


 Trumpet Call  
 Aldersgate United Methodist Church  
 1621 Thornton Ave.  
 Butte, MT 59701

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# TRUMPET CALL

December 2017

**ALDRSGATE UNITED  
 METHODIST CHURCH**  
 1621 Thornton Ave., Butte - 782-2425  
 Melissa Engel, Pastor 491-2146



When was the last time you expected a miracle to happen? Some of you might be really good at this: trusting that God will intervene in whatever you lay down before God. Some of us, though, have a hard time believing in miracles. Reality is just too complex, too hard. However, if you read the Bible, it is made up of the beautiful stories of God being in relationship with humanity. God took the ultimate step to be in relationship with humanity, beyond even making the Noahide, Abrahamic, and the Mosaic covenants with the people of

Israel, by being born into the world to be in solidarity with humanity as a fellow human and to make God's love and saving grace known to us as “God-with-us” walks with us daily through the Spirit and through each other.

November 26 marked our first Sunday of the Advent season, a season in the Christian year in which we find ourselves waiting for the birth of the Divine into our world. In other words, we are in the season of expecting a miracle to happen. The definition of a miracle is “an effect or event manifesting or considered as a work of God” “in the physical world that surpasses all known human or natural powers;” a “wonder” and a “marvel.” The birth of God into the world as the human-and-divine person of Jesus the Christ was and continues to be a miracle that strikes us as wondrous and marvelous. I mean, it is an absolute miracle when God can actually get our attention and say, “Hello, dear one. I'm here. I'm with you and I love you.”

A miracle is unfolding here in Butte for people for whom Jesus' heart bursts. As you are probably aware, the Butte Rescue Mission had to close its doors and recently Action, Inc., a non-profit organization, opened an emergency shelter in the Homeward Bound building with no operating budget. They are working off of donations as they come in. The miracle that is unfolding is God taking nothing and turning it into something: a safe, warm shelter for our people experiencing homelessness this winter.

One of my mentors/role models in ministry is Pastor Mike Slaughter, pastor Emeritus and global church ambassador of a United Methodist Church in Ginghamburg, Ohio, who wrote a book called *Christmas is Not Your Birthday: Experience the Joy of Living and Giving Like Jesus*. In it he wrote that “a miracle is a unique event in the world that God does through people like you and me. That's right—you are God's miracle worker! You are God's means to effect change in your world. God wants to birth a miracle through you.”

The Butte Ministerial Association of which I am a part has donated \$5000 to Action, Inc. to make our monetary assistance available immediately for the (Cont'd on next page)

## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- |                      |                            |
|----------------------|----------------------------|
| 01: Nita Kingsbury   | 13: La Rae Keopke          |
| 01: Chyanne Robinson | 13: Norma Pangburn         |
| 02: John Peters      | 13: Rebecca Schwartzmiller |
| 03: Dean Reed        | 14: Marylyn Shovlin        |
| 04: Burt Todd        | 16: Sophia Engel           |
| 06: Mark Dahl        | 17: Sherri Hash            |
| 06: Roberta Dobb     | 17: Mary Jo Turner         |
| 09: Hoot Gibson      | 18: Lauren Sullivan        |
| 10: Dale Olson       | 19: Henry Harrington       |
| 11: Gerry Allen      | 26: Carol Orr              |
| 11: Nita Richard     | 28: Bill Roads             |
| 12: Sue Gerry        | 31: Andi McCaughey         |



## ANNIVERSARIES

- 14: Ted & Bea Cline  
 21: Brad & Terri Belke

(continued from the front page)

emergency shelter. This association of clergy have also agreed to challenge our congregations to match that amount. We believe in the work of both Action, Inc. working to end homelessness and the Butte Rescue Mission, and have verbalized our desire for them to work together for the good of the people suffering.

Our Christmas Eve offering will be known as “our Christmas Miracle Offering” because I truly believe that “God wants to birth a miracle” through this call to generosity and I believe that Aldersgate is a part of that. For Jesus' birthday this year, let's give in his name for those whom his heart bursts, “the humble poor” as we sing in Mary's prophetic song in Luke 1, “The Canticle of the Turning.” On Christmas Eve, the Aldersgate Ad Council invites you to expect a miracle—expect for God to work through our giving—and to respond to our call to be co-workers with God in this miracle business. We can count on God to show up this Christmas in the form of Jesus the Christ. In response, we can show up as well and be ready for God to work a miracle through us!

May all of you, my fellow miracle-workers, magnify the Lord and have a blessed Christmas and a grace-filled New Year, Pastor Melissa

**November's Trumpet Call**  
In loving memory of  
Jim & Florence Street  
from Their Family



**We've Lost a Friend**  
**Nancy Allen**  
02/19/1943  
11/03/2017



December's ads in the Saturday Mt. Standard are being sponsored by Pam Gilman in loving memory of Vern Gilman.



It's time to order poinsettias, which will be used to decorate the church for Christmas. If you would like to give one in honor of someone or as a memorial, please include the information with your check.



