

ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH NEWSLETTER

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April 23, 2021

BOOK DISCUSSION TUESDAY, APRIL 27TH 7:00 PM VIA ZOOM

Join the Social Justice Ministry team and our partners at Trinity Lutheran for a discussion of *Caste* by Isabel Wilkerson via Zoom! Poetically written and brilliantly researched, *Caste* invites us to discover the inner workings of an American hierarchy that goes far beyond the confines of race, class, or gender. A book steeped in empathy and insight, *Caste* explores, through layered analysis and stories of real people, the structure of an unspoken system of human ranking and reveals how our lives are still restricted by what divided us centuries ago. *Caste* is available for purchase in hard copy and as an E-book or audiobook online.

ZOOM Meeting Login information
<https://zoom.us/j/9784438350>
Meeting ID: 978 443 8350
(or call in 1-312-626-6799)

FROM THE STEWARDSHIP TEAM: OPPORTUNITIES FOR MINISTRY

We hope that you are considering the gifts of time and talent you can share to support our mission and ministry at St. John. You should have received a letter and form to guide you in that process. If you have questions or thoughts to share, please contact Carrie Stamos (carrie637@msn.com) or Dorene Glynn (dorene_glynn_1@msn.com).



Please return the form to the church office or email it to Carrie or Dorene. If you need another form, please let Valerie know. You may also fill it out on the Stewardship page on the St. John website. Thank you!



Check us out!
[@stjohnsudbury](https://www.instagram.com/stjohnsudbury)



Visit our YouTube Channel
All of our worship videos
are available to watch at
our YouTube channel.

Find us at:
St John Lutheran Sudbury.

St. John Lutheran Church
16 Great Rd.
Sudbury, Ma 01776
978-443-8350
www.stjohnsudburyma.org

ST. JOHN SENIORS ON THE GO BOOK CLUB - APRIL 27th

Please join us!!!

We will have a ZOOM book club meeting on Tuesday, April 27th at 11:00 AM for just a get together to discuss prior books read and new books to read.

On May 18th, we will discuss *A Children's Bible* by Lydia Millet.

If you do not receive a ZOOM invitation email prior to the meeting time, please contact Jan Nielsen at jrnielsen@charter.net or 978-549-3044.

Next books:

May 18, 2021:

A Children's Bible by Lydia Millet

June 15, 2021:

Girl, Woman, Other
by Bernardine Evaristo

July 20, 2021:

Seven Sisters: Book One
by Lucinda Riley

SUNDAY SCHOOL SCHEDULE

4/25/21	10-11:30 AM <i>Peter, do you love me?</i> Outdoors at St. John
	11:45 AM-12:30 PM Zoom for those staying remote.
5/2/21	11:00 AM <i>Let the Children Come to Me</i> Family Sunday School - Zoom for all!
5/9/21	No Class - Mother's Day

CONFIRMATION SCHEDULE - ALL CLASSES 6:00 PM VIA ZOOM

4/25/21	Family Confirmation - <i>The Word</i>
5/2/21	<i>Bondage of the Will</i>
5/9/21	No Class - Mother's Day

NEW CLASSES OFFERED

Pastor Eric is offering two classes by ZOOM for all who are interested beginning in May. The first is *The World According to John*, and is a class that works through the Gospel and Letters of John. It will meet first and third Sundays at 7:30 PM beginning May 2.

The second class is *Now What?*, a class that discusses the basics of faith, life in the post-postmodern world, and how we can live a life of faith without shutting off our brains. This class begins May 9, and will meet second and fourth Sundays at 7:30.

Hope to see you there!

Grace & Peace,
Pastor Eric



SAVE THE DATE!

Most Meetings are held via ZOOM
Call church office if you are having
trouble connecting.
(Zoom meeting information is below and is
the same for MOST church meetings)

ZOOM Meeting

Login information
<https://zoom.us/j/9784438350>
Meeting ID: 978 443 8350
(or call in 1-312-626-6799)

April 23rd	-7:30 pm - Knitting/Crafting Group
April 25th	-10:00 am - Coffee and Conversation -10:00 am - Sunday School (Outdoors at church) -11:45 am - Zoom Sunday School -6:00 pm - Confirmation
April 26th	-10:00 am - Seniorcise -7:30 pm - Youth and Family Ministry Meeting
April 27th	- 11:00 am -Seniors on the Go Book Group (Jan's Zoom) -7:00 pm - Social Justice Book Group with Trinity Lutheran
April 28th	-10:00 am - Seniorcise
April 29th	-10:00 am - Bible Study
April 30th	- 7:30 pm - Knitting/Crafting Group
May 2nd	-10:00 am - Coffee and Conversation -11:00 am - Zoom Family Sunday School -6:00 pm - Confirmation -7:30 pm - Class with Pastor Eric- <i>The World According to John</i>

HAPPY PAIN

Air high fives are high fives that lack.
High fives aren't fun without the smack.
But unwashed high fives can spread germs,
and germs are hated.
So high five me baby; I'm vaccinated!

Okay, it's a possibility that I stretched a little far for that one, but it's a good day. I got my second dose of the Pfizer vaccine on Tuesday, meaning I'm a mere 11 days from full effect. Also, I'm achy and grouchy but in a happy way, not at all like the pain that comes from working out — which is sheer and simple drudgery.

Thinking about how this pain is tolerable because of the circumstances has been interesting, as I'm realizing it's tolerable because it has purpose. It's not suffering in vain, but it comes with meaning.

Jesus told the disciples that they would suffer because they follow him, and said cryptic things to them about the fact that most of them would eventually be martyred due to Roman persecution and the persecution of their own communities. Jesus told the disciples that their faithful following would cause them to be hated. "Follow me and suffer!" must be the worst sales pitch in history.

