



# ALDERSGATE ADVOCATE

November 2023

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## **Pastoral Letter – November 2023 -“Who Is Carrying Us?”**

As many of you know, I have been traveling to New Haven every Wednesday to help teach a course in preaching at Yale Divinity School. As I sat at the classroom, I felt like traveling in a time machine, as I was sitting there as a student back in 2007 and 2008. As I went to the bathroom to wash my face and looked at myself in the mirror, I could not believe fifteen years have passed. Now, I am working as a full-time pastor. I have my family—wife, two boys, and, of course, our newly adopted puppy, Sabrina.

When you hear the word “Yale,” some of you might be impressed with the academic value of its name. When I got the admission letter to their master’s program in 2007, I was thrilled and walked around the streets in Boston, shouting, “I am going to Yale!” At first, I was full of excitement and dreams. But they quickly turned to frustration and low self-esteem. I thought that I had been an excellent student but soon discovered that I was nothing special compared with other brilliant students all gathered there.

My first semester? My academic performance was much lower than what I expected. When I sat with my academic advisor to complain about my mediocre grades, she responded, “Bob, do you know where you are right now? You are at Yale.” I do not believe that it was her intention, but her response made me feel like I did not belong there. I had been planning to apply for a doctoral program, but I felt the door had been closed. I struggled with the lack of appetite and many sleepless nights.

One day, I got a call from Rev. Gregory Groover, pastor of Charles St A.M.E. Church in Roxbury, MA. I had been acquainted with him as he once invited me to come to his church and preach. (I felt very humbled to preach as a seminary student at a historic black church in Boston). He was coming to New Haven for a ministry conference and wanted to have lunch with me. As I shared what a failure I was, he looked at me and said, “Bob, Christ does not call you to be perfect. But he calls you to be faithful.”

At that moment, I felt like my huge burden was lifted off of me. I thought that my future depended on how well I would perform academically. I thought that my value was determined by my success and achievement. However, Rev. Groover reminded me that I belonged to Christ, who had always been carrying me in his arms. My self-worth did not come from how I was perceived by others who would praise me or criticize me. Instead, my worth comes from Christ, who calls me his beloved child.

Indeed, God opened an unexpected door for me. Out of several schools that offered me both admission and scholarship, I decided to come back to Boston University, as I was offered a position as associate pastor at Belmont UMC. Well, my failures did not stop there. I submitted my dissertation proposal, which was rejected by the supervising committee twice. I wrestled with my ministries, dealing with church conflicts. I applied for the ordination and was rejected twice, again. And yet, I always remembered the words of Rev. Groover. “It’s not about you. It is about Christ who calls you to be faithful.”

As I sit at the table with the students this fall, I see many brilliant faces with so much intelligence and a bright future ahead of them, or so I thought. I was surprised to hear their stories of struggles – depression, relationships, family, and uncertainty of vocation. I listen to them and offer my experiences and prayers for them. Now, I am grateful to God for these failures in my life so that “the power of Christ may dwell in me” (2 Corinthians 7:9). Just like the poem “Footprints in the Sand,” I believe that it is Christ who carries us all on his back, even when we feel isolated and abandoned. And I pray that no matter what struggles you are going through today, you are not alone. Christ is carrying you on his back.

Pastor Bob

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*“For God loves a cheerful giver.” (2 Corinthians 9:7)*



Dearly beloved,

Thank you for your pledge card for 2024. Your generosity and gifts will help Aldersgate to gather for passionate worship, teach our children, make disciples of Christ, and reach out to our community to share the good news of Christ through our works of mercy and love.

We want to thank you for your estimate of giving indicated on the commitment card. Despite the pandemic and economic recession, we have had amazing responses from our Aldersgate family. God has been doing awesome works through people like you. The theme of the stewardship campaign this year is “Building Tomorrow, Together”. As we believe that God has many wonderful visions for our church, we are glad that you want to be an active part of our ministries, especially through your giving.

If you have not sent your pledge cards and are still discerning in your heart, we want to share with you that your pledge cards help our church to plan more responsibility for ministries. Our leadership bases our ministry budget on the amount of giving we receive from our members. We also want to invite you to experience joy in giving to our God because God calls us all to be God’s faithful stewards. We praise and worship our God with all that we are and all that we have.

