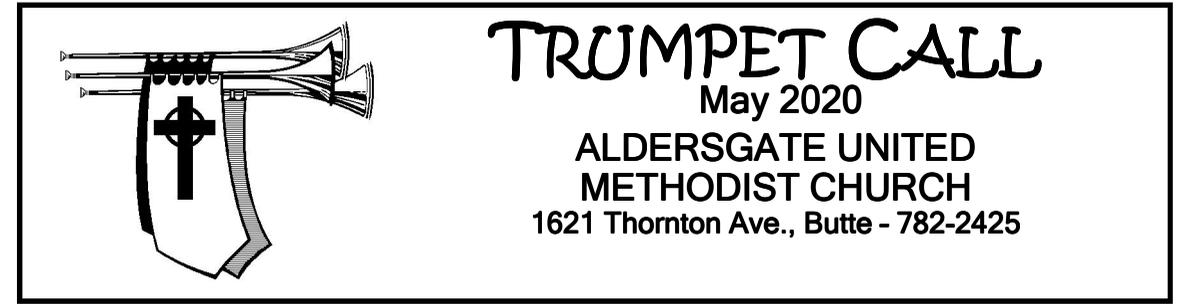


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Aldersgate United Methodist Church
1621 Thornton Ave.
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MOUNTAIN VIEW/TRINITY UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

Due to Covid-19 the UMW did not meet in April, and Susannahs Circle did not meet in March or April.

Our next UMW meeting is scheduled for May 7. Carolyn Goody is the hostess and Shirley O'Neil has the program. However we will not meet if we feel it is unsafe to do so.

Susannahs has been scheduled for May 19, at 11:30 at Copper City Café. Hopefully the world will be a little closer to normal.

We are very grateful to the volunteers who made the phone calls, handed out palms, provided music and messages, etc. We miss the faces and the hugs but our faith is intact. God truly blesses us.

Respectfully submitted,
Louise Flynn VP

Every morning it's the same prayer for me... "Thank you God! What's next?" I'm filled with gratitude beyond belief. Grateful for health, kindness, simplicity, and connection. And yet cautious to ask, "What's next, Lord?" Things seem so tenuous when we are faced with uncertainty – pandemic trends, treatment concerns, social responsibility, economic worries – and yet day-by-day we come together to figure out how best to serve.



Our church building may be empty on Sunday's, but "church" has opened up in our homes more than ever before. In May we may continue *doing church differently* at Aldersgate. In a letter dated April 20 from Bishop Karen Oliveto to clergy she writes, "*as we continue to monitor rates of COVID-19 infection throughout the Mountain Sky Conference, as well as look at models for removing Shelter in Place Restrictions, I am updating my request to keep our churches closed at least through May 2020.*"

We will continue to offer worship opportunities in the safest means possible while working in conjunction with recommendations from the CDC, and directives for our Governor and our appointed United Methodist Bishop. Until such time as it's safe for us to gather in person, worship experiences are available on our Aldersgate UMC website – **aldersgatebutte.org**. All things community, worship and connection may be found there. For those unable to access the internet, we are reaching out to you via US mail and phone. If you have not heard from us and would like to be connected, please contact the church at 406-782-2425.

We hope to be back together soon. Every day is a new beginning – "Thank you God." We will await "what's next" with patience and prayer and will keep you informed as this great unknown unfolds.

Grace and peace –
Pastor Sue

How Lucky Are We?

I grew up in a lower middle-class home in the United States of America in a time of plenty, where it was our dream to simply be upper middle-class. We might have been hungry sometimes, but we were never in danger of starvation, and if we were hungry it wasn't because there was a shortage of food at the grocery store. There was no danger of invasion or war from a foreign power in our neighborhood and we never had to worry about disease or plague. The United States was that shining city on the hill where we were safe, secure and rich, at least compared to everywhere else. Certainly, we knew other countries faced these problems, countries that were somewhere over there, across the ocean, the places we referred to as third world countries. But these problems simply did not happen in the United States of America, they only happened somewhere else, and for most of my life that was true. How lucky are we?

