



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



2022
DECEMBER

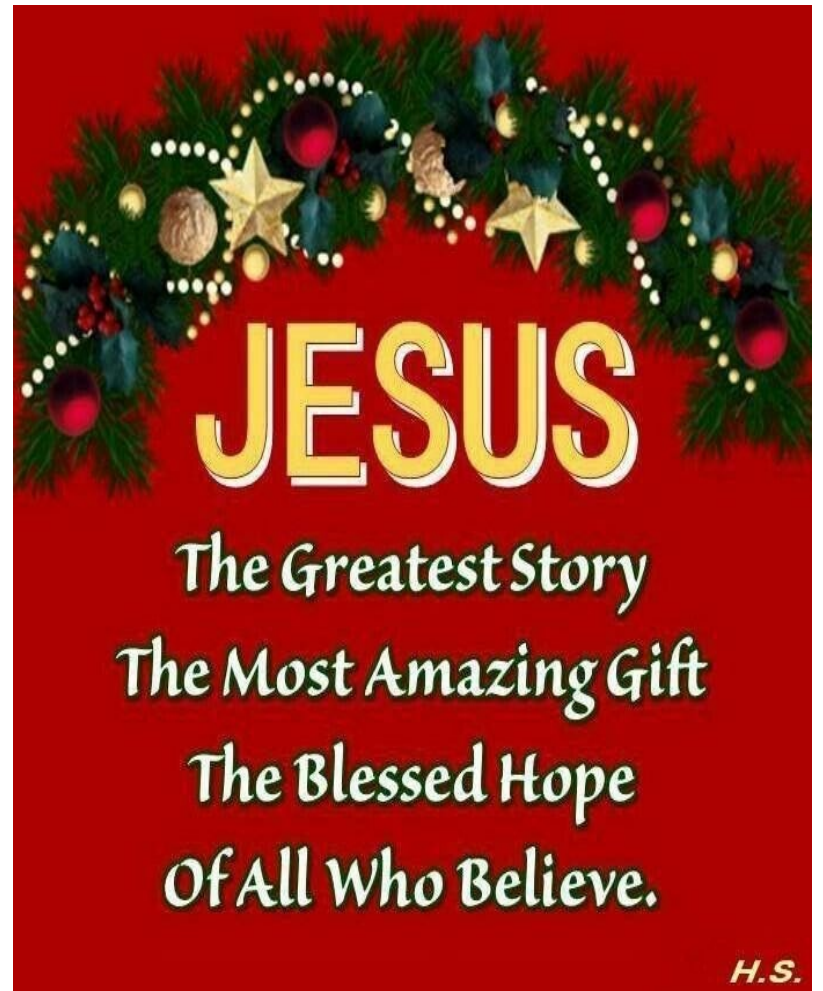


The Aldersgate Experience

Making Disciples of Jesus Christ

December, 2022

Vol. 25 Issue 12



JESUS

The Greatest Story

The Most Amazing Gift

The Blessed Hope

Of All Who Believe.

H.S.



Pastor's Message for Christmas

A TIME OF NEW BEGINNINGS

In this season of Advent, we wait in anticipation of the birth of the Light of the world, Jesus Christ. In the 2nd chapter of Luke, we see the beginning of a life that is full of potential, awe, wonder and most of all love! All of the hope and promise that ever existed for the whole world was placed within the child born in Bethlehem.

A few years ago, I saw a magnolia tree with loads of seed pods on it. I grabbed one thinking that I might try to plant a few of the seeds. One factor in my decision was because I have loved the scent that magnolia flowers have since I was a child. The other factor was to see what was possible from the seeds, since the tree they came from is large and magnificent. Isn't that how we see God - large and magnificent? Large enough to be truly impressive to meet all of our needs, give us hope and a future; and magnificent to overflowing to love us so much that He sent us the very best -Jesus!

The next time you are given a seed (idea, goal, etc.), think of it not as a challenge or difficulty or chore to be endured, but rather as the potential of wonderful opportunities and blessings it represents.

Jesus was and is the blessing that God gave us as a result of us needing a new beginning, one with a desired result, a future with hope. O Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, thank you for having mercy on us! The Blessings of God be with you during this season!

Pastor Bert



Office closed:

12/23; 12/26 and
1/2/23



**From the
Church staff**

The Aldersgate Experience

Aldersgate United Methodist Church
"Making Disciples of Jesus Christ"

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"Like" us on Facebook

Bishop.....Rev. Sharma D. Lewis
District Superintendent...Rev. Cecelia Brooks, Ph.D.
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
9:30 AM-1:30 PM—Friday
Sunday School.....9:30 AM
Worship Service/Kid Zone...11 AM
Music Rehearsals— 6 PM Wednesdays

Some clipart and quotes used with permission only

Story stones



Share the good news of Jesus' birth in a creative way.



