

**February 15, 2026**

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

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**The 2026 Flower Chart is up. Please sign up for your special dates Feb 22<sup>nd</sup> as well as March 1 and April 19 and 26<sup>th</sup> are available. Please fill in the flower chart or let Betsy know if you would like her to order flowers for you. They are such a beautiful addition to our Altar. If you have vases from previous Sundays, please bring them in to the office to be returned to our Florist.**

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### **Worship at Aldersgate February – April 2026**

Ash Wednesday service at W. Chelmsford UMC: February 18, 7:30 pm

Lenten Soup Suppers (6:00 pm) & Laity-led Lenten services (7:00 pm)

February 25, March 4, March 11, March 18, March 25

Palm Sunday March 29, 8:30 am and 10:45 am

Passover Seder Meal: April 2, 6:00 pm

Maundy Thursday service: April 2, 7:30 pm

Easter Egg Hunt: April 4, 10:00 – 11:30 am

Easter Breakfast: April 5, 7:30 am – 10:30 am

Easter services: April 5, 8:30 am and 10:45 am

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### **PANCAKE SUNDAY!**

**Sunday, February 15, 9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.**

Everyone is welcome to join us today for a pancake breakfast in the Fellowship Hall as we prepare for the season of Lent. There will be pancakes, games and discussion about the season of Lent. There will be no church school classes downstairs for children and youth today. All are welcome!



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### **Confirmation Mentors Needed**

We are looking for mentors for the youth in our upcoming confirmation class. A mentor doesn’t need to be a trained theologian or someone who has all the answers. Rather, a mentor is an adult who is mature in the faith and can walk alongside a young person on the confirmation journey. If you are interested in serving as a mentor, please contact Pastor John or Lee Williams.

### **NE Conference Guidance Regarding Local Church Engagements with ICE**

As a result of recent events, the Methodist denomination, along with many other religious denominations, has issued guidance on how local churches should interact with ICE officers. The Church Council wants to ensure the congregation is aware of this guidance. The New England Conference has a web page with resources at <https://www.neumc.org/immigrant> that includes material from a webinar describing the rights and recommended responses to ICE engagements, along with checklists and other useful information that is periodically updated. You will see signage in the church building designating private areas that would require a warrant signed by a judge – not signed by an immigration agent – for ICE officers to enter. Staff and ushers recently received training on how to respond if ICE agents sought to enter the church, with an emphasis on knowing our rights, dealing peacefully with ICE officials, and de-escalating any confrontations. We encourage the congregation to use these resources to understand how to engage with ICE, both within the church building and out in the community. We have the following constitutional rights:

- Do not open a door if an immigration agent is knocking at the door unless they have a valid warrant to enter signed by a judge
- Do not answer any questions from an agent - you have the right to remain silent
- Do not sign anything

If you want to understand the difference between a judicial warrant signed by a judge and an administrative warrant signed by ICE, or have any other questions or concerns, or please contact Pastor John, SPRC chair Dan Ward, or Council co-chairs Peter Smyton and Roger Whitehead.

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### **You can schedule your appointment for the next Blood Drives for Feb 21<sup>st</sup> and April 18<sup>th</sup> 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](https://www.redcrossblood.org) and search under December 27<sup>th</sup> to schedule an appointment. For more information call or email Cate Lehan or Robin Dye or the church office.

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### **Early Bird Bible Study**

As Early Bird winds down the current sessions on God's will and God's kingdom (Matthew 6:10), this week we will turn again to God's will. We shall examine Luke 6:20-26 to better understand how to live 'under the rule of God.' Plan to be apart of this discuss on tuesday at ten o'clock. Early bird meets via Zoom. All are welcome!

## Our Lenten Journey Begins This Wednesday, February 18

The Ash Wednesday service is a joint service with our brothers and sisters at West Chelmsford UMC this Wednesday, February 18, at 7:30 pm at WCUMC, 242 Main St., Chelmsford. Pastor John will co-officiate with Pastor Geisa of West Chelmsford UMC.

The service will be available via Zoom be using the link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85623639987?pwd=OEd2cnNYdUJWZGQreXorV0ZhNm5rZz09>

If you are joining the service by telephone, please use the following: Phone #: (301) 715-8592, Meeting ID: 856 2363 9987, Passcode: 799295.

Wednesday evening in-person soup suppers and worship led by one of our church family members will return this year, beginning on February 25. The suppers will be held at 6:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall, followed by the ~ 30-minute service in the sanctuary at 7:00 pm. If you want to help provide soup for one or more weeks, please contact Betsey Driscoll ([betseylll@yahoo.com](mailto:betseylll@yahoo.com)). The worship theme this year is “Prayer.” If you are interested in offering one of the worship reflections, please contact Pastor John or the church office. Pastor John has resources available to help you prepare. Each week’s service will be live-streamed and recorded.

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## New Grief Share Group starting Wednesday February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2026

On February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2026 we will start another GriefShare grief support group. Feel free to contact Pastor John Whitley at [john.b.whitley78@gmail.com](mailto:john.b.whitley78@gmail.com) or 703-303-3603 or our two facilitators, Marcia Dana or Chris Sargent. If you have questions or would like more information please visit [griefshare.org](http://griefshare.org). Please join us on Wednesdays 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm (in-person only). Starting Date: February 25, 2026, Place: Concord Room at Aldersgate United Methodist Church, 242 Boston Rd. Chelmsford, MA 01824

GriefShare is a safe, welcoming place where people understand the difficult emotions of grief. Over 13 weeks, you’ll find relief and comfort as you learn what to expect in the days ahead and how to navigate your personal grief process. Since there are no neat, orderly stages of grief, you’ll learn helpful ways of coping with grief, in all its unpredictability—and gain solid support each step of the way.

