



# ALDERSGATE ADVOCATE

March 2026

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## Pastor's Column

Dear Beloved in Christ,

As I write to you in March, I hope and pray, first of all, that this Lenten season has been opening up to you as an opportunity to find the hub of your faith life again. I can say for myself that Lent always has this way of unfolding and developing and emerging toward Holy Week as its disciplines of time, silence, prayer, and distinctive tones and attitudes of gathering reveal the layered facets of this gift. It is our built-in spiritual retreat within the church year that is there and waiting for us should we choose to accept it, and I hope you have. With the world as it is right now, we need the church to be fortified and renewed and ready for our vocation.

You know, this past month or so has been quite a month for the world that we have been called to be the church within, but I want to say how inspired I have been by the United Methodist connection for the ways that we have responded and shown up. We have included in the Advocate this month a letter from Bishop Bickerton regarding how we might respond faithfully to the promptings around us in light of our different giftings, callings, and locations in life. I hope you will read that letter in its entirety—it is an extraordinarily insightful and grace-filled letter that asks us all to do some searching about where we all might be called to lend something of ourselves toward the work of the Spirit in the world today. I am also inspired by the recent gathering of United Methodist leaders in Washington D.C. under the banner of “Faithful Resistance: A Public Witness for Immigrant Justice.” If you haven’t had a chance to see that, I encourage you to. The preaching, the music, and the public witness were another powerful call for us all and an inspiring example of our church being active in the world today in light of these difficult times. You can find that on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/live/U-C5OP0fPks>).

Friends, this is a season to find our strength and grounding, as the old hymn has it, “for the living of these days.” May God grant you new feet to stand on this Lent for the living of these days.

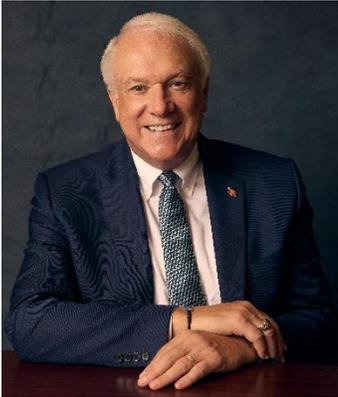
The Very Deepest of Blessings

Pastor John



A message from  
**Bishop Bickerton**

**January 25, 2026**



I write these words tonight, Jan. 24, 2026, with a very heavy heart.

Her name was Renee Macklin Good. She was fatally shot while in her SUV by an Immigration and Customs Enforcement officer on January 7 in Minneapolis, MN. She was 37 years old.

His name was Alex Jeffrey Pretti. While attempting to assist a woman who had been pepper sprayed, he was shot today by federal border patrol officers. He was an ICU nurse at a Veterans Administration hospital in Minneapolis, MN. He, too, was 37 years old.

My heart is heavy tonight, as it should be, that family members have lost loved ones and lives have been ended prematurely. My heart is heavy tonight, as it should be, because these two fatal shootings should have never happened.

But the heaviness in my heart tonight is more grievous because, in all likelihood, in just a few days or weeks, there will be another name on this list. And then another. And another.

Should I write a letter every time this happens? Perhaps I should. But letters penned from the comfort of my home seem all too shallow and ineffective. The words quickly fade as the stories of unjust and unnecessary acts of violence continue all around us. There must be something more.

Last week I had a conversation with Massachusetts Governor Maura Healey. Our conversation centered on all that is going wrong around us but, more importantly, we talked about how we might find creative ways to unite church and state to mobilize our people and meet the needs of the most vulnerable. It was a necessary conversation, and we pledged to have more—quickly. It was a good meeting. But there must be something more.

Not long ago I found myself in a conversation with another high ranking and experienced politician. We expressed mutual frustration over the very loud silence and ineffective pushback by politicians who oppose what's taking place in our country. I posed a critical but simple and genuine question: Where will the difference be made?

Their answer was also very simple and genuine: If we wait for high-ranking politicians to try to institute the changes necessary, we will find ourselves simply waiting and becoming more frustrated by the silence and the inaction. The answer, they said, is in a movement from the

bottom up. The real change will happen when people in towns and communities and municipalities say, “*Enough is enough*,” and rise up to show how much they want to see a different country, a different world.

Tonight, I write an open letter to the people of the New Hope Episcopal Area, the churches, the clergy, and the laity of New England and New York. This is not a statement or a position paper. It is a challenge.