What you need:

- Newspaper
- Bible
- Smooth, clean stones
- Pencil
- Oil paint pens
- Adult help



What you do:

1. In a well-ventilated area, cover a work surface with newspaper.
2. Read Luke 2:1-20 and choose key people and places to draw.
3. In pencil, sketch one drawing on each stone.
4. Follow directions on paint pens to fill drawings with color. Let dry.
5. Hide stones for younger siblings to find, set out a new stone each day or order them in a row and tell the Nativity story.

CELEBRATE JESUS' BIRTHDAY!



Seeking the story

Angels joyfully announced a special arrival in Bethlehem at Christmas.

Directions: Find the words listed below. Then unscramble the intersecting letters to complete Luke 2:11, NIV.



WORD BANK

- Shepherds
- Child
- Nazareth
- Census
- Baby
- David
- Mary
- Travel
- Town
- Register
- Born
- Night

T	B	W	Y	A	Z	K	E	S	H	N	G	D	J	K
Q	O	Y	A	P	R	A	L	B	F	P	I	C	Q	L
N	R	W	X	B	E	Y	R	M	B	D	M	O	E	E
S	N	O	N	W	G	A	I	B	A	C	D	O	T	D
R	G	X	J	F	I	W	M	V	B	R	R	C	E	O
P	S	C	E	N	S	U	S	H	Y	U	Y	F	P	N
O	T	P	I	G	T	Q	C	N	T	G	M	U	S	T
O	A	N	D	B	E	C	H	I	L	D	N	Z	F	A
A	T	B	A	U	R	W	H	G	F	V	A	B	U	M
T	R	A	V	E	L	J	C	H	V	O	Z	G	N	H
F	B	Q	I	W	D	X	P	T	E	N	A	O	L	Q
Z	C	R	D	Q	S	H	E	P	H	E	R	D	S	V
R	U	V	Y	K	N	I	R	T	K	G	E	Y	I	R
K	V	A	Z	X	L	S	H	Y	T	P	T	J	S	K
L	L	E	S	M	J	Z	L	Q	R	U	H	V	W	X

"Today in the town of David a _____
has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord."

LUKE 2:11, NIV

Answer: Savior

Join Us



Saturday, December 24th
6:00 PM



Annual Charge Conference
Saturday, Dec. 3rd
10 AM-Noon

Great Bridge United Methodist Church
201 Stadium Drive, Chesapeake, Va 23322

**Issue
in
Focus**

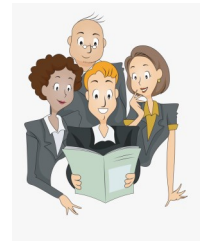
Pastor's Message

District News

Holiday Services, Celebrations and Events

Lay Ministry Calendar

News from the Pews,
Sunday School news and much more



CHRISTMAS CARDS



Our Christmas Card Post Office is back!!!

Only \$.25 for each card

Bring your addressed Christmas
Cards for your church family
each Sunday morning

Open 10:30 am—10:50 am



join us for this special Worship service

Thursday, December 15th

6:00 PM

Looking for somewhere to donate this
holiday season? Consider this.



Santa's Helpers Needed

PLEASE SUPPORT
THE WESLEY COMMUNITY
SERVICE CENTER'S TOY DRIVE

AMAZON WISH LIST

[HTTPS://WWW.AMAZON.COM/HZ/WISHLIST
/LS/IPLJIOCS5K45?REF =WL SHARE](https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/ipljioCS5K45?ref=wl_share)

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CALL
RENYATTA L. BANKS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
757-977-9107

PROUDLY SERVING PORTSMOUTH SINCE 1937



Farewell for Bishop Sharma Lewis

Saturday, December 10th

12-3 PM

Virginia Conference members will have the opportunity to show appreciation and bid Bishop Lewis farewell at a conference-wide reception at Good Shepherd UMC (9155 Hungary Rd, Henrico, VA 23294)

For those who wish to share a gift with Bishop Lewis, you are asked to donate in her name either to the Bishop's Foundation or to the Virginia Annual Conference Mission (Serving Response) Fund. Mail donations to Virginia United Methodist Conference, Treasurer's Office, P.O. Box 5605, Glen Allen, VA 23058.

To share notes of appreciation, mail a letter to Bishop Sharma Lewis at P.O. Box 5606, Glen Allen, VA 23058-5606.

**Adult Sunday
School**



NO Sunday School—12/25 and 1/1/23

**Happy
New
Year!**

Start the New Year
off right.

Join us for Worship
Service
Sunday, January 1st
at 11 AM.



