



## January 2020 ~Mini Advocate

### A Message from Pastor Lisa

Dear Aldersgate Family,

What a rich and full season we have just experienced! We heard the Angel's promises, we traveled with Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem, we knelt with the shepherds, and we followed the star along with the "wise ones" to offer our gifts to Christ.

We know that Mary and Joseph's journey did not end in Bethlehem...and the next few years were far from silent or peaceful, as they fled for their lives to Egypt. We, too, live in unsettled times. Our nights are not so silent, our world is far from peaceful. But we hold on to the hope that the light that we have found in Christ goes with us into this new year, each and every day.

This Sunday, we hear of Jesus' baptism and we have the opportunity to renew our own baptism in both services. We are reminded that we are God's loved and forgiven people, set apart for God's work. May we enter this new year confident that Emmanuel...God is with us.

In faith,

*Pastor Lisa*

### Christmas Thank You

It's hard to believe we're already into a new year! The Advent and Christmas season went so quickly. I want to thank everyone for making it so special again this year...

To the musicians and worship participants who helped us enter God's presence...

To all those who purchased gifts for children in need...

To those who shared their talents at the Christmas Faire...

To all those who journeyed through Advent in group study...

To the children who brought the Christmas story to life...

To those who brought the love of Jesus out to the community through caroling...

To those who served at St. Paul's feeding ministry and provided warm socks and gloves...

To all who offered gifts on Epiphany to support "Rise Against Hunger"...

Thank you. We are a blessed community because of the faith of all of you, sharing this journey with one another and inviting others to come along. ~ *Pastor Lisa*

## A Message from our Bishop from Jan. 9, 2020

Beloved in Christ,

Greetings in the precious name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

I am writing from India where I have been traveling with young people, including two youth from New England, on the Northeastern Jurisdiction's 2020 Mission of Peace. The MOP was created to build bridges between Christians around the world. I am so grateful for your support of MOP and for your prayers as we journey.

Even on this pilgrimage we can't help but be aware of the political unrest happening in the world; we know that conflict and turmoil are daily life for many ... violent military actions, natural disasters in Puerto Rico and Australia, a plane crash that killed nearly two hundred people, and countless other incidents. In the midst of all of this, the division in our beloved United Methodist Church became front page news.

Even here in India, people are asking "What does this news about The UMC mean for us?"

What it means for them – and for all of us – is, of course, unknown.

Media reports made the Protocol on Reconciliation and Grace Through Separation sound like a conclusion or a "done deal," but it is not. It is just one possible path forward for our denomination. <https://www.unitedmethodistbishops.org/files/websites/www/pdfs/signed+umc+mediation+protocol+statement+2020.pdf>

It was formed by a small but diverse group of UMC leaders. Just as with other plans that have emerged since February 2019, it will have to be submitted as legislation to the 2020 General Conference in May, where it will be up to the delegates to discern if this is the direction we should take.

There is much work ahead in these next few months for the 862 delegates (six from New England) to discern all the legislation and prayerfully consider what God is calling us to do and be as United Methodists. Let us offer them our prayerful support as we undertake our own discernment about how to be faithful disciples of Jesus Christ.

I encourage you to read the Protocol and submit questions you have to the mediation team. You can also watch the livestream discussion at 9:30 a.m. on Monday, Jan. 13, 2020, on the United Methodist News website and Facebook page. <https://www.neumc.org/newsdetail/proposed-agreement-outlines-umc-separation-13134985>

These seem like extraordinary times. But even in these anxious days, our faith guides us. May we hold one another in prayer and Christian love.

In Christ's love,

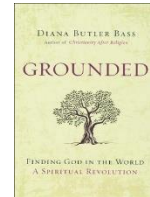
Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar

## Winter Adult Bible Study

The Adult Bible Study meets **Sundays at 9:30 a.m. & Thursdays at 10 a.m.** New Study Begins Jan. 5<sup>th</sup>. We will read **Grounded – Finding God in the World** by Diana Butler Bass. This 7-week study focuses on the spiritual aspects of God that are found in the world around us.

Everyone is welcome!

The cost of the book is \$15.<sup>00</sup>



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## Early Bird Bible Study



Early Bird reconvenes on Tuesday morning at 7:00 - 7:45 in the Concord Room. The theme for this month's Bible exploration is "525,600 Minutes - How Do You Measure a Year?" The Scripture this week is Matthew 25:31-46. Will this be the year that you use some of your minutes to deepen your faith in an adult study opportunity?

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## New Member Class has begun

A new member class will continue this Sunday between the services at 9:30am. These classes will be held in the library downstairs. Anyone interested in becoming a member or who would like to know more about what that means is welcome to attend. New Members will be received in worship on Sunday, January 26.



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## Help Needed Sunday - Undecorating the Sanctuary

Janice McCabe invites anyone who is able to stay after the second service this Sunday to help take down the garlands in the Sanctuary. Thank you, Janice and team, for the beautifully decorated space this season.

