

# THE SQUEEK

JANUARY 2025 Volume 25, Issue 1

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*Open Hearts,  
Open Minds,  
Open Doors*



## Aldersgate Church...United Methodist

Andy Gloor, *Lay Leader*

Jane Nihan, *Organist*

Mary Jensen, *Secretary*

Rev. Sarah Hong, *Pastor*

### Church Office Hours

8:30 am – 12:30 pm

Check us out on Facebook: [Aldersgate Church](#)

*The church office will be closed on Wednesday January 1 for the New Year's Day holiday*

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Insert: January 2025 Calendar  
Blue Christmas Flyer

### SUNDAY SCHEDULE

**9:00** Worship -- *Traditional yet informal*  
**10:15** Fellowship Time -- *A relaxing time with friends*

### JANUARY 2025

**Sunday, January 5 – Epiphany Sunday**  
**The Baptism of the Lord**

**Sunday, January 12 – Second Sunday after Epiphany**

**Sunday, January 19 – Third Sunday after Epiphany**

**Sunday, January 26 – Fourth Sunday after Epiphany**

*The Core Values of our church: Family, Love, Compassion.*

**A** Family of God  
**U**nited in Love  
**M**oved by the Spirit of God  
**C**ommitted to the Ministry  
of Compassion



## PASTOR'S LETTER JANUARY, 2025

“...God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other.” (1 Corinthians 12:14-25)



"Away in a Manger "Merry Christmas! I pray that the joy and hope of our Savior's birth has filled your heart and home. Christmas is a day of celebration and connection. It's the day when God gave up the throne of heaven and came among us in a child born in Bethlehem. It's the day that God revealed God's humility and embraced a manger (a feeding container for animals) as his first bed. It's the day that God invited all of humanity (including the night-shift shepherds) to come and worship – as a sign of God's desire to connect and communicate with all of us. Regardless of our background, baggage, or circumstances, God's love is available to all of us. Christmas reminds us that all of God's children are known and loved by God. I pray that each of you will claim this promise of God's love and connection in the upcoming year.

In 2025, our church leadership will focus on strengthening communication and connections. In the past, we have not always been diligent and transparent with information and updates. There were no ill-intentions. This was simply an extension of the way things were always done. So, I want to share that the Church Council and Revival Committee will start vision meetings to pray about the future of Aldersgate UMC. We want to pursue a future that is healthy and realistic. As our church considers new ways to serve our community, we will strengthen the ways we communicate, connect and coordinate our ministries.

In the month of January, our sermon series will be the theme: ***“Why Nobody Wants to go Church Anymore?”*** This theme will encourage us to approach our un-churched and de-churched family members, friends and neighbors with deep love and understanding. As we start the new year, let's pray for the people we love and care about most to church. Let's consider how we can invite and connect them into the church.

Friends, God loves you and wants the best for your life – in every part of your life. In John 10:10, Jesus tells us that he came so that we might have life – life to the fullest. God longs for you to not only survive, but thrive. So, as we start 2025, let's be prayerful and faithful. May the Spirit of Christ inspire you to grow in faith and action in the New Year! Happy New Year!

Blessings,

*Pastor Sarah*



## **2025 January Sermon Series (Beth Eden & Aldersgate UMC)**

\*Jan. 5 – “Why Nobody wants to Go Church anymore? - 1. Not my priority” – Becoming an Awe-ful church (Acts 2: 42-27)

\*Jan. 12 – “Why Nobody Wants to Go Church anymore? – 2. Full of hypocrites! – Becoming a relevant church (James 1: 22-24 & 2: 14-17)

\*Jan. 19<sup>th</sup> – “ Why Nobody Wants to Go Church anymore? – 3. New Cycle of Christian Life – Mission Possible (Matthew 28:19-20)

\*Jan 26<sup>th</sup> – “Why Nobody Wants to Go Church anymore?- 4. 13 coins theory – Becoming a patient church (Matthew 5:13-14 & 1 Corinthians 3:6-9 )