Financial Stats for October, 2022:

Income: \$12,891.00

Expenses: \$12,643.65

Difference: \$ 247.35

Year to Date Income/Expenses:

Income: \$118,136.87

Expenses: \$122,643.65

Difference: \$ -4,506.78

October Dedicated Offerings:

Communion: \$ 10.00

The Finance Committee hopes that this gives our members a better understanding of where we are with the yearly budget. If you have any questions please see Kathy Dziagwa or Gary Albertson.

WELCOME TO WESLEY!



It has been an incredible first semester for the Wesley Foundation as we begin this new ministry on the campus of Old Dominion University. From our launch party to weekly small group we have successfully been connecting with students and inviting them to explore the intersectionality of faith and life. Students have begun to call Wesley their space to grow as a disciple.

Sara one of the student leaders had this to say about her understanding of faith and why she chose Wesley:

"Faith is really important to me because it reminds me that there is someone looking out for us and guiding my life in a direction that glorifies the one who created that life. Wesley has become my favorite group on campus. I feel confident in saying that we all have the same goals, intentions, and drive to lead people to the word of the lord. Wesley stands out to me from other campus ministries because it is more student-oriented and gives more opportunities for everybody to take part in studying, leading, and connecting."

As the director for the ministry I am continually inspired by the commitment and boldness of the students who have stepped into the leadership roles of a brand new ministry. They are excited for the potential that Wesley has for reaching students, and have hope that Wesley will be an important space in the lives of many students as they complete their education. In our first semester we have moved from no student activity to averaging twelve students per event and three students committed to the leadership team! What a blessing it has been to go from an empty building to a ministry engaging with and led by students. With this new energy I am also excited for the potential partnerships that can happen between Wesley and the many churches of the Coastal Virginia District. I look forward to seeing how Wesley can partner with your church.

Currently Wesley is in need of financial support in order to make these hopes and dreams a reality. Here is my ask, as you prepare your 2023 budget would you consider adding the Wesley Foundation at Old Dominion University to your missional giving. two other opportunities for financial giving would be to include Wesley in your Christmas Eve offering or visit our Amazon wish list. Your gift would go a long way into increasing programming, service opportunities, starting weekly worship, and outreach to the campus. Please know I am available and would love the opportunity to come and share with your congregation the good work happening here at Wesley.

Grace and Peace,
Rev. Joshua McCauley
Director and Campus Minister

Rehearsals dates for December



Wednesday 6 PM
12/14;
No rehearsals on 12/7; 12/21;
12/28

All voices welcome

"Music is God's gift to man, the only art of Heaven given to earth, the only art of earth we take to Heaven."



In the Methodist church we are always saying hello or good bye to someone. This time we bid Bishop Sharma Lewis a fond farewell as she will be leaving us for the Mississippi Conference. But no fear we have a new Bishop who will be taking her place as our spiritual guide: Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson. Bishop Johnson will take over for Bishop Lewis on January 1, 2023.

A Florida native, Bishop Hauptert-Johnson (or "Bishop Sue") is a graduate of the University of Florida (B.S. in Business Administration), University of Florida College of Law (J.D.), and Candler School of Theology at Emory University (M.Div.).

Bishop Hauptert-Johnson has led with passion and integrity in a challenging time for the denomination. Her emphasis has been on unity in Christ and steadfastness to our mission. She has called on North Georgia to live into the prayer from our communion liturgy, that we may be "one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world."

Bishop Hauptert-Johnson is known for mission-driven and fruitful appointment making and her work on alignment of focus at the annual conference level.

Bishop Hauptert-Johnson is married to Rev. Allen Johnson. They have a daughter, Samantha. She enjoys NCAA football and basketball, all things Broadway, reading and movies.

Sunday, December 25th

11 AM

Christmas Morning Worship Service

Join us
As
we celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior



Living Nativity
And

Tree Lighting

Saturday 12/17

5 PM



It's Christmas Time Again!

As a small child we wake on Christmas morning, run to the tree and look for the biggest presents hoping it is ours.

As adults we find that the best presents do not always come in the big boxes but in the smallest box. As we celebrate the holiday season this year remember that the greatest gift of all came in a small package "a baby".

God loved us so much that he sent his son to save us. A tiny baby who would save the world. A big job for such a small "package".

Think about his humble beginnings—born in a manger in an animal stall. No fancy hospital with lots of doctors and nurses to help care for him. Yet, he was adored by all from the start—angels, shepherds, Wise Men and even Kings.

Why did God send his son?? I believe he sent Jesus to bring the people hope. So many had doubts about God and felt they needed someone that they could see, touch and hear. He also knew that we were sinners and had to be saved from ourselves. This is just my opinion.

