



ALDRSGATE ADVOCATE

October 2023

Pastoral Letter – October 2023 “Building Tomorrow, Together”

Every year, clergy and laity gather for the annual conference to worship, share reports, and support resolutions. One of the highlights of the conference is the memorial service for the pastors and their spouses who passed in the past year. One of the worship leaders read the name of the deceased, and those who have known them stand in love and respect, acknowledging how their witnesses influenced others to follow Christ. Interestingly, the worship leader also reads the names of the churches that closed that year, giving thanks to God for all the ministries to transform many lives in their communities.

The author of Ecclesiastes teaches us, “There is a season and a time for every matter under heaven, a time to be born and a time to die” (3:1-2). While it is understandable that everything has a beginning and end, it is sad that these churches closed their doors. Think about all those who gathered to worship there. All the babies who were baptized and celebrated. All the couples who were married. All the faithful ministries to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and welcome strangers. However, for these churches, their season has come to an end, with the hope of resurrection for a new church in a new form.

What about Aldersgate UMC? What season are we in today? We all know this pandemic has been very challenging for churches, let alone many changes in our lives. The most recent statistics show that 64% of churches in New England Conference have less than 25 people on Sunday mornings. Considering we reported 100 on Sundays last year, we can feel relatively good about ourselves. However, we want to be more than just feeling satisfied where we are. With the help of the BUILD initiative, we have been discerning where God is calling us in the future so that we can renew our love for God and find creative and relative ways to reach out to our community.

The name of our church is Aldersgate. It is named after the street where John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, had a conversion experience. After his failure in the missional work in Georgia, Wesley returned to England feeling depressed and defeated. On May 24, 1738, Wesley attended a Moravian meeting on Aldersgate Street. Suddenly, he felt his heart being warmed. He wrote, “I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation.” He felt the love of God, who forgave his sins and saved him from death. He became a different person. His gospel was not limited to the church. He started going out to market, field, and even mind to preach.

I believe that this is why our church is nicknamed as “church with a warm heart.” We want to be bold in proclaiming and living out the love of God, who may also warm the hearts of others. We do not wish our joy, peace, love, and generosity to be confined within the walls of our church. We want to actively share them with those who are looking to know who God is and what God has done for us through Christ. Isn’t this why the chartering members of Aldersgate started our church back in 1963? They were warmed in their hearts to start a new church, sowing the seeds of God’s love in our community.

Today, I led the graveside service for Jean Wetherell. Since it was raining, the family members gathered closer to each other under the canopy. I shared with them what a saint Jean was to Aldersgate UMC. I particularly remember her showing me pictures of her teaching little children in the Sunday school room. We are here today because of people like her felt warm in her heart and stepped up to build the church for the future. And we are here today. We discern, pray, and work together to build a community centered on the love of Christ, who touches us, heals us, challenges us, and sends us out to the world.

This is an exciting time for Aldersgate UMC because God may surprise us with God's plan that goes beyond our limited vision and plan. God may bring to us people we did not even think about reaching out and challenge us, "Will you love them and one another, just as I have loved you?" And we do this work and respond to the voice of God TOGETEHR, not alone.

Pastor Bob

Fall Schedule at Aldersgate

Worship services are offered at 8:30 and 10:45 on Sunday mornings. The 10:45 service is live-streamed and recorded for posting on the church web site shortly thereafter. **Coffee Hour** is offered in the Fellowship Hall between the services. **Church School classes** are offered in-person, downstairs between the services, from 9:30 to 10:30, for pre-K through senior high. **Childcare** for children ages 5 and younger is available throughout Sunday morning in our nursery. **Adult Education** is at 9:45 am in the Concord Room with a hybrid Zoom option for those who wish to attend from home. **Early Bird** occurs via Zoom each Tuesday at 10:00 am. The **Thursday Morning Bible study** is hybrid – Concord Room in-person and remotely via Zoom – each Thursday at 10:00 am. We hope you can join us whenever you are able!

Inclusivity Discussions to Continue

Thank you to everyone who attended our Inclusivity Info Sessions, where we described the United Methodist Church's (UMC's) doctrinal restrictions involving pastors and the LGBTQI+ community, how our New England Conference is addressing these restrictions, and what that means for Aldersgate. The Church Council will offer opportunities for further dialog and sharing of stories and perspectives as we seek to discern how we as a church family can be inclusive to all regardless of age, race, nationality, ethnic background, gender, sexuality, ability, and physical appearance. We seek your feedback on how you would like these discussions to be conducted. If you are willing to share, in a small group setting, how you or a friend or loved one has been impacted by being marginalized, we would love to hear from you! Please contact Peter Smyton, Council chair, at thesmytonfamily@comcast.net.

