



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



March, 2022 Vol. 25 Issue 3

*Come journey with us through
the Season of Lent*



each Sunday at 11 AM



God is Not a Good Luck Charm
1 Samuel 4:3-4

Many people will be celebrating St Patrick’s Day this month. When some people think of St. Patrick’s Day, they think about a lucky pot of gold, a rabbit’s foot or other good luck charms. But let’s be careful that we do not take Jesus out of this holiday. Because St. Patrick turned a country that was not believing in God to a country that loves and celebrates our Lord and Savior.

Good luck charms mean something different to everybody. It all depends on what you find to be lucky. Some people carry around an:

- **Acorn:** During the Norman Conquest, the English carried dried acorns to protect themselves from the brutalities of the day,
- **Four-leaf clover:** Each leaf symbolizes a different lucky characteristic: 1) Fame, 2) Wealth, 3) Love, 4) Health
- **Horseshoe:** used to ward off the “evil” eye.

A good luck symbol of any kind is **steeped** in superstition, and tied to the psyche of humanity. This is because symbols of good luck are symbols of our own hopes, and not the hopes of God.

There was this boy who had a pet rabbit. The rabbit lived in a cage. He used to go and visit him every day. But the novelty wore off. He got bored of him. So, he got one of those automatic water dispensers on the side of the cage and one of those automatic food dispensers as well.

How often do we treat God like that? Let’s be honest. How often do we visit God when it suits us? Visit him in prayer. Visit him in his Word. When we feel like it. When it’s convenient.

In 1 Samuel, this is the way Israel had been treating God. Israel visited God every now and then, whenever they needed help, and God would come and help them. And then Israel would ignore God again. This brings us to our text about Israel’s treatment of God as a lucky charm.

Israel asks themselves in verse 3: “Why did the Lord bring defeat upon us today before the Philistines? Let us bring the ark of the Lord’s covenant from Shiloh, so that it may go with us and save us from the hand of our enemies.” They ask: “Why didn’t God help us win?” Was it because we’ve been ignoring him? Was it because we’re worshipping other gods? NO! It must be because we don’t have the “magical” ark of God in our camp! Bring in the magic box with God inside! Bring in the lucky charm! Bring in the magic Genie lamp and give it a rub! THEN we will win another battle.

Ash Wednesday Service—

Wednesday,

March 2nd

7 PM



The Aldersgate Experience

Aldersgate United Methodist Church
“Making Disciples of Jesus Christ”

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Bishop.....Rev. Sharma D. Lewis

District Superintendent...Rev. Seonyoung Kim

Pastor..... Rev. Bertrand Griffin, II

Lay Leader..... Kathleen O’Hara

Minister of Music..... Dr. Christina Pinkston

Church Secretary..... Joyce Russo

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

Sunday School.....9:30 AM-resuming soon

Worship Service/Kid Zone...11 AM –resuming soon

Music Rehearsals— 6 PM Wednesdays

Some clipart and quotes used with permission only



Washed clean

Make customized jelly soaps to banish dirt and grime.



What you need:

- 1 package unflavored gelatin
- ¾ cup very warm water
- 1 tsp salt
- ¾ cup gel body wash
- Food coloring
- Rubbing alcohol in spray bottle
- Silicone baking molds

What you do:

1. In a bowl, stir gelatin and warm water until dissolved.
2. Add salt, body wash and a few drops of food coloring. Stir.
3. Spray molds with rubbing alcohol (to prevent bubbles). Place molds on a tray.
4. Pour mixture into the molds. Refrigerate until set, about two hours.
5. Pop soap out of molds and store in an airtight container.



A wonderful washing

David's prayer of repentance reveals a desire to be cleansed of his sin.

Directions: Unscramble the words on the left. Then match them with the correct phrases from Psalm 51 (NIV) on the right.

