

November 30, 2025

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

**The Altar Flowers today are given by Linda and Rich Regan
in memory of Amanda Allen and the 35 other beautiful souls
that perished in the Ghost Ship Fire 12/2/16.**

Annual Church Conference, Today, Sunday, November 30 at 7:00 pm

Our annual Church Conference will be in-person today, **Sunday, November 30, at 7:00 pm** in partnership with our friends at West Chelmsford UMC and Westford UMC. Please join us for shared worship and business sessions. If you are interested in attending remotely, please notify the church office or Peter Smyton by Monday, November 24, and a Zoom link will be sent to you.

A softcopy of our annual report has been 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.

2026 Church Budget to be presented at Church Conference

The Finance Committee recently developed and will present a recommended 2026 church budget at the Church Conference being held this Sunday evening, November 30, at 7:00 pm. The budget includes a 3% increase on all staff salaries. The recommended budget is, for the sixth year in a row, a deficit budget, with estimated expenses exceeding expected income by more than \$37,600. That is a deficit of 9.2%. We are decreasing the budget deficit somewhat by applying the dwindling unallocated funds that we received due to some very generous unexpected donations during the pandemic. This year, in 2025, we started the year with an even bigger deficit and benefited from the generosity of the congregation to substantially decrease this year's deficit. Please pray for continued wise stewardship in managing our financial resources to further Aldersgate's ministry!

Sign Up for Small Gatherings with Pastor John!

One way Pastor John wants to get to know us is through informal gatherings, hosted by members of the congregation. Look for sign-up sheets in the Welcome Area with the date, time, host family, and location of these gatherings. The number of entries for each gathering is the maximum that can be accommodated, so please use one line per individual when signing up, e.g., couples should use two lines. There are three remaining opportunities, beginning December 1. Depending on the demand, more gatherings may be added.

**Christmas Faire and Festival is this Friday and Saturday,
December 5 & 6**

Our annual Christmas Faire and Festival is this Friday, Dec 5, 1:00 pm – 8:00 pm and Saturday, Dec 6, 10:00 am – 2:00 pm. The Faire is an important fellowship and financial event, and we need everyone's help to make it a success! Please share your plans for donations of items to sell and soup(s) you will provide to the kitchen, or volunteer to staff a table on the sign-up sheets located in the Welcome Area. Contact Bonnie Marden at BonMarden@gmail.com or 978-846-1260 if you have questions.

Hats, Gloves, Mittens, Socks, and Toiletries for St. Paul's

Outreach will be collecting items for St. Paul's by the 14th of December. Please bring in hats, gloves, socks, and mittens as well as toiletries. There is a box in the welcome area.

Santa Fund

The Santa tree is up and presents need to be in by **December 14th**. Thank you all for making Christmas special for all the kids.

60th Anniversary Concert Available

Due to copyright licensing restrictions, we are unable to make the recording of the 60th anniversary concert held on November 2 widely available, e.g., on our church web site or YouTube channel. However, there is one copy of the video on a thumb drive and one copy of the audio on a CD that can be borrowed from the church office by contacting Betsy (Aldersgatechelmsford@verizon.net or 978-256-9400).

Directory Photos Are Here!

For those families who had Val Shupe take their photo for our upcoming directory, the photos are ready! The digital version of your photo has been emailed to you, so please let us know if you did not receive it. The hardcopy of the package you ordered is available to be picked up after each service in the Fellowship Hall this Sunday, November 30. As part of your payment for your photo package, \$400 was given to Junie's Place, Inc, a local nonprofit that provides support to families journeying through the grief of pregnancy/infant/child loss and to champion grief awareness. If you have questions, please contact Rick Newcomb (rnewcomb@comcast.net, 978-828-1455).

**You can schedule your appointment for the next Blood Drive
for December 27th from 9am-2pm**

Please sign up if you can help this important cause. There continues to be a national shortage! Please call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or visit RedCrossBlood.org and search under December 27th to schedule an appointment. For more information call or email Cate Lehan or Robin Dye or the church office.

Christmas Poinsettias

Once again we will decorate our sanctuary on Christmas Eve with five beautiful poinsettias. We will purchase larger plants that will be present for the Christmas Eve service.

