

September 6, 2026

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

Flowers on the altar are given in honor of Owen Brown’s 8th birthday on September 12! Love, Mommy, Daddy and Emmy

Rally Day Today!

Welcome back as we start our fall program!



9:15 a.m. - Church School Registration (or pre-register*)
9:30 a.m. - Church School for Children & Youth
9:45 a.m. - Church School Parent Reception in Library
10:45 a.m. Worship - Bible Presentation to Kindergarten and 3rd Grade Students

12:00 noon – Potluck Lunch for all!

Please bring a side dish, salad, or dessert to share.

We will provide hot dogs, hamburgers and veggie burgers.

*Skip the paper and [pre-register for Church School](#):



Advent Mission Project Suggestions Welcomed!

The Aldersgate Advent Mission Project (AMP) began in 2012 as part of the Advent Conspiracy program to encourage us to Worship Fully, Spend Less, Give More, and Love All. Thanks to the generosity of the congregation, in the 14 Advent seasons since, Aldersgate has given over \$130,000 to local, national, and international charities addressing food insecurity, clean water, disease prevention and mitigation, immigration support, housing, and disaster relief. Each year, the mission has been chosen by the Outreach Committee and Church Council. This year, we are welcoming suggestions from the congregation. Please place your ideas in the AMP Suggestion Box located in the lobby. Yes, it is only September, but to properly plan for the AMP roll-out in November, we ask for your suggestions by Sunday, October 18. Thank you!

Youth Mission Trip Sharing Time!

**Saturday, September 19
6:00 – 7:30 p.m.**



The youth and adults who attended our Youth Mission Trip this summer will host a free dinner and share a special presentation with you about our experiences serving at Mission Central. We have many stories and photos to share with you. Come join us - all are welcome!

ALL senior youth in grades 8 - 12 are encouraged to attend, whether you went on the mission trip or not. We have a short meeting to talk about Senior Youth Group ideas for this year!



Kitchen Update

Thanks to a generous bequest from a member of the congregation, the Trustees and several frequent kitchen users are working on plans to update our kitchen. The improvements will make it easier and safer to use, improve accessibility, simplify cleaning, and bring it up to code. The new design will be based on commercial-kitchen standards.

We are working with a local kitchen-design firm and anticipate beginning the renovation after Easter next year.

Junior Youth Pizza Party! - Friday, September 18, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.

All youth in grades 5 - 7 are welcome to join us! We will eat pizza, play games and talk about the activities for the year. Friends are always welcome!



Confirmation Class - Sunday, September 20, 12:00 noon - 1:30 p.m.

New date! (changed from Sep 27) The next class for confirmation students and mentors will be after Worship in the Concord Room.

Church School Teacher needed for Fall

We are looking for a 3rd- 5th grade assistant teacher for the fall. Our church is asking you to prayerfully consider making a difference in the lives of the children of Aldersgate. Please contact Lee Williams if you are interested in helping or for more information.

Sermon Notes

1. Psalm 114 imagines creation itself responding when God acts to liberate and restore. Where in your life, relationships, or community do you have trouble imagining that something genuinely new could happen?
2. Peter asks Jesus how many times he must forgive, apparently looking for a reasonable limit. Why do you think we so often look for limits to forgiveness, and how does Jesus challenge our imagination about what restoration might require?
3. The servant in Jesus' parable receives extraordinary mercy but cannot imagine extending that same mercy to someone else. What might prevent us from seeing another person as someone whose future does not have to be determined entirely by their past?
4. Forgiveness does not necessarily mean pretending that harm did not occur or that trust is immediately restored. What might it mean to hold together honesty about what has been broken with hope for what God might yet restore?
5. Finally, what features of our regular practice of worship help us, the church, to sustain an imagination for the sort of reconciliation and restoration the Scriptures are talking about today?

Fall Plans for Aldersgate!

We are excited to be returning to our fall routine today! Everyone is welcome for worship, education, fellowship, and the shared camaraderie and joy that we experience when we gather as a community of faith together in person.

Beginning **Today, Rally Day:**

Worship services are offered at 8:30 and 10:45 am. The 10:45 service is live-streamed and recorded for posting on the church web site shortly thereafter.

Coffee Hour is offered in the Fellowship Hall between the services.

Church School classes are offered in-person, downstairs between the services, from 9:30 to 10:30 am. Classes will be held for PreK - 12th grade. Church School Registration for children and youth is at 9:15 am today in the welcome area downstairs. We are also presenting Bibles to all Kindergarten children and 3rd grade children during the 10:45 am worship service.

Adult Education is meeting in the Concord Room on September 13 at 9:45 am to hear about the plans for the Sunday Adult Ed class this fall. Everyone is invited! The class begins on September 20 in the Concord Room and via Zoom at 9:45 am. The Thursday Morning Bible study will begin this Thursday, September 17 in the Concord Room and via Zoom at 10:00 am. The class will be discussing chapter 8 in the Book of Acts. Early Bird will commence via Zoom on Tuesdays at 10:00 am later in September. Please watch for details.

