



The Aldersgate logo was inspired by the Love Sculpture in Philadelphia, PA., to remind us that God is Love and that Love is the Greatest Commandment.

# Aldersgate *In Action*



Our sermon series, *“With God’s Son: Following our Rabbi through the Gospel of Matthew,”* invites us to explore the major themes and claims of Jesus in the first book of the New Testament. Today’s sermon, *“Vanquishing Evil,”* centers on Jesus’ experience in the wilderness for 40 days as told in Matthew, Chapter 4:1-11. You will find an order of service of Page 4 and sermon notes on Page 5.



**Series Spiritual Practice:** You are invited to read through the Gospel of Matthew once a month for the next 12 months. This will give us an opportunity to focus on the whole book while we share the sermons based on parts of book of Matthew at the same time.

Aldersgate United Methodist Church • 1741 Sayles Blvd., Abilene, TX 79605 • (325) 672-7893

[www.aldersgateabilene.org](http://www.aldersgateabilene.org)



# *In the Works*

Regularly Scheduled Services  
and Opportunities to Grow and Serve

All are welcome!

Please contact the Church Office  
if you'd like to know more about becoming involved.

## **THIS WEEK**

### **Sunday, January 8:**

9:00 a.m.	Traditional Worship
10:05 a.m.	Sunday School
11:00 a.m.	Contemporary Worship
4:15 p.m.	Youth Parent Meeting
5:00 p.m.	Youth Ministry

### **Monday, January 9:**

7:00 p.m.	Boy Scouts
-----------	------------

### **Wednesday, January 11:**

7:00 p.m.	Choir Practice
-----------	----------------

### **Thursday, January 12:**

7:30 p.m.	Contemporary Band Practice
-----------	----------------------------

## **COMING UP**

### **Sunday, January 8:**

4:15 pm.	Youth Parent Meeting
----------	----------------------

### **Monday, January 16: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**

Academy Closed  
Church Office Closed

## **Ministry Leaders**

Pastor: *Steve Brooks* (325) 660-4415

Associate Pastor:

*Amy Wilson Feltz* (325) 660-5017

Music: *David Wallis*

Children: *Alayna Brooks & Amber Redman*

Youth/Contemporary Worship:

*Daniel Mathis*

College/Young Adults: *Kyle Watson*

Connections: *Jessica Watson*

Administration/Finance: *Mary Chavez Lust*

Reception: *Susan Acosta*

Academy: *Carol Rogers*

Custodial Services: *Robert Sandoval*

## **Staying Connected**

Office Hours:

Mon.-Thurs. 8:30 a.m. -12 p.m.,  
1p.m.-4:30 p.m.

Fri. 8:30 a.m.-12 p.m.

[www.aldersgateabilene.org](http://www.aldersgateabilene.org)

**ENews:** Sign up on our website to receive our weekly electronic newsletter, or send an email to [news@aldersgateabilene.org](mailto:news@aldersgateabilene.org).

**Facebook:** [facebook.com/AldersgateUnitedMethodistChurch](https://facebook.com/AldersgateUnitedMethodistChurch)

**Twitter:** @AldersgateABI

**Instagram:** @aldersgateabi

**Text Message Reminders:**

gracepeace to 313131

**Text To Give:** 325-269-2032

**Our Mission: To raise up deeply devoted disciples of Jesus**  
**Our Mission Field: Aldersgate Academy, Bowie Elementary School,**  
**McMurry University, Our Neighborhoods/Community Garden**



# In Depth

At Aldersgate, all are invited to practice faithfulness in our prayers, presence (attendance), gifts (offering of money), service (action in the community) and witness (sharing our faith). You will find information about service and witness throughout the pages of *Aldersgate In Action*. This page is dedicated to matters of prayer, presence, and gifts.

---

## Prayers:

---

Clay Meadows	Millie Speed	Bob Kuykendall
Doris Ogden	Sarah Doucette	Kay Burkhart
Lou Swindell	Delmon Wilson	Billy & Jennifer Butler
Ken Schmidt	Billie Langston	Jazmine Lara, Academy student
Rosalee Schmidt	Judy English	
Alice Shaw	Charles Myrick	Elizabeth Gardner, George and
Alice Alcala	Clinton Gayle	Karen Gardner and family upon
Carolyn Strain	Addison English	the death of husband and father,
Military and Families	Lora Langford	George Gardner, Sr., on January
		1, 2017.

