

The light shines on, though darkness makes itself known. The noise of darkness, the threat of darkness, the posturing presence of gloom. But that still small voice, that thin sight of silence, that often invisible presence, goes on. God in the gaps. The light shines on.

Gospel Lesson (*Joseph*)

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Sermon (*Joseph*)

“Pretenders or Performers?”

Response to the Word (*Joseph*)

PASTOR: Let us enter the time of Lent by looking at the cross, people who stand among others as truly human — no better, no worse, simply offered the grace of God as we go. We remember some moments of courage and faithfulness, the times when we cheered on the good of life, like the laying of palm branches for the journey of Jesus Christ to Jerusalem.

ALL: **Then we remember how we turned our faces away, in doubt and fear, in failure and weakness, and the palm branches of our better moments become as ashes.**

PASTOR: As we enter the time of Lent, we will stay in humble silence with our own humanness. Let us name who we are before our God.

ALL: **We will stay this day with our own humanness, for we are born of the earth and will one day return to it. We know who we are. We are not God.**

Special Music

“Touch Me with Ashes” — *Aldersgate Choir*

Imposition of Ashes (*Joseph*)

Receiving the mark of our humanness, I invite those who wish to do so, to come forward and receive the mark of the ashes on our forehead or back of our hand, the mark which bears witness to your preparedness to own that you are an ordinary human being. Dust thou art and to dust thou shall return.

(The offering plates are between the front row of chairs.)

Please bring your offering when you come forward to receive the Imposition of Ashes.)

Response to Receiving the Ashes (*Joseph*)

PASTOR: An ending and a beginning: the end of our old selves, and a new beginning in faith.

ALL: **In the ashes of my old life, a new life is born.**

PASTOR: An ending and a beginning: the end of living in the shadows, and a beginning of living within the light.

ALL: **In the ashes of my old life, a new life is born.**

PASTOR: An ending and a beginning: the end of a life that brings hurt, and a beginning to a life that offers healing.

ALL: **In the ashes of my old life, a new life is born.**

PASTOR: An ending and a beginning: the end of a journey going away from God, and a beginning of a journey to God.

ALL: **In the ashes of my old life, a new life is born.**

Hymn #378 (red, vs. 1-3)

“Amazing Grace”

Commissioning and Blessing (*Joseph*)

(Please turn slowly and not necessarily in unison toward the doors, ready for the journey into Lent.)

PASTOR: Journey now the pathway to new life.

ALL: **We go on the way of the cross.**

PASTOR: Travel now the road through death to resurrection.

ALL: **We go on the way of the cross.**

PASTOR: Set out with Jesus through wilderness to the garden.

ALL: **We go on the way of the cross.**

PASTOR: And live the life of blessing, the way of truth, in the love that renews, rebirths, re-creates you.

ALL: **We go on the way of the cross.**

(You are invited to stay and listen to the postlude or leave as you wish.

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

Postlude

“O Master Let Me Walk with Thee” — arr. Gail Ann Wasson

Lenten Study
The Final Days:
A Lenten Journey Through the Gospels

5:30 p.m. Thursdays beginning March 6
Room 4



Potato Bake

12:15 p.m. Sunday, March 16
Sunshine Room

Bring a friend and enjoy
baked potatoes with your choice of
toppings and fabulous desserts.

Free-will Donation for the
Aldersgate General Fund.

Lenten Sermon Series

Christians at the Roundtable of World Religions

Mar. 9 What Can Christians Learn from Jews?
Mar. 16 What Can Christians Learn from Muslims?
Mar. 23 What Can Christians Learn from Hindus?
Apr. 6 What Can Christians Learn from Buddhists?

At 11 a.m. these Sunday mornings we will briefly review/
learn the basic facts of these religions and compare the major
similarities and differences to Christianity. There isn't time for a
deep study of any of the religions.

Announcements

Thursday, March 6

12:30 p.m. Worship, Prayer & Imposition of Ashes Service — Theater, Legacy Estates, 7200 Van Dorn
5:30 p.m. Lenten Study *The Final Days: A Lenten Journey Through the Gospels* — Room 4

Friday, March 7

World Day of Prayer

8:45 a.m. Take Off Pounds Sensibly — Room 4
5:30 p.m. Clinic with a Heart Fundraising Gala — Cornhusker Hotel. Cocktail hour, 6:30 p.m. dinner &
program begins with silent and live auction, guest speakers and wine and whiskey pull.

Saturday, March 8

11:00 a.m. Citizen's Climate Lobby — Sunshine Room
2:00 p.m. Breaking the Ramadan Fast — Sunshine Room

Sunday, March 9

2:00 a.m. Daylight Saving Time Begins
8:30 a.m. Worship — Worship Center and online <https://www.youtube.com/@aldersgateunitedmethodistc8463> or at your convenience at www.aldersgatelinc.org. You may also search YouTube for Aldersgate United Methodist Church, Lincoln, Nebraska
9:30 a.m. Fellowship Hour — Fellowship Hall
9:45 a.m. *The Chosen* — Room 4
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 "What Can Christians Learn from Jews?"

Monday, March 10

- 1:30 p.m. United Women in Faith “Pushout: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools” a documentary — Room 4. Pat Ruth, hostess
- 6:00 p.m. Delta Kappa Gamma — Sunshine Room
- 7:00 p.m. Board of Trustees — Zoom

Tuesday, March 11

- 9:00 a.m. Artisans
- 7:00 p.m. Life and Legacy Planning Series (Nebr. U.M. Foundation) — Worship Center and online. How can you help Aldersgate or another Methodist church with Kristine Roberts and Sharon Schmidt from the Foundation.

Wednesday, March 12

- 10:00 a.m. A.R.M.S. (Retired Ministers and Spouses) — Fellowship Hall
- 10:00 a.m. Lincoln Women’s Connection — Sunshine Room
- 7:00 p.m. Choir Practice — Worship Center

Friday, March 14

- 6:30 p.m. Friday Fling — Fellowship Hall

Saturday, March 15

- 9:00 a.m. Men’s Breakfast — Room 4

Sunday, March 16

- 8:30 a.m. Worship — Worship Center and online
- 9:30 a.m. Fellowship and coffee — Fellowship Hall
- 9:45 a.m. *The Chosen* — Room 4
- 9:45 a.m. Middle School/High School Youth Sunday School — Room 1
- 9:45 a.m. Children’s Sunday School — Room 2
- 10:45 a.m. Choir Warm-up — Choir Room
- 11:00 a.m. Worship “What Can Christians Learn from Muslims?” — Worship Center
- 12:15 p.m. Potato Bake — Sunshine Room. Bring a friend and enjoy baked potatoes with your choice of toppings and desserts. A fundraiser for Aldersgate’s General Budget.

Prayer List

Anniversaries & Birthdays This Week

- 5 John Goldrich
- 7 Joe Gores David & Julie Huston
- 13 Joseph Rafique (70)

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| Dick Easley | Judy Faubel | Dennis Frederick |
| Keller Hustad | Dallas Huston | Laura Marshall |
| Lynda Nordyke | Loyal Park | Zach Steward |
| Jacob | Arlene | John |

- Jody Anderson, Hayley Jambor’s mother who has a brain tumor
- Iva Maxey, Reba Wysocki’s sister, who is undergoing dialysis treatments
- Jessie Menck, Ken Hartwig’s niece who has bile duct cancer
- 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 5-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

