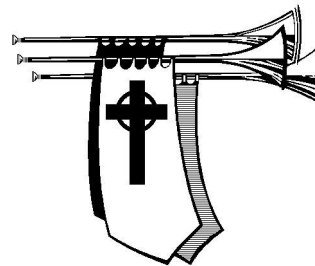
 Trumpet Call
Aldersgate United Methodist Church
1621 Thornton Ave.
Butte, MT 59701

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TRUMPET CALL

March 2024

ALDERSGATE UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH

1621 Thornton Ave., Butte - (406) 782-2425



Pay it Forward

Sharon Miller's son-in-law, Joe Stevenson, received a Pay it Forward Credit Card for \$500 from Montana Resources. Sharon's daughter, Vicki decided to donate this year's \$500 to Aldersgate Church for funeral luncheons because they did a nice job on Bill Miller's luncheon after his service. The ladies work hard and just helped

so much, so we don't have to plan food, set up tables, etc. The card is to be used for gift cards at Safeway, Walmart, the Dollar Store, etc.

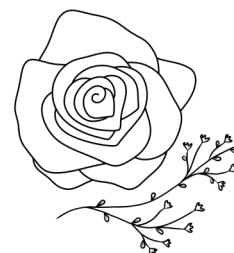


07: Bob & Nita Kingsbury

03: Brandon Robinson
05: Melissa (Ryan) Kump
07: Josh Robinson
09: Austin Kingsbury
11: Daniel Harrington
12: Ed Dobb
14: Quinn Sullivan
17: Ethan McCaughey
20: Sylvia Marcum



23: Ian Boston
24: Doc Jordan
25: John Rich
25: Jake Richards
30: Becky Rolich
31: Marcia Lubick



If you would like to order Easter flowers in honor of or in memory of loved ones, please contact the church office at: (406) 782-2425



EMAIL

If you need to contact us via email, please send it to:
aldersgatech@outlook.com



Sermon Series

DIY ... HOW TO DO CHURCH ... Our Lenten lessons focus on what it means to be and to do church. Each lesson prepares us for Easter. This is a time reminiscent of the early church. The season of Lent was used for preparing the new Christian to be baptized on Easter Sunday. Lent was a moment of confirmation or new member orientation. Our lessons this month is to prepare our hearts for Easter but also to be the church that God wants us to be.

DIY ... HOW TO DO CHURCH

March 3rd – “Give”, using Exodus 20.1-17

March 10th – “post COVID”, using John 3.14-21

March 17th – “The Order of Melchizedek”, using Hebrews 5.5-10

March 24th – “Communion and Prayer”, using March 14.22-42



Easter Message

March 31st – “Why Are You Crying?”, using John 20.1-18

What does the Bible say about Homosexuality?

This six-week study will begin on Sunday, March 24th and meet twice a day. Our first lesson will take place during the Sunday school hour at 9 am. We will hold a duplicate lesson at 2 pm, also on Sunday. These lessons are open to anyone in the community. The last time I hosted this study we had 50 in attendance with about ¼ coming from people who were not members of the church.

Each lesson will begin with a statement about respect. Homosexuality and the bible can be a polarizing subject. These lessons will discuss each passage in the bible and we pledge to listen, to be respectful, and to disagree through the means of Holy Conferencing.

The six-week course will not meet on Easter Sunday and our concluding class will be May 5th. This is the Sunday immediately following the ending of the General Conference of The United Methodist Church. No sign-ups are needed. Just bring your bible, an open mind, and a willingness to ask a lot of questions.



Seth's Message

As I write this article I am watching the snowflakes fall outside my window. For this boy raised in parsonages in Nebraska it is hard to think of Easter when the ground is still frozen, there are no whisps of green grass, and the trees are not budding ... at all! Although, living 17 years in western Nebraska did condition us to this weather. It was not uncommon to move the Easter sunrise service in doors because of the snow and cold.

