

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

Today’s altar flowers are given by Linda and Rich Regan in memory of Amanda Allen and the 35 others who perished in the Ghost Ship Fire 12/2/2016.

Join Us for a Special Advent Season –

We hope you can join us, either in-person or remotely, for our special services this Advent season. In-person worship is at 8:30 and 10:45 am each Sunday. The 10:45 service is live-streamed (preceded by church announcements) and a link to the recording is available on the church website (aldersgatechelmsford.com) shortly after the service; live-streams and recordings will include the Silent Night and the 7:00 pm Christmas Eve services

Silent Night Service, Tuesday, December 12 at 7:00 pm

Join us for this special service in the middle of the busy Christmas season. The service features beautiful scripture, reflections, and music that speaks words of peace and comfort during what can be a time of sadness. You will also have an opportunity to light a candle of hope as we await the coming of Christ, the Light of the World. A brief fellowship reception will follow in the Fellowship Hall.

Christmas Eve Morning, Sunday, December 24 Children’s Pageant at 9:30 am (One Service)

The church school will be presenting this year’s Christmas Pageant during the Sunday worship service for the congregation, neighbors, and friends!

Christmas Eve (no 4 pm service) 7:00 pm Intergenerational Christmas

This service will retell the story of the first Christmas in scripture and carols. It will include a time for children and conclude with the candle-lit singing of “Silent Night.”

10:00 pm Communion and Candlelight Christmas Eve

This service includes scripture, carols, a Christmas meditation, Holy Communion in the pews and the candle-lit singing of “Silent Night.”

Santa Fund

The Santa tree is up and presents need to be in by **December 10th**. Thank you all for making Christmas special for all the kids.

Christmas Poinsettias

Once again we will decorate our sanctuary on Christmas Eve with five beautiful poinsettias. We will purchase larger plants that will be present for the Christmas Eve service.



We are again inviting people to make a donation toward the cost of the poinsettias in celebration of someone or in memory of a loved one (suggested donation of \$10). There is a form on the welcome desk that you can fill out and either put in the offering plate or mail to the office. You can also call the church office and leave a message and Betsy will return your call to follow up with you. Betsy will also include the form in the Worship email.

We will include the names in a printed attachment to the Christmas Eve service and will show the names on the video during part of the recorded service, if possible. We want to honor each family’s preference...so please indicate your preference on the form as well. **Deadline for Poinsettias will be on December 17th.**

Confirmation Class 2024

We plan to offer the confirmation class starting from January. Please pick up the registration in the welcome area and return it to Cheryl Ortolf, our director of Christian Education. There will be 8 classes this spring and 1 retreat. For more info, please see Cheryl or Pastor Bob.

Sponsor a book for our College Students!

Adult Ed in partnership with Cheryl O. and Pastor Bob, would like to give a copy of *Jesus and the Disinherited* by Howard Thurman to our college students. The books are \$20 and we would like to gift them over the Winter Break when they all gather together again. You can sponsor a book and create a link to the next generation! You can find a donation envelope by the literature rack in the lobby.

Hats, Gloves, Mittens, Socks, and Toiletries for St. Paul’s

Outreach will be collecting items for St. Paul’s by the 17th of December. Please bring in hats, gloves, mittens, socks, and mittens as well as toiletries. There is a box in the welcome area.

Church Office hours are Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 10am-12pm. Betsy will be in the office on those days and available by phone at other times.

Prayer Wall in Fellowship Hall

The Church Council recently created a prayer wall on a rolling partition in the Fellowship Hall, asking you to post prayers of what our church will look like as a result of the on-going Inclusion discussions. The Council recently decided to expand the purpose of the wall and we invite you to post prayers on **any** topic that you wish to have other members of our church family pray about.

Children and Youth Supper & Singing Time

This music opportunity is for children and youth ages 4 years old – 12th grade. We will meet on the following dates in December:

Mondays, December 11th & 18th from 5:00 – 6:00 p.m.

We will have supper from 5:00 – 5:30 p.m. and music singing time from 5:30 – 6:00 p.m.

Children and Youth Chime Time

This music opportunity is for children and youth in 3rd – 8th grade. They will learn how to play the chimes. We will meet on the following dates in December:

Sundays, December 10th & 17th from noon – 1:00 p.m. We will have lunch from noon – 12:30 p.m. and practice chimes from 12:30 – 1:00 p.m.

Mondays, December 11th & 18th from 4:30 – 5:00 p.m. (before pizza and singing time)

Join Us for Dinner and a Pop-up Adult Bible Study on Monday, December 11 and Monday, December 18

On December 11 and 18 (both Mondays), we'll join the children and youth for supper at 5 p.m. and follow the meal with a Bible study at 5:30 p.m. We will be learning from Dr. King's sermon, "A Knock at Midnight."