---

## Service:

---

- \* **Methodist Food Pantry** (N. 1st and Shelton): Aldersgate volunteers serve on the second Tuesday of the month, from 3:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Free childcare is available. For more information call Susan Steele at 605-381-6322.
- 

## Presence and Gifts: 1.1.2017

---

9:00 a.m. Traditional Service = 144	Budget for 2017 =	\$ TBD
	Received This Week =	\$ 8,181.00
11:00 a.m. Contemporary Service = 113	Received This Month-to-Date =	\$ 8,181.00
	Received Year-to-Date =	\$ 8,181.00
Sunday School = 197	2016 Faith Promise Pledge =	\$ 38,312.00
Sunday School classes are offered	2016 Faith Promise Contributions =	\$ 41,900.00
at 10:05 a.m. for all ages. To learn more	To learn more about ways to give: visit our website	
about Adult Sunday School classes,	<a href="http://www.aldersgateabilene.org">www.aldersgateabilene.org</a> or contact Mary Chavez Lust	
contact Amy Wilson Feltz at 672-7893 or	at 672-7893 or via email at <a href="mailto:mary@aldersgateabilene.org">mary@aldersgateabilene.org</a> .	

# Growth Groups: Sign up Today!

A few weeks ago, I attended a Christmas party for one of Aldersgate's Growth Groups. Not only did I have the chance to indulge in some delicious, homemade treats, but I was also invited to participate in a game of White Elephant, even though I did not bring a gift! As I celebrated with these women, I witnessed the gracious presence of God. These women, although different in many ways, have cultivated a community of love and camaraderie that is rooted in their belief in the goodness of God.



As we gathered at the table to enjoy a meal, the group members shared stories from the past session of Growth Group and expressed their gratitude for friendship. Many of these women meet together outside of regular group time to sere together, to attend community events and even to travel with one another. As we moved into the living room to begin the gift exchange, one of the members shared a story of what she called a "God incident." Everyone listened as she shared about a moment when God led her to serve in an extravagant way at Bowie Elementary. Everyone encouraged her, and many offered to help. After that, another member shared a heart-felt poem that she wrote about their group. Toward the end of our time together, a group member shared about some health issues that she faced. Immediately, the group leader called everyone to come and lay hands on this woman for a time of prayer. I felt a bit speechless and did not offer an audible prayer because I was so overwhelmed with the reality that these women truly are being the hands and feet of Jesus to one another. Whether it is visiting one another in the hospital, bringing meals when someone is sick or getting together for moments of celebration, these women live life together in beautiful ways.



Moments like these are happening in each and every Growth Group, and for that I say, *Thanks be to God*. If you are interested in joining one of the several Growth Groups at Aldersgate, then I invite you to register for a group by indicating interest on the back of your Welcome Card or by visiting the Welcome Center to register online. You also can contact me at [jessica@aldersgateabilene.org](mailto:jessica@aldersgateabilene.org) or (210) 849-9122.



## From the Staff to the SPRC: Thank you!



Members of the Staff-Parish Relations Committee are charged with serving as liaisons between the congregation and the pastors and staff members of the church. In some churches, this strictly means filling out pastor evaluations, communicating with the district superintendent when needed and the like. Aldersgate's SPRC certainly takes care of business, but that is not where the care stops.

Under the direction of chairperson Brad Hicks, the committee members provided and shared delicious meals with the staff during each quarter of 2016. They also remember the staff during birthdays and other times of celebration, and, of course, they recently coordinated the generous end-of-the-year gifts that the congregation provided through monetary donations. (Thank you all!) On December 15, the staff expressed our appreciation for the SPRC by providing and sharing a simple yet comforting meal of grilled-cheese sandwiches, tomato bisque soup, Caesar salad and Sweet Life cupcakes. (See photo at top left). It was the least we could do to thank our SPRC for caring for us all year long. Thank you! — Pastor Steve, Pastor Amy + the Staff

## Youth: Upcoming 2017 Events

Hello, Friends! 2017 is going to be a big year, with many great events going in The Gate Youth Ministry.