Now suddenly we are at risk and our world has been turned upside down, right here in the United States of America. Suddenly we are thrust into a world where food shortages and pandemic can strike at a moment's notice. More than 20,000 people have died in the United States so far, a number that is supposed to increase by 10 times before we are through this pandemic. A number undreamed of last year at this time.

Last month was the first time in my life I went to the grocery store and found no rice, no flour, no potatoes, no sugar, no milk, no bleach and no toilet paper. Worse I saw people who were afraid, even to the verge of panic as they looked for products, they had taken for granted their entire lives. It was an unfamiliar experience and something I never expected to live through in the United States of America. A life experience I would gladly have skipped.

Except, just maybe, it was actually a life lesson, a lesson where we as the richest nation on earth got just a little taste of what it's like in the third world, a lesson on what it means to be at risk, every...single... day. A chance to learn a lesson on sharing, a lesson in helping neighbors, both near and far, and hopefully, we'll come out of this a little wiser and more compassionate about the rest of the World. A chance to understand just how lucky we have been in this country.

-Brad Belke

Message
From

The
Lay
Leader



Happy Spring Everyone! This April has been full of change, challenges, and blessings. As with everything, we have had to change how we do Youth Group, we've had challenges finding new ways to connect, but we have been blessed with strengthening our relationships in new ways. Since we can not meet in person, we have been getting together via Zoom Sunday nights at 7:00, Tuesday afternoons at 3:00, and Thursday afternoons at 4:00. At these meetings, we check in with each other, share our highs and lows, and play games. At our Sunday night meetings, we have started a new

lesson series on feeling overwhelmed. We have also been watching movies together via Netflix Party on the first and third Fridays of each month at 7:30.

Though our youth are facing challenges of their own with this new "normal," they are still concerned about our neighbors. They have been voicing concerns about the Butte Rescue Mission and those hit the hardest by the effects of COVID-19. Riley Lubick started a new program around Butte where candles are lit in the evening in support of any and all who are sacrificing their safety for the safety of others and for all affected by COVID-19. Visit the FaceBook page, Let's Light Up Butte, to learn more. Christ is Risen! Christ is with us! Christ is still at work in the lives of our youth and in our world. Our youth program is open to all youth (Aldersgate associated or not) in the 6th-12th grades. If you have ideas, questions, or concerns, please contact Jill Graff at 491-1650 or jillgraff@gmail.com.

We are trying to stay in contact.

The Assistant Lay Leaders, Peggy Ryan, Terri Belke, and Judy Reel have been calling members to try and stay in contact with everyone and complete a membership list. They report to me that they have each made over a hundred phone calls and are reaching out to people on a daily basis. Others, including Heather Marsh and Bruce Schuelke have been helping make calls.

If you haven't heard from us, we apologize and request that you call the office (782-2425) and get on the phone list. Our goal is to call everyone as often as we can. If you want to help with the calling, call Heather at the church office and she will get you some names.

Brad Belke

Easter Morning

It was the morning of Easter and all through the Church, not a creature was stirring, not even myself. I am 65 years old and in all those 65 years, not once have I not been in church on Easter morning, ever. In 2020, for the first time, I was not in church, I was not home at Aldersgate, I was not celebrating the resurrection of a Risen Savior with my church family, and it was all just wrong. I think our worship leader said it best in his Easter prayer that was part of the Easter worship folder on the Aldersgate website. Just in case you missed it here it is,

Our Morning Prayer- From Chuck Kestle

Precious Lord, Our Savior, Our Redeemer-

Easter has come to us in such a strange way this year. Our church home has been closed. Our yearning for fellowship has been stifled. Our desire for worship and communion has been stayed by a presence that has changed our lives, confined us to our homes, confronted us with an onslaught of daily statistical numerations of global tragedy that are overwhelming, unbelievable and unimaginable.

Our faith has been tested these past weeks Lord, sorely tested. We have been met by an existential crisis to which the only responses seem to be distancing and isolation. Our hearts cry out. We wonder. We worry. We ask why?

***Yet,
The tomb is still empty.
Our hope is still present.
Your grace still abounds.***

We know that there will be a better day. We know that you will work all things for the good. We know that the springtime of resurrection will confront and overcome all things. We know there is life and that life is still here now and evermore.