Topics include how to manage grief-related emotions such as loneliness, anxiety, sadness, anger, and regret; how to cope with the changes in your life and relationships; how to recognize what’s normal in grief; and what to do if you feel stuck or hopeless.

At a weekly GriefShare meeting, you will view a video featuring respected counselors, teachers, and healthcare professionals on grief-related topics. After that is a small-group discussion for sharing, support, and personal application of what you learned on the video. You will receive a participant guide with exercises to help you through your individual grief process. The cost for this guide is \$10, scholarships are available.

## Scout Sunday and Troop 81 Pancake Breakfast on March 8

We will celebrate Scout Sunday on March 8, and recognize the committed youth and adults involved in scouting organizations that day. Scouts and adult leaders are encouraged to wear their scout uniform. On Scout Sunday, Troop 81 will hold a pancake breakfast fundraiser in the Fellowship Hall 8:00 am – 11:00 am. They will be serving pancakes, butter/syrup, fruit, coffee, tea, and juice for a suggested donation of \$10 per person, \$8 for senior citizens/kids under 5. Those of us who just want to participate in our usual “Coffee Hour” that day are welcome to attend and enjoy coffee, tea, and juice for a voluntary nominal free-will donation. They hope you all enjoyed this event last year and look forward to having you join them again. Fundraising events like this help fund their scouting activities like attending summer camp and maintaining their equipment (trailer, camping kitchens, and Klondike derby sleds, just to name a few). Look for the flyers around the church for more info!



Note: You can buy tickets using the QR code, you don't need a physical ticket because there will be a list of the names who used the QR code. If you prefer to purchase the tickets before the event please see Betsy in the office or at the breakfast.

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## Junior Youth – St. Paul’s Feeding Ministry

**Wednesday, February 18, 3:30 – 6:00 p.m. 5<sup>th</sup>–7<sup>th</sup> grades.**

The junior youth group will meet at Aldersgate at 3:30pm, then travel to Lowell to help prepare and serve a meal at Elliot Church. Friends are always welcome.

## Senior Youth - Winter Break Fun!

**Monday, February 16, 7:30 - 10:00 p.m.**

Join us for late-night 10-pin bowling at Bowlero! Please bring \$20 for unlimited bowling and shoe rental. Friends are always welcome.



## Senior Youth Meeting - Big Mouth! Taming the Tongue

**Sunday, February 22, noon – 1:30 p.m.**

We’ll make subs and sandwiches for lunch and talk about the impact of the words we speak.

## Your Donations Matter

**Thank you for your generous support of Undie Sunday. Our second annual Undie Sundie collected 611 items. Donations went to Alternative House (Shelter for victims of Domestic Violence), St. Paul's Feeding Ministry, Lincoln Elementary School in Lowell, and Lowell Wish Project (dedicated to supporting families in the Merrimack Valley, so no-one goes without essentials).**

**Outreach**

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## Super Bowl Sub Sale – Thank you!

Thank you to everyone for supporting the senior youth group's Super Bowl Sub Sale so generously. We hope you enjoyed the subs! Donations will go towards the youth mission trip this summer.

## Ashley Gilkie Community Service Trip

Ashley Gilkie, a nursing student at Endicott College and a family member of Aldersgate UMC, will be part of a ServeUp service trip traveling to New Orleans to support communities still recovering from Hurricane Katrina—especially in the Lower Ninth Ward. Ashley's team will be working with local organizations to help rebuild homes, restore native ecosystems, and support families through environmental justice work. She is looking for support from Aldersgate to make the trip possible for her group. You can donate by February 27 to Ashley and the group at:

[DONATION LINK](https://www.givecampus.com/schools/EndicottCollege/serveup-team-trip-to-new-orleans/)

or entering the following URL in your browser

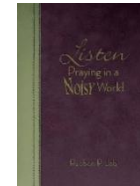
<https://www.givecampus.com/schools/EndicottCollege/serveup-team-trip-to-new-orleans/>

and click on Ashley's picture to donate in her name. Let's support Ashley on this faithful project.

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## Lenten Study: an Invitation to the Whole Church Body

### *Listen: Praying in a Noisy World*



“We live in a world of noise. Everywhere we go, we hear sounds that compete for our minds and hearts. Listening to God requires a deliberate choice to shut out the chaos around us and focus our thoughts.

*Listen: Praying in a Noisy World*, by Rueben P. Job, is a 40-day experience created to offer help to those new to prayer, those with a daily prayer routine, and those whose lives seem too busy to pray. With a focus on listening prayer and prayer as a two-way conversation, the experience will assist individuals and groups in building and deepening a personal prayer practice and spiritual discernment.

As we learn to listen, we find a new depth and fulfillment in our relationship with God and a new experience of God as guide and companion in our lives. The daily prayer pattern includes an invitation, silence, Bible reading, a story, guided time for reflecting and listening, and practical help for developing six specific prayer practices.” from Cokesbury  
Written for personal and group use, you can purchase your copy of *Listen* at any online retailer. You may find used books available as this study was written in 2014! Both the Sunday morning and Thursday class will be using this study and it may also inspire some of our Wednesday night service reflections. Classes start Thursday, February 19 at 10:00 am and Sunday, February 22, at 9:45 here at church in the Concord Room and on Zoom. Find a link in the weekly announcement e-mail. Grab a copy of the book and jump into a whole new prayer experience this Lent! Questions? See Pastor John or e-mail Kim Ward [mikdraw@aol.com](mailto:mikdraw@aol.com)