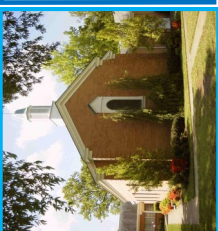




Aldersgate United Methodist Church
5767 Sellger Drive
Norfolk, Virginia 23502-5239



January, 2025 Vol. 28 Issue 1

A New Year of...



*Start the new year off right..
Join Us each Sunday at 11 am*

*Welcome to Aldersgate United
Methodist Church in
Norfolk, Virginia!*

*We are a vibrant faith community
dedicated to worship, prayer, and
learning. Join us every Sunday at
11:00 AM for our uplifting services.*

*Our church offers a range of
ministries and outreach programs to
help you grow in your faith and serve
others.*

*Located at 5767 Sellger Drive,
Norfolk, VA 23502, we are committed
to making disciples of Jesus Christ for
the transformation of the world.*

*Visit us online at [http://
www.aldersgatenorfolk.org/](http://www.aldersgatenorfolk.org/) for more
information*



**Written by
G. Dziagwa**

District Training Event

January 11, 2025 9AM-2:30 PM

New Creation UMC, Chesapeake Va.

Register early at

CoastalVaDistrict@vaumc.org>

**Workshops available on Trustees,
SPRC and many more.**



The Aldersgate Experience

Aldersgate United Methodist Church
“Aldersgate. a catalyst for God’s call through fervent prayer,
active compassion and meaningful outreach”

5767 Sellger Drive, Norfolk, Virginia 23502
Phone: 757-466-8999 Fax: 757-466-8999

Email: joyce@aldersgateumcnorfolk.hrcoxmail.com
Web page: www.aldersgatenorfolk.org
“Like” us on Facebook

Bishop.....Rev. Susan Haurpet-Johnson
District Superintendent...Rev. Elizabeth Givens
Pastor..... Tyrek Person
Minister of Music..... Dr. Christina Pinkston
Church Secretary..... Joyce Russo

Office Hours.....9 AM--1PM—Monday-Thursday

Worship Service/Kid Zone...11 AM
Music Rehearsals— 6 PM Wednesdays

Some clipart and quotes used with permission only



A HUGE CATCH

Make a catch of fish to show what happens when Jesus calls his first disciples.

What you need:

- Cardboard egg carton
- Acrylic paint
- Paintbrush
- Darning needle
- Fishing twine
- Scissors
- Googly eyes or buttons
- Glue



What you do:

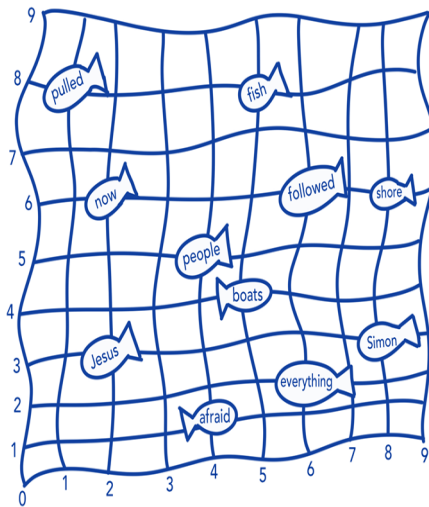
1. From the egg carton, cut out the 12 cups. From the lid, cut out two fish tails.
2. On a protected surface, turn the cup upside down. Paint the outside of each cup and both sides of the tails. Let dry.
3. Thread the needle with an arm's length of twine. Tie a knot at the end.
4. Thread the needle through the end of the tail. Tie another knot an inch from the tail.
5. Thread the needle through one upside-down cup. Pull the twine through until the cup rests on the knot.
6. Continue tying knots an inch above each cup and threading on another cup until you've strung six cups. Tie a knot above the last cup and leave a long string to hang the fish. (You can make two fish with each egg carton.)
7. Add googly eyes or buttons to the last cup to make a face.

PUZZLE

FISHING DIRECTIONS

When fishermen obeyed Jesus and let down their nets, they caught so many fish that their boats began to sink! Simon Peter fell at Jesus' knees. What happened next?

Directions: Use the coordinate clues to locate the correct words and complete Luke 5:10-11 (NIV) below. The first number in each clue pair goes across, and the second number goes up.



Then Jesus said to _____, "Don't be _____; from _____ on you will _____ for _____." So they _____ their _____ up on _____, left _____ and _____ him.

Answers: Jesus; Jesus; afraid; afraid; everything; followed; pulled; boats; shore; shore; people; people; fish; fish; now; now; Simon; Simon



NEWS FROM THE PEWS

In December we bid a final good-bye to Jimmie and Carolyn Powers as they transferred their membership back to St. Paul's UMC in Chesapeake.



