

ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH NEWSLETTER

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Organist: Bart Dahlstrom (organist@stjohnsudbury.org)

March 31, 2022

WEDNESDAYS DURING LENT

Wednesdays during Lent we will gather in worship at 7:00 pm for Holden Evening Prayer or something similar. Following worship, we plan to go somewhere like a coffee shop, local restaurant, or perhaps simply in Heritage Hall (depending on COVID) to enjoy time together in community as part of our Lenten discipline.

We're looking forward to this opportunity for worship and community, and we hope to see you there!



HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

Palm Sunday	April 10	9:30 am
Maundy Thursday	April 14	7:30 pm
Good Friday	April 15	7:30 pm
Easter Sunday	April 17	9:00 & 11:00 am



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

**APRIL 14TH, 4:00 PM –
ZOOM MEETING TO DISCUSS
RACE, RACISM, AND
ANTIRACISM.**

Our group meets the second and fourth Thursdays of the month at 4:00 PM for informal, unstructured discussion about books, ideas, and experiences touching on race, racism, and antiracism.

Please join us!

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

Awareness
Knowledge
Action

**ST. JOHN SENIORS ON THE GO BOOK CLUB
FOR APRIL 5th & 12th**

Please join us!!!

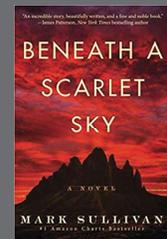
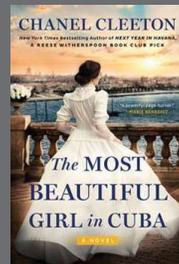
ZOOM book club meetings will be on Tuesdays, April 5th and April 12th, at 11:00 AM for a get together to discuss prior books read and new books to read.

On April 19th, we will discuss “The Most Beautiful Girl in Cuba” by Chanel Cleeton.

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

Next books:

April 19, 2022, “The Most Beautiful Girl in Cuba” by Chanel Cleeton
May 17, 2022, “The Four Winds” by Kristin Hannah
June 21, 2022, “Beneath the Scarlet Sky” by Mark Sullivan
July 19, 2022, “A Gentleman in Moscow” by Amor Towles



PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS:

Brian Young
Norma Duane
Liz Tolbert
Ruth Avery
Wendy
Ann Kirk
Claudine
George Stanley
Wanda Miller
Sedona

Christopher Miller
John Duane
Rhonda Tibbetts
Bill Davis
Jan Nielsen
Judy
Meg Davis
Ed Holmgren
The Rev. Tim Stein
Pastor Ivan Bepalov (in Kyiv)

Charles Miller
Helen Williams
Alexis Marsh
Janice Potter
Marilyn Kunelius
Carolyn Sweeney
Joan LeDuc
Gus Sullivan
Alan Bascom



CONVERSION INTO COMMUNITY

We often hear the word *evangelism* in church. If you're anything like me, you hear it with a mixed set of responses.

Gen X Skepticism

Part of me hears this word and responds with a skepticism native to Gen X. It evokes images of televangelists, knocking on doors to tell people why our brand of Jesus is better than other brands of Jesus, and so on.

Heartfelt Conversion

Another part of me hears this word and thinks about coming to a time and place where the message of Christ, the hope of new life, and the power of experiencing God together has converted my heart and drawn me again and again to faith. The liturgy and the act of worshiping together fills me with hope and new life in ways that I still struggle to describe.

I remember a person at a youth event so many years ago telling a story that I've heard told and retold time and time again. It's something along the lines of, "I was hurting and lost, and I had a moment when I walked into a worship service thinking it would be the last time and had a moment of clarity. God spoke to my heart and something changed in me". What speaks to people is different in each story. Sometimes it's a person who comes to sit by them. It's sometimes the choir or music. Sometimes it's something they hear in the confession. For me, it's often the experience of communing that reiterates God's loving welcome to my own heart.

It's funny, very seldom is it the preacher! I'm sure that must be the second thing. It must be.

Sometimes it's the Coffee

I heard a story from one of our longtime members recently about the impact of a man whose presence offered this invitation, but not in worship. My paraphrase is this, "I never saw him go to worship. He was always just back in the kitchen reading his newspaper, making coffee, and setting treats up on the plates. Once worship was over, we all walked in and he had it all laid out. This is the thing that feels the most like St. John to me."

This is such a powerful image because it stirs up the images of the sacred to me that are similar to what I feel when I receive communion. The table prepared, the welcoming host, the sacrifice of time and effort for the sake of those who will gather for the meal. This is worship through hospitality, a piety of petits fours. It's perhaps a third sacrament, whose earthly element is in coffee, and the Spirit is present in the holy conversations where we learn everything there is to know about who we really are.

Want to know about the building? Want to know about who's having surgery or who's doing something amazing? Want to know about special events or projects? Want to hear an occasional theological reflection about sports?

It seems that Jesus is present in, with, and under the earthly elements of coffee and donuts — not because of what they *are* in the way of Communion, but because they *represent* what Jesus offers. Jesus offers community.

Community is What We Offer

Follow me.

Where have you laid him?

What do you want, woman?

Sell all that you own and follow me if you want to be perfect.

Who do people say that I am?

