



The Open Door

A publication of Aldersgate United Methodist Church
2869 Cohasset Road, Chico, CA 95973

March 2024
Phone: 530.893.8640

A Church of open hearts, open minds, open doors



**Holy Week is March 23-31st this year.
Here are how the days break down:**



Sunday March 23rd is Palm/Passion Sunday. This is the day that Jesus came into Jerusalem and was received like a

King. Please read Matthew 21:12-22, Mark 11:15-19, Luke 19:45-48, and John 2:13-17

Monday is the day that Jesus turned over the change tables and cleared the Temple Please use the same passages from Sunday.

Tuesday several things happened, Jesus taught in the Temple, He went to the Mount of Olives and gave what is known as the Olivet Discourse, and this is the day that Judas agreed to betray Jesus. Please read Matthew 21:23-24:51, Mark 11:20-13:37, Luke 20:1-21:36, and John 12:20-38.

Wednesday was probably a day of rest for Jesus after two long and grueling days. We are not told of what

happened on Wednesday in Scripture. Maybe divide Tuesday's reading up and do two on Tuesday and two on Wednesday, they are long passages.



Thursday is where things start to get somber. We call his day **Maundy Thursday**, and this is where Jesus has his last meal

with his disciples and has the Last Supper. After the Supper Jesus goes to the Mount of Olives and prays. Please read Matthew 26:17-75, Mark 14:12-72, Luke 22:7-62, and John 13:1-38.

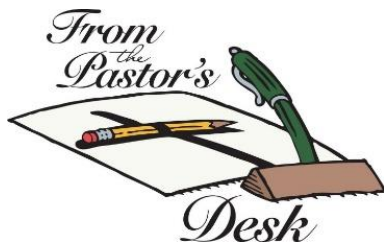


Friday, March 29, is a very busy day for Jesus. He had his six, yes six trials, was crucified, died, and was buried. **We call this Good Friday.**

Please read Matthew 27, Mark 15, Luke 22:63-23:56, and John 18:28-19:37

(More detailed biblical references on last page)





Blessings Aldersgate Church Family,

We are starting a process on how to be the hands and feet of Christ, not only in our homes and community, but in our church as well. You will see a handout Sunday mornings with the information I give you so I can get to know what you will do to help your church out.

This will range from greeting people as they enter church in the morning, ushering people to a seat, lighting the candles, reading Scripture, and there will be more options. This is your church, and I would love everyone to be involved doing something for the church. I always feel that the more the members of the church take ownership and help out at the church the more they are willing to invite people to our church.

In March we have, what I think of as the most important week of the church, Holy Week! It starts on Sunday, March 24th and goes through Easter on Sunday March 31st. My plan is to shoot a video each day of Holy Week explaining what events were happening, what Jesus was going through, or doing a daily devotion

I also want to invite all of you who have been getting the nudge from the Holy Spirit to join the church, get baptized, or remember your baptism to let me know so we can talk about it.

I hope you have a Blessed Lenten Season, and remember I recommend that you give up some time to open up your Scriptures and read about the last week of Jesus' life. You can find that in each of the Gospels here:

Matthew - Chapters 26-27
Mark - Chapters 14-15

Luke - Chapters 21-23
John - Chapters 13-19

I will also have a handout that shows you a whole outline showing you where you can find each event in each Gospel. I pray it will be a blessing for you to look at, study, and read during the month of March!

In Christ's Love,
Pastor Scott Gessford

February Sermon Schedule


In service this month we will finish up our Against All Odds Series and we will have not 1, but 2 Easter messages. They will be on March 24th, and 31st. Here are the upcoming Scripture verses so you can read ahead and be prepared for what we talk about on Sunday...

- | | | | |
|----|--|----|--|
| 3 | He was counted among the rebels
Matthew 27:15-26 | 24 | He rose from the grave
Luke 24:1-12 |
| 10 | He was led like a lamb to the slaughter
Isaiah 53:7 | 31 | The Re-Creation Story
John 20:1-18 |
| 17 | He entered Triumphantly
Luke 19:1-10 | | |

Please join us for this series as we look how Jesus fulfilled 24 prophecies during the final week of His life Against All Odds! The resurrection story is so important and powerful for we Christians that we will talk about it for 2 weeks this year!