On a happier note— We congratulate Steve Carter on the arrival of his new granddaughter, Parker.

Continue to remember those in our church family who no longer are able to attend Sunday morning services. Take five minutes to give them a call or drop them a note.



Several of our committed members are no longer able to do certain ministerial jobs in the church. Consider being a volunteer on Sunday morning. We need ushers, communion servers, hosts/hostesses for the Café, etc.

Issue in Focus

News from the Pews

Important Financial Updates,

Lay Ministry Schedules

Mission Updates and
Pics from way back when

And much more





Helping Hands ...

People always ask who are the Helping Hands Group and what do they do. Well, this small group of dedicated ladies make teddy bears and surgery dolls for Children's Hospital in Norfolk.

Here are a couple of pictures of

the Treasure Box at CHKD. Can you spot the teddies. Great work ladies!

Thanks to Rhoda Ganaden Ballantyne for the pics.



The Neighborhood Widows' Bible Fellowship is a wonderful group of women that meets in a home in our neighborhood every Thursday from 10:00 am to 11:30 am, however, we won't be meeting the Thursday after New Year's Day. We are scheduled to meet on January 9, 16, 23 and 30.

We currently studying the book "Boundaries, When to say Yes and How to say No to Take Control of Your Life" by Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr John Townsend. Discussions focus on the boundaries Jesus used in His earthly life and how we can apply that wisdom to our lives. The overall objective is to have joyful and useful lives that honor God! It's only through establishing and maintaining proper boundaries that we will have a solid operating base from which we can help others.

If you are a widow and would enjoy fellowship with other Christian widows, please call the number below and join us.

If you know a widow who might enjoy such a fellowship, please pass this announcement on to her so she can join us.

If God has put on your heart that it's time for **you** to start your own group, be it for widows or widowers, parents of young children, couples, adults singles, or other groups, please call: **757-515-8194 for more information. If there is no immediate answer, please leave a voicemail.**



In the sanctuary, a 54-foot-high, stained glass dome is supported by arches bearing mosaic likenesses of female figures representing the cardinal virtues of faith, hope, love and charity. The pipe organ was considered the finest in the south when it was installed in 1959, according to the church's historical marker.

What will happen with the building isn't yet known, said Rev. Elizabeth Givens, district superintendent for the Coastal Virginia District of the United Methodist Church. It will be under the control of the Va. Conference of the United Methodist Church once Epworth closes, Givens said. "We will be spending a lot of time in prayer and discernment," Givens said, as church leaders seek to find a new use for it.

Ramey said she worries about what will happen to the building. She doesn't want to see it turned into a business, like the Freemason Abbey Restaurant and Tavern across the street, which once was a church. "I'd like to see another church there. Someone who would really appreciate a beautiful building like that," she said. Ramey said she hasn't decided where she'll go next. She lives in Chesapeake and may look for a church closer to home. Still, she said she can't imagine attending services anywhere else. The 71-year-old said her attendance at Epworth began "in utero," and she's been committed to it ever since. Her parents were married there, and attended throughout their lives, too, she said. When Ramey was growing up, the services were packed with hundreds of people. The numbers slowly began to dwindle over the years, and then dropped off significantly after the COVID-19 pandemic, she said.

After a while, it was just the longtime regulars who kept coming. New members signing up became a rare occurrence. These days, most attendees are older, and children are rarely seen there. Longtime member Sara Fitchett also remembers the days of well-attended services. The 88-year-old joined in 1963, and was married there that same year.

"When I first started going there, that church was full," Fitchett said. "But as the years went by, people moved away, people died, and some people just stopped going to church altogether." Fitchett has remained an active member throughout her more than six decades at Epworth, and has served on every kind of committee and church leadership role imaginable. So has Ramey. The two women said what they've loved most about Epworth is the people, who they described as an extended family.

"It's one of the friendliest churches I've ever been in," Fitchett said. "We have a good time and we all love the Lord." Fitchett said she also hasn't decided on a new church yet. She plans to visit some in the coming months, and may look for one closer to her home near the airport. "I know I'll never find another church like this one," she said.

Continued from previous page. (taken from the Virginia Pilot)

**Undecorating the church
Saturday, Jan. 4th at
10 AM**

**Come and share the fellowship
as we prepare the church for
Sunday services. Many hands
make light work.**



The End of an Era

NORFOLK — As the 11 a.m. service (12/15) got underway Sunday at the historic Epworth United Methodist Church in downtown Norfolk, just a dozen people sat among the sanctuary’s many oak pews. That’s a pretty typical number these days, according to the church’s few remaining members. Some Sundays it’s even less than that.



It’s because of those greatly diminished numbers — and the dire financial circumstances that come with them — that the 130-year-old church will close its doors. The last service is set for Jan. 5.