Regardless of where we are financially, God binds us as God’s family united in God’s love for one another. You are a precious child of God and brother and sister in Christ to us. We pray that we all will be blessed by God abundantly and experience joy and gratitude as we witness more growth in our ministries in 2024. Again, thank you for all you do to help us imagine and make possible many ministries of our church. We look forward to serving with you!

Pastor  
Rev. Songbok Bob Jon

Chair of Finance Committee  
Wendy Baker

## **Annual Church Conference, Wednesday, November 15 at 7pm**

Save the date! Our annual Church Conference will be in-person on Wednesday, November 15, at 7pm in the Sanctuary. Rev Jin-Yong Choi from the North Boston Korean UMC in Andover, MA will be leading us in holy conferencing in the Sanctuary at 7pm. If you are interested in attending remotely, please notify the church office and a Zoom link will be sent to you.

A softcopy of our annual report will be sent via an all-church email. If you are attending the Church Conference, feel free to print it out and bring it with you to follow along. There is a sign-up sheet in the Welcome Area: let us know if you are attending in person and if you want the church to provide you with a hardcopy. Please use the sign-up sheet to let us know if you plan to attend remotely via Zoom, or notify the church office by Monday, November 13.

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### **Inclusion Discussions**

Thank you to everyone who has participated in our info sessions and/or small group discussions over the last two months as we seek to discern how we as a church family can be more inclusive to all regardless of age, race, nationality, ethnic background, gender, sexuality, ability, and physical appearance. Please post prayers on the Prayer Wall in the Fellowship Hall for what Aldersgate will look like, and what we, as a faith community, will be as a result of these discussions. And please pray for church leadership as we discern the collective will of you, our congregation, based on our exchange of ideas. Watch for information about next steps in this whole-church conversation.

If you missed any of the info sessions held in September, the Zoom session held on Wednesday, Sept 20, was recorded and can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/8NaiqBm7br4>.

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.

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## **Inclusion Discussions FAQs**

Several people have asked questions about the inclusivity discussions that have been sponsored by the Church Council. We thought it would be helpful to answer some of the more common questions here.

### **Q: Why are we having these conversations now?**

A: Recently, some members of the congregation expressed disappointment that, while the United Methodist Church (UMC) denomination's bylaws have continued to restrict pastors from being openly gay or from officiating same-sex weddings, Aldersgate has not been openly proactive in supporting people from marginalized sectors of society, including the LGBTQI+ community. These concerns have motivated church leaders to invite the congregation to discuss Jesus' call to love all.

### **Q: What has Aldersgate done about these concerns?**

A: The Church Council created a Statement of Inclusion that is posted on the "About Us" page of the church web site under the "Who We Are" section. During the summer, Pastor Bob's sermons addressed the theme of Inclusion. In September, there were four information sessions where Pastor Bob, Maylis, Bonnie Marden, and Peter Smyton described the denomination's stance, our New England Conference's position, and what Aldersgate is currently doing. In October, a Prayer Wall was created on a rolling partition in the Fellowship Hall where you are invited to post prayers for what the church will become as a result of these discussions. On October 29, a series of small group discussions was held. We invite further ideas about how to continue to be in conversation and practice "Radical Hospitality" to everyone who enters our building.

### **Q: Can members of the LGBTQI+ community receive Communion and have their funeral at a United Methodist church like Aldersgate?**

A: Yes, members of the LGBTQI+ community can receive Communion, and be baptized and have their funeral at United Methodist churches, including Aldersgate. The current restriction on pastors is limited to officiating non-heterosexual weddings.

### **Q: I heard the church was egged recently and it was because of these conversations. Is that true?**

A: The church was egged but there is no indication it was because of these conversations. These conversations have been internal to the congregation, and it is unlikely a member is the culprit. It was only two eggs, with minimal clean-up necessary, and it appears to have been a one-time, random act. The police are investigating but have no reason to believe it was in response to anything that occurs at Aldersgate.