Some of us are protestors. Some of you do it well. It comes naturally to you to participate in organized protests. It is an important action, and it is time for towns and communities to show how many of us are unhappy with the way things are. Training in non-violent resistance is critical and approaching protesting with the right objective in mind is essential. We must bring the core values of who we are as United Methodist Christians, finding ways, clear and intentional ways, to protest in love. Anything less than that is just what some are hoping for – chaos, unrest, and a reason to limit our rights and freedoms. If you protest, do it the right way and consider doing it now. But it’s not enough.

Some of us are providers. Some of you do it well. It comes naturally to you. In nearly every town in this Northeast corridor there is someone who is afraid, so afraid that they do not come out. They are not working or grocery shopping or attending school. They fear their home will be invaded and are terrified every time a whistle blows. They need someone to know their name, someone to have empathy, someone who is willing to help provide for their basic needs. Someone to be a friend. These personal connections offer a sense of hope amid great fear. Every church has some capacity to collect food, cook food, deliver food, take a child to school, check on a neighbor, and make a difference. If you are a provider, provide, and consider doing it now. But it’s not enough.

Some of us are community organizers. Some of you do it well. It comes naturally to you. The ability to pull communities together from different denominations or individual agencies is of critical importance in these days of uncertainty and fear. To embrace the concept that we are stronger together is to pool our passions and our resources in a way that will provide a greater impact for the people who need it most. The need is glaring in some settings, more subdued in others, but it is present everywhere. If you are a community organizer, organize, and consider doing it now. But it’s not enough.

Some of us are pray-ers. Some of you do it well. It comes naturally to you. Believing in and evoking the presence of God during times when there are few or no answers is of critical importance. In my last local church, one of our most influential leaders suffered a crippling stroke. When I visited with her, she lamented over how she would not be available to our church in what was a critical time for leadership. In our conversation I reminded her that perhaps her role was changing and that she could become our chief “intercessor” in prayer. She had the capacity to pray us through. And she did. I am convinced that her prayers bolstered and blessed the leaders of that church at one of the most important times in our history. If your gift is praying, it is time for you to pray, intentionally pray, and consider doing it now. But it’s not enough.

All of us are residents of the United States of America. Those of you that are happy with the current state of affairs will not appreciate this letter. Perhaps you have already stopped reading it.

But for those of you who are not happy with the way things are going, it is time for us to do something that is of critical importance. Whether we are Democrat or Republican, progressive or moderate or conservative it is time to declare that something is not right in our country.

Any time that anyone anywhere is shot, whether by an ICE official or a mass shooter, something is wrong. Any time injustice emerges, pain is inflicted, harm is done, there will be debate and disagreement. But here's the bottom line: If you do not agree with the current direction of our country, dividing ourselves politically and theologically will not help. We must demonstrate to ourselves and to the world that different people who think differently can work together for the common good. If you are a resident, it is time for us to say, "*Enough is enough*" and pull together to make a difference now when a difference is desperately needed.

Throughout this letter I have said that any particular step by itself is not enough. It's not enough because we need everyone's gifts and abilities to impact the change we long for.

Protesters criticize those that pray and those that pray criticize those that organize. Providers are called naïve and politicians are accused of being cynical. And I believe that's just what some want – disagreement, chaos, and disunity. As long as that continues internally, the change so many of us long for externally will never take place.

Please do not point the finger at those who respond in different ways. Point the finger at the problem and stay centered on the issue. Focus intentionally on how your gifts can be used in collaboration with others to get the job done. That's leadership. That's focus. That sets the stage for making a difference. That's embracing the reality that none of us can solve this alone. But together we might just stand a chance to recreate a "*more perfect union*" that, as the founders of our country wrote, "*would establish justice, ensure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity.*"

That's not unlike what Jesus himself prayed, "*The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one. I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.*" (John 17:22-33)

Hearts are heavy this night. But in the midst of our heaviness, let us band together as one body, bound in purpose, conviction, and love to make the difference we can make.

The Journey Continues, . . .

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Thomas J. Bickerton". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Thomas J. Bickerton



## **Please Join Us for Lent This Season**

Each year we mark this holy season with mid-week worship with a reflection by one of our church family members, preceded by a soup supper in the Fellowship Hall. Our Wednesday evening soup suppers and worship this year continues each Wednesday through March 25. The supper 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 salad, bread, or dessert for one or more weeks, please contact Betsey Driscoll ([betseylll@yahoo.com](mailto:betseylll@yahoo.com)) or sign up on the sheet on the lectern in the lobby. The worship theme this year is “Prayer.” The service will be live-streamed and recorded.

