

ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH NEWSLETTER

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Organist: Bart Dahlstrom (organist@stjohnsudbury.org)
Sexton: George LaBarge

March 23, 2023

UPCOMING AT ST. JOHN

March 24	7:30 pm - Knitting/Crafting
March 26	9:30 am -Worship 10:45 am- Sunday School 5:30 pm - Youth Ministry Collaborative
March 27	10:00 am - Seniorcise
March 28	11:00 am - Seniors on the Go Book Group
March 29	10:00 am - Seniorcise
March 30	10:30 am - Bible Study 5:45 pm - Bells 6:45 pm - Lenten Evening Prayers (in-person) 7:15 pm - Choir
March 31	7:30 pm -Knitting/Crafting Group
April 2	9:30 am -Worship 10:45 am- Sunday School 5:30 pm - Confirmation
April 3	10:00 am - Seniorcise
April 4	11:00 am - Seniors on the Go Book Group
April 5	10:00 am - Seniorcise
April 6	10:30 am - Bible Study 7:30 pm - Maundy Thursday Service
April 7	7:30 pm -Good Friday Service
April 9	9:30 am - Easter Worship 10:45 am- Easter Egg Hunt 11:00 am - Easter Worship



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



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.
• • • • •

LENTEN PRAYER

Merciful God,
accompany our journey
through these forty days.
Renew us in the gift
of baptism,
that we may provide
for those who are poor,
pray for those in need,
fast from self-indulgence,
and above all that
we may find our treasure in the
life of your Son,
Jesus Christ, our Savior
and Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and
the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.
Amen.

ST. JOHN SENIORS ON THE GO BOOK CLUB FOR MARCH 28th AND APRIL 4th

Please join us!!!

ZOOM book club meetings will be on Tuesdays, March 28th and April 4th, at 11:00am for get togethers to discuss prior books read and new books to read.

On April 18th we will discuss "Sarah's Key" by Tatiana de Rosnay.

Any questions, contact Jan Nielsen at jrnielsen@charter.net or 978-549-3044.

Next books:

April 18 - "Sarah's Key" by Tatiana de Rosnay

May 16 - "The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek"
by Kim Michele Richardson

June 20 - "The Island of Sea Women" by Lisa See



WE PRAY FOR OUR COMMUNITY:

Brian Young
John Duane
Joan LeDuc
Judy
George Stanley
Pastor Ivan
Liz Packard
Ara Bramantis
Wanda Miller
Nancy Quinn
Tom Toepfner

Christopher Miller
Helen Williams
Marilyn Kunelius
Carolyn Sweeney
Gus Sullivan
Janet Erb
Martha
Amber
Caryl Lundie
Glen Jorda
Vince Golden

Charles Miller
Janice Potter
Rhonda Tibbetts
Claudine Selzer
Barbara Locke
Bob
George Wolf
Katie
Lauri Pekkala
Brian Fuller

Norma Duane
Jan Nielsen
Ann Kirk
Meg Davis
Mark Sarvela
Joan Western
Donna & Bob May
Gogi Woodward
Estela Gaudet
Joyce Fryklund



A STEP IN TIME

We carry with us a lot of responsibility and urgency that makes us feel busy, rushed, and anxious. Some of this is external to us. A significant portion of this amounts to internalized pressure curated by arbitrary deadlines and expectations we set for ourselves, and this focus on productivity can be a thief or a crutch. In positive usage, it aids us in achieving what our younger selves would never imagine. Then there are other moments in which productivity becomes a thief of our inner resources as we consent to conditional timelines without true need.

Now that we're settling into the new house, I'm coming out of a time of high expectation and urgency. I recognize my own anxiety has intensified to match the decline in what was necessarily time-sensitive. For our own sanity and respect for our neighbors, it was necessary to move our belongings from the old house, as well as dispose of the trash generated by moving. The anxiety to rush to finish and fast caused me to forget that my body doesn't like doing things at the same pace and intensity it did when I was 26. My elbow hurts, my shoulder aches, and my lower back protested for days. I came to the realization that we need to finish by the end of April, not last week. Though I plan to be quit of the old house far sooner than that, I could have saved myself a lot of headaches and backaches if I bore this in mind more intentionally.

