

# THE STATE OF THE 'GATE

*Aldersgate Church - St. Louis Park, MN  
26, January, 2020 | 11:15am*



## **Aldersgate Church “State of the ‘Gate” Annual Report 2020**

[www.aldersgatemn.com](http://www.aldersgatemn.com) † 952.929.6725

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**Prepared by Pastor Paul Baudhuin  
January 26th, 2020**

*It's been an up and down season at Aldersgate Church. As we often say around here, this is an anxious, confusing, and tired world we live in and we are seeking to find our way through it and be a light in it.*

## **Working Mission & Vision**

**We seek to be a Creator-centered, Jesus-Shaped, and Spirit-led community creating atmospheres that foster spiritual connection, healing, and growth.**

*Our leadership had two retreats since our last Congregational meeting in 2017. We began to dream about and put language to this new “working” vision. Digging deeply into who we are, what we care about, and what we believe God may be doing among us, we have begun to live into the above vision and mission: It steeps us in the Triune God and Christian tradition, while liberating us to find authentic ways for people to experience meaning and purpose in that tradition. We are excited to continue to grow in living into this vision and mission!*

## **Statement of Inclusion**

**We, Aldersgate United Methodist Church, believe that God loves, honors, and celebrates all people regardless of age, race, nation, gender identity, background, sexual orientation, abilities, or socio-economic position. We believe that God calls us to embody God's radical love by cultivating a space free from harassment, judgment, hate, or discrimination.**



*In August of 2018, we passed the above Inclusion Statement at 96% margin. In these uncertain times in the history of the United Methodist Church, this statement and the values in it have freed us up to know and be who we are, to open our doors passionately to the LGBTQ+ community, and to be advocates for inclusion and equity within and beyond the scope of our church. This is a huge step for us and bore fruit with the February 2019 Special General Conference where limitations and consequences for LGBTQ+ Methodists and allies were strengthened. Because of the hard work we had already done in clarifying this shared value, we knew how to respond and were able to keep moving forward in our mission.*

## Church Leadership

*Thank-you to some great volunteers for serving on the council for the past several years who will not be continuing with their council position in 2020. Our long time Finance Chair (so long he can't even figure out how many years it's been!), John Sams stepped down. We thank you John for how faithfully you have served. Gail Miller and Mary Hinz both served in the role of Community Outreach over the last several years and have chosen to step down. Thank-you for your service to our community and to Aldersgate Church!*

### 2020 CHURCH COUNCIL

**Pastor** Paul Baudhuin (pbaudhuin@aldersgatemn.com, 612-718-9058)

**Lay Leader** Marjie Broderson (marjebrodersen@gmail.com, 952-797-0007)

**Trustees** Katie Hinz & Jay Broderson

Katie: hinz.katie09@gmail.com, 952-807-1715

Jay: JBroderson@huntelec.com, 612-750-1075

**Finance** Fred Price & Rachel Stenhaus

Rachel: stenhaus.rachel@gmail.com, 507-993-5030

Fred: fprice@rhinestonesunlimited.com, 612-743-5242

**Staff & Parish Relations** Amy Mahanna-McKinney (Amy.Mahannah@hennepin.us, 952-920-9525)

**Community Outreach** Linda Cremons (l.cremons@gmail.com, 952-564-0821)

**Congregational Care** Jan Nyberg (j-nybe@umn.edu, 952-649-0943)

**Life Groups** Angie Peery (apeery@rhinestonesunlimited.com, 612-220-5242)

**Lay Member to the Annual Conference** Gail Miller (googi001.gail@gmail.com, 952-926-6812)

**Secretary** Linda Sams (lsams\_mn1@comcast.net, 952-926-6812)

## Life Groups Report

*As we work to “create atmospheres that foster spiritual connection, healing, and growth” we continue to have a need for consistent volunteer leadership to organize and lead small groups such as ACE (Adult Christian Education), Children & Youth groups, and Bible Studies. We also continue to look for a part time staff position as a youth ministries leader. We also hope to find a way for parents of younger children to have a group of some kind where childcare is offered. And mostly, one of the key things we’ve identified is that about 70% of homes within a five-mile radius of Aldersgate are occupied by age demographics (55 and younger) that indicate that there are likely kids ranging from birth to high school age. We are not in this for mere church growth. We are in this to offer atmospheres that foster spiritual connection, healing, and growth, and if we are to do so, we will need to take a hard look at how we are doing this for families with kids, single people, and young couples without kids or who will soon have kids. This is most of our neighbors; whom we’re called to love and serve. For a smaller church, all the opportunities we have in place is impressive, and needs to be named and celebrated, however let’s start dreaming about what more we could do to help our community find spiritual connection, healing, and growth.*