ETRCAE _____	_____	out my transgressions (v. 1)
HS AW _____	_____	away all my iniquity (v. 2)
RSEEROT _____	_____	me with hyssop, and I will be clean (v. 7)
WNERE _____	_____	me, and I will be whiter than snow (v. 7)
TLBO _____	_____	your face from my sins (v. 9)
DIHE _____	_____	out all my iniquity (v. 9)
NATRG _____	_____	in me a pure heart (v. 10)
LNSECAE _____	_____	a steadfast spirit within me (v. 10)
LBTO _____	_____	to me the joy of your salvation (v. 12)
W HSA _____	_____	me a willing spirit, to sustain me (v. 12)

Answer bloc, wash, hild, bloc, create, renew, restore, grant



(continued from pg. 2) People so easily put their faith in lucky charms, or tarot cards, or horoscopes, or magic stones. The Bible calls these things idolatry and magic. These things simply take our hearts and our trust away from God alone. Even with “religion”, we can exchange our lucky charms with symbols or ceremonies and make them our idols.

These things can become the focus of our faith, instead of God himself. God is not in a box, or in an object, or in a ceremony. God is in our lives. And today, God is with us through Christ by the Holy Spirit. It is alright to have some external symbols: water, and bread, and wine. But let us not exchange our faith in God for something we can see. Let them be an outward expression of an inward grace!

Pastor Bert Griffin

NEWS FROM THE PEWS

Thanks be to God...

Lucinda's ribs are healed

Barbara Jenkins survived a medical crisis.

We made it through the 2 snow visits.

Spring will soon be here (March 20th).

Issue in Focus

Pastor's Lenten Message

Thanks to Many

Updates on Missions and Ministries

Lay Ministry for the month

Calendar updates, new dir

And much more!



How Do You Observe Lent??

”Lent is a season of forty days, not counting Sundays, which begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday. Lent comes from the Anglo Saxon word *lencten*, meaning “lengthen” and refers to the lengthening days of spring.”

The forty days represents the time Jesus spent in the wilderness, enduring the temptation of Satan and preparing to begin his ministry. Today, Christians focus on relationship with God, growing as disciples and extending ourselves, often choosing to give up something or to volunteer and give of ourselves for others.

It is suppose to be a time when we seek the Lord in prayer by reading Sacred Scripture; we serve by giving alms; and we practice self-control through fasting . We are called not only to abstain from luxuries during Lent, but to a true inner conversion of the heart as we seek to follow Christ's will more faithfully. (so the dictionary says)

What do you do. Do you give up chocolate, soda or some other food that you enjoy? This is what most people do. But is this really a sacrifice or just the usual thing each year. Has the Lenten Season lost some of its true meaning? Do we just look at it as another way to prepare for a holiday, like Christmas?

This year as we journey through Lent together let us focus more on the true meaning of forming a more meaningful relationship with God; a personal relationship. Share your daily thoughts with him, praise him daily and thank him for all of your blessings.

Let’s truly celebrate the season before Easter—The most self-reflecting and significant time of the Christian year. Jr



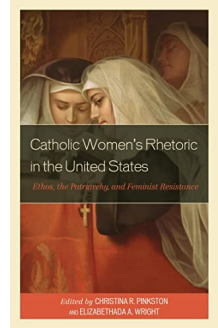
Did you know that we have a publisher among us?

That’s right. Dr. Christina has two books available for purchase on Amazon.

Celebrating the 60th Anniversary of 'Things Fall Apart' (African Histories and Modernities)--published December 2020. I am the Co-editor of this notable book.

And

Catholic Women’s Rhetoric in the United States: Ethos, the Patriarchy, and Feminist Resistance - By Christina R. Pinkston (Editor) Published January 2022. She is the Principal Editor of this critically important book.



Congratulations to Dr. Christina.

Did you also know that Pastor Bert’s mother, Marian Griffin, is also a published author. Congratulations to her also.



Pics of our faithful volunteers who go to Cooke Elementary each month.



Did you ever wonder why Ashes??

This year, Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, falls on March 2. During worship services that day, pastors in many Christian churches dip a finger in ashes (often made by burning branches from the previous Palm Sunday) and make a cross on parishioners' foreheads.

