



Hello my siblings in Christ.

I am Bertrand Griffin II, the new pastor of Aldersgate UMC in Norfolk beginning in July 2021. I wanted to share a few thoughts and a little bit about myself before my arrival. First, I am overjoyed to have this opportunity to be in ministry with you very soon!

My personal vision is based on the scripture “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” This scripture reminds me that through Christ, I am to lead members in a way that allows them to reach their maximum potential and use their spiritual gifts for kingdom building.

I graduated from Dillard University in New Orleans with a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry. After graduation I was employed as a chemist and manager with Westinghouse, CH2M Hill and other Department of Energy government contractors for almost seventeen years until heeding God’s call to go into the ministry.

I also have a Master of Divinity from Gammon Theological Seminary (ITC) in Atlanta. Though my informal education in ministry began years before, going through seminary as well as being a student pastor and interning at Wesley Chapel UMC allowed me to understand more fully my call. I began to understand what God wanted to do through my life and that was to show others Christ by example and teaching the way to Him. Show them love, compassion and service and how to share these gifts with others.

One of my theological points is serving others. One of my favorite theologians, Gustavo Gutiérrez, is the founder of Liberation Theology. His ministry and theological emphasis are based on his understanding that Jesus had a “preferential option for the poor.” His words and example resonate with me. I have seen myself as an agent of support and service to others based on this thesis. This includes my work in disaster response, forming a partnership with a healthcare provider for a clinic and social justice focus with community and police conversations.

Another of my points is grace. Without God’s grace, there would be no hope. I have endeavored to show by word and example why grace is so important for us all. This includes showing how God allows for us to have opportunity after opportunity to both show and receive grace. Grace is a frequent guest in my sermons.