### **ADULT SMALL GROUP OPPORTUNITIES**

**ACE (Adult Christian Education)** meets Sunday morning after worship

**Women’s Book Club**

**Bible Study @ Parkshore:** Thursdays, 1:00-2:00pm

**Bible Study @ Towerlight:** Mondays, 11:30am-Noon

**Tuesday Testaments:** Tuesdays, 10:30-11:30am

**Moms Group:** Mondays, 6:30pm

**20/30-Something Trivia Night at Steel Toe Brewery:** 1st Tuesdays, 6:30pm

**Men’s Softball Team:** Monday Nights April-August

**Pop Up Choir** performs occasionally during worship- Contact Serena Steffenhagen

**Jubilee! Bell Choir** performs during worship and practices Wednesdays at 6:45pm

**Theater of the Spirit (TOTS)** full-scale musical production every March, rehearsals begin in January

**Holy Guacamole Fantasy Football League** competes annually starting in August

*Our Life Groups area continues to help adults find relational connection and small group discipleship. We work to offer a variety of ways to connect and grow. In 2020 we hope to bring more stability to ACE as well as form some new Adult Small Groups that meet within and beyond the walls of Aldersgate. If you have any questions regarding Adult Small Groups, contact Pastor Paul.*

## **YOUTH SMALL GROUP OPPORTUNITIES**

**Youth Ministries** meets Wednesday nights from September through May- Contact Paul Baudhuin

**Chapel Chimers Bell Choir** meets Wednesday nights from September through May- Contact Christina Herold

*A team of adults, Handbell Director Christina Herald and Pastor Paul have been working to keep some consistency in our youth ministry through this staff transition. Students have been engaging in Bible study, spiritual practices, game nights, and service projects together on a nearly weekly basis. Our Chapel Chimers Handbell Choir continues to rehearse regularly, play in worship, and has also been playing at the Chapel View Care Center in Hopkins about once/quarter. They are looking at a big trip this Summer, but that's still being decided. One of the top concerns in regards to Youth Ministry is our awareness of the busy-ness and pressures in which today's teenagers live. We seek not to fight against their schedules and pressures, but to find ways to offer them space where they are safe to be who they are and find respite from the busy worlds in which they live. How do we offer this space for them? And how do we invite more students into it?*

## **CHILDREN SMALL GROUP OPPORTUNITIES & EVENTS**

**Children's Message** during worship every Sunday

**Nursery Playtime** for babies through pre-school during worship- Contact Katie Hinz

**Children's Worship Activities** at the Kid's tables during worship- Contact Angie Peery

**Kid's Time** for K-5<sup>th</sup> grade during worship (prior to the Scripture Reading and Sermon)- Contact Cleo Bonham

**Kick Off Sunday** after worship on the first Sunday after Labor Day

**Annual Christmas Program** in worship in December with one practice the day before- Contact Angie Peery

**Annual Easter Egg Hunt** on Easter Sunday before worship

*A team of people have done a fantastic job of continuing to offer meaningful space for our kids to find value and connection at Aldersgate. Busy bags are stocked, the tables in the sanctuary have content relevant to worship, kids have safe and meaningful content in Kids' Time, the Children's Message in worship is intentional and kid-centered, and the Nursery is ready every Sunday to love and spiritually nourish our youngest members. There's a whole team, but a special thanks goes out to Cleo Bonham, Katie Hinz, Stephanie Randolph, Jen Wood, and our Life Groups lead, Angie Peery for all their work!*

**LIFE GROUPS TEAM:** Angie Peery (chair), Marjie Broderson, Cleo Bonham

## Community Outreach Report

*Thank you for your generosity and sacrificial spirit. We are making a difference in the community and the world. Keep up the good work! As we go forward, we're looking to engage new hands in our many outreach efforts, as well as other efforts about which people may be passionate and want to champion. We're also looking for more ways to engage our kids in service. Watch for those opportunities.*

### COMMUNITY OUTREACH IN 2019

Contact Linda Cremons or any member of the Community Outreach Team for 2020 Opportunities

**Sheridan Story** provided 40+ children with weekend food bags with your donations and a grant received from the St. Louis Park Family Services Collaborative, plus many hours of volunteers distributing food every week at Aquila Elementary.

