



ALDERSGATE ADVOCATE

May 2023

MESSAGE FROM OUR PASTOR:

“Welcome Home!”

I recently joined a group of our men and went to Plymouth, MA, to watch the Herring Run. Every spring, it is said that tens of thousands of herrings from all over the North Atlantic flock to find Plymouth Harbor. They swim past Mayflower II and enter Town Brooks. They swim two miles upstream to spawn in Billington Sea. We tried to find any herrings that were audaciously swimming against the current. But the only herring we found was a dead one, waiting to be picked up by a seagull. We had fish and chips near the Mayflower and returned to our car. And guess what we saw. Tens of herrings were swimming in a herd, waiting to jump and pass the Grist Mill. We shouted excitedly, “Look at that!”

It is amazing that these herrings swim over 1,000 miles to come home to where they are born. Only one percent of these eggs survive and mature in the ocean. But they still remember their ways back home. They are determined to swim against the current for two miles and jump the ladder because they remember their home. As the school year is almost coming to an end, I hear some parents in our church who are preparing for their children in college to come home. They will come home to stay with their families. They have many stories to share from their academic studies, friendship, and adventure. What a joy it would be to be reunited with our children as they come home.

Home! What a wonderful word! It is where we belong, nurtured, and loved. Home is where we experience a sense of security, comfort, and peace. However, not everyone feels the same way about their homes. When my wife was pregnant with Joshua in 2018, her nurse asked, “Do you suffer any physical, emotional, or sexual abuse from your spouse?” As Sungha answered, “Of course not,” her nurse sighed and said, “I wish that there were more women who could answer the same.” There are many who find their home far from the place of safety, comfort, and rest today. There are also many who choose to leave their home and embark on a perilous journey in search of a new home for their children.

In my former church, we had a woman who cooked a meal every Friday and fed about 100 people. People came from many different places in their lives. Some were homeless. Some had homes but lived in poverty. Some felt lonely and came to join the fellowship. For these people, this woman cooked a good and hot meal, supported by other volunteers. I used to tell her, “You are such a good cook. I bet you can make good money if you open your own restaurant.” And she said, “This is my restaurant, and I take my job seriously.” Every week she prayerfully discerned what she would cook, went grocery shopping, and cooked meals praying that whoever came would find a home there.

That is how I often imagine my preaching. I am cooking spiritual food to nourish those who come home. There was a time when I took for granted that we Christians came to the church. However, the pandemic changed everything for me. After a long time of shutting the doors at the church, I felt delightful and grateful that anyone came to the church to worship on Sundays. Just like the herrings that find their way home by their instinct, I believe that it is the Holy Spirit who nudges us to find our way back to church after an exhausting week with our family, jobs, and other responsibilities. Our worship and fellowship give us rest in God, nourish us, and empower us so we can go back to our places for the week, being sent out in Jesus’s name.

I am looking forward to meeting and spending the summer with some of our college students who are coming home. While summer is considered “slow” for many churches, I am looking to continue to grow in my love for God and my fellowship with you all. To all who are hungry for God, who gives us divine joy, peace, and love, I am ready to welcome them by saying, “Welcome home.”

Pastor Bob

Reserve June 9, 2023, for Rev Maylis' Ordination Ceremony (NOTE DATE CHANGE)

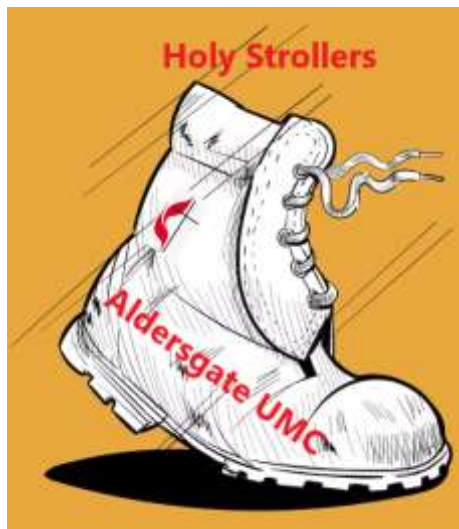
Reserve the evening of June 9, 2023. Rev Maylis will be ordained a Deacon in the United Methodist Church at a ceremony conducted by Bishop Peggy Johnson during Annual Conference at the DoubleTree Hotel in Manchester NH. We need to be represented at that ceremony in support of Rev Maylis.

