

ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH NEWSLETTER

Pastor: The Rev'd Eric Wolf (pew@stjohnsudbury.org)
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January 28, 2021



- Visit our YouTube Channel
- All of our worship videos are available to watch at our YouTube channel.
- Find us at:
- St John Lutheran Sudbury.

**The Annual Winter Congregational Meeting
will be held on February 7th via Zoom.**

This will be held via Zoom at 9:30 am

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



COFFEE AND CONVERSATION
VIA ZOOM

10:00 AM
SUNDAYS



KNITTING/SEWING GROUP
VIA ZOOM

7:30 PM
EVERY FRIDAY



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

GOOD DEEDS, DONE EXPENSIVELY

The works of your hands are faithfulness and justice;
all of your precepts are sure.
They stand fast forever and ever,
because they are done in truth and equity.

-- Psalm 111:7-8

My daughter spent what felt like five minutes looking at my hand after I had surgery to repair the tendons I severed with a butter knife in March of 2020, but given that she was nearly two, it was probably more like thirty seconds than five minutes. She was looking at the zig-zag incision that was at this point still stitched with what I call her “Science Face”. It’s the face my bride has when she’s working on something engineerish or mathy, both technical terms, I assure you.

After studying my wound and processing it for about 30 seconds, she covered it with her hand and said, “Hurt.”

“Yes, hurt.”

“Owie.”

“Yep, owie.”

Now in standard toddler fashion, she later decided it would be interesting to see what would happen if she smacked my hand — all in the name of science, I’m sure — but it was interesting to watch her make the connections and then casually walk away to play. She gave me a real moment of connection and then went about her business.

It’s fascinating to think of how seldom we get that true attention from adults. How often is someone talking to us while looking at their phone or watching TV? It’s frequent enough that it doesn’t really feel like being ignored, and most of the time we’re probably doing the same thing ourselves, so this kind of half-attention is fairly acceptable behavior. But then there are those Moments.

You’re speaking with another person and your eyes lock onto each other in a moment of mutual recognition, creating what feels like a vulnerable interaction. It can be somewhat breathtaking with someone you love, and even then it can at first feel weirdly uncomfortable until you step into the awkward space to join them and make it feel normal. It’s really weird when it happens with someone you don’t know well. When that happens, a lot of times the shock of connection causes us to break eye contact and back away from this vulnerable possibility.

What’s weird is that this isn’t really romantic (unless it is), but it does feel surprisingly intimate. I wonder why this is something we’ve learned to shy away from so quickly. We seem to avoid anything that might lead us into deeper understanding, deeper engagement, deeper self-revelation and connection with other people. Think about how jarring it is for someone to respond with something other than “fine” when you ask, “How are you?”. Even a question literally asking about what someone’s current condition is promotes an attitude of low key disinterest even if you care if they’re not fine.

Maybe it’s because these interactions, these connections, these Moments may be free, but they don’t come cheap. I think a lot of times we’re afraid that if we maintain that suddenly-awkward eye contact, if we give an honest answer to “how are you?”, if we allow that connection to remain then that person will see whatever it is we’re afraid of them seeing because even though it’s not written on our face for others to see, it’s certainly written on our hearts.

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“Hurt. Owie”. So simple, so disarmingly honest. It’s endearing and exposing, and it makes you want to draw close and back away because we all want more than anything else both to be known and to be able to hide our pain simultaneously.

The love of God is like this: exposing; disclosive; vulnerable.

I think this is why so many people don’t like the idea of individual confession. If we have to voice the reality of our Sin and sins to God with the help of a pastor, it means we have to take a hard look at their reality for ourselves and spend that time trying to figure out what to do when we don’t like what we see. It’s hard to develop vulnerability with others when we have trouble being vulnerable with ourselves. Sometimes we shy away because we’re not prepared for The One Who Won’t Look Away, no matter what they see written on our hearts, and for the truth facing us when we see ourselves in the mirror of those eyes.

But as with other things in life, perspective is everything.

I look at a picture of myself and feel like I look fat, but my bride sees it and tells me I look handsome.

I see in God’s eyes all the things I wish I weren’t, but God looks in mine and sees everything I’m being created to be even if that isn’t realized yet within me. Love sees potential and hope even when we can’t see it for ourselves.

What is God seeing in your eyes this week? What more might you see if you don’t look away?

Grace & Peace,

Pastor Eric

PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS:

Rachel Florey

Joe Jackson

Richard

Brian Young

Robin Hartford

Pat Quinn

Rhonda Tibbetts

Charlotte McNeil

Isla Rose Kelley

June Carins

Steven Greene

Jim Gronemeyer

Brian

Regina Mueller

David Donnelly

Trish Sarvela Leiva

Brennan McGinnis

Patricia Jolou

Ruth Avery

Janice Potter

Norma Duane

Dave Weber

Liz Tolbert

Erica Kivimaki

Bill Moldwin

Johnny

Christopher Miller

Alexis Marsh

Paul Simeone

John Duane

Jim Hansgate

Ron Rakowsky

Pam McKay

Peter Kindem

Nancy Buse





1/31/21 - Parable - Lost Sheep

11 AM Sunday school -
Preschool to Grade 3

11:45 AM Sunday school
Grades 4&5

6 PM Confirmation - Parents and
Kids - Get to Know Each Other
with Pastor Eric

2/7/21 - Parable - Sowing Seeds

11 AM Family Sunday School
All grades

6 PM Confirmation - New Unit -
Lutheran Living

2/14/21 - School Vacation

NO Sunday School or Confirmation-

SAVE THE DATE

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

January 29th - 7:30 - Knitting Group

January 31st - 10:00 am - Coffee and Conversation

-11:00 am - Pre-K-Gr 3 Sunday School

-11:45 am - Grade 4/5 Sunday School

- 2:00 pm - Bible Study (Previous Thursday am Group)

