

April 20, 2018

Aldersgate Friends and Family,

Have you looked at the stream that runs through the church property lately? Someone came into my office this morning to tell me that it's overflowing. The water that comes down the hill from Newport Way is pooling at the bottom of the hill and not getting into the stream the way my informant wishes it would. There are pools of water nearby the stream. Now, there is no danger to the building from this overflowing and the fish that call the stream home are not worried about extra water on their banks. The soil is saturated with water but the hillside is stable and the road is well supported. I'm not telling you this because I want to scare you. I'm telling you this because I want you to consider the concept of overflowing.

In the letter to the church at Philippi, Paul describes a love that overflows. In Chapter 1, verses 9-11, he writes,

And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

I want to ask you to consider what a love that overflows would look like or feel like. A love that can't stay in its place expressed through your church overflows out into the community. Pools of love could develop. The two laws that Jesus named as the greatest laws are love of God and love of neighbor. Paul prays for a love of God and love of neighbor that overflow through the church into the lives of those who are hungry for a kind word, a good deed, or a helping hand. That's the kind of overflowing love that I've felt at Aldersgate since I arrived.

Paul says that love overflows with knowledge and full insight. So, I'll try to supply some knowledge and at least a little insight in this short letter. This year's Stewardship Campaign is in full swing. That means that it's the time of year when our church determines how our resources can match up with our mission through love. It's the time when we list all the amazing ministry opportunities we want to do and see how we can afford to do them. Last year's budget was an example of overflowing love. Before I arrived, you budgeted for new staff (thank you!) and continued to grow in Faith, Love, Health, and Service. You saw increasing numbers of participants in programs like the Vacation Bible School, Fall Festival, Egg-stravaganza, and Youth Group. We have worked together since I arrived to continue to make worship even more vibrant, participatory, and inspirational. We reached out to provide a safe space for newcomers in our community in the Rock Chinese Church and later blessed them on their way when they transitioned to more permanent space. We supported outreach efforts through Sophia Way, Congregations for Kids, Habitat for Humanity, UMCOR, and more. Thank you for your generosity in making all that possible.

It's time to help the Finance Team at Aldersgate make responsible decisions about the coming year's budget by pledging generously. If that limited insight is not enough and you wish for Paul's "full insight," I invite you to contact me or Melinda Lilley, chair of the Finance Team. We will welcome your questions, suggestions, and offers to help with the budget process.

Enclosed, please find a pledge card that we hope you will return on May 6 during worship. The pledge cards have a place for you to indicate your pledge for the regular Operating Budget (which is approximately \$525,000), as well as the Capital Campaign to pay off the loan for our kitchen remodel (\$52,000) that is now due. This is what Paul calls our "harvest of righteousness". A balanced budget is an indication of our priorities. The budget that our Finance Team will develop based on our pledges will show our love, our ability to let love overflow through us, and the righteousness that God seeks to develop in those touched by that love.

Take some time in the next several weeks to pray about your pledge. Pray that God's love will be overflowing at Aldersgate this coming year and for many years to come. Remember that pledges are not bills to pay and can always be amended up or down by contacting the Finance Secretary or the church office. However, your pledge is an invaluable part of planning for the future at Aldersgate, so that we can continue to be a place where love overflows.

In faith,

Pastor Laura Baumgartner



My/Our plan to give **for offering ourselves in service:**

Annual Operating Budget

\$ _____

☐ weekly ☐ monthly ☐ quarterly ☐ annually

Capital Campaign/Kitchen Remodel

\$ _____

☐ I will donate before December 31, 2018

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

☐ **Electronic Giving:** Please send information on setting up automatic withdrawals or credit card payments.

☐ **Envelopes:** Please send me giving envelopes.

☐ **Estate Plan:** Please send information on including AUMC in my estate plan.

(Please complete other side of card.)

Name _____

Please check the areas of ministry ***you would like to learn more about***, that you are not currently involved in:

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth | <input type="checkbox"/> Personnel | <input type="checkbox"/> Computer Technology |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Worship | <input type="checkbox"/> Children | <input type="checkbox"/> Mission Outreach | <input type="checkbox"/> Website |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Family Ministries | <input type="checkbox"/> Buildings & Grounds | <input type="checkbox"/> Church Library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Audio/Visual | <input type="checkbox"/> Hospitality | <input type="checkbox"/> Preschool | <input type="checkbox"/> Health |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Finance | <input type="checkbox"/> Fun Events | <input type="checkbox"/> Pastoral Care | <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor Recreation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stewardship | <input type="checkbox"/> Lay Leadership | <input type="checkbox"/> Prayer Ministry | <input type="checkbox"/> Environment / Green |

Other areas of interest: _____

ALDERSGATE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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