



July 19th, 2026

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

Flowers on the altar are given by Debbie and Peter Smyton in celebration of their 48th anniversary and their daughter, Robin’s birthday.

Confirmation Class - Sunday, July 19, 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

The next class for confirmation students and mentors will be after Worship in the Concord Room.

Green Team Meeting - Sunday, July 26, 8:30 - 9:00 a.m.

Join the Green Team in the Concord Room to plan a Fall project and share ideas on how we can make our church even greener!

VBS Planning Meeting - Sunday, August 2, 10:45 a.m.

There will be a final planning meeting in the Concord Room for all who would like to help with this year’s VBS program. **We are looking for at least one more adult volunteer, and there are many opportunities for youth helpers.** Please see Lee Williams if you have any questions.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL!

August 10 – 14, 9:00 a.m. – noon Children Ages 4 – 12

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.

Our special guest is an experienced scuba diver who will help us learn what it’s really like to dive deep into the ocean!

Kids of all ages will experience God’s Word, explore and create through fun crafts and activities, music, snacks, and games. We will also visit our church garden and harvest vegetables to sample and to donate to the Chelmsford Food Pantry. Please see Lee Williams if you have questions or would like to help.

Registration deadline is Monday, July 27. The cost to participate is \$20 per child; max of \$60 per family. The registration form is available online at <https://www.aldersgatechelmsford.com/education/vacation-bible-school/>

A note from the Red Cross

We very much appreciate your support and partnership - we collected 23 units which for a July drive was awesome - each unit can help up to 3 patients in need so your blood collections was extremely impactful.

Thank you to all who donated blood Saturday 7/11

If you missed the date - You can schedule your appointment for the next Blood Drive on August 8th 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 August 8th to schedule an appointment. For more information call or email Cate Lehan or Robin Dye or the church office.



Altar Flowers

Thank you to all who have donated flowers for the Altar over the years. They make a beautiful addition to our service. There are still several dates that are not claimed. They are September 27th, November 15th and 29th. If you can sign up for these, that would be great.

New Video Monitors to Enhance Our Worship Experience

Based on suggestions from the congregation, the Trustees have acquired and installed video monitors on the front wall in the sanctuary. The monitors were purchased using available Endowment funds. The worship planning and live-stream/recording teams will be using the monitors during the service to display videos and slides, including potentially announcements prior to the service, the Call to Worship, the sermon title, and responsive prayers and litanies. (We will not be displaying the entire service, just items that may help enhance our worship experience.) Please be patient with us as we use the summer to learn how to use the monitors. And, we are looking for your feedback on the ways in which you find the monitors helpful or distracting; please share your thoughts with Pastor John, Bob Peterson, Val Shupe, or Peter Smyton.



Summertime Stewardship

It's hard to believe that we are halfway through the year! There has been so much activity and hard work, by so many servants at Aldersgate! As we journey through the summer months, please be sure to keep your church family in mind with your prayers and your pledges.

Please feel free to bring your 2026 pledged offerings when you join us on Sunday services this summer at 9:30 am. You can also send them by mail or electronic bill pay. Thank you for your faithful stewardship! For questions about bill pay through your banking institution, contact Kelly Mongiovi, our Financial Secretary at kmongiovi@aol.com, or Finance Chair, Bob Peterson, at peterston.robertk@gmail.com.

Sermon Notes

1. Last week, we began to look together at the decision-making process of the Council of Jerusalem and saw that the experience of the early church in the mission field raised the questions and set the framework for what brought them together into council in the first place (The Spirit is moving among the Gentiles! What are we to say and do about that?). Their experience, in other words, was already playing a major role in their discernment as the council convened. In today's reading, we see them starting to bring Scripture into conversation with that experience. How are they doing that? What are they looking for?

2. There's a short verse later in Luke 24 than our reading selection for this morning where it says, "Then he opened their mind to understand the Scripture." That captures well what we see him doing with his disciples in the Gospel selection for today. Why do they need their minds opened to read and understand well?

3. Is it possible to understand the written words of scripture well and miss their meaning? Is it possible to commit them to memory even, but miss the heart of it?

4. Many scholars who study early Christian biblical interpretation have observed that their reading of the Old Testament was shaped by their experience of the risen Christ. In other words, their readings were shaped by their spiritual lives and by their experience of God. What would it look like to read that way? How would that shape what we're looking for when we open the Bible?

5. Churches hold council meetings all the time—from large-scale General and Annual Conferences to the month Trustees meeting in a local church like ours. What's different between meeting in council as the apostles did and holding a council meeting?

Aldersgate Breakfast and Bible (AB&B)

So what is AB&B? It's two mid-summer opportunities to 'gather and grow.' It is an opportunity for fellowship with other faith travelers and share our stories and life experiences. Some of that will be done during a light continental breakfast. Some during the exchanges during the Bible study

It is also an opportunity to grow. Join in as we grow in knowledge of God's Word; grow in faith; grow in love for God and one another; and grow in our ability to be more Christ-like.

AB&B is open to all (you might think of it as an adult vacation Bible school). The first gathering is this Wednesday July 22, 10:30 - 12:00, in the Fellowship Hall.

If you plan to attend, please sign up today and no later than Tuesday noon.

Look forward to seeing you.