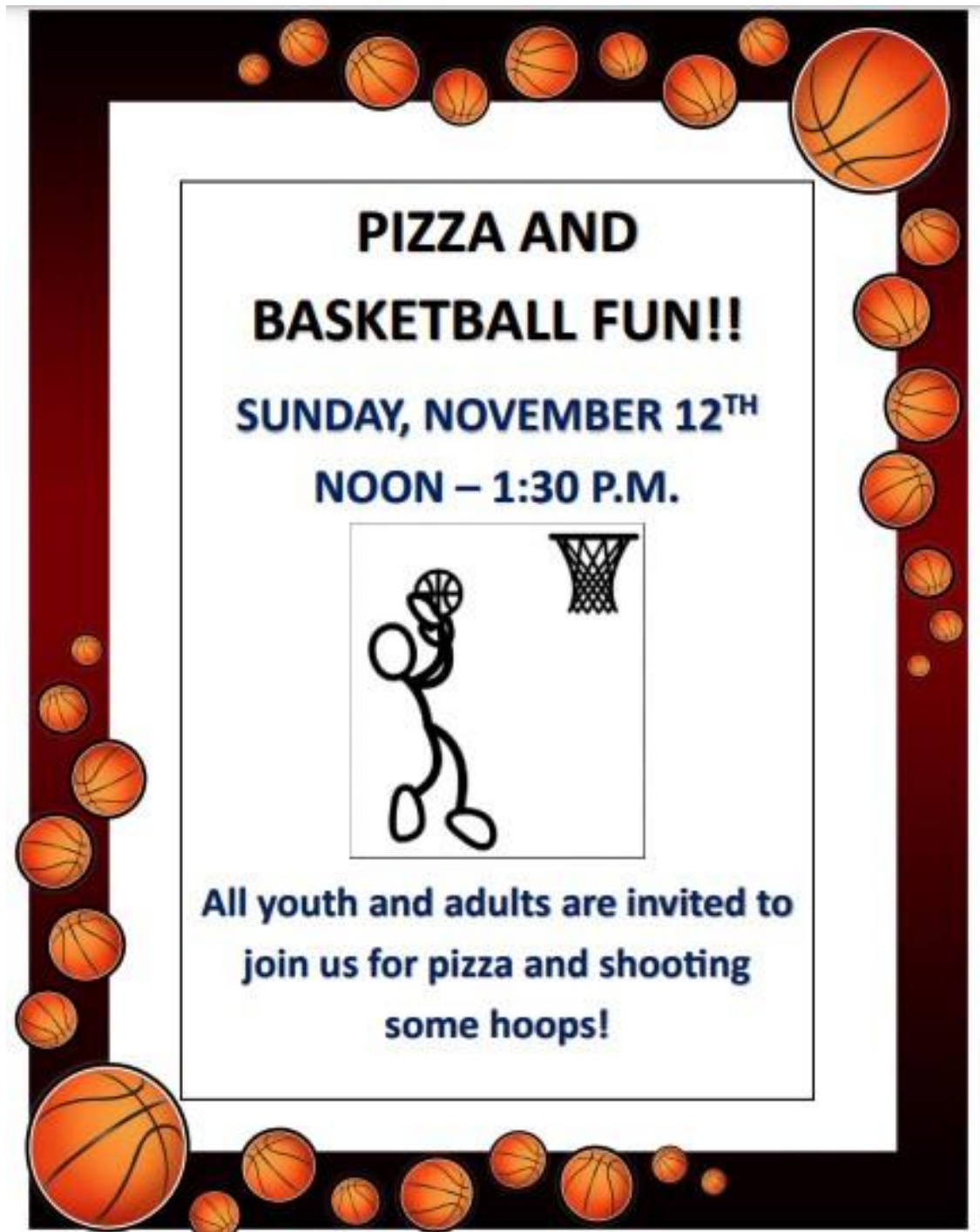
### **Q: What is the next step? What can I do?**

A: We are looking for further ways to continue the dialog and become an even more inclusive and welcoming congregation. There has been some discussion of displaying some visible symbol to the community to show we are welcoming despite the media's portrayal of the denomination. We invite ideas about how we can continue to be in conversation. If you have suggestions or thoughts to share, please contact Pastor Bob or Peter Smyton, Council chairperson.

## Still Time to Get Involved with Church Ministries


Thanks to everyone who attended the October 15 Ministry Fair, which featured over 20 small groups and church committees displaying info about their activities. If you missed it or you attended and are still mulling over if or how to get involved, it is never too late! Please contact Betsy in the office or Peter Smyton and one of us will connect you with the right people so you can learn more about the church ministries of interest to you!

If you would like to **work at the Faire** please contact Peter Smyton. If you would like to **help Greet, Lay Read, Acolyte, Serve Communion, Usher, or Count offering**, please let Betsy know. It would help to know your Name, what you would like to do, which service or both and your email and phone.