“It’s just so sad,” said Kathy Ramey, a lifelong member of Epworth. “Of course, we all knew we couldn’t keep it going. Ten people can’t support a church of that size.”

The decision was made by the church’s council during a recent meeting, Ramey said. Not long before that, the group had decided to shut down the church’s longtime preschool. It had become too difficult to find teachers, Ramey said, and the school was no longer making enough to support itself.

Epworth United Methodist first opened its doors in 1894 at the corner of Freemason and Boush streets. The large Richardsonian Romanesque granite and sandstone building was constructed to accommodate the growing congregation at the Granby Street Methodist Church at the corner of Granby and Freemason streets, according to an historical marker outside the church.

It took two years to build, at a cost of \$125,000, according to a church pamphlet published in 1950. Among the building’s unique architectural features are two sandstone griffins that mark the corners of the front roofline, and eight gargoyles that lean from the 135-foot tower to ward off evil.

Continued on next page

Treasurer’s Update:

Dear Aldersgate Family,

I hope this message finds you well. I wanted to provide some important updates regarding our financial situation.



In November, our financial outlook improved primarily because there was two months of rent ($\$1,250 \times 2 = \$2,500$) for the parsonage that came in.

Many folks of our congregation may not realize that the parsonage is rented to a pastor at ODU that helps to sustain our finances and has for the past 3.5 years as Pastors Bert, Melody and Tyrek did not require housing during there ministry at Aldersgate. If it were not for this steady financial stream, our congregation would be in serious financial distress.

The Capital Campaign is still ongoing from the air conditioning and roof repair expenses and as of November 30th \$12,520 of the \$26,960 borrowed from the Memorial Fund has been raised to replenish it. So, as you can see, your continued financial contributions are essential for sustaining the ministry and facilities at AUMC.

Please remain steadfast in your giving and keep our church in your prayers. Together, we can ensure that Aldersgate will continue to thrive.

Thank you for your unwavering support and commitment.

Blessings,
Kathy Dziagwa,
Aldersgate UMC Treasurer

Financial Stats for	
Nov. 2024:	
Income:	\$11,795.00
Expenses:	\$10,937.31
Difference:	\$ 857.69
Remaining Balance:	\$ 8,712.36
Year to Date Income/ Expenses:	
Income:	\$135,450.59
Expenses:	\$129,218.73
Difference:	\$ 6,231.86

Birthdays

1/3 Sherry Williams 1/30 Kathy Dziagwa
1/5 Gary Albertson



Anniversaries

We currently have no Anniversaries listed for this month. Please let the office know if we missed yours.

Remember in Prayer

Home: Billie Young, Joe Dziagwa and any of our church family who are at home and still not able to attend worship in-person

Those in our church family who are in the hospital, having tests or just not feeling well.

Those who have lost family or friends.

The United Methodist church international;
Our Bishops and District Superintendents as they continue to make decisions with denomination in mind.

If you know of others in the congregation who need to be included on this prayer list, please call the church office.



Ushers

Kathy Dziagwa, Kevin Floyd

Counters

1/5 Millie Hanson, Gary Albertson
1/12 Kevin Floyd, Diane Willis
1/19 Greg Dziagwa, sub
1/26 Debbie Supper, Bill Bunch



Lawn Maintenance

1/6 Team 2
1/13 Team 3
1/20 Team 1
1/27 Team 2
2/3 Team 3

Trash Collection—

Calendar Highlights

1/4 —10 AM Undecorate the Church
1/8; 1/15; 1/22; 1/29 —6 PM Choir Rehearsal
1/9; 1/16; 1/23; 1/30—10 AM Thompson Bible Study
—5:30 PM Spaghetti Dinners
1/7—7 PM Elizabeth Park Civic League
1/11—9 AM—3 PM District Training Event
1/13-7 PM RFS/WM/EP Civic League
1/21-6:30 PM Finance/Administrative Board Meeting
1/28-10 AM Helping Hands Meeting



Newsletter Deadline
Wednesday, Jan. 15th
for the February issue.



You do not have to wait until the deadline to submit your articles. You can email the office at any time or leave it on my desk....

Update...

More than 50 adults and children attended our Santa Breakfast.



A wonderful time was had with lots of laughter, fellowship and of course visits with Santa.

A special thank you for the dedicated workers (elves) of Greg's team. We could not do this without the help from our volunteers.

Barbara Harrell

check out the Facebook page for more pictures



All Things Come to An End



As I enter my last year as secretary at Aldersgate I am prone to reminiscing about "the good old days".

Most of you know that I have my youngest grandson every weekend-we speak often about days past. But I have come to realize that this generation will never really have "the good old days". They are too much in a hurry and way more concerned about self-gratification.

