

Light a Candle for Christmas Eve

One of the church experiences that we anticipate this time of year – and one that many of us find meaningful – is lighting our individual candles and singing *Silent Night* during Christmas Eve Candlelight Services. While we can't recreate all of the aspects, emotions and experiences of that service virtually, we are putting together a Christmas Eve service that we hope will capture some of the aspects of gathering as a community to light candles and hear the refrain of *Silent Night*.

We are hoping to gather as many pictures of lit candles from our Aldersgate church family as possible. We are asking you to participate in this way if you can: Sometime between now and December 15th, light a candle (or two or three) in your home, snap a picture, and email it to Theresa at theresa@aldergatedsm.org. (You can also drop off a printed picture to the church office if that is easier for you.)

The pictures don't have to be of a certain kind or size of candle. The candle just needs to be lit. Use your imagination – or use no imagination at all! We appreciate your assistance in helping us symbolize our gathering together as a church community to share our light.

Advent-Christmas Reflection Times in the Sanctuary

Through January 6th, we are providing times each week when you may stop by the church for individual prayer, meditation or reflection times in the sanctuary. The goal is to provide opportunities for quiet contemplation in a sacred and special place during the holy and reflective seasons of Advent and Christmas.

We have resources available for those who may find them helpful. Masks and social distancing are required and we ask that you limit your time to 10-15 minutes. If several people are already in the sanctuary you are asked to briefly wait to enter. You do not need to make reservations or call ahead. If you have any COVID-19 symptoms or have been exposed to anyone who has tested positive we ask that you not come but wait for another time.

Staff will be in the building during each of the times listed below to let you into the building.

Mondays:	9:00 a.m. - Noon
Tuesdays:	9:00 a.m. - Noon 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Wednesdays:	9:00 a.m. - Noon 1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Sundays:	3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

***Let Us Go Now to Bethlehem* Daily Devotional and Weekly Discussion Schedule**

If you haven't not yet picked up your copy of the Advent Devotional *Let Us Go Now to Bethlehem*, we still have copies of the book available. Book can be picked up from the church office Monday-Thursday, between 8:30-12:30. If you are unable to pick up a book, please contact the church office and we will arrange to have a book sent to you.

Each week the book is discussed in Zoom discussion gatherings. The discussion opportunities this week will be on:

Week Three:

- Sunday morning, 10:45 a.m., Dec. 13
- Tuesday morning, 11:00 a.m., Dec 15
- Tuesday evening, 6:30 p.m., Dec 15
- Wednesday afternoon, 2:00 p.m., Dec 16

The Zoom link for "Let Us Go Now to Bethlehem" Book Discussion is the same for each conversation time.

<https://zoom.us/j/94523796273?pwd=ZXNqZWdscGN3eFBMbUlxS09keFVxUT09>

Meeting ID: 945 2379 6273

Passcode: 445825

You are welcome to attend whichever discussion time you choose. You do not need to sign up ahead of time. If you aren't able to attend the Zoom conversations you are still invited to pick up a book for your own personal devotions.

A New Kind of Advent Workshop

This year's Advent craft workshop will look a bit different than usual, just like everything else in 2020. We will have packets of crafts to pick up at the church beginning next week during office hours (Monday-Thursday 8:30am-12:30pm). Throughout Advent, we will be posting four videos of Christmas stories being read, and the crafts included will coincide with each story. The crafts may be completed one at a time to align with the stories as they are posted, but this is not required as any necessary instructions will be included with the craft materials. People of all ages are welcome to pick up craft materials and participate as we will have packets of differing levels of difficulty available for both younger and older "kids." If you are unable to pick up your packets during office hours, please call the church or email staff to schedule a pick-up time.