Pastor John and Charles McCrea are hosting

Summer Social Justice:

Read MLK's Favorite Author with Us!

Join us to read *Jesus and the Disinherited* by Howard Thurman. This is the book Pastor Bob gifted our young people a few years ago. The UMC General Board of Church and Society frequently utilizes Thurman's writings including *Jesus and the Disinherited*, to inspire and shape its justice-rooted advocacy. Martin Luther King, Jr., carried the book in his briefcase wherever he traveled. Let's read it together and find out what the UMC and MLK found so compelling about it!

Our first gathering will be July 22 from 6:00-7:00 PM to discuss the first half of the book. (It's only three short chapters.) We will have a second gathering in August to finish our discussion of the book. Let either Kim (mikdraw@aol.com; 315-368-7324) or Suzanne (shevelone@gmail.com, 617-504-0922) know if you are planning to read with us but show up even if you don't RSVP!

Discussion and Listening Sessions on Relocating Flags, August 16

Thanks to everyone who has shared their opinion on whether to relocate the American and Methodist flags to the Fellowship Hall. The church leadership has learned that there are strong feelings on both sides of this topic. We believe, in the spirit of Christian fellowship, that it would be useful to have a session to discuss and listen to each other's views and the reasoning behind them to better understand each other's perspectives. The session will include a pot-luck meal and will be held on Sunday, August 16, at 5:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall. We hope and pray that those of you with opinions will attend and be willing to actively participate in discussions at your table during the dinner, followed by a sharing of those discussions with the whole group. We pray that this discernment process, conducted with respect and love, will move the church body to a better understanding of our collective views and towards a level of closure.

Single Ladies Dining Out



Single Ladies Dining Out will have **dinner** together on July 25th at 5pm at Rufina's on Concord Road, Chelmsford, MA 01824. **Please** RSVP by Thursday July 23rd to Betsy Campbell at 978-256-9400 or aldersgatechelmsford@verizon.net so that she can reserve a table large enough. If you are a single lady and would enjoy a dinner out and lots of fun conversation, we would love to have you join us. Please talk to Betsy for more information.

Clean Sweep

Please see the signup sheet in the welcome area and consider signing up for a job or two helping to spruce up the church this summer. The jobs can be done on your time! If you don't have a key, ask Betsy in the office to borrow one or when to come. Thank you! Samples of the tasks this year include clean windows, vacuum pews, remove wax off the sanctuary rug, paint the office ceiling, clean out the kitchen refrigerators, and repair hymnals.

Service in the Fellowship Hall on Hot Sundays This Summer

If the sanctuary is uncomfortably hot on a Sunday morning this summer, we'll plan to hold the service in the **air-conditioned** Fellowship Hall. Our rule-of-thumb will be hold the service in the Hall if the temperature that morning is predicted to be over 80°. Watch for an all-church email and/or One Call-Tell All notification of the venue change if time permits. In lieu of the livestream on those Sundays, a recording of the service will be uploaded later that morning.

Green Team News

We expect to share our bounty with the Chelmsford Food Pantry (CFP) every week of the summer. We donated five pounds of peas this week!

The Garden Club also has the congregation's share of produce. You can find the produce on tables in the Fellowship Hall every Sunday this summer. This week's offering are Leaf Lettuce, Swiss Chard, Kale and some Peas.



Hymn Sing on Sunday July 26 at 9:30



It is time for a Hymn Sing! We are joyfully anticipating coming together on Sunday, July 26, to sing some of our favorite hymns and share some of our most meaningful Scripture passages.

We will have cards for you to fill out this coming Sunday. Please fill those out by next Sunday, July 19, so that we can be ready for the Hymn Sing.

Cardio Boost and Beginner Line Dance

Come Join these Dance Classes starting in Fellowship Hall at Aldersgate United Methodist Church – 242 Boston Rd., Chelmsford, MA 01824 ,For questions contact **Heather Dinsmore** dancingmom23@gmail.com Or check with Betsy in the office.

Looking for more movement in your life? We are pleased to announce two new classes for the next few months being offered in our hall designed to help you get motivated and feel fit! A local dance instructor, Heather Dinsmore, will be offering Cardio Boost and Beginner Line Dance classes for our local community.

Cardio Boost exercise class combines cardio moves to enhance endurance and burn calories, strength training to define muscles and strengthen your core, and stretching to increase flexibility. This class begins with a warm-up and stretch, then 5 cardio boost workouts, and ends with a hand weight routine and cool down. You will get a total body workout while increasing your stamina and having fun! Participants will bring their own weights to class (2-5 lbs. is recommended).

Put on your boots and join us for Line Dancing! This lively, beginner-friendly program welcomes all skill levels. Participants will be led through classic and modern line dances with step-by-step guidance. No partner or experience is required - just come ready to have fun, get moving, and enjoy time with your community.

Each class will be \$5.00 each, payable at the beginning of class via cash, check or Venmo. No pre-registration required and must be aged 18 or older to participate. Participants must wear closed-toe shoes and comfortable clothing for each class.

Schedule:

Fridays (7 weeks) - July 31, August 7, (no class August 14), 21, 28, (no class September 4), September 11, 18, 25 - 1:00-1:45 pm – Cardio Boost , 2:00-3:00 pm – Beginner Line Dance