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## **In Case You Missed It: Advent Conspiracy Donates \$8000 to Yambasu Agricultural Initiative!**

On February 1, we presented a check for \$8000 to Rev. We Hyun Chang, New England Conference Director of Connectional Ministries, towards the Yambasu Agricultural Initiative as part of our Advent Conspiracy program. Each year, our Advent Conspiracy to Worship Fully, Spend Less, Give More and Love All encourages us to set aside funds that we would otherwise spend on gifts that loved ones do not really need to instead donate to our Advent Mission Project, which this Advent season has been Yambasu Agricultural Initiative as part of the UMC Global Ministries Agriculture and Food Ministry Program. Thank you for your generosity to support food security and agricultural projects that build self-sustaining communities to our brothers and sisters in Africa.

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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 will receive training on how to respond to ICE interactions, 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. At a minimum, you 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.

## Coming Up at Aldersgate March – 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

Red Cross Blood Drive: April 18, 9:00 am – 2:00 pm

Troop 81 Pancake Breakfast/Scout Sunday: March 8, 8:00 – 11:00 am

Local Pastor Preaching Lab: **Saturday March 7**, 9:00 am – 2:00 pm

## OUTREACH...

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### You can schedule your appointment for the next Blood Drives for 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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### Single Ladies Dining Out

Single Ladies Dining Out will have **lunch** together on Saturday, March 28th at 1pm at Longhorn Steakhouse 1t 5 Harold Drive, South Nashua, NH 03060. **Please RSVP** by Thursday March 26<sup>th</sup> to Betsy Campbell at 978-256-9400 or [aldersgatehelmsford@verizon.net](mailto:aldersgatehelmsford@verizon.net) so that she can reserve a table large enough. If you are a single lady and would enjoy a lunch out and lots of fun conversation, we would love to have you join us. Please talk to Betsy for more information.



### 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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### Book Club in the Concord Room and on Zoom

March 31, More or Less Maddy by Lisa Genova, Faith's pick

April 28, Everything is Tuberculosis by John Green, Kim's pick

May 26, Betty by Tiffany McDaniel, Robin's pick

If you have a suggestion for an upcoming book let Deb Benson know. 978-604-0288



## 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.

## CHURCH SCHOOL NEWS

### Pancake Sunday!

Our church school hosted a Pancake Sunday event on February 15, the Sunday before Ash Wednesday, and it was enjoyed by all! Thank you to the youth for helping serve breakfast. We used up all the butter, milk and eggs by making pancakes, we had fun running pancake races, and we had a discussion to learn about the season of Lent.



### Valentines



Thank you to all the children and youth who made Valentine's Day cards during church school. We mailed 30 cards to our church family and friends, and we received many thank-you notes saying how much the cards were appreciated.

### Scout Sunday **Sunday, March 8**

On Scout Sunday, we encourage all scouts and leaders to wear their scouting uniforms and participate in worship by serving as a greeter, acolyte, or assistant usher. Please see Lee Williams or Betsy Campbell if you can participate.

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**Camp Sunday**  
**Sunday, March 22, 10:00 – 10:30 a.m.**  
**Fellowship Hall**



Youth and their parents are invited to learn about summer camp opportunities at our United Methodist Church campgrounds. Abby James-Vickery, Assistant Director of Overnight Programs at Camp Aldersgate, will join us to share information about the summer camp program at Camp Aldersgate in North Scituate, RI. We will also learn about Camp Wanakee in Meredith NH and Camp Mechuwana in Winthrop ME. There are brochures for [Camp Wanakee](#), [Camp Mechuwana](#), and [Camp Aldersgate](#) downstairs. Scholarships are available from the Doris Miller Camp Scholarship Fund.

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**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL!**  
**Children Ages 4 - 12**  
**August 10 - 14, 9:00 a.m. - noon**

This year's VBS, "Operation Overboard: Dare to Go Deep With God," is an invitation and a challenge to dive into the waters of God's Word and discover what true faith is all about. We will learn Bible stories about people who show deep faith by depending on God, daring to care, claiming Jesus, choosing to follow, and changing the world. Kids of all ages will experience God's Word, explore and create through fun crafts and activities, music, snacks, and games.

**There will be registration forms available at the end of March.**  
**If you have any questions or would like to help, please see Lee Williams.**

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**CHOCOLATE SALE**  
**Sunday, March 29, after both services**



The youth will be selling homemade chocolate in the hall area after both worship services. This is a fundraiser for their mission trip to Mission Central in Pennsylvania.