We can set up car pools for those wishing to attend that session that is usually at 7 PM on Friday evening. We should plan on being at the Double Tree a bit early as Maylis says it can get a bit crazy during that time. As we get closer to the date, we will have more information. There may also be a streaming of the service and as we learn about that, we will provide that detail.

At a subsequent worship service at Aldersgate, we will be presenting Rev Maylis with a Jordan River stole in honor and recognition of this important milestone in Rev Maylis' journey with Christ. If you want to make a small donation for the purchase of that stole, make your checks payable to Aldersgate UMC but mark it with "Stole" in the notes section of your check. We don't need that much, only a couple hundred dollars, so anything left over will be donated to the United Methodist Youth 2023 trip they will be taking.

We will be celebrating Maylis' ordainment with a potluck on Sunday June 11th.after the 10:45 service. Please save the date and plan to come and bring a dish to share.

Holy Strollers



Come and hike with Aldersgate's Holy Strollers hiking group. The group hikes once a week on local conservation land in Bedford, Billerica, Carlisle, Chelmsford, Lowell, and Westford. The hikes are usually 2.5 to 3 miles or about 1 to 1.5 hours on wooded trails which often have rocks and roots. The group usually hikes on Thursday at 1:00 pm when the weather is cold or 9:00 am when the weather is hot. If the Thursday weather forecast is rain or snow, the hike will shift to another weekday. On Sunday night or Monday morning an email is sent out to the group indicating the day, time and location of the hike. The email also includes a

Google map link to the trailhead and a link to the trail map. A person from the group will meet at the church for anyone who wishes to carpool to the trailhead. You don't need to commit to every week, hike when you can. If you wish to join us and be included on the email notification for the hike or want more information contact Rick Newcomb, email: newcomb@comcast.net or Peter Smyton, email: thesmytonfamily@comcast.net.



Garden Club News

Thank you to everyone that came out to help during our recent garden work day. We had a great crew! We planted a bed of early rhododendrons and limelight hydrangeas on the side of the sanctuary. They look lovely and should add beauty to our church for years to come. The vegetable garden is well-weeded and ready to plant, and the peas are off to a great start!

It's not too late to join us for more planting in the garden. We meet as weather permits so get on our mailing list by contacting Lee Williams <v.l.williams@comcast.net>.



Here are pictures of the front gardens. Thank you to all the gardeners who designed and planted these in the fall to beautify the grounds, just in time for spring.



APPLE BLOSSOMS

The blossom is the promise of the abundance of the apple tree. The fruit and tree are the proof of the thoughtfulness of God. The legend has grown up that the tree of knowledge in the Garden of Eden was an apple tree. Despite the failure of Adam and Eve, the Lord did not leave them without hope. Christ, the Adam; and Mary, the new Eve, are often pictured with apples in their hands. Thus the symbolism of the apple is that the good God did not forget His children. It is a sign of concern for others.

-With the present abundance of apple blossoms all around us, I thought this would be an uplifting message.

-Written on the back of a greeting card received from a Christian friend in 1984.

-This 4 X 6 greeting card doesn't reflect the publisher. It does picture a colorful picture of apple blossoms on the front of the card. I will take a picture and send it to you.

From Jan Shumbata



Birthdays and Anniversaries – May

We celebrate a Happy Birthday and a Happy Anniversary for the following. When you see them, you can celebrate with them or send them a card on their special day.

May Birthdays

May 6 – Samuel R.

May 6 – Laura Brown

May 6 - Jayne Yeuell

May 9 – Diane van Buren

May 10 - Steve Johnson



May Anniversaries

May 23 - David and Dawn Jones wedding anniversary

If we have missed your big day, please send them by email, to Betsy in the office at aldersgetechelmsford@verizon.net or call 978-256-9400 so she can add your names and dates to the lists for the Advocates for the coming months. We can then recognize the milestones in your life and celebrate with you.

Updated Church Directory Contact Info

There have been a bunch of changes in our church family since our church directory was published in 2019! If you have new contact info to share, or want updated contact information of our church family – new addresses, phone number, and/or email addresses – please contact Betsy in the office.

Book Club in the Concord Room and on Zoom



On May 30, we will discuss “The Bucolic Plague” by Josh Kilmer Purcell (Robin’s pick) Let Deb know if you want to join by Zoom.

On June 27 we will discuss “On Tyranny” by Timothy Snyder, (Kim’s pick)

On July 25 we will discuss “The Keeper of Lost Things”, (Deb Teal’s pick)

Hope you all can join us! Blessings, Deb

Single Ladies Dining Out

Singles Ladies Dining Out will have lunch on **May 13th** at 1 pm at Nobo, 18 Boston Rd., Chelmsford, MA.