Life presents us with opportunities to learn or forget this lesson frequently. Others invite us into their anxiety and we invite them into ours.

One way this presents itself in congregations is the constant worry about finances and membership, comparing ourselves to others in a mode that's more akin to the business culture than the discipleship culture. I'm telling you the truth when I say that in my years as a pastor who has the rare benefit of exposure to over a hundred congregations, I've never seen a congregation improve their financial health or attendance by talking about it during council meetings.

Not a single one. *Ever.*

What I have observed is that efforts to realign a congregation's understanding of stewardship has helped. Efforts to discern congregational vocation and live into that has helped. Discerning leadership priorities that more fully engage faith formation across the ages has helped. The willingness of adults to participate in intergenerational activities with younger families and children helps.

But focusing on the problems and rehashing the same things over and over both at official and unofficial meetings?

Never.

It's a little counterintuitive, I suppose. It makes sense that talking about what might be going wrong is seductive, because it feels productive to analyze and identify what's wrong. It's tempting to say, "if only the pastor would give suggestions or direct us in the right path during sermons". I could do that! It's tempting for me too, because I could tell people what to do. I could set a trajectory for the congregation and tell us what we must do to be "successful". The trouble is, we're not called to succeed like the world tells us success looks like. More isn't always better in God's economy. Some of the most vibrant congregations I've seen have fewer members than we do, and some of the least healthy turn out to be the largest. Jesus identifies our growth trajectory as one measured by fruit produced, not "souls reached". The role of the pastor is to create space in which the community can discern. The role of the sermon is to identify law and gospel; pain and healing; baptismal identity and how we discern what comes from that as individuals and as a congregation.

As Jesus followers, we step out of *chronos*, the time and timing of our cultural expectations. We step into the *kairos* of God, the rhythm of God's own timing. Stepping into *kairos* is less productive from the standpoint of the metrics we're accustomed to from the standpoint of our business and achievement mindsets. God's

metrics are found in relationship, joy in suffering together, and the satisfaction that comes from loving ourselves and others well.

In living out this vocation, it becomes more challenging to measure success by the standards to which we're accustomed. In so doing, we recognize that the metrics of success in God's kingdom may feel less straightforward, but they also offer a return that builds us up rather than wearing us down.

Grace & Peace,
Pastor Eric

EASTER OPPORTUNITIES

It's time to sign up for Easter flowers!

The sanctuary looks and smells so lovely on Easter morning thanks to these special offerings. As always you may designate whether you want to dedicate your flowers in memory or in honor of a loved one.

The cost for the flowers this year will be \$15.00 per plant. You are welcome to take them home and plant the bulbs in your home garden after Easter!



This year we are adding another opportunity for you to participate in our Easter celebration services. Perhaps you can't sing in the choir or play a brass instrument but you can still participate by making a donation in the amount of your choosing toward our special Easter music.

Please use the envelopes in the pews and note whether your donation is for flowers or music. Thank you.

2023 LENTEN WORSHIP

Weekday Lenten Services

Every Thursday in March at 6:45 pm

Holy Week

Palm Sunday

April 2 at 9:30 am

Maundy Thursday

April 6 at 7:30 pm

Good Friday

April 7 at 7:30 pm

Easter Sunday

April 9 at 9:30 & 11:00 am

Easter Egg Hunt in between the services.

Easter Egg Hunt

April 9th

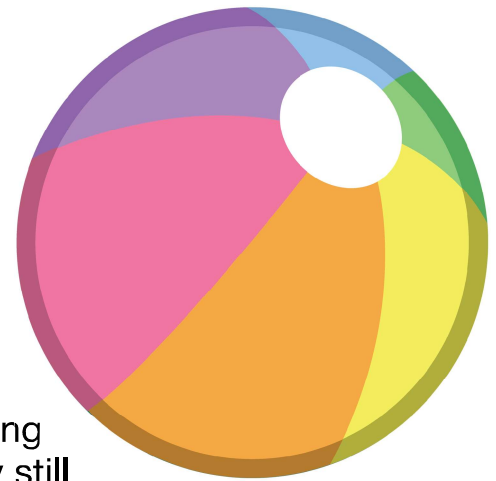
St John's Backyard



Bring your baskets and join the fun!

