

**March 1, 2026**

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

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“The flowers on the altar are given by Mary Jean Thurlow in honor of her mother who would have turned 102 today, and in celebration of Andrea who turned 28 on Monday.”

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The 2026 Flower Chart is up. Please sign up for your special dates April 26, May 3, May 31, June 14<sup>th</sup> and 28<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 into the office to be returned to our Florist.

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

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

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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### **Update on Our New Church Directory**

All the photos and information were submitted to Color Craft, the church directory vendor, the first week of February. On February 16, Color Craft started the design and layout of our church directory. By the first week of March, they will provide our church directory proof for the directory committee to review and provide any corrections. If the review process happens as expected, we should receive our new church directory at the beginning of May. We will provide another updated status at the beginning of April. If you have any questions, please feel free to email Rick Newcomb at [rnewcomb@comcast.net](mailto:rnewcomb@comcast.net), or Peter Smyton at [thesmytonfamily@comcast.net](mailto:thesmytonfamily@comcast.net).

**Many thanks for those who gave blood on February 21<sup>st</sup>**

**If you missed this date and would like to schedule your appointment for the next Blood Drive on 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](http://RedCrossBlood.org) and search under April 18<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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### **Our Lenten Journey Continues This Wednesday, March 4<sup>th</sup>**

Wednesday evening in-person soup suppers and worship led by one of our church family members continues this Wednesday, March 4. 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. 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.

There is no signup or cost to attend – just come! There is a basket for donations.

Betsey Driscoll organizes the meal portion of the evening, which consists of soup, bread, salad and dessert. Each week, there will be three kinds of soup, including always our traditional "Rebecca's Minestrone" which is vegan and gluten free with available pasta served on the side. (No judgement from us if you or your kids only want to eat plain pasta!)

**We are looking for volunteers to help provide salad, bread, or dessert.** Please email Betsey Driscoll ([betseyLLL@yahoo.com](mailto:betseyLLL@yahoo.com)) if you can provide any of those on a given week.

**We also (always) need help with cleanup!**

Each week, we will fill pint takeaway containers that will be available to take home or to a neighbor.

Here is our tentative menu of soups; we will update it in the weekly bulletins, along with the ingredient list/recipes.

March 4:

Beef and Barley, Miso Ginger, Rebecca’s Minestrone

March 11:

Chicken and Rice, Senate Bean, Rebecca’s Minestrone

March 18:

Seafood Chowder, vegan Corn Chowder (both courtesy of Rick Newcomb), Rebecca’s Minestrone

March 25:

Zuppa Toscano, Butternut Bisque, Rebecca’s Minestrone

**On the lectern in the welcome area, there is a sign up sheet for the bread, salad and desert for each Wednesday Soup Suppers.**

**New Grief Share Group continuing Wednesday March 4th, 2026**

On March 4<sup>th</sup> 2026 we will continue GriefShare grief support group. The book that will be used for the group, has a cost of \$20. Feel free to contact Pastor John Whitley at 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.



## Easter Flowers

If you wish to provide Flowers to enhance the beauty of our sanctuary during our Easter Services on April 5th, please complete this form and send or bring it to the church office by Sunday, March 29th.

I/We wish to order:

Number of plants _____	Pastel Tulips	\$15.00
Number of plants _____	White Double-Stemmed Lily	\$20.00
Number of plants _____	Blue Hydrangea	\$25.00

**Please order as soon as possible to ensure your order can be fulfilled.**

Please indicate how you would like your dedication to read in the church bulletin:

(Please print)

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Given by:

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Please take your plant(s) home with you after the 10:45 service on Easter Sunday.

Return this form and payment to the church office or put it in the offering plate. Checks should be made payable to Aldersgate United Methodist Church, with "Easter Plants" written on the memo line. Please include payment with your order.

## 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 UPCOMING EVENTS

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

**Cards for Soldiers** (combined junior and senior youth groups)

**Sunday, March 8, noon - 1:30 p.m.**

We will make cards to send to men and women who are serving in the military.

### SENIOR YOUTH UPCOMING EVENTS

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

**Big Mouth! Taming the Tongue**

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

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



### Service Opportunity

**Saturday, March 7, 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

Join us as we meet the students from the Local Pastor's Licensing School who are spending the day at our church, practicing their preaching. We will serve them lunch.

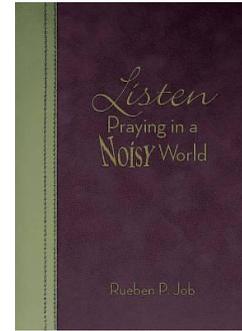
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## Lenten Study: an Invitation to the Whole Church Body

### *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. Join a class on Thursdays, at 10:00 am OR Sundays, at 9:45 am 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)

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### **Early Bird Bible Study**

Early Bird continues the Lenten Study with discussion and sharing of insights and reflections on the Scriptures of week one in 'Listen - Praying in a Noisy World.' Join in on Tuesday morning at ten via Zoom.

## **“Aldersgate Mighty Men”**

Come join the Mighty Men of Aldersgate Saturday, March 21<sup>st</sup> 8:00am to 9:30am. We'll start the morning off with the best breakfast in Chelmsford, engage in fellowship, and discuss the next era of the AUMC Mighty Men. Bring your ideas, bring your passions as we revisit our purpose and charter?

We look forward to your participation as we engage in our first meeting for 2026.

Reach out to David Driscoll, Greg Piper, Ken Teal or Ray Brown with any questions!

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### **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.