It's interesting to me that this didn't seem to scare them off, even if it did scare them.

To be perfectly candid, I don't have many policies because I find them limiting. I have policies not to spit into the wind or cut mushrooms without a cutting board. Even so, I have a general policy to avoid pain where possible, and a very specific policy to avoid situations concerning pain involving me (I'm looking at you, lunges). Knowing this, it may seem strange that I not only opted into a faith that promises pain, but answered a calling as my vocation to a role that is often challenging and puts me at odds with both the general policy against pain, because I often spend time with people in the moments of their greatest pain; and pain involving me, because there are moments when being a pastor just breaks your heart.

Perhaps this is more what Jesus was trying to get at, other than warning the disciples what it means that they follow him, that pain is an unavoidable part of life in the same way that happiness is unavoidable. Even if we studiously try to keep either out of our lives, smiles and frowns will come and go. I wonder often whether what Jesus was really saying is, "choose happy pain — pain that has purpose, rather than pointless pain that just hurts for the sake of hurting.

Purpose changes everything in our mindset.

Avoiding situations that put extra holes in my body is another of my policies, a corollary to the policy on pain, so it may not surprise you to know that I don't like shots, but the vaccine is a hole with a purpose — pain with a plan. It's not pointless vain suffering. It's fine because it has meaning.

Discipleship might be simple, but it isn't easy. The act of investing our lives in the joy of God's love is one that really isn't much more complicated than that very thing on the surface, but it's the surface of the waters of baptism, and we soon realize that as soon as they're disturbed by our dipping our toe in the water, the ripples of joy and the cost of this investment soon demands our attention in every facet of our lives. To follow Jesus is to surrender wholly to the idea that love is our ethic, faith is our guide, and sacrifice is our praxis.

In short, we choose happy pain.

Happy, not because it hurts, but because it has meaning. Paul writes in Romans 5, "Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained

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access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings” — wait! We boast in our sufferings?

What kind of bait and switch is this? Lure'em in with glory and they'll stick around for the suffering! I'm telling you, the early Church had an awful marketing department!

But here's what this suffering produces, “and not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.”

There's another way to read that last piece, it isn't just God's love poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, but it can be rightly translated from the Greek as something along the lines of, “God pours love for God into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that's been given to us”. Not only is God's love a gift, but our very love for God is a gift from God.

This is one of a number of consistent paradoxes in the Christian faith: in weakness, we find strength; in defeat, we find victory; in dying, we find life. It may not be great marketing, but it's certainly revelatory of the deeper truths of life: nothing good comes cheap, even if it's inexpensive at first.

So today I endure happy pain, knowing that for my immune system this suffering will produce endurance. I also hope y'all have some pity for my wonderful wife because I'm already enough of a character.

Grace & Peace, PEW

KNITTING/SEWING GROUP VIA ZOOM

7:30 PM
FRIDAYS!



BIBLE STUDY

Bible Study has moved back to its previous time of Thursday mornings at 10:00 am.

Contact Ippolit Matjucha if you would like more information.



COFFEE & CONVERSATION VIA ZOOM

10:00 AM
SUNDAYS



PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS:

Rachel Florey	Brian	Bill Moldwin
Regina Mueller	Johnny	Wendy
Richard	David Donnelly	Christopher Miller
Brian Young	Trish Sarvela Leiva	Alexis Marsh
Robin Hartford	Brennan McGinnis	Paul Simeone
Pat Quinn	Patricia Jolou	John Duane
Rhonda Tibbetts	Ruth Avery	Jim Hansgate
Charlotte McNeil	Janice Potter	Ron Rakowsky
Isla Rose Kelley	Norma Duane	Pam McKay
June Carins	Peter Kindem	Steven Greene
Erica Kivimaki	Bill Davis	Rev. Roald Kindem





SAVE THE DATE! *Family Promise Metrowest* is reimagining our annual Walk for the Weekend of May 1 & 2 in your town, and we need you to be a part of the weekend to make it a success.

Family Promise Metrowest depends on you and this fun, annual, friends-and-family event to fund our programs. Because of the outpouring of support from our community last year, *we were able to help change the future for 50 families including 89 children.*

Here are the details:

2021 Walk for Change...*Help us change the future of families facing homelessness*

Where: *Wayland*
When: *May 2, 2021*
Who: *Congregation Or Atid*
How: *Registration opens March 15*
www.familypromisemetrowest.org

We are hoping that all 50 congregations in our Network will form teams, take lots of photos of everyone walking, and post them on Facebook or Instagram! Visit our website to get some ideas for family-friendly activities leading up to the weekend of May 1 and for your walk.

Also, everyone will need to follow state guidelines for COVID-19 safety at that time (for example, masking and social-distancing).

We need you this year. ***If you can't walk --- no problem!*** Please consider a donation to our Campaign of Change and help us change the future of families facing homelessness.

Another way you can support our mission: Check out our [Raffle for Change](#) for a chance to win the following prizes:

FIRST PLACE: \$2,500 cash prize.

SECOND PLACE: "Refresh Your Room" prize package. This package includes a two-hour consultation with interior designer Susan Burt; a \$300 gift card to Debsan's Decorating Store in Natick; a \$250 gift card to Home Goods/Home Sense; and professional painting services for one room, donated by Dimensions 3D.

THIRD PLACE: "Rejuvenate Your Garden" prize package. This package includes a one-hour consultation with landscape designer Catherine Volic, owner of Sweetgum Horticulture, and a \$500 gift card to purchase plants or landscape supplies.