We are again inviting people to make a donation toward the cost of the poinsettias in celebration of someone or in memory of a loved one (suggested donation of \$10). There is a form on the welcome desk that you can fill out and either put in the offering plate or mail to the office. You can also call the church office and leave a message and Betsy will return your call to follow up with you. Betsy will also include the form in the Worship email.

We will include the names in a printed attachment to the Christmas Eve service and will show the names on the video during part of the recorded service, if possible. We want to honor each family's preference...so please indicate your preference on the form as well. **deadline for Poinsettias will be on December 21st**

Advent Mission Program

Sunday, November 30

9:30 – 10:30 a.m.

Fellowship Hall

Everyone is invited to join us as we prepare for the season of Advent! 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!

Everyone is encouraged to enjoy this special day together as a family!

CHURCH SCHOOL CLASSES WILL BE UPSTAIRS ON THIS SUNDAY

JUNIOR YOUTH UPCOMING EVENTS

This fellowship group is for youth in grades 5th – 7th grade. Friends are always welcome!

Christmas Faire

Friday, December 5, 4:00 – 8:00 p.m. and

Saturday, December 6, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Please sign up for a time to help with the youth table on the sign-up sheets in the welcome area. We will offer cookie decorating – please bring 1 dozen sugar cookies.

SENIOR YOUTH UPCOMING EVENTS

All youth in grades 8 – 12 are welcome to join us at any time.

Christmas Faire (7th graders will join us) (fundraising points)

Friday, December 5, 4:00 – 8:00 p.m. and

Saturday, December 6, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Please sign up for a time to help with either the kitchen or the youth table on the sign-up sheets in the welcome area. We will offer a variety of children's crafts at the youth table.



Craft table request

If you have made crafts for the Faire, **please bring them in by Sunday December 1st** so that the knitting group can price them on December 1st and get ready to put them out. If you can make a suggestion for a price for your items, please do.

Christmas Faire and Festival is December 5 and 6

Faire Wreath and Swag Workshops: Sunday Nov 30 from 2 to 6pm, Monday to Wednesday Dec 1 - 3 from 10am to 4pm. Wednesday Evening set up, Thursday bake table and all item delivery starting at 10 am. Friday Faire Elves circle at 12:30.

Please contact Bonnie Marden at 978-846-1260 if you can join us in Rooms 1 and 2 and so we can update you on any updates to our schedule.

Wreaths and Swags will be available Sunday November 30! Back parking lot.

Attention Chili and Soup Makers

Awesome Cooks - (1) Chili, (2) Chicken Soup (frame?), (3) Lentil Soup.

Nothing too fancy, just your best batch Eva! See Greg Piper or reach out @ gpipes01@gmail.com Thank you for your help. Please drop it off at the Church on Thursday or Friday morning the 4th or 5th.

Calling all cooks and helpers for Santa's Kitchen

If anyone would like to help in the kitchen for the church fair - either Friday night or Saturday - please contact Mike Kane or Greg Piper.

At

tention All bakers

We are in need of baked goods for the Faire. Please drop them off at church on Friday Morning the 5th. Thank you for sharing your talent.

Christmas Faire and Festival is December 5 and 6

Our annual Christmas Faire and Festival is **this week**, on Friday, Dec 5, 1:00 pm – 8:00 pm and Saturday, Dec 6, 10:00 am – 2:00 pm. The Faire is an important fellowship and financial event, and we need everyone's help to make it a success! Please share your plans for donations of items to sell or volunteer to staff a table on the sign-up sheets located in the Welcome Area. Contact Bonnie Marden at BonMarden@gmail.com or 978-846-1260 if you have questions.

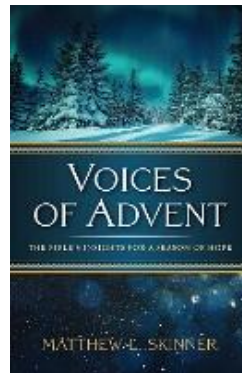
Sunday Morning Class Adult Education News

Today, Adult Education Class invites you to join the Advent Mission Program in the Fellowship Hall at 9:30 AM. Join us next week in the Concord room at 9:45 AM for our first week of Advent study.

Thursday Morning Bible study is not meeting this week because of our Christmas Faire festivities. Join us on Dec 11 to begin our Advent study. The group meets at 10 AM in the Concord Room and on Zoom. The group will resume their study of *Truth in A Post-Truth World* in January 2026.