If you are a single lady and would enjoy a lunch out and lots of fun conversation, we would love to have you join us. Please RSVP by Thursday May 11th to Betsy Campbell 978-256-9400 or by email to aldersgatechelmsford@verizon.net.



Women’s Daytimers Breakfast Club

We meet once a month, Friday mornings at 10 am at a local restaurant for breakfast and socializing. Please contact Chantale Shepard at 978-250-9573 for more details or if you are interested in being added to the email list. We welcome new members!

OUTREACH...

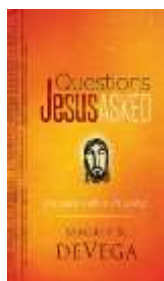
Rummage Sale May 5th and 6th

Our annual Rummage Sale will be on Friday May 5 from 3pm to 8pm and Saturday May 6 from 9am to 12pm. We will also need your help setting up and working on the sales.

Please sign-up on the sheets in foyer for set up, working at rummage sale and most important clean up. You may start bringing your rummage items to the Fellowship Hall after the 10:45 service on April 30th. **Please no electronics and no large furniture.**

ADULT EDUCATION...

Sunday Morning Class Discusses “Questions Jesus Asked”



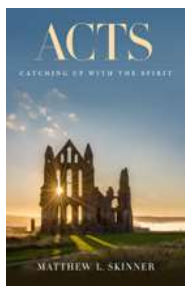
“What does Jesus want to know about us?”

Jesus was fond of asking questions, many of which cut right to the heart of what it means to be human. Why are you terrified? What do you live for? Who do you say that I am? In “**Questions Jesus Asked**”, author Magrey deVega explores six of the most provocative questions Jesus posed to others and guides us in answering them for ourselves. Asking these questions takes courage. Not only do they reveal what Jesus really cares about, they open a window into our hearts.

We all have questions for God, but growth happens when we turn things around and ask what Jesus wants to know about us. When we dare to raise them, these questions bring us a fuller appreciation for the wisdom, power, and presence of God in our lives. Are you willing to step out in faith? Are you ready to answer the questions Jesus asked?”

Join the Adult Class, held in the Concord Room at 9:45 on Sunday mornings to discuss these questions and discover more about ourselves, God’s role in our lives and those we are in community with. **All are WELCOME!** Books can be ordered online but are not necessary to take part in the class.

Thursday Morning Class



Thursday Morning Class will continue their study of “**Acts: Catching Up with the Spirit**” by Prof. Matthew L. Skinner. Come to the Concord Room at 10:00 am for discussion and discovery. We saved a seat just for you!

“The Acts of the Apostles is a unique and crucial book that chronicles the story of God’s grace flooding out to the world through the lives of the apostles in the decades immediately following Christ’s ascension into heaven.”

Violet Hopkins Memorial Library

Are you missing browsing the books in the lobby? Need to return a book you borrowed? All the materials that were in the lobby have been relocated to the main library downstairs. You can find fiction titles in the Concord Room rack. Parenting help, prayer books, devotionals, comfy chairs, tea and so much more are waiting for you in the Violet Hopkins Memorial Library downstairs. **You are welcome to explore or reflect there anytime.**



If you’d like to check out a book from the basement library, remove the card from the back of the book and add your name to it. Place it in the floral box. If there isn’t a card in the back of the book, please find a fresh card in the floral box, add the title of the book and your name to it and place it back in the box. Return the book when you are finished to the table under the window.

Parishioners' Art Wall



The pieces on the lobby wall are on loan from our Church Family Members. This week features a piece from Charlotte Bair. The two frogs done by Vicky Vooy, are on loan from the Ward family.

Items will be displayed for short time and then will be rotated out. We invite you to share your photography, drawings, paintings, mosaic, or fabric arts that are meaningful to you and welcoming to all.

Please notify Betsy in the office at 978-256-9400 or aldersgatehelmsford@verizon.net if you would like to share your talent with the congregation for a while.

MOTHER'S DAY BREAKFAST



SUNDAY, MAY 14TH

9:00 – 10:30 A.M.

MENU:

MINI EGG FRITTATA'S

SAUSAGE

PANCAKES WITH ASSORTED TOPPINGS

FRUIT CUPS

VEGAN & GLUTEN FREE SELECTION TOO!



All donations will go towards our youth attending the national United Methodist youth conference in Daytona Beach, Florida in July. Thank you for your support!

CHURCH SCHOOL NEWS

Easter Egg Hunt Celebration!