Why ashes? Traditionally, they're a sign of mourning, humiliation and penitence. Ashes also represent the frailty and temporary nature of human life ("You are dust, and to dust you shall return," Genesis 3:19). Christians are pained because our sins led to Jesus' death. With repentant hearts, we begin the season of Lent, knowing that it leads to Jesus' resurrection on Easter Sunday.

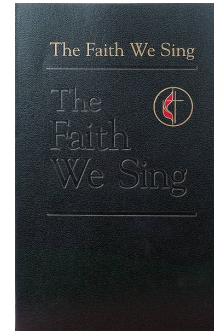
For Ash Wednesday — and throughout the 40 days of Lent — ponder this prayer from an Italian sacramentary, or liturgical book:

A prayer for Lent

"O God, you know how fragile is our human nature, wounded as it is by sin. Help your people to enter upon the Lenten journey strengthened by the power of your word, so that we may be victorious over the seduction of the Evil One and reach the paschal feast in the joy of the Holy Spirit." AMEN



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Deadline

Sunday, March 6th

\$15.00 each.

Dedicate one now.



Notes from Our Music Ministry

Schedule for March

Wednesday 3/2 6-6:30 PM Choir Rehearsal

Wednesday 3/9 NO REHEARSAL

Wednesday 3/16 6 PM Rehearsal

Wednesday 3/23 6 PM Rehearsal

Wednesday 3/30 6 PM Rehearsal



We are always accepting new members—interested?? Contact Dr. Christina Pinkston at

<director@aldersgateumcnorfolk.hrcoxmail.com>

Special Thanks to the Care Response Team for

Putting together gift bags for new residents of our community and for our shut-ins. The Valentine's surprise made the day extra special for many.

Thank You



Birthdays

3/18 Kevin Floyd
 Jo Beth Strong
 3/30 Marguerite Windley

3/27 Arthur Wallace
 Norma Tipora

Anniversaries

3/26 Mike and Joyce Russo



Remember in Prayer

Home: Bonnie Savage, and Barbara Jenkins,
and Ben Hogwood

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 our safety in mind.

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



Newsletter Deadline

Tuesday, March 15th
for the April 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....



Ushers

Diane Willis, John Floyd

Counters

3/6 Greg Dziagwa, Jimmie Powers
 3/13 Debbie Supper, Bill Bunch
 3/20 Millie Hanson, Gary Albertson
 3/27 Neal Windley, Michele Floyd
 4/3 Kevin Floyd, Diane Willis



Lawn Maintenance



3/7 Team 3
 3/14 Team 1
 3/21 Team 2
 3/28 Team 3
 4/4 Team 1

Calendar Highlights



3/1 7 PM Elizabeth Park Civic
League Meeting

3/2 7 PM Ash Wednesday Service

3/10 6 PM Discovering Your Possibilities Meeting

3/12 Before going to bed—set clocks ahead

3/14 7 PM RFS/WM/EP Civic League Meeting

3/15 7 PM Finance/Administrative Board Meeting

3/17 7 PM Healthy Journey Meeting

New Directories are coming

The Final draft of our newest pictorial directory has been done. Members have emailed or called in their corrections and updates.

Look for the hardcopy editions on the credenza in the lobby on Sunday, March 6th.

Digital copies will be sent out March 1st.



As we leave February and look towards Spring

February may be the shortest month of the year but for Aldersgate certainly not the quietest.

Things at the church are as busy as ever.

Thanks to Neal Windley and Randy Thrasher the soffits damaged by one of the storms have been repaired and/or replaced.

Children at Cooke Elementary School still had a good dinner thanks to our loyal members who go there each month. (See pics elsewhere in this publication.)

A new ministry by one of our family is up and running and off to a very good start.

We learned a lot each Sunday about Black History Month and some background on a few familiar Spirituals.

And last but not least—families at Samaritan House are enjoying the donated winter items collected during December and January.

Blessings All Around

It's that time of year again...Time to



Turn Your Clocks AHEAD one hour on

Saturday, March 12th....

You don't want to be late for Church!