**Various Community Outreach Efforts** received \$3,500 from your cash & coin offerings

**Simpson Housing Services** received socks and underwear that you donated plus sandwiches you made

**St. Louis Park Emergency Services (STEP)** received food items, school supplies, and toys that you donated

**St. Louis Park High School Bird Feeder Program** received food items that you donated

**Perspectives** received camping supplies, Christmas gifts funded by you and purchased by our youth, and many hours of volunteer help with their Kids Café

**St Louis Park Unpaid School Lunches** were paid with \$1,800 of your donations

**Basketball in the Park** received Aldersgate volunteer hours

**UMCOR** received hygiene kits that you assembled, and specula offerings for various global crises

**Various Organizations** received gift cards and other items that you donated

*In February 2020 we are supporting a new organization called Breaking Free, which helps support victims of sex trafficking. Look for more information on this in upcoming emails and in the bulletin. Also, this year we are changing our volunteer opportunity at Perspectives: For the last 6 years of so, we have helped at the Kids' Café one Friday each month. The kids were no longer helping with the meals, and they have plenty of other high school students from the community helping (way to go High School students!). We missed interacting with the kids and decided to see what other opportunities they had for us. Instead we are going to help with childcare during Perspectives A.A. meeting on the second Tuesday of each month.*

**COMMUNITY OUTREACH TEAM:** Linda Cremons (chair), Bonnie Hendrickson, Lori Longworth, Sheri Manning, Jan McElfish, Gail Miller

# Congregational Care Report

*Our Congregational Care team continues to do amazing work. Check out this list of what they've done in the last year!*

## CONGREGATIONAL CARE GIVEN IN 2019

**Mailings & Target Gift Cards** for college age students at Valentine's Day and Halloween

**Greeting Cards** sent to parishioners over Lent and Advent who cannot leave their homes

**Fall Kickoff Picnic**

**Flu Shot Clinics**

**Winter Potluck and Games**

**Support Calls and Visits** of parishioners during hard seasons in their lives

**Celebrations and Fellowship** with parishioners during great times of blessing

**Flower and Cookie Deliveries**

**Prayer Shawls** made for those who could use some comfort

**Health Closet** is stocked for anyone to borrow when needed

## WHO TO CONTACT

**With Care Needs or Concerns** contact Jan Nyberg, a member of the Care Team or Pastor Paul

**To Offer Care** contact Jan Nyberg or a member of the Congregational Care Team

**To Join a Meal Train Team** contact Jan Nyberg or a member of the Congregational Care Team

**When Prayers are Needed (Prayer Chain)** contact Serena Steffenhagen

**To Join the Prayer Chain** contact Serena Steffenhagen

Our care team is committed to making sure that all are noticed, known, cared for, and loved. If you feel you have a need of some kind, don't hesitate to reach out. There's a lot happening in the world and at Aldersgate, but sometimes you just need an ear, a visit or prayer.

**CONGREGATIONAL CARE TEAM:** Jan Nyberg (chair), Deb Achor, Steph Lund, Lance Grevious, Kaye Grevious, Pat Manning, Joan Munson, Marcia Soules, Sandy Price

## Worship Report

*Worship continues to be a space for the whole gathered community. We continue to offer a vibrant experience filled with music that edifies the God and our souls, prayers for one another and the world around us, and Biblically rooted wondering and teaching. It is important to note and name that attendance has been declining over the last two years. By and large this is due to a few people who've sought out another community in the area, but the vast majority is due to people who have died or moved away. This is part of the life of any church and was happening even when we were growing. The difference is that we are not seeing new people walk through our doors to replace these natural decreases in worship attendance and overall engagement.*

*Beginning In 2015 we experienced a few years of growth. We had new space, a new pastor, a new Children and Youth Minister, and new energy. All that change was like putting a little gas on a fire. And when you put gas on a fire, it quickly erupts, but just as quickly dies down. Our challenge now is to find out how to stoke this fire with the resources we have and get it burning hot and steady. It's slower, it's not as exciting, it's harder, but it's the good stuff. This is true in all areas of ministry, but worship is still the primary entry point for most new people. So, let us continue to uphold and live into our values of intergenerational community, authentic spirituality, and Jesus-shaped, Biblically rooted worship! And let's get the word out!*

### 2019 WORSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

**All Saints Sunday** healing service with candle lighting and a prayer station to remember loved ones

**All Hands Sunday** outlined opportunities for volunteering to help worship "go" and we saw an increase in ushers, greeters, scripture readers, sound techs, and more!