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# YOUTH GROUP NEWS

## Junior Youth Events

*This fellowship group is for youth in grades 5<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> grade. The junior youth and senior youth will have some activities together. All 7<sup>th</sup> graders will be invited to help with the Senior youth fundraisers to earn points towards attending our mission trip this summer. Friends are always welcome!*

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

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

We will talk about service and make cards to send to men and women who are serving in the military. Dan Ward will speak with us about how meaningful it is to receive mail while deployed overseas.



### Marshmallow Night!

**Friday, March 13, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.**

Join us for a fun night of marshmallow games and activities! Wear something white!

We will need a parent helper for this meeting.



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## Senior Youth Events

*All youth in grades 8 – 12 are welcome to join us at any time. The 7<sup>th</sup> graders will join us for some activities. We always welcome friends and remember you are an important part of this group!*

### 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.

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

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

We will talk about service and make cards to send to men and women who are serving in the military. Dan Ward will speak with us about how meaningful it is to receive mail while deployed overseas.



### Chocolate Making! (7<sup>th</sup> graders will join us) (fundraising points)

**Sunday, March 22, noon – 1:30 pm**

We will make chocolate treats to sell at our Palm Sunday chocolate sale.



### Chocolate Sale (7<sup>th</sup> graders will join us) (fundraising points)

**Sunday, March 29, after both services**

We will need volunteers to sell chocolate after both services.

## Youth Mission Trip at Mission Central (7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade)

Sunday, July 12 - Saturday, July 18

Save the dates! Watch for more details coming on our trip to at the Mission Central warehouse in Mechanicsburg PA.



## Super Bowl Sub Sale

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



## St Paul's Feeding Ministry

Thanks to the Junior Youth group and their friends and family for helping to prepare and serve the St Paul's dinner in February. About 120 people enjoyed the delicious meal.





# **CHOCOLATE SALE**

## **Sunday, March 29**

### **After both services**

**The senior youth group will be selling  
homemade chocolate in the hall area.**

**This is a fundraiser for their mission trip  
to Mission Central in Pennsylvania.**



## UPCOMING EASTER EVENTS

### **Easter Egg Hunt**



**Saturday, April 4  
10:00 - 11:30 a.m.**

Join us for fun crafts, an Easter Egg Hunt and a special movie – bring your friends!

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### **EASTER BREAKFAST**

**Sunday, April 5**

**Full Course Breakfast: 7:30 - 10:30 a.m.**

**Easter Services: 8:30 & 10:45 a.m.**

***No Church School***



Vegan and Gluten Free options available.

Donations will go towards the youth mission trip this summer.

**To our loving Aldersgate family,**

**We are so thankful for all the outpouring of thoughts and prayers leading to our successful kidney transplant from Laurie to Tom.**

**We are recovering well at our gracious friend's home, Rick and Dottie Newcomb.**

**The outpouring of love, encouragement, best wishes, meals, desserts, and so much more is so very much appreciated and honestly astonishing. We are so happy and lucky to have you as our family.**

**Sincere love and appreciation,  
Tom and Laurie Kubik**

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**Dear Aldersgate Family,**

**Thank you all for your condolences on the recent passing of my dad, Dick Angel, through your thoughtful cards, phone calls, and conversations. Some of you also shared your sweet and often funny – memories of him. I appreciate it all.**

**Warmly, Jill Angel**

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### **Music Notes for March Advocate**

You are invited to join choirs from Massachusetts (including some of our ringers!) and surrounding states as they come together to ring at this year's 38th Massachusetts Spring Ring!

Date: Saturday, April 11, 2026

Public Concert: 3:00pm-4:30pm

Location:

Tewksbury Memorial High School

320 Pleasant Street

Tewksbury, MA 01876

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### **“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!

## Habitat Workday April 11, 8-2:30

Aldersgate volunteers are needed for a workday for Habitat for Humanity at the same Concord location as last year. Please contact Ken Teal if you are interested. We need 3 more volunteers. Email tealka@verizon.net or call 978-807-7822 if you are interested. It is always a great experience.

 **Project Kompass**  
1<sup>st</sup> Annual Spring Fling Fundraiser

# DUELING PIANOS

FEATURING 

March 21, 2026 • 6:00<sup>PM</sup> - 10:00<sup>PM</sup>

**SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES**

**Piano Man - \$2500**  
(4) complimentary tickets, social media spotlight, your logo/name displayed during the event, live shout out during the event and your first song request is prioritized

**The Lounge - \$1000**  
(2) complimentary tickets, social media spotlight, your logo/name displayed during the event and a live shout out during the event.

