

The Aldersgate Experience

Making Disciples of Jesus Christ

April, 2026 Vol. 29 Issue 4



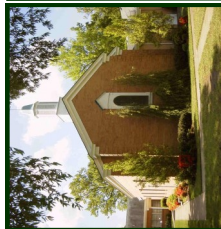
He Has Risen

*Worship Services each
Sunday morning at 9 AM*

A

APRIL 2026

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



The Pastor's Corner

Scripture Focus

John 11:25-26 (NIV)

Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die.'



“From Hurt to Hope: Walking towards Resurrection”

As we move closer to Easter, we often focus on the joy of the resurrection, the empty tomb, the celebration, the music, the lilies, and the proclamation that “He is risen!” But before we arrive at the joy of Easter morning, we must first journey through the reality of the cross.

The truth is, many of us understand something about the cross, not just the one Jesus carried, but the crosses we carry in our own lives. Life has a way of bringing hurt. Sometimes the hurt comes from loss. Sometimes it comes from disappointment. Sometimes it comes from broken relationships, unanswered prayers, or seasons where God feels strangely silent.

Even in our churches and communities, people are quietly carrying burdens that others may never see. The Easter story reminds us that God does not ignore our hurt, God enters into it.

When Jesus walked toward the cross, He carried the weight of the world's pain. He knew betrayal. He knew abandonment. He knew suffering. He knew what it meant to feel the depth of human sorrow.

Yet the cross was not the end of the story.

What looked like defeat on Friday became victory on Sunday. What looked like loss became redemption. What looked like death became life.

Easter reminds us that God specializes in bringing resurrection out of places that look hopeless. If you are carrying hurt in this season, know this, your story is not over.

God still rolls away stones. God still breathes life into weary hearts. God still turns mourning into joy.

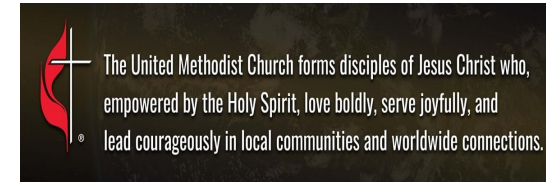
Sometimes resurrection does not happen overnight. Sometimes it unfolds slowly as God heals what has been broken and restores what has been lost.

Continued on Pg 2



From the Staff:

Pastor Donna, Dr. Christina and
Joyce



**Happy Administrative Professionals Day to all of
the church secretaries throughout the Coastal
Virginia District**

The Aldersgate Experience

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

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

Office Hours.....9 AM--1PM—Monday, Wednesday

Worship Service/Kid Zone...9 AM
Music Rehearsals— 6 PM Wednesdays

Some clipart and quotes used with permission only

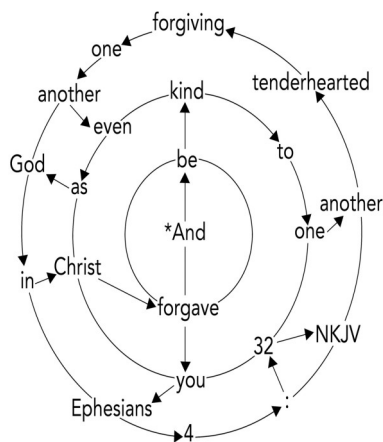


Puzzle!

This Bible verse teaches an important lesson about how we should treat others — and why.



Start with the asterisk in the center circle and follow the arrows. Write the words in order on the blanks below.



"And _____ ,
 _____ , _____
 _____ , _____
 _____ ."
 _____ , _____

Answer: "And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you." Ephesians 4:32, NKJV



The butterfly reminds us of new life and the Resurrection. After three days, Jesus rose from the dead and brings us the hope of new beginnings. This simple craft helps children celebrate that joyful truth.

What you need:

- Light-colored construction paper
- Card stock
- Glue
- Paint
- Paintbrush
- Paper towel or baby wipe



What you do:

- Cut out a butterfly body from the construction paper.
- Glue the butterfly body onto the card stock.
- Use a paintbrush to coat the palm of one hand with paint.
- Press your painted hand beside the butterfly body to create a wing.
- Repeat with your other hand to make the second wing.
- Clean your hands with a paper towel or baby wipe.
- Optional: Add Luke 24:5-6 (NIV) around the butterfly or on its body:

"Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen!"

Cont. from pg. 1

But Easter assures us that hope always has the final word.

As we prepare our hearts for Holy Week and Easter Sunday, I invite you to walk the journey with Christ, through the cross, through the silence of the tomb, and into the promise of new life.