**Longest Night Christmas Service** for those experiencing loss during the holidays

**Christmas Eve 7pm Service** helped to increase overall Christmas Eve worship attendance by nearly 20%!

**Improved Marketing** with Christmas banners and targeted Facebook Ads

**Live Streaming** made great strides (thanks Pete Chirpich!) and was featured by the annual conference

**Worship Attendance** from Missouri, Alaska and even Norway using Live Streaming

### GOALS FOR 2020 WORSHIP

**Logo & Signage** to help increase traffic through a re-branding effort

**Authentic & Updated Atmosphere** that fosters spiritual connection, healing, and growth for all ages

**New Projector** so people can actually see what is on our screen

**WORSHIP ADVISORY TEAM:** Pastor Paul Baudhuin (chair), Serena Steffenhagen (convener), Brian Roemen, Becky Hart, Jody Warden, Pete Chirpich, Mike McKinney



## Finance Report

*Finances are merely resources given to us by God to be used for the sake of equipping the people to be the Body of Christ for one another and the world. One of the tenants of church-world is “as worship goes, so go the finances.” That is, when worship attendance is up, giving tends to increase. And when worship attendance is down, giving tends to decrease.*

*We must always remember; a church’s survival is not as dependent on its finances or its building but its people. It’s the people that matter. And, we have some great people working to keep the Aldersgate stable financially. The Council, Finance Team, and the Foundation all agree that while we have the reserves to fund 2020, we need to make some big shifts toward reducing our deficit in 2021, and that work starts now. A balanced budget will help us find freedom from financial concerns and gain a new missional fervor. The reality is this: God has given us, and will give us, what we need to do what God has called us to do.*

*Two key steps have been taken to move towards a balanced budget in 2021. First, the council made the hard decision that we no longer can afford a full time Children and Youth Minister (more on that in staffing). And second, we’ve formed what we’ve called a “Real Estate” team. This team is working hard to find creative and effective ways to best leverage one of our biggest assets, our building and grounds. They have been meeting since summer to look at a variety of ways to do this, and as they move forward, they will bring us updates as it is pertinent.*

*We are grateful for those who have the minds and spirit to think outside of the box and help us do what we believe any church is called to do: operate fully within but not beyond your resources.*

### CURRENT ASSETS & LIABILITIES

Please note: At the time of printing 2019 books have not been closed so these numbers are not completely accurate. A more complete financial report will be available shortly after we close 2019. Stay tuned.

Aldersgate Property appraised at ~**\$1,900,000**

Aldersgate Revolving (Old Parsonage Proceeds) Fund: **\$107,870.16**

Aldersgate Designated Gifts Fund (restricted and unrestricted): **\$62,746**

Other operating cash and investments: **\$33,508**

**TOTAL Aldersgate Accounts** **\$204,124.16**

Aldersgate Foundation Designated Funds	<b>\$143,532.00</b>
Aldersgate Foundation Undesignated Funds	<b><u>\$286,913.29</u></b>
<b>TOTAL Aldersgate Foundation Accounts</b>	<b>\$430,445.29</b>

**Aldersgate Church carries no debt, whether in the form of a mortgage, credit line, or otherwise. This is good and liberating news!**

**INCOME & EXPENSE ACTUAL 2019**

Please note: At the time of printing 2019 books have not been closed so these numbers are not completely accurate

2019 Pledged Income:	<b>\$189,570</b>
2019 Foundation Contributions	<b>\$10,432</b>
2019 Discoveries For Children Preschool Rent	<b>\$63,600</b>
2019 Other Income	<b><u>\$4,074</u></b>
<b>2019 TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$267,676</b>
<b>2019 TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b><u>\$338,291</u></b>
<b>2019 Deficit Covered by Reserves</b>	<b>(70,615)</b>

**FINANCE TEAM:** Rachel Stenhaug (co-chair), Fred Price (co-chair), Marjie Broderson (Lay Leader), Katie Hinz (Trustees co-chair), Jay Broderson (trustees co-chair), Chuck Tschida (Treasurer), Amy Mahannah (SPR lead), Linda Sams (secretary), Kathy Anderson (Finance Bookkeeper)