A Parent Meeting will take place **Today, January 8th**, at 4:15 p.m. in the Chapel. We have much to talk about for the spring semester, including opportunities to serve and get connected with these students. Our first youth meeting of the semester will follow the parent meeting, taking place from 5-7:30 p.m.

Also, don't forget our annual Spring Break Ski Trip to Monarch, Colorado! It will take place during **March 13-17**. The cost for each person is \$400. Spots are beginning to fill up, so be sure to sign up online at [www.skidaddy.com/aldersgateabilene](http://www.skidaddy.com/aldersgateabilene) before all the spots are filled! Much of the info about the trip is provided on the website, but if you have any questions, feel free to contact me at [youth@aldersgateabilene.org](mailto:youth@aldersgateabilene.org).





## In the Word

By Pastor Steve

*Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness. – Matthew 4:1a*

The account of Jesus' temptation by the devil in the wilderness is one of the most unique, powerful and inspiring passages in the Bible. Jesus' 40 days in the wilderness certainly is rooted the 40 years that the Israelites spent in the wilderness before entering the Promised Land (Deuteronomy 8:1-5). Biblically, the wilderness becomes a place where God's people are prepared, tested and disciplined and guided by God for that which is next. Therefore, the temptation narrative in Matthew 4:1-11 has provided for the church throughout history a foundation and springboard for the spiritual practices/disciplines of **solitude, silence, prayer, fasting and reflecting on Scripture**. Spiritual practices such as these are indispensable for our growth into the people God has made us to be. They give us space and God permission to guide our lives on God's terms.

As you think about the ways you want to reorient and reorder your lives in the new year, I would like to offer you a list of resources to help you grow in grace and in your understanding of God's love for you by intentionally going into the wilderness daily with these spiritual practices. Check out at

least one of these resources and begin to wrestle with the content. They will help you experience the transformation for which we all belong:

*Celebration of Discipline* by Richard Foster and *Sacred Rhythms* by Ruth Haley Barton are simply the best books I know that introduce various spiritual practices.

*The Way of The Heart* by Henri Nouwen and *Invitation to Solitude and Silence* by Ruth Haley Barton are great books that weave together the spiritual practices of solitude, silence and prayer.

*Praying with the Church: Following Jesus Daily, Hourly, Today and Fasting*, both by Scot McKnight, are two of the most practical books I know on these spiritual practices.

*Shaped by the Word* by M. Robert Mulholland teaches us how to read and reflect on scripture not just for information but for our transformation.

And finally, if you have not made yourself familiar with all the free resources **The Bible Project** offers, please go to [www.thebibleproject.com](http://www.thebibleproject.com). Their short videos on books of the Bible and biblical themes are second to none.

# **WITH GOD'S SON: FOLLOWING JESUS THROUGH THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW VANQUISHING EVIL**

MATTHEW 4:1-11

## **SOME BIG QUESTIONS...**

HOW STRANGE/UNIQUE IS THIS? (GENESIS 3, JOB 1:6-13)

CAN EVIL REALLY BE THAT PALPABLE?

IS THE WILDERNESS GOOD?

DO WE ACTUALLY HAVE THE CAPACITY...?

## **CONTEXT PLEASE**

**GOD'S SON, HUNGRY?** (DEUTERONOMY 8:1-5)

**GOD'S SON, A MANIPULATOR?** (PSALM 91, DEUTERONOMY 6:16)

**GOD'S SON, A SERVANT?** (DEUTERONOMY 6:13, MATTHEW 16:13-28)

## **JOINING GOD'S SON AS VICTORIOUS CHILDREN OF GOD...**

Contemplative prayer deepens in us the knowledge that we are already free, that we have already found a place to dwell, that we already belong to God, even though everything and everyone suggesting the opposite. –Henri Nouwen

*Our Mission: Raising Up Deeply Devoted Disciples of Jesus*