Easter Sunday
Between the 9:30 AM and 11 AM services

BEACH PARTY
WE HAD A BALL—A
BEACH BALL!

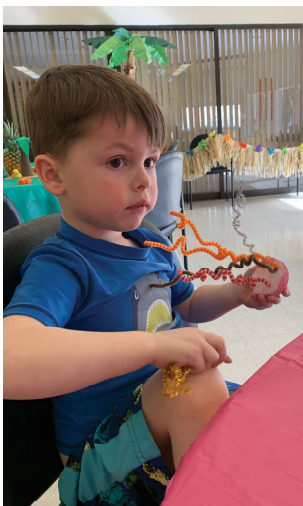


Spring may still have been a couple days away, but on March 18th, our St John Beach in Heritage Hall was the hottest spot in town! We enjoyed playing in the water and sand tables and “splashing” in a pool full of balls!

The beach brought out our inner artists as we designed our own surfboards, filled our ocean with fish, and created a jellyfish buddy to take home—one jellyfish even snuggled in for the night and shared a pillow with its creator!



We had a blast playing hide and seek with the sharks and hanging out on our big flamingo float. The best part might just have been being together!



Thank you to everyone who helped setup and clean up!





March's Featured Lending Library Book

Our Children's Message on March 26th will feature Social Justice's latest book recommendation, ***When Sadness Comes to Call***, written and illustrated by Eva Eland. By describing and illustrating sadness as a friend or house guest, this book provides a sensitive portrayal of an emotion that many of us have a hard time dealing with. The book outlines ways to deal with the sadness by identifying it, acknowledging it, accepting it, and finding activities to coexist with it. ***When Sadness Comes to Call*** encourages us to pay attention to times when we are feeling blue and to work with our sadness—rather than simply ignoring it.

Mildred Cheung

There were Brownies in the Sanctuary!

Bet you are wondering how you missed out on that deliciousness. Our St John Girl Scouts, of which Brownies is one level, celebrated Girl Scout Sunday during worship on March 12th. Led by Laura Kennedy, a troop leader here in Maynard, our Girl Scouts served as ushers, our reader, and our acolyte.

Our active Girl Scouts—Jill Valentino, Faith Plante, and Jane Miller (Lucy Kennedy was sick) recited the Girl Scout Promise and Law. And Jill shared a Girl Scout Prayer. Finally all current and former Girl Scouts—about 20 from all generations—stood up to end with a prayer.

Thank you to all who participated!



SUNDAY SCHOOL SCOOP

Perhaps you were walking through the hallway on March 12th, and you saw a string stretching from the back of Heritage Hall attached to a bucket that



went all the way down the hallway through the Narthex and halfway up the aisle in the

sanctuary? We were studying the Woman at the Well that day, and we witnessed just how far the Samaritan woman had to haul the bucket up to provide Jesus with a drink. Getting water was a lot of work in those days! We could certainly understand how interested she must have been to

hear that Jesus had *Living Water* for her to never thirst again. And then when Jesus knew details about her life that a stranger could not

have known? No wonder she shared her excitement with everyone she met.



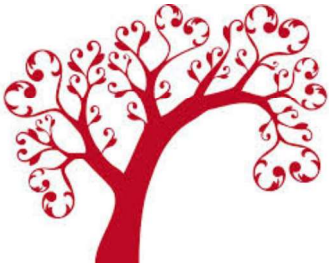
On March 19th, we gathered together to share the lesson of Jesus Blesses the Children. We acted out the story. Ethan played

Jesus. Kirsten, Aria, and Luke played the disciples. And Emily was a mother with a whole bunch of kids! We learned how important each and every one of us is to Jesus—regardless of our age. Then we pulled out our collage papers that we created back in January 2020 prior to the pandemic and created a mural depicting Jesus blessing the children. Check it out on the hallway going to the nursery.

Finally we stuffed 62 spring goody bags for the Maynard Backpack Project!



CONFIRMATION CONNECTION



In Confirmation class, we are currently focusing on faith practices: why we do and what we do. On March 19th, we considered prayer.