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## Rise Against Hunger Speaker coming to AUMC

Our Advent Mission focus this year was Rise Against Hunger. Our special offering from last Sunday on Epiphany totaled \$8709. It is not too late to add your gift to the total. A local representative from Rise Against Hunger will join us on Sunday, January 19<sup>th</sup>. Joe Gautier will share with us how the money we raised will help end world hunger. He will speak in the Fellowship Hall at 10:00 a.m. to all that would like to learn more about this important mission. The church school classes will also come up to the fellowship hall to participate. Through our gifts, we can make a positive difference in our world!

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## Senior Youth Super Bowl Sub Sale: Place Your Orders Now!

Our Senior Youth will be taking orders for Super Bowl Subs over the next three weeks. Orders can also be placed by using the sign-up sheets placed on the table under the flower chart and the downstairs hallway or by emailing Cheryl at [aumc-education@verizon.net](mailto:aumc-education@verizon.net) by Sunday, January 26<sup>th</sup>. The subs will be ready for pick up after either service on Sunday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>.

The proceeds will go towards our youth mission trip this summer.

Types of Subs: Italian, Turkey, Falafel, and Vegetarian – there will be no set cost, you can decide what to donate!

## 6:31 Service

The Youth led worship service will resume on February 9<sup>th</sup>. All are welcome to attend this worship service that connects with all ages. There will be fun, meaningful skits and of course, there will be refreshments following the service.

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## The "Single Ladies Dining Out"

The group will get together for dinner on January 25th at Stelio's in Billerica. Deadline for reservations is Thursday the 23rd. PLEASE decide by then if you are going and reserve your spot by calling or talking with Ardie D. or Betsy C.. This way we will reserve a table large enough. We hope you can join us.

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## Navigating the Estate Planning Process

Date: Sunday, February 9 (Snowdate: Saturday, March 7); Time: 2 to 3pm

Childcare Available (Donations to Youth Mission Trip)

Ever wonder what legal documents are needed to ensure your family and wishes are cared for. Come meet Robert D'and learn the difference between a Will and Trust, naming a guardian or executor, as well as the important documents needed at the different stages of your life. Registration is not required, however, for planning purposes please call the office or include your name on the list in the hallway. This event is jointly hosted by the AUMC Wonder Women and Mighty Men.

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## Book Club

**Date:** Last Tuesday of each month

**Time:** 7 p.m. | **Location:** Concord Room, and all are welcome!

Upcoming books and start date for each:

January 7 - Christmas Bells by Jennifer Chiaverini

January 28 - The Great Alone by Kristen Hannah

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## Outreach News

Thank you to Susan Lewis and with your support and generosity, the Cookie Walk in December was able to raise \$386 to benefit the Justice for Our Neighbors Program.

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## New Office Hours

Beginning this week, the office will be open from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

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## Thank you from the Staff

Thank you for your gifts of love and appreciation this Christmas. We are so blessed to serve as your staff here at Aldersgate. Your kind words and generosity have touched our hearts. We look forward to what God has in store for us all as we continue into the new year!

*Pastor Lisa, Cheryl O., Maylis, Cheryl C., Silvia, Hank, Sherrie and Deana*

## **Thank You!**

Thank you to all the musicians who so gracefully and beautifully enhanced our worship throughout 2019! You have made a difference, and we are thankful to God for you!

We hope you have enjoyed the end of the year break, rehearsals started again last week.

Here is the schedule:

Worship Arts: Tuesdays, 4 pm downstairs

Adult Choir: Tuesdays, 7:30 pm in the Sanctuary

Bellissimos: Thursdays, 6:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall

Shepherd Bells: Thursdays, 7:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall

Interested in joining any of our groups? Please speak to Cheryl Cruickshank or Maylis de la Fe.

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## **End of Year financial statements**

The end of year statements have been printed out and are available for pick up at the church until January 21st. Any remaining statements will be mailed out the 22nd. Please open and review for any errors so they can be addressed promptly.

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## **2020 Church Budget Approved**

Aldersgate's 2020 operating church budget was recently approved at the January Church Council meeting. A tentative budget had been approved at last November's Church Conference, but further refinement of the budget had been planned to ensure the budget would be balanced. At the Council meeting, a budget was approved that includes a projected income and planned expenses of about \$375,000. A balanced budget is not possible without both the generosity of the congregation and the fiscal stewardship of the church's mission and administrative committees. Thank you!

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## **Pastor Lisa traveling this week**

Pastor Lisa will be out of the office Monday through Friday this week. She is reachable by email or cell phone if needed. If you have other business matters, Silvia is available in the church office. For pastoral emergencies, Rev. Steve Garnaas-Holmes or Mack Hagins will be on call.

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## **Advocate update**

The next edition of the Advocate will be available in February. Please submit your contributions to the office no later than January 15<sup>th</sup>. Thank you!

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## **Upper Room Devotionals**

Devotionals for January/February are available on the Welcome Desk. If you choose to make a donation for this booklet, please find the slot on the shelf provided for that purpose.

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## **Community News**

Monday, Jan. 20: Boston Children's Choir: "Still I Rise Concert" at Symphony Hall

With Sofia Rodriguez & Matthias Driscoll performin