In the name of your Son and the Spirit he has given us- Amen

In the Jewish faith tradition, they have a prayer that ends, “next year in Jerusalem.” For me in 2020 the prayer will be, “next year at Aldersgate.” Until then remember it may be Friday now, but Sunday is coming.

-Brad Belke



Intermountain Change for Children

As your spring cleaning begins, continue to drop spare change in your Change for Children Can (a mission project of AUMC). Glance in the junk drawer, the console of your car or perhaps under the sofa cushions. Change is everywhere! We will collect our cans of spare change to gift to the children at Intermountain just as soon as we are worshiping together again. Every penny, nickel, dime and quarter

****THERE WILL BE NO CALENDAR PRINTED THIS MONTH.****

- 02: Ed Wolstein
- 04: Jonathan Crummett
- 07: Carol Wenger
- 08: Bea Cline
- 11: Cec Trescothick
- 13: Ryder Robinson
- 15: Melanie Prescott
- 21: Peggy Ryan
- 23: Matty McLaughlin
- 29: Abra Belke
- 29: Russ Robertson



- 03: Paul McCaughey
- 04: Gayle Nicholls
- 07: Heather Marsh
- 10: Rachel Tremis
- 13: Janet Fletcher-Rich
- 14: Becky Myrass
- 18: Crispin Marsh
- 22: Arlene Timmer
- 27: Larry Johnson
- 29: Olive Pearce



- 09: Don & Debbie Fisher
- 11: Don & Doris Jenkins



Graduation Sunday

The Member/Nurture Committee cautiously optimistic to honor our graduates on Sunday, May 31. Perhaps weather permitting we can gather outside. Please call Heather at the office or Peggy Ryan (565-0529) before Tuesday May 26th, with names of high school, trade school or college graduates. We honor children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

GREETINGS FROM YOUR ASSISTANT LAY LEADERS

I have enjoyed visiting with everyone on the phone. I was able to reconnect with people that have been unable to come to church in years.

Everyone is asking if anyone needs anything and how everyone is doing. Please call me if you need an errand run.

Hope to see you soon.

-Peggy Ryan



Calling and touching base with our Aldersgate people has been a great blessing to me personally. Some calls have been short and sweet and some have lasted a while—an hour has been the tops!. It's been a time to get to know people better, learn a little personal information about them that I didn't know.

I hear "we are doing just fine" a lot. We have people who are independent and are connected with family and neighbors and others in our church family. All have been appreciative for what I am calling the "Aldersgate Connection". Everybody will be glad to return to church and our "face-to-face" connection.

People have shared prayer requests. Many are taking advantage of the sermons and music on the website. The Easter resources were just great and much appreciated.

Blessings, Judy

GREETINGS FROM YOUR ASSISTANT LAY LEADERS

Continued

In the book "Kitchen Table Wisdom" the author, Dr. Rachel Remen, recalls a story where she as a newlywed is standing in her kitchen trying to make it "kosher". While figuring it out she says she "feels" the presence of the women in her family who have solved these problems for generations. Her mom, grandmothers, aunties – all asking the same questions about keeping a kosher kitchen.

This past week I was making some calls standing at the kitchen sink looking out to the window when the image of my own grandmother came to mind. She is on the phone with the cord stretched out leaning over the sink looking out the window with the small window air conditioner cooling things down. She did not drive and as a rural wife who gardened, canned, mended, washed, ironed and cooked for a large extended family all day long the connection her phone provided kept her in community. She accomplished a lot with the receiver held to her ear. Her 4 party-line phone was her lifeline to the outside world. Its still there, with the same number (232-8508) and in use by my uncle.

That is what the phone and the calling provides for us as a congregation right now. We cannot be together, so we are exercising community through calls and messages of all sorts. I hope you know that we are sincere when we say, "If you or know someone who needs anything or just someone to talk or pray with, please do not hesitate to reach out." This is a sincere offer.

Dr. Remen reflects, "Listening creates a holy silence... And in the silence of listening, you can know yourself in everyone. Eventually you may be able to hear, in everyone and beyond everyone, the unseen singing softly to itself and to you."

Until we can be together may you know joy, be at peace and stay healthy.
-Terri Belke