We assembled and examined the way that Jesus taught his disciples to pray: The Lord's Prayer. We considered the emotions that each line of the Lord's Prayer evokes. And we shared ideas about why we pray and how we pray. We realized that our prayers can be as simple as having a conversation with God.



PUMPKIN PATCH PLANS!



Spring has sprung! October and our St John Pumpkin Patch will be in business before we know it. We need to start planning to ensure we have a successful Patch!

For instance, if you have any old wagons or plastic crates/baskets that you are considering getting rid of, please consider giving them to St John! Providing wagons for folks to haul their pumpkins to their cars with and baskets for organizing the pumpkins will improve our customers' shopping experience and increase our sales!

We also would like to provide fun photo opportunities for our visitors like the painted wooden pictures that you stick your face in so if you have some wooden boards that you don't know what to do with, we would love to put them to good use!

If this sounds like fun to you and you would like to get more involved, please contact Michelle Rose at mrose@stjohnsudbury.org or 508-320-7245.

Mother's Day Bags for The Wish Project

Our Sunday School classes will be decorating and filling Mother's Day bags for donation to The Wish Project in North Chelmsford. The Wish Project works with social service agencies throughout the Merrimack Valley and beyond to fulfill a variety of client needs. We are hoping to donate 15 full bags. Can you please help us by donating any of the following items?

- Bath salts/bath bombs
- Body lotion
- Body wash
- Pair of white socks or slipper socks
- Hairbrush
- Comb
- Deodorant
- Small notebook or journal
- Pens/pencils
- Adult coloring books
- Colored pencils
- Women's razors
- Women's shaving cream
- Lip balm/Chapstick
- \$5 Dunkin' Gift cards
- Nail polish
- Nail polish remover
- Headbands

Please bring the items to church by Sunday, April 16th. We will be decorating and filling the bags during Sunday School the following Sunday.

If you have any questions, please call Michelle Rose at church or email her at mrose@stjohnsudbury.org.

Thank you for your help in making a special day for women across the Merrimack Valley!





Support St. John

in supporting our partnership with

Jardín de Amor

Our goal is to match the Outreach Ministry's support of \$2000.

See the poster for information regarding how to financially support individual students, individual teachers, and nutrition for the entire school.

In addition to financial support, Jen Adams will bring donations to the students.

Items they are in need of:

- New children's underwear and socks
- Clothing for children and teens (anything but infant and toddler sizes) - Items will be used by multiple siblings over the years, so please make sure donations are in good condition.

Please make sure all donations are made by April 2. Contact Jen Adams (jenerbadams@gmail.com) with

any questions.

¡Muchas gracias!



ST JOHN
is hosting our first

KIDS HELP THE WORLD FAIR

Saturday, June 24th (exact time TBD)

Our goal is to provide families in our community with the opportunity for their kids to help with different service organizations at the fair on June 24th.

What can I do?

If you work with a service organization, you could help sponsor a table at our fair and help brainstorm an activity that kids could do to help them.

For example, maybe the Outdoor Church has kids write a note to add to our lunch bags that we distribute to Cambridge's street-dependent population on the 4th Sunday of each month.

Or maybe a family has a special cause they like to support like the National Kidney Foundation. Perhaps they could set up a soccer goal and have kids score a goal and donate \$1 per goal.

How can I find out more?

Attend our Coffee Hour/Adult Forum on Sunday, March 26th in the Lounge!

Fearless Women: Feminist Patriots from Abigail Adams to Beyoncé

Online Webinar: Wednesday, March 29, 2023 - 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. EDT

To register go to [Fearless Women: Feminist Patriots from Abigail Adams to Beyoncé - National Archives Foundation](#)

When America became a nation, a woman had no legal existence beyond her husband. Abigail Adams tried to change this, reminding her husband John to “remember the ladies” when Congress formulated laws for the new nation. *Fearless Women* tells the story of women who dared to take destiny into their own hands; some were abolitionists, some famous like Susan B. Anthony, and most of them considered themselves patriots. Author **Elizabeth Cobbs** will discuss the stories of fearless women on both sides of the aisle, rich and poor, from all backgrounds and regions, and show that the women’s movement has never been an exclusive club.

Women’s History Month programming is made possible in part by the National Archives Foundation through the generous support of Denise Gwyn Ferguson.