Because the same power that raised Jesus from the grave is still at work today, bringing healing, restoration, and hope. And that is good news for every hurting heart.

Grace and peace,
 Pastor Donna

Joint Service with Heritage UMC

Good Friday Service
 April 3, 2026
 6 PM



*Pastor's Corner

*News from the pews

*Mission Opportunities

* Calendar Highlights

*Lay Ministry Schedules

and much, much more



Spaghetti Dinners:

When Cindy Crosby, wife of former pastor Lee Crosby, came to me in the fall of 2019 to ask if I would co-chair a new mission at Aldersgate United Methodist, I was apprehensive. When she told me it would be a Spaghetti Dinner for the community every Thursday night, I was even *more* apprehensive. I'm ashamed to say that I didn't want to commit to several hours every Thursday evening. So, I told her I would think about it. I finally agreed to give it a try for a couple of months and I'm so glad that I did. Debbie Supper, me, and a team of about five others began preparing, serving, and cleaning up spaghetti, salad, garlic bread, and dessert every week beginning in Jan. 2020. Then, we all know what happened in March of that year. Spaghetti dinners ended as the world shut down for many months.



In January 2023, Aldersgate was ready to resume missions, and the weekly Spaghetti Dinner was the first on the list. Since that time, we have opened our doors to community, parishioners, passersby, etc. If you have never attended, there is no better time than now. The volunteers who are putting in their time each week have gone above and beyond to provide a clean and comfortable space and an inviting meal that includes, but goes beyond, spaghetti, meatballs, sausage, etc. These dinners are free to all and, thanks to a Donation Jar, have always been self-supporting. Every dollar goes toward purchasing food and kitchen supplies, and we were even able to purchase signage that has been placed by the street to advertise our dinners. All of this is at no financial cost to the church.

We welcome you to Aldersgate United Methodist Church one Thursday soon. Our meals are meant to be enjoyed while sitting at tables in our Social Hall. We begin serving at 5:30 p.m. and continue through 6:30 p.m. Those who have been attending know that it is better to arrive early in order to get a full selection of food choices. Good food goes fast! We will continue Spaghetti Dinners through May 21st, take a break for the summer, and return in the fall.

See you soon!
Cindy Albertson

Our Aldersgate Duo (Dr. Christina and Gary) continues to enrich our weekly Sunday morning service.

If you would like to join us (new voices are always welcome) see Dr. Christina Pinkston for more information. Choir Rehearsals are Wednesdays 6-7:30 PM.

April rehearsal dates are:

4/1; 4/8; 4/15; 4/22; 4/29



April 21st is

Election Day

Once again Aldersgate will open our doors to the community for voting.

This has served as a great opportunity for the community to visit the facility and to meet some of our church family. Some of our neighbors have continued to visit the office even after the voting is over.

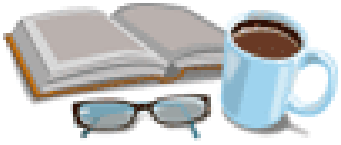
Thanks to our trustees, Bill and Randy for opening up early morning and closing late at night.

You are invited to a Play Date at the church playground on Saturday, April 11th 9 AM—11 AM. Come out and meet the neighbors and children who come and use the playground.

Heritage UMC has a spaghetti dinner the second and forth Tuesdays at 6 PM.

**Heritage Food Pantry—Saturday, April 11
10 am— Noon**





Weekly Bible Study

Neighborhood Widows' Bible Fellowship (NWBF)

The **Neighborhood Widows' Bible Fellowship** is a wonderful group of widows that meet in a home in our neighborhood on Thursdays from 10:00 am to Noon.

During our April fellowship we will continue to study one of the best selling Christian books of all time: **"In His Steps" by Charles M. Sheldon**. World-wide, it has sold over 30 million copies! Quoting from the book jacket: "It is the story of a group of modern Americans who pledge to follow "in His steps" for a year, to ask themselves before each action, "What would Jesus do?" Their efforts to apply the basic teachings of Christianity to the complexities of the modern world, with its problems of personal gain, business ethics, of poverty and unemployment, make this an absorbing novel, one which profoundly stirs the soul, carrying a rare spiritual message."

This study is helping us take a closer look at our lives, listen ever more closely to the Holy Spirit, and move closer to what we believe that Jesus would do if He were in our situation.

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.

"Delight yourself in the Lord; and He will give you the desires of your heart." Psalms 37:4

More Reflections on Lent

The last day of Lent this year was April 2. The day we can return to what we pledged to give up for 40 days – so what's next? Was your commitment to give up something for the physical self, engaging in a new act of service, or beginning a daily reflection and meditation to enliven your spiritual life. The question remains – what's next?