I know the "church" in general is somewhat concerned about the younger generations not attending services on Sunday morning. However is a coffee house in our narthex really the answer?

As having served eight pastors, I have seen many "tricks" aimed at the younger families with some success. Some of the trial and error events have worked and some do not. Most of the older congregational members have an issue with some of the changes. What has happened to the reverence and awe of Sunday morning worship?

What has happened to churches conforming to society instead of society conforming to the church?

I may not be in this church office after 2025 but I will still wonder and be concerned about Aldersgate and every church's future for many years to come.

JR

Stepping Down After Years of Service:
A Call for Volunteers



After years of dedicated service as the webpage designer and lead contact for all computer-related issues at Aldersgate United Methodist Church, I find myself preparing to step down from my position. It's been a pleasure serving and supporting the church community, but now I need someone to take the lead and carry forward this vital role.

The role involves:

- Recording the weekly worship service and uploading it to our church website.
- Designing and maintaining our church's website.
- Being the go-to contact for any computer and network-related issues for the church.

The ideal volunteer would need to have a knack for tech—especially with website design and troubleshooting—and a willingness to dedicate the time and effort to keep our digital presence running smoothly.

If you or someone you know is interested in stepping up to this rewarding volunteer role, please reach out and contact Greg Dziagwa or the church office. Your contributions will be invaluable in continuing to support our community's online presence.

Greg Dziagwa

No Thompson Bible Study or Spaghetti Dinner on Thursday, January 2. These ministries will resume on Thursday, January 9. thanks



Aldersgate UMC
Nominations and Leadership
2025

Church Council – Chair Kevin Floyd

Tyrek Person Pastor Gary Albertson Finance
Bill Bunch Trustee Chair Kathy Dziagwa Treasurer Cindy
Albertson SPRC Chair Michele Floyd Lay Delegate to Annual
Conference Cindy Albertson Recording Secretary

**Staff-Parish Relations Committee – Co-Chair Cindy
Albertson (2025) Co-Chair Greg Dziagwa (2025)**

Tyrek Person Pastor Michele Floyd Lay Delegate to Annual
Conference
Cindy Albertson 2025 Gregory Dziagwa 2025
Beverly Cooper 2025 Phyllis Day 2025 Debbie Supper 2025

Board of Trustees – Chair: Bill Bunch (2027)

Randolph Thrasher – Co Chair (2027)

John Floyd 2026 Steve Carter (2027)
Tyrek Person Pastor

Committee on Nominations – Chair – Tyrek Person

Michele Floyd, Lay Delegate
Millie Hanson 2025 Beverly Cooper 2025 Phyllis Day 2025

Finance Committee – Chair Gary Albertson

Tyrek Person Pastor Kevin Floyd Church Council Chair
Bill Bunch Chair Trustees Kathy Dziagwa Treasurer
Joyce Russo Financial Secretary Gary Albertson Finance Chair
Cindy Albertson SPRC Chair Michele Floyd Lay Delegate to
Annual Conference

Worship Committee - Chair Tyrek Person Pastor

Dr. Christina Pinkston Music Director
Barbara Harrell

Kitchen Committee Chair – Cindy Albertson, Debbie Supper
Care Response Team – Millie Hanson, Mary Ellen Gillespie,
Barbara Keim, Billie Young, Sherry Williams, Debbie Supper

What is their Purpose

With the new year comes new leaders for the church. Here is a short explanation of what each committee does.

SPRC— Acts as a liaison between staff and the congregation. In other words your go to if you have an issue with any staff member or the pastor or services. They also do the hiring and evaluations of all staff.

Trustees—This group are the “caretakers” of our building. They are the first contact if there is a maintenance issue—building reservations and use guidelines. They handle an insurance issues, the parsonage and answers to the district.

Finance—This committee takes care of our stewardship concerns. They assign the counters, evaluate how funds are spent and handles all payments to conference, district and general bills. The treasurer also does the taxes (federal, and state) for the staff and writes the paychecks.

Administrative Board—This committee is comprised of a chair from each other governing group in the church. This is where decisions are made regarding the overall running of the church. They are the final vote before district.

Last but not least is Nominations or what is now known as Lay Leadership committee. This important group is responsible for making recommendations as to who will be a new leaders for the next calendar year.

I hope this helps with your decision if you are approached to serve on one of these committees.



Thanks to the Santa Breakfast Volunteers

Kitchen Help: (6) Greg & Kathy, Bill & Kathy, Kevin, Gary

Servers: (2) Kathy Dz & Lucinda

Santa: (1) Steve

Coordinator: (1) Barbara Harrell

Cleanup: (8) Greg & Kathy, Bill & Kathy, Kevin & Michele, Gary, Lucinda