## Staffing Report

*Staffing has been one of the biggest challenges of 2019. Our staff are all faithful and talented and serve Aldersgate with their loving spirits. Make sure to thank each of them for what they bring to our community.*

### 2020 ALDERSGATE STAFF

**Pastor** Paul Baudhuin (pbaudhuin@aldersgatemn.com)

**Church Administrator & Worship Coordinator** Serena Steffenhagen (aldersgate@aldersgatemn.com)

**Youth Ministries** TBD

**Bookkeeper** Kathy Anderson (finance@aldersgatemn.com)

**Handbell Director** Christina Herold (bells@aldersgatemn.com)

**Pianist/Accompanist** Kathy Webster (contact church office)

**Nursery Coordinator** Jennifer Wood (contact church office)

**Contract Custodians** Anne and Maxwell Kebasso (contact church office)

*In June our long time Financial Bookkeeper Judy Chirpich resigned, though she has graciously stayed with us though a long hiring process. When we have a last day set, we will celebrate Judy for her many faithful and steadfast years in this position (but don't hesitate to thank her now too!). We are excited to have Kathy Anderson on board as our new Bookkeeper, and she and Judy are actively working on the transition.*

*In May our Children and Youth Minister Erin Evans resigned, and she has been greatly missed, especially by our children and youth. In the interim Pastor Paul has been filling in with our youth, but this is not ideal for several reasons. The job for a part time Youth Coordinator is posted and we hope to have this filled soon! We will keep you posted.*

*Serena Steffenhagen is our Church Administrator and Worship Coordinator and has been a rock through this year of transition. She continues organize and lead music in worship, put together the slides on the screen, manage volunteers for worship, manage volunteers for the Nursery, organize the chancel area for worship, schedule events in the building, assist Pastor Paul in a myriad of ways, and much more. Thank you, Serena for all you do!*

*In the Spring of 2018, Aldersgate lost our multi decade long Handbell Director and saint of the Church, Sandy Stoneking to pancreatic cancer. We still feel that loss deeply. But we also are grateful that long time ringer and partner in ringing with Sandy, Christina Herold has stepped in to continue the 50+ year tradition of a robust Handbell Ministry here at Aldersgate. She leads our Jubilee and Chapel Chimers choirs. We are also grateful*

*for Sandy Mullaney taking leadership of the Ding Dong Dollies (an outside handbell choir, sponsored by Aldersgate). Our handbell ministry continues to thrive!*

**SPR (STAFF-PARISH RELATIONS) TEAM:** Amy Mahannah (lead), Church Council (in 2020 we are exploring restructuring this. Stay tuned.)

## **Trustees Report (building/grounds and Contracts)**

*Our trustees had a rough 2018 and 2019! In 2018 a frozen pipe caused Fellowship Hall to flood and almost immediately again in 2019, the old chapel/ new youth room flooded. Frozen pipes keep baptizing our space in ways you don't want things baptized! But thankfully our trustees worked to rally people together to take care of it, and though we have some damage, all is well.*

*As our Real Estate team meets, and as we clarify some missional efforts to reach new people in our community, we will come to clarity on exactly what to do with the old chapel space. We will keep you posted.*

*But it hasn't been all bad! Our Trustees continue to do a great job maintaining our building and grounds. They have managed the contract with our snow removal company as we've absorbed care for the road on the east side of our building (formerly Webster Ave). They've managed to get the lawn mowed. They've organized spring cleanup dates, celebrating all who participate even if they clean the windows with a little too much passion and accidentally break one!*

*Our 1940s/50s built home is showing its age with increased maintenance needed. If you are handy around the house, and are able and willing to help with odd jobs from time to time, be sure to let the Trustees know. We could use the help! But overall, our building continues to be another resource for us to live out our mission/ vision. It is in our building that we gather for worship, where we gather for small groups of all ages, and where we plan and execute ministry. We continue to have a good relationship with the DFC Preschool, and we make space for voting (stay tuned for how you can help with the 2020 election- it's a great way to extend hospitality), Elmwood neighborhood events, scout troops, a massage school graduation, and others.*

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES:** Katie Hinz (co-chair), Jay Broderson (co-chair), Chuck Tschida, Camille Wallace, Judy Chirpich, Andrew Young