A Statement of Inclusivity, consistent with the beliefs of our denomination and its Book of Discipline, created by the Council and posted on the church web site in the Who We Are page, is below.

All Are Welcome at Aldersgate

As a United Methodist congregation, we affirm that all persons are individuals of sacred worth, created in the image of God. We affirm that we are an open, welcoming, fully accepting congregation supportive of all, regardless of age, race, nationality, ethnic background, gender, sexuality, ability, and physical appearance. In agreement with our New England Conference Open Spirit Task Force, we are committed to safeguarding the sacred worth and dignity of all persons in our churches and communities, including those who identify as LGBTQI+ persons.

We are a church that supports every individual's full participation in the life, ministry, sacraments, membership, and leadership of the church at any level. We celebrate the blessings of gender and cultural diversity in our pastors and leadership team.

Single Ladies Dining Out

Single Ladies Dining Out will have dinner together on **Oct 14th** at 4:00 pm at Bahama Breeze, 413 Middlesex Rd, Tyngsboro, MA 01879. Please RSVP by Thursday Oct 12th to Betsy Campbell 978-256-9400 or by email to aldersgatehelmsford@verizon.net so that she can reserve a table large enough.

If you are a single lady and would enjoy a dinner out and lots of fun conversation, we would love to have you join us.



Book Club in the Concord Room and on Zoom

On October 31 is "The Measure" by Nikki Erlick, (Judy's pick)

Hope you all can join us! Blessings, Deb

On Nov 28th "The Dovekeepers" by Alice Hoffman (Robin's pick)

Ministry Fair on October 15!

Have you ever wondered what the various committees and small groups that you read and hear about do here at Aldersgate? The Church Council is sponsoring a Ministry Fair on **Sunday, October 15, from 9:30 to 10:45 am** in the Fellowship Hall. Each of the church committees and small groups will have a table with information about their purpose and activities, and you can learn about the structure and the ministries of the church in a fun and informal setting, during Coffee Hour. Come and find out what your fellow congregants are up to! If you are thinking about plugging in for a single event or something a bit longer term and are not sure how or where, or just curious about what goes on here the rest of the week, this is a chance to learn more. You may learn of an opportunity you will find rewarding! If you have questions, please ask Pastor Bob or Peter Smyton, Church Council chairperson. See you at the Fair!

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

Birthdays and Anniversaries – October

It has been a whole year of Celebrations for our Church Family.

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.

October Birthdays

October 8 - Rebecca Fipphen
Oct 13th - Betsy Campbell
October 17 - Elizabeth Fipphen
October 28 – Isabelle Cole
October 20 – Aldo Rodriguez
October 23 - Sungha Jon
October 28 - Isabelle Cole



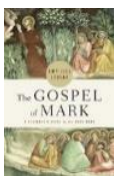
October Anniversaries

October 10 - Peter and Holly Fipphen
October 11 - Rich and Linda Regan
October 14 – Suzanne Hevelone and Lee Pender
October 15 - Bob and Sungha Jon
Oct 22 - Laura and Ray Brown
October 31 - Dan and Jane Vooyes



If we have missed your big day, please send them by email, to Betsy in the office at aldersgatechelmsford@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.

Fall Adult Study Starts Soon



Both the Sunday morning Adult Ed class and the Thursday morning Bible Study class will be using *The Gospel of Mark: A Beginner's Guide to the Good News* by Amy-Jill Levine for our fall programs. Walk through the Bible's earliest source for the life of Jesus to examine John the Baptizer, the Little Apocalypse, the Transfiguration, and several of Jesus's most notable stories and parables, as we see Jesus as divine and human, powerful and weak, approachable yet mysterious. The Sunday class meets today at 9:45 am; Thursday class at 10:00 am. Both the Sunday and Thursday classes will meet in the Concord Room and via Zoom. Look for the Zoom link in the weekly worship email or you can obtain it through the church office (aldersgatechelmsford@verizon.net or 978-256-9400).