- 6:00 pm - Confirmation

February 1st - 10:00 am - Seniorcise

February 3rd - 6:00 pm - Outreach Meeting

February 2nd - 11:00 am - Seniors on the Go Book Group

February 3rd - 10:00 am - Seniorcise

February 5th - 7:30 pm - Knitting

February 7th - 9:30 am - Congregational Meeting

-11:00 am - Family Sunday School

- 2:00 pm - Bible Study (Previous Thursday am Group)

February 8th - 10:00 am - Seniorcise

February 9th - 11:00 am - Seniors on the Go Book Group

February 10th - 10:00 am - Seniorcise

February 12th - 7:30 pm - Knitting Group

ZOOM Meeting Login information

<https://zoom.us/j/9784438350>

Meeting ID: 978 443 8350

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DISCUSSION ON INEQUALITY OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Join St. John and Trinity Lutheran for a presentation on Inequality of Economic Opportunity by our very own Jeff Fuhrer on Tuesday February 23rd at 7:00pm via the St. John Zoom account. We'll explore the facts about racial wealth and income disparities, examine the causes, and discuss ways forward.

RECONCILING IN CHRIST SUNDAY THIS SUNDAY 1/31

This Sunday is Reconciling in Christ Sunday coordinated by Reconciling Works: Lutherans for Full Participation. Through the theme 'Coming Together - Building Community' Reconciling Works poses the question "How do we, the church, come together and build community, to express the fullness of God's diversity?" As we approach RIC Sunday and beyond, I encourage you to reflect on this commitment we made as a community to support the full welcome, inclusion, and equity of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and asexual/aromantic (LGBTQIA+) Lutherans in all aspects of the life of their Church, congregations, and community. How have we honored our commitment? Where do we have areas for growth and learning?

I also encourage you to check out the RIC website to learn more about the initiative, available resources, and other engagement opportunities here: <https://www.reconcilingworks.org/>. We hope to engage in more conversation together around revisiting our commitment and finding new ways to support our LGBTQIA+ siblings within our congregation and in the broader community.

Maddy LaCure - Social Justice Team

St John's Super Bowl Squares to Benefit the



Help our youth raise \$1000 for local food pantries by buying one—or more—square(s) for \$10 between now and Friday, February 5th. On February 6th, we will randomly draw names of all contributors out of a hat and assign names to squares. If your square has the last digit of the score of both teams at the end of each quarter or the game, you could win a soup dinner made by one of our young families!
Four dinners up for grabs!

Join the fun! Click this link
(or copy and paste into your web browser) to fill out the form:
<https://forms.gle/LrmvWshb7Dpv3QCM7>

Mail \$10 per square you are purchasing to St John, 16 Great Rd, Sudbury, MA 01776. Note Souper Bowl of Caring in the memo section.

Another way to help is to purchase some non-perishable food items (or you may write a check) and drop them at St John in the box in the lobby by Monday, February 8th.
Ring the bell so Valerie can let you in if you do not have a key.



Member DIRECTORY

We are in the process of updating our directory. The on-line version remains constantly updated but the printed version needs to be updated. In preparation for this, can you please make sure that Valerie has the current addresses, phone numbers and email addresses that you would like included. Also if you were inadvertently omitted from the directory, please contact Valerie. Please send a new photo if you would like your photo updated. This is really important for those of you that have children that are rapidly changing! You may email an electronic photo (Valerie can crop them) or send a hard copy to the church. The new di-

rectory will be printed on February 25th. Any photos and information not updated by then will remain the same as in the current directory. Thanks for your help in this effort!

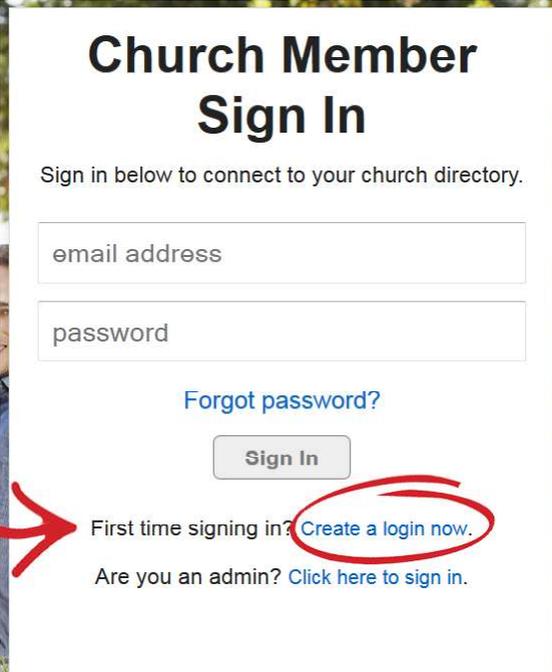
Also please consider using the on-line directory. It is a wonderful up to date tool. See information below! Valerie is also willing to help with getting you set up with the directory app.

Access Our Directory Online

Now you can go to
members.InstantChurchDirectory.com
to access our Church Directory online!

It's Easy!

1. Create a login using your email as it's listed in our church directory and make up your own unique password.
2. Confirm your email.
3. Sign In from any web browser (using your computer or mobile device).



Church Member Sign In

Sign in below to connect to your church directory.

email address

password

[Forgot password?](#)

First time signing in? [Create a login now.](#)

Are you an admin? [Click here to sign in.](#)

Instant
Church Directory™
Online