2025 Advent Study Voices of Advent by Matthew Skinner

Advent begins today. Hurry to pick up a copy of *Voices of Advent*, by **Matthew L. Skinner**. Skinner examines biblical texts to show how they influence our lives and Christmas traditions. Through voices from Jesus, John the Baptist, faithful believers, angels, and visionaries, *Voices of Advent* guides readers to find hope in their messages and experience Advent as both the beginning of the Christian year and an introduction to the story of Jesus. This study includes short video segments to watch together and discuss. The Sunday 9:45 AM class will begin on Dec. 7. The Thursday 10 AM class will begin Dec. 11. If you can't make it to a group meeting, you can watch the videos on your own any time on Amplify Media. Call Betsy in the office for access code.



Early Bird Bible Study

Early Bird will begin the Advent series "Another Look at the Messages of Christmas" with a look at the familiar passage of Matthew 2:1-12. Particular focus will be given to verse twelve wherein the wisemen were directed to return to their country another way. This week's theme is 'Another Way.'

Be a part of these faith discussions. Early Bird meets on Tuesday mornings at nine o'clock via Zoom.

Church School Christmas Pageant - Sunday, December 21, 10:45 a.m.

The church school will be presenting this year's Christmas Pageant during the 10:45 a.m. worship service for the congregation, neighbors, and friends! Lee Williams will be visiting the church school classes on December 7 to sign up children and youth for different parts. The pageant practice for all participants will be on Saturday, December 20, at 10:00am in the sanctuary.



ADVENT GREETINGS

Our Aldersgate family wishes to extend to you the opportunity to participate in the giving of a Congregation Gift for the Staff: Pastor John, Betsy, Rev Maylis, Lee, Deana and Mirna.



Aldersgate is truly blessed with a dedicated and talented staff. The Congregation Gift is a wonderful opportunity to share of ourselves and acknowledge our love for their gift to us throughout the year.

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 (Dan Ward, Clewis Howe, Lee Pender, Steve Johnson, Jay Turchinetz, Scott Henderson).

In Christian Love and Spirit,
The Staff Parish Relations Committee

What Would Jesus want for His Birthday?



Just as the Wise Ones traveled great distances to bring precious gifts to the child Jesus, so too, we want to give gifts this Holy season that would make the heart of Jesus glad.

Again, this year, we are following the principles of *The Advent Conspiracy*:

- * Worship Fully
- * Love all
- * Spend Less on things people do not need
- * Give more of ourselves, our time, our lives



We are encouraging each other to save the money we would have spent on gifts that those we love really don't need, and instead give a life-giving gift that truly matters. This year our church council and outreach committee have selected as our Advent Mission the UMC Global Ministries *Agriculture and Food Ministry* program: the Yambasu Agriculture Initiative.

You are welcome to take one of the special ornaments on our Mission tree in the front lobby area beginning November 30.

On Epiphany, also known as "Kings' Sunday" - January 4, we will bring our monetary gifts from the savings we have made and will offer them to support our Advent Mission: the Yambasu Agriculture Initiative.



UMC Global Ministries
Agriculture and Food Ministry Program

Yambasu Agriculture Initiative

Will you join us during Advent in offering the gift of food security this Christmas Season? Global efforts to eliminate hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition are meeting more roadblocks because of the elimination of many U.S. foreign aid programs. In Africa, UMC Global Ministries is expanding the **Yambasu Agriculture Initiative** to help communities improve their food security through agricultural training and capacity building.

Named for the late Bishop John K. Yambasu of Sierra Leone, the Yambasu Agriculture Initiative works with United Methodist annual conferences and episcopal areas in Africa to lead agricultural projects that build self-sustaining communities.

Project Examples

- expanded growth of crops such as maize, cassava and rice
- cultivating seed projects to expand future crop output
- honey and secondary product sales
- poultry, rabbit and piggery projects, among others

You can find out more about this organization at:

umcmmission.org/story/food-security-from-the-ground-up-yambasu-agriculture-initiative and
umcmmission.org/work/humanitarian-relief/agriculture-and-food-security

Bring your gift on January 4, as we celebrate King's Sunday and offer our gifts of love for the world Christ loves and came to save.