Easter Hymn Sing

 in the Sanctuary, with the Joyful Hosannas
Saturday, March 23rd at 2:00pm

Hope to see you there! Tell a friend, Bring a friend!!

65th Anniversary party!!!!

To celebrate our 65 years in ministry we are going to have a party! That is right, we are going to celebrate the 65 years of your church life. After talking with the Leadership Team in January, we are tentatively scheduling this event for Saturday June 1st, and Sunday June 2nd!

On Saturday we will do some fun activities (we are starting to work on details now) with a barbeque AND either a chili or rib cookoff. We will invite our community, previous congregants (with your help on that), previous pastors and our District Superintendent.

As a matter of fact, our District Superintendent is planning to stay over and deliver you a message on Sunday morning! What a treat that will be, Blake always does a great job on motivating churches. Please plan on attending and listening to what God is doing in our district, conference, and denomination.

If you have any suggestions, please let us know by either emailing me or writing them down and giving them to me on Sunday. We will be looking for volunteers to help us prepare and execute the celebration.

Pastor Scott's Bible Study:

Our Lent study is on the last 24 hours of the life of our Lord and Savior Christ Jesus. This will be based on the study 24 Hours That Changed the World by Adam Hamilton and the suggested donation for the book and study is \$15 to cover the cost.

We do not want the price to hinder people from joining our study, so if you want to join us and cannot afford the \$15, that is NO problem at all. On the flip side, if you want to help cover someone else's book I would consider that a Grace Bomb to one of your fellow church family! The books will be here and I will hand them out at Bible Study, or just ask me before or after service and I would be happy to give you the book so that you can read it ahead of time!

Coffee with Pastor Scott:



Please join me on Friday March 8th from 9 am to 11 am at the Starbucks located on the corner of East and Cohasset (V's Starbucks) for coffee and conversation with me. Our record so far is January when we had 8 people come (see picture) and I don't even think we talked about church once.

If you cannot make it on Friday, please set up a time and place with me and we will get together at a different time, wherever is convenient for you!

Blessings,
Pastor Scott

Friday Night Light:

The March Friday Night Light will be a mission celebration at 6pm on Friday March 22nd! The proceeds for the month will either go to support the missionaries that we support as a church.

In 2024 during the odd months, we will have a guest speaker that will highlight a ministry that we support, or a local ministry that we can bless with our giving. In the even months we will either play some sort of game, like Bible Jeopardy, or another activity to be determined. Where those proceeds go will depend on what we need as a church

Leadership/Trustees report

Aldersgate needs You! Oh boy, do we need you.

As I look at the leadership agenda, much of it is how much we need and want you -- your ideas and your participation.

On Saturday June 1, & Sunday, June 2 we're holding Aldersgate's 65th anniversary. We're forming a team who will brainstorm ideas then make a plan for that weekend. What are your ideas? You won't have to be the hands & feet that weekend (unless you want to be). Right now, we need our ideas & voice. It's just 3 months away!!! Yikes. Please let pastor Scott &/or I know if you will help plan that weekend.

Easter is March 31st. To get the church ready for Holy Week, the Joyful Hosannas Easter hymn sing on Saturday, March 23, & Easter, we're holding a work day on Saturday, March 16 from 9 a.m. - noon.

I'm consulting with past trustee's leaders on what projects that we need to do.

There will be coffee & pastries in the morning and possibly lunch after.

Any amount of time you can help is appreciated.

The final item for this article is the 2024 budget.

At the February leadership meeting we adopted the 2024 budget of \$209,144, which works to almost \$17,500 per month. The total budget is an increase of \$2000 over the 2023 budget. Personnel costs make up almost 70% of our budget; building maintenance & utilities are 18%; the conference tithe is 10%, leaving 2+% for worship, office expenses, and education.

Increased costs/inflation are hitting each of us personally & in the business operation of Aldersgate.

The next leadership meeting is Sunday, March 17 at 11:30 after worship. Everyone is welcome to come to the leadership meeting. The first 10 minutes are set aside for your comments.

Hopefully you can see why Aldersgate needs you. The budget presents a challenge to us, and the anniversary celebration is an opportunity for us. Each one of you, each one of us are integral to our church family. It's only with all of us will Aldersgate survive the challenges, continue building relationships with each other, & provide opportunities to those who are looking for hope - the hope that comes through Jesus.

