

END OF SUMMER REPORT 2020



ALDERSGATE
Camp & Retreat Center





DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Summer 2020 brought many challenges. The usual summer buzz was replaced by the quiet rustle of leaves, bird calls echoing through the forest, and frogs calling to each other across the lake.

Although Aldersgate was closed for in-person camp, the Aldersgate staff found new and innovative ways to keep campers connected, encounter God, and live into their most authentic selves. Aldersgate Virtual Camp, Worship At Home, and the Aldersgate Anti-Racism Education Initiative all brought the camp experience to our campers.

Aldersgate continues to be a sacred space, where everyone can feel empowered to grow in faith and build friendships, where campers practice what they learn at camp to change the world. We are making improvements to the site and programs as we expect to welcome in-person programming in 2021.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'John Spelman'.

JOHN MICHAEL SPELMAN
ALDERSGATE CAMP AND RETREAT CENTER,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



VIRTUAL CAMP

Aldersgate made the decision to offer virtual camp free of charge to the general public. While we cannot ensure all of our campers have equal access to the internet, our goal was to reach as many members of our camp community as possible without creating barriers for participation.

Our virtual camp programming was a mix of pre-recorded activities, live Zoom meetings, and Facebook Live campfires. Campers and their families could choose traditional camp favorites like arts & crafts and nature activities or use our STEM activities with online resources to supplement their distance learning curriculum.

Weekly Friday “closing campfires” were a favorite among campers and alumni, where everyone was able to virtually gather around the Aldersgate campfire and sing favorite camp songs.

Virtual Camp activities can still be found at: www.campaldersgate.com/virtual-camp



Union United Methodist Church
June 24 at 7:10 PM · 🌐

Sarah, Liam and I worshipped with Camp Aldersgate this evening. Here is Sarah's response to their worship service. #JoyfulWorship Aldersgate Camp & Retreat Center. We can't wait until next time. Beth Hajder



WORSHIP AT HOME

PSALM 100

Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness; come into his presence with singing. Know that the Lord is God. It is he that made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise. Give thanks to him, bless his name. For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations.

This year, worship looked different. Led by this summer's camp chaplain, Heidi, campers explored Psalm 100 through a series of Zoom worship services. Services focused on giving thanks, worshiping together, and reminding campers that God loves them unconditionally.

Campers and families also enjoyed at-home devotionals they can use year-round. These devotionals explored how to use everyday objects like teddy bears, bubbles, and molding clay to pray.



ANTI-RACISM



BELIEFS, ACTIONS,
MOVEMENTS, AND POLICIES
ADOPTED OR DEVELOPED TO
OPPOSE RACISM.



ANTI-RACISM EDUCATION

In response to the protests and demonstrations in support of Black Lives, Aldersgate struggled as to how we could best support our community of campers, staff, volunteers, and families.

Our staff highlighted that we would not shy away from these tough conversations while together at camp and should not do that this summer, even though we were physically separated.

As we continue to strive for Aldersgate to be a sacred space, empowering all in faith and friendship to change the world, we recognized that Aldersgate must stand as an anti-racist voice in order to uphold our mission. Anti-racism is actively opposing racism and working towards changing racist policies and organizations.

Current and former Aldersgate staff worked together to create an anti-racism video series to share with our camp community. They created videos to address questions like "What is bias?" or "What is the difference between race, ethnicity, and culture?" and shared kid-friendly videos from other organizations. They also created resources for adults to talk about race and racism with children. The anti-racism series culminated in a panel discussion with two Black staff members who shared their experience growing up in New England.

This video series can be found at: www.campaldersgate.com/antiracism



FACILITIES IMPROVEMENTS

The maintenance staff at Aldersgate took this year to complete some much needed projects.

The Dining Hall Floor was sanded and sealed to ensure many more years of gathering around the table. An added bonus - the original beauty of the floors can be seen once more!

All 13 guestrooms of the Retreat Center received new windows this summer. Thanks to our maintenance director and a lot of help from a United Methodist NOMADS couple, we were able to finish this giant project ahead of schedule. This improvement will make the rooms warmer in the winter and cooler in the summer.





2020 VOLUNTEERS

A huge thank you to everyone who helped organize and execute all the work we did this summer!

Becky Bonilla Torres

Jorge Bonilla Torres

Kaelyn Boss

Charles Brown (NOMADS)

Martha Brown (NOMADS)

Santiago Caireta Serra

Teresa Chacon

Christopher Clark

Tunde Fekete

Heidi Fiore

Phoebe Greene

Abby James-Vickery

Ashley Leonard

Scott Lynch

Melissa Moroni

Kalasia Richer

Kailyn Shippee

Rikki Spelman

Carrie Toomey

Emilio Torres-Roseberry

Ethan Torres-Roseberry

Logan Torres-Roseberry

Ila White

Maddie White

Laura Whitefleet-Smith

Alison Yoon



ALDERSGATE

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