Children's Sunday - May 21st!

Our church school classes will be participating and leading worship this Sunday as we celebrate the ascension of Jesus.

Our theme will be "Watching and Waiting!"

When have you felt close to Jesus and where would you like God to breathe His love into?

This will be our last church school class time until the fall!



Summer Camp Programs

The New England Conference offers many summer camping opportunities for all ages. Please visit this website: www.neumc.org/campsandretreatcenters to find out more information. There are scholarships available to all children and youth who attend a camp program, thanks to our Doris Miller Camp Scholarship Fund. Please see Cheryl Ortolf if you have any questions.



JUNIOR YOUTH UPCOMING EVENTS!

5th – 8th graders

This fellowship group is for youth in grades 5th – 8th grade. Friends are always welcome!

Friendships

Friday, May 12th 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

5th – 8th grade

We will talk about friends and what a friendship should be as part of God's family. Bring a friend and a snack to share.

Great Brook Picnic

Sunday, May 21st from noon – 2 p.m.

The senior and junior youth will go to Great Brook in Carlisle for a picnic and ice cream. Friends are always welcome!

SENIOR YOUTH UPCOMING EVENTS!

All youth in grades 9 – 12 are welcome to join us at any time. The 7th & 8th graders will join us for some activities.

We ALWAYS welcome friends and remember you are an important part of this group!

Mother's Day Breakfast

Sunday, May 14th from 8:00 – 10:30 a.m.

Come help cook and serve breakfast!

Great Brook Picnic

Sunday, May 21st from noon – 2 p.m.

The senior and junior youth will go to Great Brook in Carlisle for a picnic and ice cream. Friends are always welcome!

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

AUGUST 14 – 18, 2023

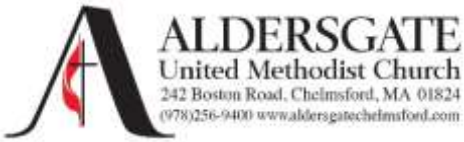


Cost: \$20.00 per child, family max: \$60.00 – make checks out to Aldersgate UMC

Scholarships are available – please see Cheryl Ortolf

Under Construction: A Habitat for Humanity Vacation Bible School is a Christian education resource that uses a construction metaphor to help children learn about community. Children will learn a Bible lesson each day, create, assemble, and produce projects which can help care for needs of people in the community or for use by Habitat for Humanity volunteers and partner families, and learn about the Bible Theme Story through play and be refreshed by a healthy snack.

Your children won't want to miss learning about how they are part of a community that helps one another! Register them today and let's get moving and help our neighbors!



VBS Registration Form
August 14 – 18, 2023 from 9 a.m. – noon
For children: 4 - 12 years old



Cost to register: \$20.00 per child, family max of \$60.00

Student's Name _____

Parent/Family/Guardian Name _____

Address _____

E-mail Address _____

Phone Numbers: Home _____ Cell _____ Work _____

Date of birth _____ Age _____ Last school grade completed _____

Home Church (if any) _____

Friends of your child at this church _____

Special Needs/Allergies/Medical Information/Other: _____

Emergency Contacts Name _____

Phone _____

Name _____

Phone _____

Name(s) of person(s) who may pick up this child from VBS _____

Photo Release: _____ Church/VBS has my permission to use my child's photograph publicly in VBS materials. I understand the images may be used in print publications, online publications, presentations, websites, and social media. I also understand that no royalty, fee or other compensation shall become payable to me by reason of such use.

Parent/Guardian's signature: _____ Date _____

Music Notes for May Advocate, 2023

We had a wonderful day at the 35th Massachusetts Spring Ring on Saturday, April 22. Thank you to all our ringers who participated so enthusiastically, and to all who came to support us and enjoy the concert!

Here are a few photos for you to enjoy! And look out for the Kubiks in red!
Photos courtesy of Perry Villanueva and Pastor Bob.



**Upcoming Event:
Oil paint, Acrylics,
Watercolor, portrait, Pottery**

**SAVE
THE
DATE**

Art by Mirna

Let your imagination fly

**Enhance your skill and let's go
paint together.**



**Monday, May 15th from
6:00 to 8:00 pm.
in the Grotto room.**



**All Saints Episcopal
Church.
10 Billerica Rd.
Chelmsford MA.01824**

RSVP INFO.

**978-726-3443 text
mirnacunha73@gmail.com**

**AGES 12 AND OVER.
Tickets will sell at the
entrance for \$35.00
material included!
CASH ONLY**