Larry Ducommun, 530-893-4464

Financial Report

With the closing of the financial books for 2023, the General Fund started off 2024 with an operating balance of \$13,622.57. In addition, the church once again paid 100% of its tithes back to the Conference totaling \$19,601.65.

To meet the cash flow reserve necessary to ensure that the church's bills and obligations are paid on time, our emergency savings account at the Interfaith Credit Union was cashed out in January 2024 and those monies, totally \$11,738.09, moved to the General Fund (not included in the General Fund balance listed above).

Total contributions to the General Fund from monthly giving for the month of January were only \$9,134.76. With expenses for January totaling \$17,760.95, a portion of our recently cashed out emergency savings had to be used to cover some of the shortfall. January ended with a General Fund reserve balance of \$20,081.52.

At the February 18th Leadership meeting, a new 2024 budget was adopted with a General Fund operating budget of \$209,144: up \$2,000 from the 2023 budget.

We continue to thank you for your prayers over the finances of the church and for all the little (and big) things you do to keep this church running smoothly.

Prayerfully submitted,
Susan Hartman, Chair, Finance Committee

Keep Up To Date...

We have started using a program called Text In Church, it is a way for you to get text messages from the church about what is going on. If you text the word Church to 530-882-3260 and fill out the form that will come to you and you will be added to the list that will get a text message at least once a week and sometimes more depending on what is going on at the church. A first-time guest can text Guest to the same number and they will go through a six week process of messages to hopefully get them to continue to worship with us. I have also added one for Bible Study (Study below), if you have already signed up on the church QR Code, I have added you to the Bible Study group as well.

But there is more.... If you scan the correct QR Code below with the camera on your phone it will make the process even easier. And if you need help with it please see me, Larry, or ask someone else if they know how to do it. I hope you find it easy to do and you are blessed in keeping up to date on upcoming messages, etc. Here are those QR Codes:



For those of you who do not text, please email me and let me know that you want to be on our email list (you do NOT need to do both or else you will get both a text and email). My email address is: pastorscottgumc@gmail.com

Blessings,
Pastor Scott

Do you have yarn to spare?

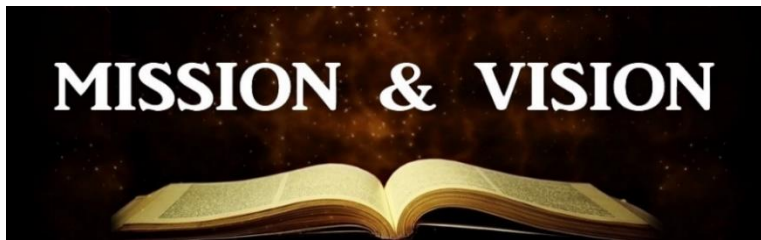
I have been making lap robes for the children at Shriner's Hospital for a number of years. About 2 years into this venture, I learned that Shriners will not accept anything made with yarn because of the "fibers" that may cause problems for the children. However, they continue to accept the lap robes and turn them over to a Shriner (and former Worshipful Master of Table Mountain Lodge in Paradise) who is in constant contact with elementary school teachers, both up on The Ridge as well as in Sacramento, and my lap robes go to children "in need". Some of these young children sleep on a concrete floor for lack of a bed, etc. If you have any yarn you would like to get rid of, I would appreciate it if you would send it my way and know that it will be used for children in need. Before I started this, I had no idea there were children who were in such need, and I've been assured the lap robes bring not only warmth but joy to these children and makes my project even more worthwhile. If you can help, please contact Peg McElroy.

Birthdays

Karen Sandrowski	3/18
Mary Marshall	3/30

Anniversaries

Scott and Clara Gessford	3/9
--------------------------	-----



,Vision Casting Results...

I wanted to write a separate article to share with you the Purpose, Vision, Journey, and Mission statements that were a result of our visioning sessions last year. Here they are:

Aldersgate UMC Mission, Visioning, and Purpose Statements:

Our Purpose- Is to build a faith community that reads, studies, and lives out God's Word as we grow in our spiritual journey.

Our Vision- To see the city of Chico Know God, To live like Jesus, and To grow in our spiritual lives!

Our Journey- To live as God has called us to, by the example of Christ Jesus, and listening to the Holy Spirit who guides us.

Our Mission- To be the hands and feet of the Living Christ in our church, homes, and community!

Our Values-

To love our neighbors. To see them as God does, not by our human understanding.