\*Feb. 2<sup>nd</sup> – “Why Nobody Wants to Go Church anymore? – 5. “He Ain’t heavy, he is my brother.” - Becoming a compassionate church (Acts 2:17 & Habakkuk 2:1)

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### **CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED**

The church office will be closed on Wednesday, January 1 for the New Year’s Day holiday

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**ON DECEMBER 29TH**, we will have our favorite Christmas carol and hymn singing Sunday. On December 1st, 15th and 22nd, we will have an insert on which you can submit your (1 or 2) favorite to the office. We will select the most favorite ones to sing on 29th and will sing the rest in the month of January. You can submit your favorite (1 or 2) hymns or carols through the email to the church office or pastor Sarah.

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### **JANUARY HELPERS**

	<b><u>Lay Readers</u></b>	<b><u>A/V Technicians</u></b>	<b><u>Greeters</u></b>
January 5	Cindy Fisher	TBD	The Quick Family
January 12	Mike O’Hea	TBD	Barb Pefley
January 19	Jenny Graham	TBD	The Thurman Family
January 26	Theresa O’Hea	TBD	Sue Pedersen



You are invited to this district-wide leadership event! We will worship together and engage in learning through different workshops. Classes are offered in mergers, creation care, SPRC, finance and apportionments, discipleship, spiritual practices and more.

The cost is \$15. Look into bringing a whole group from your church as the cost is capped at \$50 per church!



# JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

07 Ashley Goranson  
08 Anna Wirtz Evans  
11 Ruth Graham  
11 Taylor Swartout  
12 Jan Weller


17 Donovin Sims  
20 Pat Clankie  
21 Marylon Cole  
22 Robert S. Glenny  
22 Peter Weller

22 Parker Moyer  
29 Alexa Sohner  
29 Nevaeh Waugh  
31 Nancy Whitson



**JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES**  
20 John & Linda Ruhl

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**SQUEEK DEADLINE**  
**Thursday, January 16th** is the deadline for the February, 2025 Squeek. Please have your articles in by this date. Thank you.  
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## Remember In Your Prayers

Those in the congregation who are experiencing physical or emotional distress:

- David Levine     Mark Hoey
- Donelle & Parker Moyer     Delores Moon
- Bill Gridley (Jennifer G. Johnson)
- Don & Colleen O'Hea (Mike O'Hea)
- Caramie Waugh & children     Jean Ewaldz
- Anne Niday     Abbey ( Deb & Jay Alms)
- Judy (Jan Weller)     Zachary Wirtz
- John Day (moved to WW health care center)
- Gordie Smith     Ms. Hawks (Deb Alms)
- The residents of Northwood, MI (Jan Barrett)
- Lester (Brenda Westphal)

We welcome Lu Fransen back to Rockford. She left FL after hurricane Helene's devastating impacts. Keep her in your prayers to find a new place soon.

Sympathy for Coralee (Rev. Thomas) Hardwick on the passing of her close cousin, Charlie

Sympathy for Gordy Smith's family. Gordy passed away on Dec. 16th. Also Gordy Smith's family is mourning for Gordy's grandson, Micheal's passing at the beginning of December.



**Note:** After the printing of this *Squeek*, there may have been others hospitalized or ill. We need your help.

*Please notify the Church Office. Thank you.*

**THERE IS NO SCHEDULED LUNCH & LEISURE IN JANUARY 2025.**

**SENIOR BALLET AND SENIOR BALANCE CLASS** - Would you like to be healthier with good exercise habits? A Ballerina of the New York City Ballet, Aubry A. will open \*Senior ballet and \*Senior balance class at both Aldersgate and Beth Eden locations starting January 18th. Anyone over 50 yrs old can join. Most classes are on Saturday and one on Monday morning. Check out the yellow banner outside of church (near church sign) and there will be more details on sign up details as well as class fees. Contact pastor Sarah for more information.

### WESLEY WILLOWS MEET AND EAT GROUP

Our next luncheon is Friday, January 3 at 11:30 in the Town Center. Reservations can be made by contacting Alice Rice (815-624-7029) or by calling the church office by the evening before.