**PIZZA AND  
BASKETBALL FUN!!**

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 12<sup>TH</sup>**  
**NOON – 1:30 P.M.**



**All youth and adults are invited to  
join us for pizza and shooting  
some hoops!**

## Middlesex Community College Student Receives Aldersgate Scholarship

Last spring, the Mighty Men's group of Aldersgate established a scholarship in the church's name at Middlesex Community College (MCC). The funds had been raised via a series of golf tournaments several years ago and had grown through investments to \$8000. The scholarship of \$1000/year is to be given to a deserving BIPOC – black, indigenous, or person of color – student each fall until the funds expire. This fall, the MCC selection committee selected Ibrahim Konteh as the first recipient of the Aldersgate UMC Scholarship! Ibrahim is majoring in Information Technology – Cyber Security. He received his award certificate at a ceremony at MCC on October 24, with Pastor Bob and Peter Smyton in attendance to present Ibrahim with his award. Congrats Ibrahim! A special thanks to Dawn Jones who served as an evaluator of the applicants for MCC.



### Aldersgate UMC, Chelmsford, Scholarship

*"Receiving this scholarship has not only alleviated financial burdens but has also served as a tremendous source of motivation. It has reaffirmed my belief in the power of hard work, determination, and the unwavering support of those around me. This scholarship will enable me to focus more on my studies, engage in extracurricular activities, and contribute positively to my community."*

**Ibrahim Konteh**

**Major: Information Technology  
- Cyber Security**



**Ibrahim Konteh Receives  
the Aldersgate UMC  
Scholarship**

## Single Ladies Dining Out

Single Ladies Dining Out will have dinner together on **November 11th** at 1:00 pm at Nobo Japanese Restaurant, 18 Boston Rd, Chelmsford, 01824. Please RSVP by Thursday Nov 9th to Betsy Campbell 978-256-9400 or by email to [aldersgatechelmsford@verizon.net](mailto:aldersgatechelmsford@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. Please talk to Betsy for more information.



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## Book Club in the Concord Room and on Zoom

On Nov 7th is “The Measure” by Nikki Erlick, (Judy’s pick)

Hope you all can join us! Blessings, Deb

On Nov 28<sup>th</sup> “The Dovekeepers” by Alice Hoffman (Robin’s pick)

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## 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

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## Birthdays and Anniversaries – November

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.

### November Birthdays

Nov 2 Dave Howe

Nov 4 - Garth Brown

Nov 14 - Linda Regan

Nov 18 - Rebecca Biggar

Nov 19 - Pastor Bob Jon

Nov 28 – Jake Dean



### November Anniversaries

November 24<sup>th</sup> – Deb and Joe Benson Anniversary



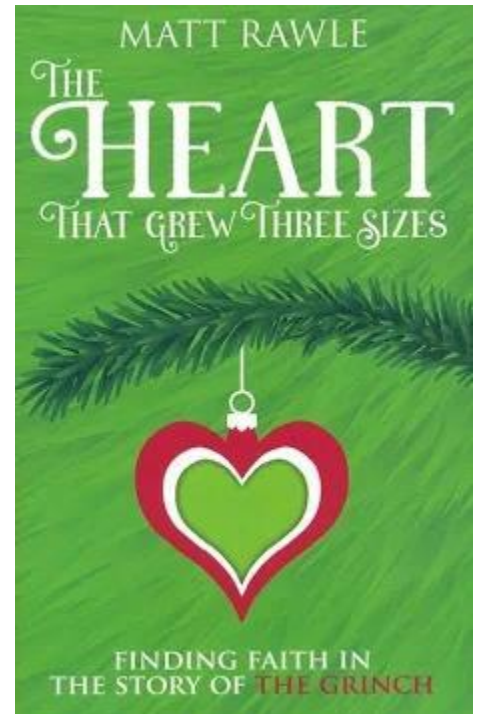
**If we have missed your big day, please send them by email, to Betsy in the office at [aldersgatechelmsford@verizon.net](mailto:aldersgatechelmsford@verizon.net) or call 978-256-9400 so she can add your names and dates to the lists for the Advocates for the coming months. We can then recognize the milestones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

## Advent Study Begins December 3rd

This year, we take a deeper look at a children's book that delights all ages in the Christmas season.

*The Heart That Grew Three Sizes: Finding Faith in the Story of the Grinch* by Matt Rawle will be the Advent material for the Adults AND some of the kids Sunday School classes.