Easter is not about the weather. Yes there are places in our country where people are planning on which sun dress to wear for Easter Sunday and maybe even the traditional Easter hat. Easter, for us, is a reminder of hope. We've already experienced another winter of record freezing temperatures, icy roads, and more snow scooping than we care to imagine. Easter is a reminder that God is in control of the weather. Easter is a reminder that summer days will be here again. Easter is a reminder that we are loved. There are so many things that are compelling about Easter but one that I am working on for the 31st is from this passage ... But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look[a] into the tomb, and she saw two angels in white sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. They said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.” When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?” Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.” Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to him in Hebrew, “Rabbouni!” (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, “Do not touch me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’ ” (John 20.11-17) Wow! This passage just gives me goosebumps. It is wrought with emotion. Mary is grieving, crying, publicly mourning.

We've all been there. We cannot leave this planet without experiencing loss. As I said, Easter has nothing to do with the weather – especially when we live in Montana – Easter is about who we are. We are a people that believe death does not define us. We can grieve, we can remember, but Easter is a reminder that we have a mechanism for moving on. It may not be easy, in fact, missing our loved ones will not be easy, but Jesus shows us the way that in our raw emotion, he comes to us, sits with our feelings, and helps us cry; and then says, “OK, Mary, go to my brothers and sisters ...” We can get through anything. Easter is just such a reminder. Now time for snow scooping.

Seth



MY CHOICE IS JONAH

A long time ago, right after Pastor Jerry Bechtle had started the Friday morning Men's group we decided to take a week and think about whose story in the Bible spoke to us the loudest. Which character we felt closest too, who we had empathy for, and then we would report back the next Friday and explain why we chose that character. The other 12 men in the group all picked Job, which I found remarkable then, and now. Twelve men who were successful in life, attended church, appeared to be happy and content, all picked Job as the biblical character with whom they had the most in common. I think there is a lesson there about pain and suffering, a lesson for another time, maybe after a review of the scripture where "*Jesus wept.*" or "*Woman, why do you weep.*" So, when it was my turn that morning, I announced that my choice for bible character was Jonah. Of course, everyone remembers that Jonah got swallowed by a whale (actually a big fish) and was in the belly of this fish for three days before the fish spit him out. The whole deal about the whale is the reason Jonah is every child's favorite Sunday School story. And I remember a great comedy routine by Christian comedian Mike Warnke telling us about Jonah showing up at Nineveh, bleached white from the acid in the fish's belly, hair a mess, covered with fish vomit, and demanding that they repent. It is no wonder that they did. But that wasn't the part I was concerned about when I chose Jonah. In fact, that part, the whole fish thing, might actually distract us from the real focus of the story. It might distract us from the fact that Jonah was throwing a temper tantrum against God, that Jonah was a bigot and unforgiving, and that he righteously desired that God destroy Nineveh, man, woman, child, and donkey. The whale part gets our attention, but it's the rest of Jonah that is amazing – as Pastor Bolz-Weber says, "*you have to love a Bible story wherethe least interesting thing about it is that some guy gets swallowed by a big fish and is spit back up on dry land.*" To help understand Jonah you need to understand that the Assyrians were the worst, history tells us that when they captured a city, they couldn't be bothered to waste rope to control their new captives, they used fishing line through their right eye to secure them in a line and march them off to slavery. The Assyrians had ravaged and pillaged all their neighbors including much of Israel and they were despised by the few remaining Jews not in captivity. And then one day, God says to Jonah "*Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it, because its wickedness has come up before me.*"

(continued on next page)