Protestant Prayer Bead Workshop

Join Kim Ward, Melinda Goodick and friends again this autumn (date to be determined) to discover a new way to enhance your prayer life! We will spend a bit of time making a set of prayer beads and then discuss a variety of prayer practices. No experience necessary- just you and a desire to spend time with other believers.

Books on making and using prayer beads are available in the lobby and the downstairs library, or check out this website. <https://www.kristenevincent.com/prayer-beads/>

Keep your eyes peeled for beads and a cross pendant you'd like to use! Yard sales, Grandma's old jewelry, or shops like Beadles in Nashua or Michaels are all good options to find what sparks a bit of JOY in your soul. Kim has some materials to offer. Contact her to see what she has available or if you want to contribute or help in some way. mikdraw@aol.com or 978-256-2014

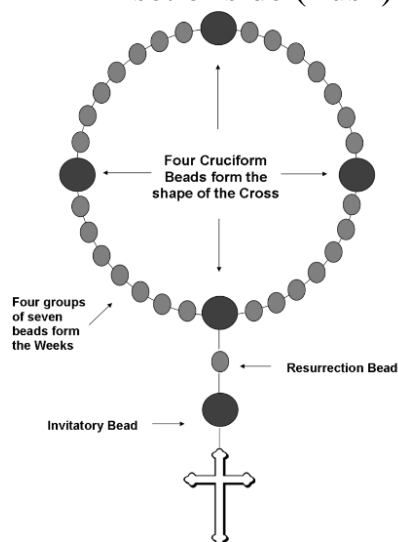
Here's a list of specific materials if you want to collect your own supplies:

Materials Needed

- 5 large (10mm – 12mm) beads
- 29 medium (8mm – 10mm) beads
- 36 seed (size #6 or #8) beads
- 1 cross or other pendant
- 2 crimp tubes (size 2 x 2)- **Kim will supply this**
- 20 – 24 inches of wire (49-strand, .019 or .018")- **Kim will supply this**

Tools Required- Melinda and Kim will have these available to use if you don't have your own.

- 1 pair of chain nose pliers
- 1 set of side (flush) wire cutters



You can also buy a kit on line to assemble with us.

<https://www.etsy.com/shop/prayerworksstudio/?etsrc=sdt>

If you don't want to make your own, you can buy a pre made set online and join us to talk about how to use them. <https://fullcirclebeads.com/> or check out the wide variety on Etsy.com.

We look forward to spending some time with you and hope you will join us for a time of creating, fellowship, discussion and prayer!

Christmas Faire and Festival

DECEMBER 1, 2022 1pm - 8pm

DECEMBER 2, 2022 10am - 2pm



Hear Ye – Hear Ye! Save the Dates and join our creative teams preparing for our 2023 Christmas Faire and Festival! Please share your plans for donations or volunteering on the Sign-up Sheets available soon. Spread the word by posting the Faire Flyers located in the Welcome Area at your office or area businesses.

WORKSHOP DAYS and TABLE LEADS: Spend some time with us between November 20 to 29 as we create wreaths, centerpieces and then transform the Fellowship Hall to welcome the community and share our gifts and talents. Unique and one-of-a-kind crafts, food and gifts – your generous donations and shopping blesses others and our church witness. During the Faire, Elves staffing the sales areas and tables support our hospitality to all our guests. To volunteer in one of the Faire areas, please contact Peter Smyton at 1-617-893-9669 or the contact persons listed below.

CHRISTMAS & CREATIVE CRAFTS: Highlights of our Craft Tables include holiday decorations and gifts, quilted and decorative crafts and an exciting collection of hand knitted and crocheted items by our talented Aldersgate Knitters/Crocheters. All gifts and contributions are welcome!

GLAD TIDINGS GREENS: The Greenery Team works all year to prepare decorations and bows for wreaths and swags – a highlight of our Faire! Starting Sunday November 20 with set up and wreath, swags and centerpiece creation November 27th through midday Wednesday November 30, we welcome all hands (no experience necessary) to decorate wreaths, create swags and centerpieces using your donations of creative containers and set up the Fellowship Hall. If you have time on any of those days, please come join us!

GREENS: Evergreens, Holly, or Decorative Tree Cuttings

On Saturday and Sunday November 18th and 19th, Faire Elves will trim your branches and greenery for the swags and beautiful arrangements we create each year. Contact the Church Office or Jim Ortolf 978-995-0614, jamesortolf@gmail.com, if we can harvest any of your greens!!

