



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

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**Today’s altar flowers are given by Betsy Campbell in celebration of her grandchildren’s birthdays. Christopher’s 16th on July 14th, Kimberly’s 19th on August 16th, Finn’s 5th on August 14th and Ella’s 7th on January 27th.**

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### **Special Church Conference Today at 10:30**

We have recently received a bequest from Nancy Goodick, which needs to be approved by the Special Church Conference. We invite everyone to attend the meeting, as we will also share a report on the endowment activity, a tribute to Nancy, and other helpful information.

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### **VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL! FOR CHILDREN AGES 4 - 12 AUGUST 14<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> from 9 - noon**

Our theme for VBS this summer is "Under Construction". We will learn about Habitat for Humanity and the way God helps us to Share, Care, Learn, Worship, and Celebrate!

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### **Youth 2023 Sharing Time! Save the date!**



The youth and adults who attended Youth 2023 will host a pasta dinner and share a special presentation with you about our experiences at Youth 2023 on Saturday, September 16<sup>th</sup> from 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.

We have many stories to share with you along with photos and videos. Come join us - all are welcome!

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### **Young Adult Get-together with Pastor Bob**

On August 19<sup>th</sup> at 11 am, Pastor Bob invites the Young Adults (age 18-26), to join him at Sully’s Ice Cream. Please let him know if you can come by calling him at 508-685-6291.

### **Red Friendship Pad**

On the center aisle of the pews are Red Friendship Pads. During the offering, please sign the pad and pass it down the row so all can sign it and pass it back to the center aisle. Please note who is in the pew with you. If you are visiting, we would like to welcome you and get to know you. Please fill in your contact information. For more information about our church, please talk to those around you or contact Betsy in the church office at 978-256-9400. The email address is [aldersgatechelmsford@verizon.net](mailto:aldersgatechelmsford@verizon.net).

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### **Clean Sweep – Help Needed – Please sign up**

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 make arrangements to borrow one or when to come. Thank you! Samples of the tasks this year include cleaning pew cushions, weeding around the church building, and cleaning windows.

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### **Comfort in the Pews for Everyone**

An additional pew has been removed to make our existing seating more accessible and accommodating to people using wheelchairs, walkers, canes or crutches and those who may be accompanying them. If you need more space or find the pew difficult to sit in, please make yourself comfortable in the red chairs provided. Please let an usher or trustee know if you need something adjusted. This is a work in progress and an experiment. We want you to feel at home in our space.



### **Donate Your Time and Talents**

It takes many hands and we need your help in running the church! Over the summer we will be working to fill our slate of committees for the Fall and we wanted to extend an invitation for you to think about where God might be calling you to use your gifts. We ask that you send in your reply to the office by August 31<sup>st</sup>.

#### **Committees Include:**

Adult Education, Children's Ministry Team, Finance and Stewardship, Membership & Congregational Events, Memorial Gifts, Outreach, Staff Parish Relations, Trustees, and Worship/Altar Guild. More informal groups include IT, Ushers and Recording.

Please contact the office at [aldersgatechelmsford@verizon.net](mailto:aldersgatechelmsford@verizon.net) or Jim Ortolf ([jamesortolf@gmail.com](mailto:jamesortolf@gmail.com), 978/995-0614) if you have any questions or you are interested in serving in one of these areas!

## **Info Sessions in September on the United Methodist Church's Stance on LGBTQI+ and Impact on AUMC**

The Church Council has recently been discussing how to ensure we are an inclusive, welcoming church to all here at Aldersgate. A Statement of Inclusivity, consistent with the beliefs of our denomination and its Book of Discipline, created by the Council and posted on the church web site in the Who We Are page, is included below.

Some people have been confused about or are unfamiliar with the United Methodist Church's (UMC's) stance on the LGBTQI+ community, how our New England Conference is addressing this stance, and what that means for Aldersgate. We invite the congregation to learn about the current situation and options the UMC and Conference may consider through information sessions in September, led by Pastors Bob and Maylis, as our clergy, and Bonnie Marden, our delegate to the UMC General Conference, where these topics are discussed. The sessions will consist of an overview of the denomination's stance and the impact on local churches, followed by a Q&A. Each of these four sessions will be similar. There will be two in-person sessions on Thursday, 9/14 at 7:00 pm and Sunday, 9/17 at 9:30 am (between the services) in the Fellowship Hall, and two sessions via Zoom on Wednesday, 9/20 at 8:00 pm and Monday, 9/25 at 7:00 pm.

The Council plans to offer other opportunities after these sessions for further dialog and sharing of stories and perspectives as we seek to discern how we as a church family can be inclusive to all regardless of age, race, nationality, ethnic background, gender, sexuality, ability, and physical appearance.

Paul wrote in Corinthians 1 12:12, "all the members of the body, though many, are one body..." The Council recognizes that there are many different opinions in our church family based on our individual understanding of the scriptures and Jesus' teachings. We hope to use this time to share our views and learn from each other in constructive and respectful ways so that we can together grow in our faith. Whether you join us for these sessions or not, thank you for holding all of us in prayer and faithful trust in God's leading us into the future.

### **All Are Welcome at Aldersgate**

As a United Methodist congregation, we affirm that all persons are individuals of sacred worth, created in the image of God. We affirm that we are an open, welcoming, fully accepting congregation supportive of all, regardless of age, race, nationality, ethnic background, gender, sexuality, ability, and physical appearance. In agreement with our New England Conference Open Spirit Task Force, we are committed to safeguarding the sacred worth and dignity of all persons in our churches and communities, including those who identify as LGBTQI+ persons.

We are a church that supports every individual's full participation in the life, ministry, sacraments, membership, and leadership of the church at any level. We celebrate the blessings of gender and cultural diversity in our pastors and leadership team.