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 7:00 Men's Breakfast	2
3 9:00 Adult SS 10:30 Worship 11:30 Coffee & Conversation 5:30 Kids/Youth Meal 6:00 Kid's/Youth Group	4 11:00 Bernaboe Meeting	5 6:30 Square Dancing 7:00 Mining City Choir	6 8:00 Women's 4th Day 9:30 Sandwich Ministry 10:00 Midweek Lipreaders 5:30 Choir 6:30 Men's 4th day	7	8 7:00 Men's Breakfast	9
10 9:00 Adult SS 10:30 Worship 11:30 Coffee & Conversation 6:00 Youth Group	11	12 7:00 Mining City Choir 7:00 Trustees Meeting	13 8:00 Women's 4th Day 10:00 Midweek Lipreaders 5:30 Choir 6:30 Men's 4th day	14	15 7:00 Men's Breakfast	16
17 9:00 Adult SS 10:30 Worship 11:30 Coffee & Conversation 6:00 Youth Group	18	19 5:00 Spork's Dance 7:00 Mining City Choir	20 8:00 Women's 4th Day 10:00 Midweek Lipreaders 5:30 Choir 6:30 Men's 4th day	21	22 7:00 Men's Breakfast	23
24 9:00 Adult SS 10:30 Worship 11:30 Coffee & Conversation 2:00 Homosexuality Bible Study	25	26 6:30 Square Dancing 7:00 Mining City Choir 7:00 Finance Meeting	27 10:00 Women's 4th Day 10:00 Midweek Lipreaders 5:30 Choir 7:00 AD Council	28 7:00 Maundy Thurs- day Service	29 7:00 Men's Breakfast	30
31 9:00 Adult SS 10:30 Worship 11:30 Easter Egg Hunt						

It's like if God came to me and said "*Hey Brad, you know the people who hurt children and the people who refuse to wear masks during a global pandemic, and who litter, and who take advantage of women, and those people on "news" TV who report their stupid opinions as truth ...well, you're right, those people aren't righteous. So, I would like you to preach out against them for me.*"

Can you imagine? I don't know about you but if God called me to deliver a divinely sanctioned spanking of all the people who annoy me, I'd be out on the street corner in the blink of an eye. I would even bring a bullhorn to cry out against my enemies, the horrible people (all the ones who don't agree with me). So, it is kind of weird that Jonah doesn't take God up on this offer and head to Nineveh as directed. Instead, Jonah takes off on a boat in the opposite direction.

Of course, once he is on the boat, the storm comes up, he gets thrown off the boat, swallowed by a big fish, spit up on the shore, and gets to Nineveh where he gives his reluctant prophesy: "*Forty more days and Nineveh will be overturned!*" All with what I assume was zero sincerity. Even so, it worked, his enemies repented, sackcloth, ashes, the whole thing. And then worst of all, God forgave them, changed his mind, and did not destroy them!

But here is the remarkable part of the story. Now Jonah is upset and pouts, furious that his enemies repented, and were spared. Now Jonah ends up sitting on a little hill outside Nineveh, where he admits *why* he didn't go to Nineveh as God demanded, and it wasn't because of low self-esteem, travel worries or fear of public speaking. Nope, Jonah is like, *Yep, that is why I didn't want to go to Nineveh in the first place— because I knew that God, was gracious, merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.* Yes, indeed that is a big problem, a God

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Maybe that's the focal point of Jonah – you have to think about how maybe I too need my enemies to remain my enemies.

Because after all it is hard to know who I am, if I don't know who I'm against. It is hard to feel better about myself if I can't look down on someone else, and feel that I am so much better, and in the right. Identifying with the character Jonah, I am confronted with how uncomfortable it is for God to show love and mercy to those I do not believe deserve it. Because deep down inside aren't we all a little like the Prodigal Brother, where we don't want to have empathy for those who have screwed up, for those who have abused their position, for those who disagree, for those who have done harm.

Because, and this is why I find Jonah's story so important, as much as I want to be right and to have God on my side and to know that God loves me, I am stuck with the knowledge that God also loves my enemies. God is kind of the worst like that. Amen.

Brad Belke




April 23 - May 3

...and **KNOW** that I am **GOD**

PSALM 46

The United Methodist Church General Conference | CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA



The Midweek Lipreaders – A New Bible Study for a New Year!

Beginning February 7, 2024 (Wednesday) at 10:00 AM in AUMC Break Room, a Bible study based on the book "James" by Westley Bible Studies will be offered. The cost for the book is \$10.

The study will be led by Burt Todd in a discussion-style format. Coffee will be provided by Georgia of Butte.