## ALDERSGATE FINANCE NEWS FOR JANUARY 2025

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Our 2024 income was able to support all of our expenses. The additional income from the Trustees (\$20,000) and our Spacesharing of the parsonage (\$9,500) helped cover our expenses.

We have prepared our 2025 Budget. Our projected expenses are \$161,920.35. We have received 36 pledge cards totaling \$58,172 or about 35% of our budget. We understand that some choose not to pledge but do give faithfully. We will continue to share Pastor Hong with Beth Eden UMC. This allows each church to budget 50% of the Pastor's salary and related benefits. Apportionments are estimated to be \$18,612 for the year (included in the budget figure above).

The Finance Committee and Church Council have authorized the changing of our primary financial institution. We will now be banking with Northwest Bank, effective 1/1/2025. If you are currently giving your financial gift through the ACH process or are interested in using ACH, please contact me and I will share the new account number and routing number.

We are grateful for 2024 and look forward to 2025!!!

Deb Alms, Finance Chair

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**NEXT NOISY CAN SUNDAY** will be January 19, 2025. Save your change to bring for various local missions. Contact Sue Murr for any questions. Thanks to all at AUMC who help Noisy Can Sunday make a difference for the Rock River Valley Pantry. **Our first year of collections has totaled \$1,245.00**



Congratulations to Ruth Wood for receiving the fitness reward

**Charge Conference with Beth Eden**



## A HISORY OF THE ALDERSGATE UMC TOY MINISTRY

The following is a brief history of Aldersgate’s Toy Ministry from 2012 to December of 2024.

2012 – Pastor Doug Williams dreams of making toys and giving them to children. He found the “Toymakers of East Lake UMC” in Florida and they were able to send patterns for Aldersgate to use.

On Father’s Day, 95 toys were blessed and given to 3 agencies.

2014 – In the Spring, Aldersgate youth raised \$10,000 for a mission trip to Bolivia.

In August, 5 youth from Aldersgate took 20 toys each to give to children in need; a total of 100 cars. The youth going to Bolivia were Ashley Reynolds, Tara Glenny, Zach Wirtz and Kris and Shaun Perrot.

2016 – On February 14, George Franklin, Bill Rhodes and Pastor Doug recorded at CBS Studio in downtown Chicago. The recording appeared on “Different Drummer”

2107 – Aldersgate received a grant from the United Methodist Foundation and appeared on “Different Drummer”.

In April of 2017, Pastor Doug and Lisa Williams took 300 toys on a mission trip to Kenya in Africa.

2024 – The goal for the last 3 years has been to make and distribute 1500 toy cars. We have met that goal and delivered the toys through the following agencies:

Carrie Lynn Children’s Home  
Kids Above All  
Meld  
Mercy Health  
Remedies  
Rock House  
Rockford Head Start  
Rosecrance  
St. Elizabeth Center  
Swedish American  
United Way  
YMCA  
Shoe Box Ministry



(Thanks to Andy for packing and delivery.)

**Aldersgate helped with Bethlehem Market Place at Beth Eden UMC.**



**FreindsGiving at Aldersgate**



**Merry Grinchmas**



# *Blue Christmas Service*

*The Rockford region remembers our loved ones  
who lost their lives to opioid overdose*

**Monday, December 23rd at 10am**

**Brooke Road UMC & Community Center**

**1404 Brooke Road, Rockford**

*With words of lament and hope from local leaders  
including Mayor McNamara and Coroner Muraski*



**Receive free Narcan, the life-saving  
overdose reversal medication**

*And visit the resource fair with NAMI, Remedies, Crusader,  
Winnebago County Health Dept, Rosecrance, Live4Lali, and more*



# January 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Office Closed	2	3 WW Meet & Eat 11:30am	4
5 Epiphany Sunday Communion	6	7	8	9	10	11
12 Baptism of the Lord	13	14	15	16 Squeek Deadline	17	18
19 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Epiphany Noisy Can Sunday	20	21	22	23 Squeek goes out	24	25
26 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Epiphany	27	28	29	30	31	