As I think about Lent, it's not all about what you give up but how what you have chosen will make a difference in your life and those around you. Giving up a food or drink item and returning to that same item year after year is not always sacrifice. But it can be an act of cleansing to be given up for good.

There is always an act of service available. In the church, your community or school there is always a need. This is how you build community.

The same is for daily reflection and meditation. You will find it refreshing to give 5 – 10 minutes in the morning and/or at night in a quiet space refreshing as you surrender to and in the presence of the Master.

While we give up something between Lent and Easter it is a remembrance of the 40 days our Lord spend in the wilderness, our commitment does not have to stop there. Think of taking this spiritual journey 40 days at a time. Not rotating, just beginning another 40-day cycle – an another – soon your journey becomes part of your joy. There is joy when our commitment becomes second nature to our spiritual growth and development.

Seriously consider your 'what's next' as we rejoice in the 'Risen Savior' and His presence in our lives. JR





Birthdays

4/3 Barbara Keim 4/22 Donna Tucker
 4/13 Brittany Floyd 4/26 Barbara Hogwood
 4/27 John Floyd

Anniversaries

We currently do not have any anniversaries for the months of April. Please contact the church office if we have missed yours.



Remember in Prayer



Home: 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.

Those in our church family who are no longer with us in attendance but always in our hearts, Lucinda Williams, Maria Davidson and Barbara Hogwood, and Arthur Wallace.

The United Methodist church international; our sister church, Heritage. Our Bishops and District Superintendents as they continue to make decisions with the denomination in mind. Our Military, families and leaders of our country.

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

Newsletter Deadline
Wednesday, Apr 15th
 for the May 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

B. Bunch and K. Floyd

Counters

4/5 K. Floyd, D. Willis
 4/12 B. Bunch, sub
 4/19 M. Hanson, G. Albertson
 4/26 K. Floyd, D. Willis



Lawn Maintenance



4/6 Team 3
 4/13 Team 1
 4/19 Team 2
 4/27 Team 3

Trash Collection— Randy Thrasher

Calendar Highlights

4/1 Cooke Elementary

4/1; 4/8; 4/15; 4/22 and 4/29 6 PM Choir Rehearsal

4/2; 4/9; 4/16; 4/23; 4/30 10 AM Thompson Bible Study
 5:30 PM Spaghetti Dinners

4/3 6 PM Good Friday Joint Service with Heritage UMC at Aldersgate UMC

4/7 and 4/13—Civic League Meetings

4/11 9 AM—Playdate at the Playground
 Impact Worship Center in Social Hall

Impact Worship Center may be using the facility on some Tuesday evenings.



Did you Know!

Our Widow's Group Bible Study not only gets together weekly, they do missions as well,

Recently we received a letter from Senior Services of Southeastern Virginia volunteer coordinator thanking the Bible Study group for their generous donation to the Golden Care Bag Drive (a part of the United Way's Day of Caring). A copy of the certificate is on the bulletin board across from the office. Stop by and check it out.



Thanks to Joyce Thompson and her Bible study group for this wonderful way of contributing and helping older adults in need, including those experiencing homelessness.



Where do we go from here?

Lent is almost over and soon we will celebrate the Risen Christ. Do you now return to eating or doing what you gave up or did it come to mean something else to you.

I have never believed in "free Sundays" during lent. If Jesus can spend 40 days in a wilderness fighting evil, I am sure he did not get "Free Sundays".

What will we do now...I so look forward to celebrating Easter..not just for the candy, Easter dinner, family and friends but because it means renewal.

Easter gives us a chance for beginning again. To throw off all of the past year and to renew our spiritual commitments. Maybe we have laxed off in our prayer life, or we have missed church services. Maybe we need to rethink our ministry opportunities. Instead of saying "I don't want to do that" we should say, "I'll give it a try".

What do you think? Where are you going after Lent? Back to the old habits or starting a new one.

On another note-please keep our country in your prayers as we don't have a clue where it is going either?

JR



NEWS FROM
THE PEWS

Parsonage Family has new addition

Colton Warren McCauley arrived on March 2. Josh, Liz and sister Addie are elated with the new baby. Congrats to all.



Prayers of Christian Sympathy go out to Dr. Christina's, and Barbara Harrell's families for the loss of their family members.

Christina Pinkston wishes to thank everyone for all of their prayers, cards and calls during this time. Barbara Harrell has also expressed thanks for the many calls, prayers and support.

Interested in welcoming our members each Sunday or helping to count the offering after church? See Gary Albertson or Kevin Floyd.