When you lay that Baby Jesus in your manger scene this Christmas, thank God for this small package who has the biggest effect on all humanity. He truly is "the reason for the season."
JR

A prayer to the Christ-child

You have come to us as a small child, but you have brought us the greatest of all gifts, the gift of eternal love. Caress us with your tiny hands, embrace us with your tiny arms and pierce our hearts with your soft, sweet cries. —Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153)



Birthdays

12/17 Vernon Williams
12/27 Nicholas Albertson



Anniversaries

We currently have no anniversaries listed for the month of December.

Remember in Prayer

Home: Jimmie Powers, Carolyn Powers, Barbara Hogwood, Kevin Floyd, Bill Bunch, Vernon Williams
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.

Newsletter Deadline
Wednesday, Dec. 15th
for the **January** 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

Randy Thrasher, Kevin Floyd



Counters

12/4 Kevin Floyd, Diane Willis
12/11 Greg Dziagwa, Jimmie Powers
12/18 Debbie Supper, Bill Bunch
12/25 Millie Hanson, Gary Albertson
1/1/23 Neal Windley, Michele Floyd



**OFFERING
COUNTERS**

Lawn Maintenance



12/5 Team 3
12/12 Team 1
12/19 Team 2
12/25 Team 3
1/2/23 Team 1

Calendar Highlights

12/3 10 AM—Noon Annual Charge Conference at Great Bridge UMC
12/4 Staff Parish Meeting following 11 AM Service
12/8 6 PM Vision Team
12/10 6-7:30 PM Christmas Extravaganza
12/15 6 PM Blue Christmas Service
12/17 4 PM Special Birthday Drive by
5 PM Living Nativity and Tree Lighting
12/24 6 PM Christmas Eve Service
12/25 11 AM Christmas Morning Service
1/1 11 AM New Year's Day Service



ALDRSGATE
CHRISTMAS EXTRAVAGANZA
Saturday, December 10, 2022
6:00 - 8:00 P.M.

YOU still have time to write your name on the "sign-up sheet" in the narthex of the sanctuary. Observers are welcome, but **PARTICIPATORS** are appreciated! Share your hidden talent, special skill, humorous wit, artistic project, competitive game-playing spirit, scrumptious baked treats, and musical gift (voice or instrument). Please take full advantage of this incredible opportunity to **"DO YOU!"**

Sunday, December 4, is the deadline to register.

Consider one or more of these categories to feature your specialty:

- **Baking Contest:** you may submit up to **TWO** different items (cakes, pies, cookies, breads, tarts, cobblers, cupcakes, and brownies). Prizes will be awarded, so multiple entries will better your chance to **WIN!** Place your name on a small label under your platter so that the entry will be "anonymous" until the judging has concluded. **NOTE:** **NO** store-bought items will be permitted in the contest, but they will be added to the refreshments for our light repast after all lively activities end.
- **Talents:** **MUSIC**—voice or instrument; **COMEDY**—skits, jokes, costumes, and/or dances; **RECITATION**—storytelling, poetry reading, and/or Spoken Word performance; and **ARTWORK**—knitted or crocheted items, quilts, paintings, sculptures, or other forms of art.
- **Bring your competitive spirit! GAME ON!!!**
- "Name That Tune"
- "Musical Chairs"
- "Christmas Brain Teaser(s)"--test your knowledge and quick-thinking skills
- "Scavenger Hunt"
- "Sing-along" of holiday music

Gary Albertson (Master of Ceremonies) and **Christina Pinkston** (Mistress of Ceremonies) will lead the "FUNTASTIC" events of the evening. Prepare to laugh loudly, play fairly, entertain and be entertained, before we fellowship together while enjoying yummy refreshments.

The **ALDRSGATE CHRISTMAS EXTRAVAGANZA** promises fabulous **YULETIDE FUN!** Bring your family, friends, companions, and neighbors! Spread the word! No "grinches" or "scrooges" are allowed!

**NEWS FROM
THE PEWS**

Updates and Other Stuff

As we enter this holiday season we need to remember those in our congregation who are not able to be with us for whatever reason. Send them a card or give them a call. Lets spread the holiday cheer.

Jimmie and Carolyn Powers are still on the mend hoping they will be back with us soon.

Barbara Hogwood is having some issues with her leg and unable to be with us.

Vernon Williams will be celebrating his 99th birthday this month and has some vision issues. He loves hearing from his church family.

Maria Davidson who is limited in where she can go without assistance. Thinks of her church family often.

Arthur Wallace who although lives a distance from us never forgets to send a card and misses being with his church family back home.

Greg Dziagwa who will be having surgery this month and may not be able to be with us to celebrate this special season.

We would also like to extend congratulations to

Gary Albertson on his retirement

Special thanks to all of our church volunteers who have generously committed to mowing, cleaning, visiting, serving our church this past year.