**Rediscover the gift of Advent that comes without packages, ribbons, and bows.** We don't know why the Grinch hated Christmas. We just know he did. If we're being honest, there's probably something within the Christmas season celebration that awakens a Grinch within all of us. Maybe the gift we unwrap was all wrong, or memories that were supposed to be joyful never were. When everything seems wrong in the world, even joyful celebrations are much too loud. We don't know why the Grinch hated Christmas. We just know he did. In this new Advent study, Matt Rawle explores the faith themes in the Christmas classic, *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!* including, how did the Grinch's heart grow three sizes come Christmas morning? How did Christmas save the Grinch? Could it be that the very thing we think we hate is the one thing that changes our lives? This Advent and Christmas season, look at a familiar classic through the lens of faith and see how Christ speaks to us through our culture.



Be a Grinch and get your copy of the book at your favorite bookseller before December! We will save a place around the circle for you.

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

On four more Tuesdays starting November 7, 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](mailto:shevelone@gmail.com)) so we need to know how many people to plan to feed, but come even if you don't!



## Protestant Prayer Bead Workshop November 16, 10:00 am Concord Room



Join Kim Ward, Melinda Goodick and friends 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](mailto:mikdraw@aol.com) or 978-256-2014

Here's a list of specific materials 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")

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

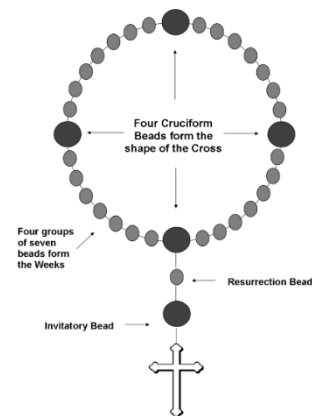
- 1 pair of chain nose pliers
- 1 set of side (flush) wire cutters

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!



## God's Garden

Despite the cool, wet weather this summer, our church garden still produced plenty of fresh, organic vegetables. Many members of the church enjoyed a taste of the produce on Sunday mornings. And here are the season totals for our donations to the Chelmsford Food Pantry and St Paul's Feeding Ministry:

16 lb carrots  
21 cucumbers  
2 eggplant  
2 bunches garlic scapes  
13 lb green beans  
2 bunches mixed greens  
12 bunches kale  
20 bunches lettuce  
14 pints peas  
10 lb potatoes  
3 bunches radishes  
4 bunches rhubarb  
5 yellow squash  
6 bunches swiss chard  
22 lb tomatoes  
9 pints cherry tomatoes  
2 zucchini

We also harvested 13 butternut squash, which we plan to donate to either the Thanksgiving baskets or the food pantry.



Thank you to Deana Peterson for donating these beautiful dahlias. Their lovely blooms graced the front steps of the sanctuary this autumn.

Thank you to all the volunteers who helped with the vegetable garden and landscaping projects this year: Chris Sargent, Wendy Xu, Jim Ortoff, Melinda Goodick, Soo Kim Lee, Jim Casiello, Justin Randall, Jake Randall, Beth Randall, Bev Turchinetz, Jay Turchinetz, Clewis Howe, Lee Williams and Pastor Bob Jon. Now it's time to put the garden to bed and enjoy a well-deserved winter's rest!

# Christmas Faire and Festival

DECEMBER 1, 2023 1pm - 8pm

DECEMBER 2, 2023 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 27<sup>th</sup> 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 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>, 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:BonMarden@gmail.com)

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

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Thank you from Maylis and Aldo and family

We would like to thank you all, again, for gifting us with a month of gratitude for our ministry here through beautiful cards and flowers. It is a joy and a privilege to be part of this church family.

Our prayers for God's abundant blessings on each one of you and your respective families.



## CHURCH SCHOOL NEWS

### SUPPER, SINGING AND STUDY TIME!



We had 25 people attend our first Tuesday evening supper, singing and study time! We enjoyed gathering around our large dining table and had pizza. The children and youth then had fun singing and the adults met to study the Bible and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. speeches about love.

You are welcome to join us in November on the following dates:  
Tuesdays, November 7<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 – 6:00 p.m.

### Food Collection for Thanksgiving Baskets

#### **Bring in items by November 12<sup>th</sup>**

The church school will once again help our Outreach committee by supplying items needed for the Thanksgiving Baskets.