Committees and Small Groups will meet either in person or via Zoom, based upon the decision of each group. Please let Betsy in the office know of your group's plans so she can keep the calendar up to date and schedule rooms if needed.

Staff & Office Hours: Betsy will continue to be in the office Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 10:00 a.m. to noon. She will be working other hours from home and checking voicemail and email. The other staff will also be in and out of the office, as well as working remotely, connecting by Zoom, email and phone, and are also available by appointment.

If you have gotten out of the habit of attending in person, we hope you will plan to return this fall and experience the joy of being in worship and fellowship together. Thank you for your faithfulness in prayer and in your participation as we begin this new year together!

New Acolyte Training

Any youth in 5th – 12th grade that would like to begin serving as an acolyte, please contact Lee Williams. We will schedule a training session for new acolytes as well as any experienced acolytes that would like a refresher or could help with the training.



Feedback on the New Video Monitors

The worship planning and live-stream/recording teams have been experimenting this summer with different ways of using our new monitors during the service. As we try different ways to use, or not use, the monitors, we are looking for your feedback on the ways in which you find the monitors helpful or distracting. During the summer, in what ways did you like how they were used and in what ways did you dislike how they were used? Please share your thoughts with Pastor John, Bob Peterson, Val Shupe, or Peter Smyton.

Garden Club News

This week we delivered the following to the Chelmsford Food Pantry:

- 3 bags lettuce
- 4 bags chard
- 1 bag green beans
- 4 zucchini
- 62 tomatoes
- 5 pints cherry/Juliet tomatoes



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. It’s helpful if you bring your own bag.

Final Listening Session on Flags in the Sanctuary

The Church Council has discussed relocating the flags in the sanctuary worship space for a few months, received feedback from a number of parishioners on the subject, and held a listening session to better understand the congregation's feedback. Another session is scheduled for September 27 immediately after the second service to gather more feedback from the congregation. This is the final opportunity to voice your opinion on this subject and understand the opinions of others. We encourage those of you with strong opinions to make time to participate. Please join us for this important dialog. If you have a strong opinion and are unable to attend, please submit a brief note explaining your position and why you feel that way, to Pastor John, Peter Smyton, or Roger Whitehead, to be read at the session.

Bring a bag lunch and join in this final session. Beverages will be provided.

New Grief Share Group, Continues Wednesday September 16, 2026

On September 16th, 2026 we will continue our GriefShare 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 or Dottie Newcomb. If you have questions or would like more information please visit griefshare.org. Please join us on Wednesdays 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm (in-person only). 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.

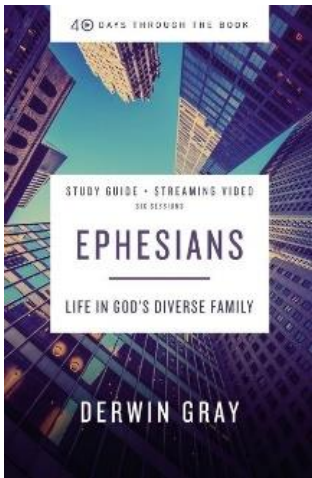
At a weekly GriefShare meeting, you will view a video featuring respected counselors, teachers, and healthcare professionals on grief-related topics. After that is a small-group discussion for sharing, support, and personal application of what you learned on the video. You will receive a participant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

Early Bird Bible Application begins Tuesday Sept 22nd

Early Bird Bible Application resumes on Tuesday 22 September. Per usual, it will convene on Tuesdays at ten o'clock via Zoom.

A New Year of Adult Education Begins with New Testament Studies!

SUNDAY MORNINGS



Sunday morning at 9:45am in the Concord Room, join members of the Adult Education Team to dive into Paul's letter to the Ephesians. Each morning, we will watch and discuss a short video segment from Derwin Gray, former defensive back in the NFL and now, Pastor of Transformation Church, a multiethnic, multigenerational, mission-shaped community. The study guidebook provides you with a place to take notes as you watch and prompts, prayers and questions, as you read the relevant chapter of Ephesians throughout the week. ***Ephesians: Life in God's Diverse Family (40 Days Through the Book)*** can be purchased from your online retailer in paperback or ebook. If you need a Bible, please see Kim Ward (mikdraw@aol.com) or Pastor John.

Our first Sunday class will be September 20th at 9:45. Grab a cup of coffee and meet us in the Concord Room to discover more about the life of the early church!

THURSDAY MORNING

Thursday mornings at 10:00am in the Concord Room, join Pastor John and friends, as the group continues their study of the book of Acts. During the week, read and explore a chapter of Acts. Then on Thursday mornings, discover together what the life of the early church was like and the application of their lessons to your life today.

The group will begin September 17th with Acts chapter 8 at 10 am in the Concord Room. All you need is your Bible. If you need a Bible, please see Kim Ward (mikdraw@aol.com) or Pastor John.