To be a light in the world. We do this today by our actions, deeds, and words.

To inspire our members and community. By living out God's grace, mercy, love, and forgiveness in our world today!

To honor God and our church. By being the example of Christ who loves everyone.

To be a witness. By sharing our faith stories and inviting people to know the living Christ.

This month I wanted to briefly highlight our Mission, which as you see is, **"To be the hands and feet of the Living Christ in our church, homes, and community!"**

We live into our Mission by doing nice things for our families, our church, and our community. One of the ways we do this is by support missionaries out in the field across the world.

We also do it by Grace Bombing people that we come in contact and sharing with them that we do it because Jesus loves them. Just because our series has ended doesn't mean that we should stop our efforts from being nice and doing nice things for people.

As a matter of fact, I want this to be one of our goals for 2024... to do something nice for someone at LEAST once a week! And I would love to hear your stories as you do them. Please email them to me at pastorscottgumc@gmail.com or you can mail them to the church at: 2869 Cohasset Rd. Chico, Ca 95973.

Blessings,
Pastor Scott

From February Friday night light



Passion Week (Events and Scriptures)

EVENT:	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
ARRANGEMENTS FOR BETRAYAL				
Plot to arrest and kill Jesus	26:1-5	14:1-2	21:37-22:2	X
Judas' agreement to betray Jesus	26:14-16	X	X	X
THE LAST SUPPER				
Preparation for the Passover meal	26:17-19	14:12-16	22:7-13	X
Beginning of the Passover meal	26:20	14:17	22:14-16	X
Washing the disciples feet	X	X	X	13:1-20
Identification of the betrayer	26:21-25	14:18-21	22:21-23	13:21-30
Dissension among the disciples over greatness	X	X	22:24-30	X
First prediction of Peter's denial	X	X	22:31-38	13:31-38
Conclusion of the meal and Lord's Supper	26:26-29	14:22-25	22:17-20	X
DISCLOSURE AND PRAYERS FROM THE UPPER ROOM TO GETHSEMANE				
Questions about Jesus' destination, the Father, and the Holy Spirit answered	X	X	X	14:1-31
The Vine and the branches	X	X	X	15:1-17
Opposition from the world	X	X	X	15:18-16:4
Coming and ministry of the Spirit	X	X	X	16:5-15
Prediction of joy over Jesus' resurrection	X	X	X	16:16-22
Promise of answered prayer and peace	X	X	X	16:23-33
Jesus' prayer for His disciples and believers	X	X	X	17:1-26
2nd prediction of Peter's denial	16:30-35	14:26-31	22:39-40a	18:1
Jesus' 3 agonizing prayers in Gethsemane	26:36-46	14:32-42	22:40b-46	X
BETRAYAL AND ARREST				
Jesus betrayed, arrested, and forsaken	26:47-56	14:43-52	22:47-53	18:2-12
TRIAL				
1st Jewish phase, before Anna	X	X	X	18:13-24
2nd Jewish phase, before Caiaphas & Sanhedrin	26:57-68	14:53-65	22:54	X
Peter's denials	26:69-75	14:66-72	22:55-65	18:25-27
3rd Jewish phase, before Sanhedrin	27:1	15:1a	22:66-71	X
Remorse and suicide of Judas Iscariot	27:3-10	X	X	X
1st Roman phase, before Pilate	27:2, 11-14	15:1b-5	23:1-5	18:28-38
2nd Roman phase, before Herod Antipas	X	X	23:6-12	X
3rd Roman phase, before Pilate	27:15-26	15:6-15	23:13-25	18:39-19:16
CRUCIFIXION				
Mockery by the Roman soldiers	27:27-30	15:16-19	X	X
Journey to Golgotha	27:31-34	15:20-23	23:26-33a	19:17
First 3 hours	27:35-44	15:24-32	23:33b-43	19:18-27
Last 3 hours	27:45-50	15:33-37	23:44-45a, 46	19:28-30
Witnesses of Jesus' death	27:51-56	15:38-41	23:45b, 47-49	X
BURIAL				
Certification of death & procurement of the body	27:57-58	15:42-45	23:50-52	19:31-38
Jesus' body placed in a tomb	27:59-60	15:46	23:53-54	19:39-42
Tomb watched by the women & guarded by soldiers	27:61-66	15:47	23:55-56	X