



Our Vision—A beacon of God’s love radiating faith, hope, and joy... Everywhere!

The Flowers on the Altar are given by Linda & Rich Regan in Memory of my dear friend Cheryl Harris, always in our hearts.

The Flowers on the Altar are given by Cate Lehan and Steve Johnson in celebration of George Cole’s birthday on December 20 and his wife Sym’s birthday on December 8 and in celebration of the Christmas season!

Advent Candle Lighting Liturgy

Fourth Sunday in Advent

Reader: God does not come from nowhere but through a people named Israel, a prophet named Nathan, a king named David, and a descendant of David named Jesus: When King David had defeated his enemies, he wanted to build a temple, as a house for God’s presence, and consulted Nathan, who said, “Do whatever you have in mind.” But God gave Nathan a different message about a different kind of house: Down to this day I have never dwelt in a house since I brought Israel up out of Egypt. I lived in a tent and a tabernacle Your family and your kingdom will be established for ever in my sight. Through an angel God speaks to Mary: You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, God will give him the throne of his ancestor David;... his reign shall never end. Through Mary, God speaks to us: My spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior, whose name is holy, who has routed the proud and all their schemes, brought down monarchs from their thrones, ... raised on high the lowly, filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. We light our fourth candle, as a sign of God’s love, shining in the world through people past and present.

(Light the fourth candle)

Reader: Living God, thank you for coming to our world.

People: Thank you for meeting us in real people, whose stories we can tell, and above all in Jesus.

Brian Wren, *Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany*, WJKP: 2008

Charge Conference at 10:30 am on December 31

We will be holding a Charge Conference after the one service, around 10:30 am, on December 31 to vote whether to approve the proposed 2024 budget. The balancing of the budget needed to be done after the Church Conference on 11/15, once the pledges were received and were compared with the proposed 2024 expenses. The proposed budget includes a 3% pay increase to the church staff. We will also vote to approve the candidacy of our seminary intern, Veejay Strama, for ministry. All church members are invited to attend this short meeting to review and vote on these two important items.

Join Us This Holiday Season

We hope you can join us, either in-person or remotely, for our services the remainder of this holiday season. The services are live-streamed (preceded by church announcements) and a link to the recording is available on the church website (aldersgatechelmsford.com) shortly after the service; live-streams and recordings include today’s pageant at 9:30 am, the 7:00 pm and 10:00 pm services tonight, and the hymn sing next Sunday.

Christmas Eve Morning, Sunday, December 24 Children’s Pageant at 9:30 am (One Service)

The church school will be presenting this year’s Christmas Pageant during the Sunday worship service for the congregation, neighbors, and friends!

Christmas Eve (no 4 pm service) 7:00 pm Intergenerational Christmas

This service will retell the story of the first Christmas in scripture and carols. It will include a time for children and conclude with the candle-lit singing of “Silent Night.”

10:00 pm Communion and Candlelight Christmas Eve

This service includes scripture, carols, a Christmas meditation, Holy Communion in the pews and the candle-lit singing of “Silent Night.”

Hymn Sing, Sunday, December 31, 9:30 am

King’s Sunday, January 7, 2024, 8:30 and 10:45 am

We return to two services, at 8:30 and 10:45 am, on Epiphany, or Kings’ Sunday. Church school and Coffee Hour are at 9:30 am and Adult Ed is at 9:45 in the Concord Room. We will be bringing forward our special Advent Mission Project gift during the services.

Confirmation Class 2024

We plan to offer the confirmation class starting from January. **Please pick up the registration form** in the welcome area and return it to Cheryl Ortolf, our director of Christian Education. There will be 8 classes this spring and 1 retreat. For more info, please see Cheryl or Pastor Bob.



Aldersgate U.M.C. Advent Mission Project

This year our church council and outreach committee has selected the Greater Lowell Community Foundation Refugee and Immigrant Resettlement Fund.

This fund will support the efforts of Greater Lowell organizations to help ensure those in need are welcomed and connected with housing, employment, transportation, food, acculturation, and other related support.

You can find out more about this organization at: www.glcfoundation.org.

You are welcome to take one of the special ornaments on our Mission tree in the front lobby area.



SEASONS BLESSINGS



This is the final opportunity for you to contribute to the Congregation Gift for the Staff:

Pastor Bob, Betsy, Cheryl O., Cheryl C., Rev Maylis, Sherri, Deana, and Mirna.

This gift is an opportunity for the members of our church family to come together in grateful appreciation.

If you would like to contribute you may do so by dropping your donation off at the church, mailing it to the church and marking it with a "Staff Gift" note, or giving it to an usher or any member of the SPRC (Roger Whitehead, Clewis Howe, Sue Lewis, Marcia Dana, Dan Ward, Angela Hughes, Jane Vooyoys, Michelle Mescall, or Ray Brown).

Thank you for your participation and may the Blessings of this Joyous Season Be with you and your family Throughout the year.

The Staff Parish Relations Committee

On Epiphany, also known as "Kings' Sunday" - January 7, we will bring our monetary gifts from the savings we have made and will offer them to support our Advent Mission: Greater Lowell Community Foundation Refugee and Immigrant Resettlement Fund.

Prayer Wall in Fellowship Hall

The Church Council recently created a prayer wall on a rolling partition in the Fellowship Hall, asking you to post prayers of what our church will look like as a result of the ongoing Inclusion discussions. The Council recently decided to expand the purpose of the wall and we invite you to post prayers on **any** topic that you wish to have other members of our church family pray about.

Big Thank you from the Bair and Swan Families

Thank you from the Bair and Swan families to those who have contributed to and sent boxes to my grandson. They haven't started arriving yet but soon there will be at least a box a week. Joyous days when the mail arrives. 55 deg. and wet. Muddy outside and in. But it will be 120 deg. in the Summer, so he is content with rain. He says "things have been very busy lately, but we are making a difference and keeping people safe here."

Advent Study will conclude on Thursday 1/4 and Sunday 1/7

There will be no adult class today 12/24 or Thursday 12/28.

Adult Ed will conclude the Advent Study of *The Heart That Grew Three Sizes: Finding Faith in the Story of the Grinch* by Matt Rawle on Thursday 1/4 and Sunday 1/7.

Early Bird Bible Application

Early Bird will not meet for the next two weeks. We will convene again on Tuesday 9 January at ten o'clock.

Flower Chart available

The Flower Chart for 2024 is now available on the board in the hallway. Please sign up for the dates you would like for 2024.

Scones available Sunday

Didn't get your fill of scones at the Faire? You're in luck! Each week during Advent, we will have two varieties for sale for \$1.25 apiece donation. Check with **Betsey Driscoll** after the 9:30 am pageant service in Fellowship Hall.

Church School and Adult Ed will not meet until January 7th. There will be no classes for either on 12/24 or 12/31

Christmas Pageant Cast

Mary: Norah K.

Joseph: Andrew P.

Narrators: Kate C., Katie F., Alex P.,
Gabriel R., Samuel R.

Shepherds: Owen C., Matthias D.,
Benjamin H., William H., Zachary M., Aurora M., Henry M.,
Christopher P., Conner R., Brent R.,

Angels: Audrey H., Leah H., Hayden K., Zoey M.,
Evelyn W., Vivian W., Eleanor W.

Stars: Daniel J., James P.

Animals: Emmy B., Owen B., Joshua J., Gideon M.,
Robbie P.



Thank you to the extra children and youth who may have joined the pageant!