KRINGLE'S KITCHEN: If you like a busy, fun place and feeding the body as well as the soul, Kringle's Kitchen is the place for you! Our Elves prepare delicious dinner and breakfast items. Our signature dish is Aldersgate Chili! To help this team cook and serve, contact Mike Kane, 978-590-0556, mdkane@comcast.net.

SLEIGH BELLS SILENT AUCTION: Our Silent Auction offers gift and theme baskets, quilts and high quality items or services for auction. The Auction closes Saturday at Noon! If you have a donation, theme basket or talent to share with others (such as a home cooked dinner), please contact Melinda Goodick 978-256-3983 mgoodick@hotmail.com.

THE CHILDREN'S SHOPPE: Our active Jr. and Sr. High Youth offer creative crafts activities for children each year. Help is welcome in this busy and creative area! Contact Cheryl Ortolf aumceducation@verizon.net

COUNTRY STORE & BAKERY: Cookies, cakes, bread, pies, candy – this is where it's at! Slice it, dice it, bake it, taste it! AUMC Bakers are outstanding offering festive treats and sweets for the season. Sample Betsey's Scones and other delicious treats.

Betsey Driscoll 978-256-8719 betseyLLL@yahoo.com

JINGLING JEWELRY/RE-GIFTING: Share your new or barely used jewelry and holiday gift items at our Jangling Jewelry/Regifting Area. We offer a responsible way to pass it on our treasures!



CALLING ALL ELVES!

Additional help with set up beginning before Thanksgiving and clean up on December 2 is greatly appreciated! For any other general questions, contact Bonnie Marden, 978-846-1260 BonMarden@gmail.com

**Safely and joyfully we will share, prepare, shop and sing together
as we ring in the Holy Season!**

Join Us for Dinner and a Pop-up Adult Bible Study

On six Tuesdays starting October 10, we'll join the children and youth for supper and follow the meal with a Bible study in conjunction with the teaching of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The supper will be at 5 p.m. followed by the study at 5:30 p.m.

We will use Share the Dream, a six-session audio Bible study based on the life and teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. It looks at six biblical principles that shaped Dr. King's life and motivated him to speak on behalf of African Americans in the Civil Rights Movement: love, conscience, freedom, justice, perseverance, and hope. There will be a video and discussion each week.

Parents and non-parents are welcome. Please let Suzanne know by email (shevelone@gmail.com) so we need to know how many people to plan to feed, but come even if you don't!

Holiday Cards 4 Military

October 2 - 7PM Workshop in Fellowship Hall to make cards to be sent all over the world to our soldiers. We will provide everything needed and guidelines for writing a personal message inside the card.

If anyone cannot make the workshop Monday night but would still like to participate in writing to the soldiers, they can pick up some kits.

Susan Lewis and Dawn Jones



RALLY DAY!



On Sunday, September 10th, we celebrated the beginning of church school and our fall program. Our church school teachers, children, and youth came together to remember how we are all welcome!

We are blessed to have the following church school teachers this year:

PreK – 2nd Teachers: Susan Hunt, Dottie Newcomb, Wendy Xu

3rd – 5th Grade Teachers: Marlene Breen, Jim Ortolf & Arieli

6th – 8th Grade Teachers: Dave Jones and Dan Ward

High School Teachers: David Driscoll, Lee Pender and Peter Smyton



We also presented Bibles to the following children: Joshua Jon and Gideon Myers received their Beginner's Bible. David Allotey-Pappoe, Audrey Hunt, Hayden Knox, Benjamin Howe, and Aurora Myers received their NRSV Bible.

NEW MUSIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN & YOUTH!



PIZZA AND ICE CREAM SOCIAL!!

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 1ST NOON – 1:00 P.M.

All children and youth ages 4 years old – 12th grade along with their parents, are invited to join us in learning about some exciting music opportunities this fall.

We will have pizza and ice cream together and then parents will gather in the Concord Room to learn about the various music programs and the children and youth will play some fun games in the Fellowship Hall.

If you have any questions, please see Pastor Maylis or Cheryl. We hope you can join us for pizza and ice cream!

Children and Youth Supper & Singing Time

This music opportunity is for children and youth ages 4 years old – 12th grade. We will meet on the following dates this fall:

Tuesdays, October 10th & 17th from 5:00 – 6:00 p.m.

Tuesdays, November 7th & 14th from 5:00 – 6:00 p.m.

Mondays, December 11th & 18th from 5:00 – 6:00 p.m.