**Whiskey Business - \$500**  
(1) complimentary ticket, social media spotlight and your logo/name displayed during the event

**In Tune - \$250**  
Social media spotlight and your logo/name displayed during the event

## 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, sausages, 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, they don't need a physical ticket because we will have a list with the names. If you prefer to purchase the tickets before the event please see Betsy in the office or at the Breakfast.



The flyer features a central image of a stack of pancakes topped with strawberries, blueberries, and a sprig of mint. To the left of the pancakes is a red scalloped-edge callout bubble containing the text 'WE HAVE GF!'. To the right is another red scalloped-edge callout bubble with the text 'ADULTS \$10 SENIORS AND KIDS UNDER 5 \$8'. Below the pancakes is a QR code. At the bottom right, the text 'BUY TICKETS HERE' is displayed with 'HERE' underlined. At the very bottom, the address 'ALDERSGATE METHODIST CHURCH 242 BOSTON ROAD, CHELMSFORD, MA' is printed.

# Troop 81 PANCAKE BREAKFAST

HOT BREAKFAST INCLUDING PANCAKES, FRUIT,  
TEA, AND COFFEE. SUPPORT THE SCOUTS!

MARCH 8<sup>TH</sup>  
2026  
8AM- 11AM

WE  
HAVE  
GF!

ADULTS \$10  
SENIORS AND  
KIDS UNDER 5  
\$8

BUY TICKETS  
HERE

ALDERSGATE METHODIST  
CHURCH  
242 BOSTON ROAD, CHELMSFORD, MA

## Why I Ride 2026

Dear Sponsor,

Here I go again! I just registered for the 2026 Pan-Mass Challenge. The PMC is an annual bike-a-thon that raises more money for charity than any other event in the country. Last year we raised a record \$78,000,000 for Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. We have exceeded a BILLION dollars raised since the first PMC in 1980, and, 100% of every rider-raised dollar goes directly to DFCI.

That's all good info to know, but you're probably wondering why I'm still riding the PMC after 20 years.

I started riding for Erika, who succumbed to a brain tumor when she was just 6 years old. She used to tell people she "spells her name with a "K" because it's strong and straight, and she's too bold for a curlyque "C."

Then I kept riding for my husband Greg, who was treated at Dana-Farber for three years for a rare form of non-Hodgkins lymphoma. Despite the excellent care we received, they couldn't achieve a sustained remission. We lost him in 2012.

I ride in celebration of survivorship for my niece, Emily, who was diagnosed with leukemia when she was 6 years old. Last December, she celebrated her 43rd birthday!

I ride for my cousin Sigrid, an avid Red Sox fan, who has survived multiple brain tumors.

I ride for my partner, John, who is a 2 time cancer survivor. I'm grateful to have someone special to share my life with again.

The list goes on, but you get the idea...

Researchers are making great strides in cancer treatment and care. Survivors are living longer with improved quality of life and every penny I can raise toward that end is a triumph. That's why it's so important to me to continue to ride and raise money to help Dana-Farber in their fight against cancer. This is my 21st year riding, and my goal is to raise \$21,000. Won't you help by giving what you can?

If there is someone special that you would like me to ride for, please share their name and whether it is in honor, or in memory. You can donate online by clicking on this link: <https://profile.pmc.org/MD0202>. If you prefer, you can write a check made out to PMC and mail it to me at 6 Sterling Lane, Westford, MA 01886.

I am grateful and excited to be able to ride.

I thank you in advance for your generosity and your continued support.

Blessings,

Marcia

## Birthdays and Anniversaries – March

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.

### March Birthdays

March 6 – Frank Shumbata

March 9 – Dan Ward

March 15 - Charlotte Cole

March 16 – Gabriel R.

March 20 - Jim Ortolf

March 23 – Kate C.



### March Anniversaries

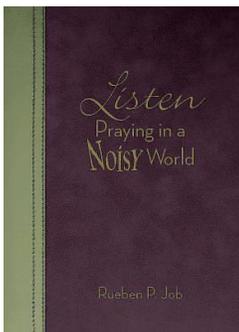
None

**If we have missed your big days, please send them by email, to Betsy in the office at [aldersgetchelsford@verizon.net](mailto:aldersgetchelsford@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.**

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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 9:45 class and Thursday 10:00 am class will be using this study and it may also inspire some of our Wednesday night service reflections. Classes start after Ash Wednesday, February 18. Grab a copy and jump into a whole new prayer experience this Lent!