Please bring in the following items and place in the brown box located downstairs in the church school area:

PreK – 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Class – Cranberry Sauce or Canned Green Beans

3rd-5th Grade Class – Large Can of Fruit Cocktail

6th –7th Grade Class – Apple Juice (plastic container)

8<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Class – Regular Rice (no instant rice)



## **ADVENT MISSION PROGRAM**

**Sunday, November 26<sup>th</sup>**

**9:30 – 10:30 a.m.**

**Fellowship Hall**

Everyone is invited to join us for this special program!

Each of our activities will be connected to one of our church's outreach focus areas and the Advent Conspiracy program of: Worship Fully, Spend Less, Give More and Love All.

**We will also reveal our Church Wide Advent Mission Focus –  
come find out what program we will be supporting during Advent!**

We are also asking families to bring their favorite holiday goodie to share – each family will have a special card to write their name on, and the item of food they brought. Everyone is encouraged to enjoy this special day together as a family!

**CHURCH SCHOOL CLASSES WILL BE UPSTAIRS ON THIS SUNDAY**

## Junior Youth Events for November!

*This fellowship group is for youth in 5<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> 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!*



### Cosmic Bowling

**Sunday, November 5<sup>th</sup> from noon – 2:00 p.m.**

**Junior Youth & Senior Youth**

We will go play cosmic bowling and eat pizza at the Acton Bowladrome. More info to follow.

### We're Number 1!



**Friday, November 17<sup>th</sup> from 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.**

It seems like everyone is obsessed with winning today! Join us for an evening of games and discussion as we learn that there doesn't have to be only one winner and a whole bunch of losers.

### Christmas Faire

**Friday, December 1<sup>st</sup> & Saturday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>**

We will offer a cookie decorating table – please bring 1 dozen sugar cookies.

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## Senior Youth Events for November!

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



### Cosmic Bowling

**Sunday, November 5<sup>th</sup> from noon – 2:00 p.m.**

**Senior Youth & Junior Youth**

We will go play cosmic bowling and eat pizza at the Acton Bowladrome. More info to follow.



### Basketball Competition

**Sunday, November 12<sup>th</sup> from noon – 1:30 p.m.**

We are inviting the women who played basketball in college for a friendly basketball game, weather permitting. We will make subs for lunch.

### Christmas Faire

**Friday, December 1<sup>st</sup> & Saturday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>**

We will offer various children's crafts. You also have the option to help in the kitchen. More info to follow.

# OUTREACH...

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## Thanksgiving Baskets

Thanksgiving is around the corner and once again Aldersgate is providing Thanksgiving baskets for 50 families in the Chelmsford/Lowell area. If you would like to help support here are a few ways:

1. Sign up to bring a frozen turkey on Nov 19. Sign-ups sheets are in the front entrance way.
2. Donate \$ in the turkey box. Again in the front entrance.
3. Sunday school children can donate dry goods and canned goods. (see the Church School News below)

Gobble, Gobble and Thank You!

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## Santa Giving Tree

Annual Chelmsford Santa Giving Tree will be up in the entrance way on Nov 19.

Tags will be hung on the tree for your selections. Christmas gifts are due by Sunday December 17.

Thank you for helping create a better holiday for local families who need some assistance. God is Good, all the time.

## Santa Fund History from Robin Knox

The Santa Fund (Secret Santa) was started over 20 years ago by a family member of mine. Her name was Maureen Perry. She was a nurse at the high school. I moved to Chelmsford 16 years ago and started helping her. I was a family in need of help many years ago while living in Watertown. My husband was laid off and we had no income. We had no food and I had no idea what we were up against. It was right before thanksgiving that this happened. We applied for food stamps but didn't get any till after Christmas.

It snowed every Wednesday that year for weeks and my oldest would go and shovel for neighbors and the money he earned he went the store and bought presents for his sister and little brother.

So this is how I pay it forward. So there is a need to have families helped out this year and if you would like to help with one gift, or buy for one child, or to buy for one family or more please contact me and I will give you a gift request for clothes or shoes a warm coat or a toy.

Or if you have a need yourself this season please contact me. All is kept confidential please send me an email or a text or a call and I will try to help your family.

All kids under 18 are welcome to get help. I will need to know there size and 1 toy wish. Merry Christmas,

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For members of the Congregation, there will be a Santa Fund tree like we had last year so that you can come and choose your gifts to get.