We will have supper from 5:00 – 5:30 p.m. and music singing time from 5:30 – 6:00 p.m.

We are hoping for this group to sing during the 10:45 a.m. worship service on October 22nd, November 19th, and December 24th at the 9:30 a.m. Christmas pageant worship service.

Children and Youth Chime Time

This music opportunity is for children and youth in 3rd – 8th grade. They will learn how to play the chimes. We will meet on the following dates this fall:

Sundays, December 10th & 17th from noon – 1:00 p.m. We will have lunch from noon – 12:30 p.m. and practice chimes from 12:30 – 1:00 p.m.

Mondays, December 11th & 18th from 4:30 – 5:00 p.m.

We are hoping for this group to play chimes in worship on Sunday, December 24th at the 9:30 a.m. Christmas pageant worship service.



**Join us for a FUN, family
Halloween Party!**

Sunday, October 29th

3:00 pm -4:00 pm

Aldersgate U.M.C.



Games, Crafts, Snacks
and Trick or Treating

Bring your friends and neighbors!



Junior Youth Events for October!

This fellowship group is for youth in 5th – 7th grade.

Our mission is to provide your youth with a safe, healthy and loving environment to help them grow and experience Christianity.

Friends are always welcome!

Scavenger Hunt!

Friday, October 13th from 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

We will go on some scavenger hunts, bring a snack to share and friends are always welcome!

Scooter Hockey!

Friday, October 20th from 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

We will have fun playing scooter hockey, bring a snack to share and friends are always welcome!

Halloween Party Planning - Saints

Sunday, October 22nd from noon - 1:30 p.m.

The junior youth will join the senior youth. We will plan our church wide Halloween party and talk about present day Saints. We will have mac n' cheese for lunch.

Senior Youth Events for October!

This fellowship group is for youth in grades 8-12. During some events, the junior youth will join us.

We are a fun group of youth who celebrate Christ's presence among us by engaging in community and group activities, church participation and mission projects.

College Care Packages

Sunday, October 8th from noon – 1:30 p.m.

Cheryl will e-mail a list of possible items that we will include in these special packages and let you know how many of an item you need to purchase. We will also talk about when we graduate from high school – what's next?

Nerf Fun!

Sunday, October 15th from noon – 1:30 p.m.

We play various games with nerf balls and learn about resiliency. We will order pizza for lunch.

St. Paul's Feeding Program

Wednesday, October 18th from 3:30 - 6:00 p.m.

We will travel to Elliot Church in Lowell and serve a meal. More details to follow.

Halloween Party Planning - Saints

Sunday, October 22nd from noon - 1:30 p.m.

The junior youth will be joining us. We will plan our church wide Halloween party and talk about present day Saints. We will have mac n' cheese for lunch.

God's Garden



The garden group usually harvests twice a week during the summer and early fall. On Wednesday mornings, we gather to harvest for the Chelmsford Food Pantry or the St Paul's dinner. On weekends, we take turns bringing in veggies to share with the congregation in the Fellowship Hall. With this schedule, we can pick the veggies when they're ready and offer them while they're fresh. As the weather gets cooler, the vegetable garden is winding down. By now, the gardeners are winding down, too, and looking forward to a winter break.

Many thanks to the Garden Group for all their faithful planting and harvesting and supplying all of us and the Food Pantry with delicious veggies. An also thank you for doing all the planting around the church to make our gardens a beautiful place.

**All are invited to attend the Troop 81 Halloween party.
Parents need to stay with their children.
Come and have fun.
October 25th from 7-8 Back parking lot.**

Games - Contests -
Candy - Cider

Questions? Contact
jointroop81chelmsford@gmail.com

SCOUT TROOP 81
INVITES YOU TO A
**HALLOWEEN
PARTY**

CUBSCOUTS WELCOME!
OCTOBER 25, 2023
7-8 PM
ALDERSGATE CHURCH
242 BOSTON RD
CHELMSFORD

www.troop81chelmsford.com



JOIN THE ADVENTURE

Be a Scout!

**Troop 81
Chelmsford**

A Linked Boy/Girl Troop
jointroop81chelmsford@gmail.com

Open House AOLs and New Scouts

- September 27 - Pioneering
- October 25 - Halloween Party
- November 15 - First Aid
- December 13 - Recruitment Night/
Ice Cream Social
7-8:30 pm

Aldersgate United Methodist Church
242 Boston Road, Chelmsford

