

December 8, 2024

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

The flowers on the altar are given by Suzanne Hevelone in celebration of all Hevelone and Pender December Birthdays including Lee, Elara and Reed

December Upcoming events

Remaining Sundays of Advent: December 8th, 15th and 22nd.

Silent Night Service, Tuesday, December 10th, 7 pm

Cookie Walk, Sunday, December 15th, 9:30 am and 11:45 am

Christmas Pageant, Sunday, December 22nd, 9:30 am – only one service

Christmas Eve Services, Tuesday evening, December 24th, 4 pm, 7 pm, 10 pm

Red Cross Blood Drive: Aldersgate UMC, Saturday, December 28th, 9 am – 2 pm

Sunday, December 29th – one service at 9:30 – No Church School

Epiphany Sunday on January 5th, 8:30 am and 10:45 am

Welcome Adesuwa, Our Scholarship Winner, and Family

Today, December 8th, at the 10:45 service we welcome Adesuwa Onyekwena and her family to Aldersgate! Adesuwa is this year’s recipient of the Aldersgate Scholarship at Middlesex Community College. She is majoring in public health informatics and technology. Adesuwa has a 3.76 GPA and is planning to graduate in 2026. Her career goal is to work as an environmental health specialist and next attend UMass to pursue her bachelor's degree in public health. Welcome, Adesuwa, and congratulations!

Church Conference at 10:30 am on December 29

We will be holding a Church Conference after the one service around 10:30 am, on December 29 to vote whether to approve the proposed 2025 budget. The balancing of the budget needed to be done after the Church Conference on 11/17, once the pledges were received and were compared with the proposed 2025 expenses. The proposed budget includes a 3% pay increase for the church staff. We will also approve the addition of Beth Randall to Trustees. All church members are invited to attend this short meeting to review and vote on these two important items.

Dear Church Family,

Thank you so much for all the prayers, cards and the special meal that we received after Jim's back surgery. We are so blessed by all the ways our church family cares for each other. Cheryl & Jim

Santa Fund

The Santa tree will be up on **November 17th** and Presents need to be in by **December 15th**. Thank you all for making Christmas special for all the kids.

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

Outreach will be collecting items for St. Paul’s by the 15th of December. Please bring in hats, gloves, socks, and mittens as well as toiletries. There is a box in the welcome area.

Christmas Poinsettias



Once again we will decorate our sanctuary on Christmas Eve with four beautiful poinsettias and several smaller ones. 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. **There are forms on the welcome desk and 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 20th**

You can schedule your appointment for the next Blood Drive on December 28th from 9 am-2 pm

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 August 10th to schedule an appointment. For more information call or email Cate Lehan or Robin Dye or the church office

No Early Bird on Tuesday 12/10

Early Bird will not meet this week on Dec 10th. It will reconvene on Tuesday 17 December.

Church School Christmas Pageant

The church school will be presenting this year's Christmas Pageant during the 9:30 a.m. worship service for the congregation, neighbors, and friends! Lee Williams will be visiting the church school classes on December 8 to sign up children and youth for different parts. The pageant practice for all participants will be on Saturday, December 21, at 10:00am in the sanctuary.



Note: There will be only be one service on December 22 at 9:30.

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
- * Love all
- * Spend Less on things people do not need
- * 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. This year our church council and outreach committee have selected the Habitat for Humanity of Greater Lowell organization as our Advent Mission.

You are welcome to take one of the special ornaments on our Mission tree in the front lobby area beginning December 8.

On Epiphany, also known as "Kings' Sunday" - January 5, we will bring our monetary gifts from the savings we have made and will offer them to support our Advent Mission: Habitat for Humanity of Greater Lowell.

HAPPY HOLIDAY WISHES



Our Aldersgate family wishes to extend to you the opportunity to participate in the giving of a Congregation Gift for the Pastor Bob, Betsy, Rev Maylis, Lee, Deana and Mirna.

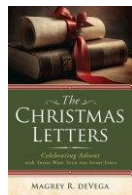
The Congregation Gift is a wonderful opportunity to share of ourselves and acknowledge our love for their gift to us throughout the year.

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 (Dan Ward, Clewis Howe, Sue Lewis, Marcia Dana, Angela Hughes, Jane Vooy, Michelle Mescall, or Ray Brown).

In Christian Love and Spirit,
The Staff Parish Relations Committee

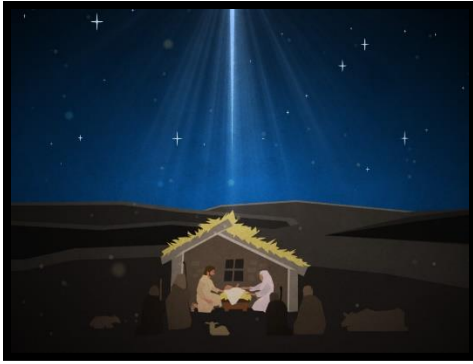
Advent Study for Adult Ed

The Sunday and Thursday Adult Ed classes will be studying "The Christmas Letters" by Magrey deVega. In The Christmas Letters we are invited to hear about the miracle of



Christ's birth from those who first told the story. The letters in the New Testament, known as the Epistles, contain the first attempts by the church to understand and celebrate the mystery of the Incarnation. Discover what the letters ask of us as we follow Christ. The book is available through Amazon, through Cokesbury, or at your local bookseller. A few copies will be available for a suggested donation of \$15.

The 2025 Flower Chart is up on the wall. Please start to fill in your spots for your special dates.



Habitat for Humanity – The Gift of Home

Will you join us during Advent in offering the gift of “home” this Christmas Season? Habitat for Humanity of Greater Lowell was founded in Lowell in 1991 as an affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International. They serve 16 communities in Greater Lowell and Northern Middlesex County to help families build and improve places to call home. You can find out more about this organization at: www.lowellhabitat.org.

WHAT DOES IT COST TO BUILD A HOUSE?

- \$800 Kitchen Cabinets
- \$500 Water Heater
- \$200 100lb of Nails
- \$150 Front Door
- \$100 Kitchen Sink
- \$75 Lighting Fixture
- \$50 Door Bell Set
- \$50 Low Flow Toilet
- \$35 Bundle of Roof Shingles
- \$25 Bathroom Faucet



Bring your gift on January 5, as we celebrate King’s Sunday and offer our gifts of love for the world Christ loves and came to save.