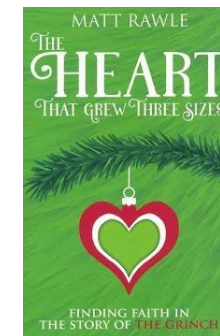
If you'd like to listen to Dr. King preach the sermon before we meet, you can find it here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GDRQTzNzu1I>

Please email Cheryl Ortolf (aumc-education@verizon.net) or Suzanne Hevelone (shevelone@gmail.com) if you'd like to come, so we need to know how many people to plan to feed. Everyone is welcome!

Advent Study Begins December 3!

This year, we take a deeper look at a children's book that delights all ages in the Christmas season. *The Heart That Grew Three Sizes: Finding Faith in the Story of the Grinch* by Matt Rawle will be the Advent material for the Adults AND some of the kids Sunday School classes.

Rediscover the gift of Advent that comes without packages, ribbons, and bows. We don't know why the Grinch hated Christmas. We just know he did. If we're being honest, there's probably something within the Christmas season celebration that awakens a Grinch within all of us. Maybe the gift we unwrap was all wrong, or memories that were supposed to be joyful never were. When everything seems wrong in the world, even joyful celebrations are much too loud. We don't know why the Grinch hated Christmas. We just know he did. In this new Advent study, Matt Rawle explores the faith themes in the Christmas classic, *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!* including, how did the Grinch's heart grow three sizes come Christmas morning? How did Christmas save the Grinch? Could it be that the very thing we think we hate is the one thing that changes our lives? This Advent and Christmas season, look at a familiar classic through the lens of faith and see how Christ speaks to us through our culture.



Be a Grinch and get your copy of the book at your favorite bookseller before December! We will save a place around the circle for you.

Early Bird Bible Application

During the Advent Season Early Bird Bible Application will examine how the birth of the Christ Child impacted many different individuals and the lessons we might learn from their transformed lives. Some of those persons included Mary, Joseph, the inn keeper, shepherds, Elizabeth and Zechariah. The theme of this Advent study is "From Ordinary to Extraordinary." We begin with a look at the shepherds. Early Bird meets on Tuesday mornings at ten o'clock via Zoom.

ADVENT CONSPIRACY

WHAT WOULD JESUS WANT FOR HIS BIRTHDAY?

Just as the Wise Ones traveled great distances to bring precious gifts to the child Jesus, so too, we want to give gifts this Holy season that would make the heart of Jesus glad.

Again, this year, we are following the principles of *The Advent Conspiracy*:

- * Worship Fully
- * Spend Less on things people do not need
- * Love all
- * Give more of ourselves, our time, our lives



We are encouraging each other to save the money we would have spent on gifts that those we love really don't need, and instead give a life-giving gift that truly matters.

On Epiphany, also known as "Kings' Sunday" - January 7, we will bring our monetary gifts from the savings we have made and will offer them to support our Advent Mission: "Refugee and Immigrant Resettlement Fund."

Please join us in our special giving on "Kings' Day" – January 7th.

Checks may be made payable to AUMC with "Refugee and Immigrant Resettlement Fund" in the memo.

Greater Lowell Community Foundation



"Since its inception in 1997, the Greater Lowell Community Foundation has maintained the clear mission to improve the quality of life for the people in the communities we serve by connecting caring donors with local nonprofit organizations that best serve the causes that matter most to them."

Refugee and Immigrant Resettlement Fund

"On August 8, 2023, Governor Maura T. Healey declared a state of emergency due to rapidly rising numbers of migrant families arriving in Massachusetts who need shelter and services, and the severe lack of availability of those resources."

"With the influx of new refugees and immigrants arriving in Greater Lowell, GLCF is leading the effort to provide support to local nonprofits charged with these resettlements. The GLCF Refugee and Immigrant Resettlement Fund will support the efforts of Greater Lowell organizations to help ensure those in need are welcomed and connected with housing, employment, transportation, food, acculturation, and other related support."





ADVENT GREETINGS



Our Aldersgate family wishes to extend to you the opportunity to participate in the giving of a Congregation Gift for the Staff: Pastor Bob, Betsy, Cheryl O., Cheryl C., Rev Maylis, Sherri, Deana and Mirna.

Aldersgate is truly blessed with a dedicated and talented staff. The Congregation Gift is a wonderful opportunity to share of ourselves and acknowledge our love for their gift to us throughout the year.

If you would like to contribute you may do so by dropping your donation off at the church, mailing it to the church and marking it with a "Staff Gift" note, or giving it to an usher or any member of the SPRC (Roger Whitehead, Clewis Howe, Sue Lewis, Marcia Dana, Dan Ward, Angela Hughes, Jane Vooy, Michelle Mescall, or Ray Brown).

In Christian Love and Spirit,
The Staff Parish Relations Committee