**"BLUE CHRISTMAS" EVENT FOR THOSE WHO ARE GRIEVING AND FINDING IT DIFFICULT TO GET THROUGH THE HOLIDAYS: THURSDAY, DEC. 21, 6:30 PM AT QUARRY BREWING IN THE GRAND BALLROOM. PASTORS MELISSA ENGEL AND SANDY VANZYL WILL BE FACILITATING.**



The offering envelopes for 2018 will be ready after the first of the year. If you don't currently have numbered envelopes, but would like to, please call the office. Both

**Introducing our new Youth Group Director, Jill Graff . . .**

Youth have been a big part of my life since, well, I was a youth. I was blessed with a small, but amazing, youth program while I was a youth in Colorado. While at Colorado State University, I helped with the youth group at the church I was attending. When I moved to Bozeman for graduate school. I met my now-husband Joel who signed us up to teach junior high Sunday school at Bozeman UMC. We taught Sunday school for 7 years before we moved to Iowa City. In Iowa City, I became a youth Sunday school teacher again because I realized that I needed youth in my life. While there, I taught youth Sunday school for another 7 years and was active with the youth group. Therefore, upon finding our church home in Aldersgate UMC, I was bummed to learn there was not a youth program. I got goosebumps the day it was announced that Melissa would be joining us and had a passion for youth. I am beyond thrilled to be involved with the amazing youth of Aldersgate and can't wait to see what the future holds.

Youth Group is made up of young people, grades 6-8 and meets every other Sunday, 6-8 pm. Schedule: 12/10 [6-8 pm], 12/19 [4-9 pm] help with SPARCS dinner/dance, 01/07 [6-8 pm]



Thanks to all who provided salads or desserts, or who otherwise helped to host the luncheon after Nancy's Memorial Service. We are grateful—Aldersgate/Butte, you are the best.  
*The Family of Nancy Allen*



Our Annual Celebration of Ministries will be after church, Sunday, Dec.3 with a potluck. We will have the chance to get to know our new District Superintendent, Jan Witman. All are welcome!



**Christmas Eve Candlelight Service**  
**Aldersgate UMC**  
**December 24**  
**5:00 PM**

**Mountain View/Trinity United Methodist Women**

The UMW met on Thursday, Nov. 2, at Christina's for our annual 'Non Bazaar'. This is the kick-off for Christmas and also a fundraiser for continued support for local missions and our gifts to the church. We believe we best serve the community by giving to local charities such as the Food Bank, Homeless Shelter, Safe Space, etc.

Our next meeting will be Thursday, December 7, at the home of Linda McElroy and she will host. It's always a pleasure to see her many Christmas decorations. Please let us know if you would like to join us, so Linda can have the correct place settings.

Susannah's will meet on Tuesday, December 19, at Annie's as usual, at 11:30.  
Respectfully submitted,  
Louise Flynn, VP

## “EXTRA GRACE REQUIRED”

Aldersgate and the people who attend here have committed to be involved and care for each other as a family. Like any family there is always a member or two who have a bad day or who are by nature just a little “prickly” as my wife identifies this conduct. At our house we call these people “EGR’s” which stands for “Extra Grace Required”. Every family, every business, every group has its very own EGR(s) and if you don’t know who it is in your family, it is probably you.

In any family as large as Aldersgate there is always going to be an occasional bad day, bad mood or an unkind word. When that occurs remember that there is “Extra Grace Required”. Forgive the offender and move on with your day, content that the family at Aldersgate is big enough, open enough and loving enough to make room for everyone. There are two more points I want to make about this:

First, to the person(s) who have been offended by a “EGR” individual. Don’t dwell on the slight, insult or unkind word, we serve a Savior whose message was one of forgiveness and grace. And for God’s sake don’t leave the church or take a month off to pout because you were offended. If you were offended by someone who required some “EGR”, please come back, you are welcome here and we miss you. Remember you are a part of our family, we want you at Aldersgate, and we ask that you offer the offending party a little extra grace and go on with your day. If that doesn’t work come, see Melissa or I and we will help.

Second, to the person(s) among us who require a little extra grace (knowing full well that sometimes that might be me), behave yourselves. You serve a Savior whose message is one of acceptance, forgiveness and grace and you don’t need to say the hard word, the snide comment, or the sarcastic observation. Bite your tongue, extend grace and be glad that you attend a church where everyone is welcome even if sometimes “Extra Grace is Required”. And if you think something must be said, come see Melissa or myself and we will help.

We, as a family must keep our eye on the goal. In 6 years we have doubled our attendance, the church is thriving, and we are accomplishing much as a faith community. Now is not the time to stumble, to turn back or to forget who we serve. There remains much to accomplish to get where we need to go as a faith community. To reach our goal and be successful everyone needs to extend grace to our entire family, just as the Lord Jesus Christ extended it to each of us.

Brad L. Belke  
Lay Leader