Each of these represent moments in Jesus' ministry that are invitations into community and deeper relationship. What I find so interesting is that Jesus never invites *anyone* to "church". Jesus *goes* to church and participates in leading and teaching, but the *evangelism* of Jesus isn't a simple theological or ideological conversion. The true spiritual experience of evangelistic conversion as Jesus offers it is to join in life together *with* him. Jesus teaches theology to crowds, but seldom in church. Jesus hosts at tables, but eating with sinners, sex workers, and tax collectors who he makes comfortable, and pastors and council members who he makes anxious. Jesus invites people to join him where he is, and this is so much of what we're called to do too.

Jesus evangelizes conversion not to his *church building*, but into his *community*. This beloved community *is the Church*.

At its very heart, this is what it means to be church: *koinonia*, an intimate sharing in the life of faith together.

As we think about what it means to be St. John, to be neighbors, to be family or friends, we remember that the heart of who Jesus calls us to be is the very simplicity of being we, gathered in faith and love for God and each other.

Sometimes it really is all about the coffee here.

Grace & Peace,
Pastor Eric

NAMETAGS!

Now that we are back in the building, let's help Pastor Wolf and Lauren get to place our names along with our faces! Please wear your nametags for the next several Sundays. *This is a good practice for every Sunday to help visitors as well.* Please let Valerie know if you need a nametag or if yours is "tired looking" and needs to be replaced. They are hanging on the wall near the double door on the North Rd. side of the narthex.

PASTOR'S CLASS: LIVING FAITH

This week is our next-to-last session in our conversational exploration of faith practices. We spoke last time about what Communion means, and this time we're going to ponder what it means to participate in the life of faith. What are our expectations? What are the conditions? What is necessary and what is cultural necessity? These questions are the ones that sit at the heart of our practice as people of God, and the pastor wrote about this topic in this week's article in our newsletter.

Join us Monday, April 4 at 8:00 pm so we can explore these questions together.

GRILL, PLEASE!

Imagine the smell of cheeseburgers wafting through the air. Kids running around playing tag. Parents chatting in Adirondack chairs. In our church backyard????

The Youth, Family, and Education Ministry wants to make this vision a reality. But we need your help. We are looking for a very gently-used gas grill, and we are hoping to purchase some Adirondack chairs (the plastic stackable kind) and a portable fire pit to give our families a fun place to get together here at St John. If you have a gently-used grill or would like to make a donation toward any of these items, please let Michelle Rose mrose@stjohnsudbury.org or Laura Kennedy kennedy.lkk@gmail.com know.



DIG OUT YOUR EASTER BASKETS!

The annual St John Easter Egg Hunt is returning on Easter Sunday, April 17th between the worship services. Grab your coats and baskets and make sure your family is part of the fun!

CONFIRMATION CONNECTION

On March 20th, we gathered with our fellow churches in the Sudbury Youth Ministry Collective for some crazy fun and a meaningful emergent worship experience. We kicked off the fun with Rock/Paper/Scissors battles, the Hokey Pokey, and a Musical Chair Scramble. As the scramble knocked people out, we created original wearable art with pipe cleaners. Once we got our sillies out, we moved into a thoughtful worship experience about Water. Worship provided scripture and questions for us to reflect on as well as various prayer stations including a watercolor area and prayers that washed away. We are grateful to Professor Heather Jocelyn from Boston College and Zack Moser, SUMC's Youth Leader, for designing and preparing this unique worship opportunity.

On March 27th, the Confirmation class discussed the Lord's Prayer. Students worked together to put the Lord's Prayer in order using our magnet board. Over snacks of Airheads, KitKats, and peppermint patties, we analyzed the Lord's Prayer reflecting on the meaning of each verse. Finally, our youth had a blast writing and performing their own Sugar-Fueled Broadway-style version of The Lord's Prayer (Thanks to Jeannette Jones for providing the piano accompaniment for the final performance!)



SUNDAY SCHOOL SCOOP

When Devon started reciting the Lord's Prayer during the Children's Message this past Sunday, you may have wondered if we were working on that in Sunday School. And the answer is YES! On March 20th, we did listen to the story of Jesus giving the disciples the Lord's Prayer and teaching them how to pray. We used magnet boards to test ourselves to see if we could put the Lord's Prayer into the proper order—using pictures, phrases, and single words. And now we are using those in KidSpace too! We also made Prayer Cubes to use when it's time to pray. Each face of the cube has a different prayer on it so families can learn and pray a variety of prayers.



Our lesson for Sunday School on March 27th was the Parable of the Prodigal Son. Mike Ripley used his story-telling talents to share the parable, and the kids were riveted as they munched on their snacks. Classes discussed how much God loves us—even when we don't make the best choices—and celebrates having us be part of God's family. We ended with a photo Scavenger Hunt around the church. There was no fooling our kids. They found every object!

Mission Movers are sponsoring a furniture drive to support Household Goods in Acton which supplies furniture to families in need. Attached is a list of most needed items. If you have items to donate contact Earl Baucom 978-460-2481 or Jane Misslin 617-953-0059 to arrange pickup or bring items to church and leave them at the far end of Heritage Hall. Mission Movers have rented a truck for April 23rd. Call us soon!

Furniture Drive Acceptable Items

Bed Room Furniture

Mattresses: Please reject any mattresses that have any stains or rips of any size (standard mattresses only)

Box Springs: Please reject any with stains

Bed Frames: Please make sure all parts and hardware are included and kept together

Bureaus, Dressers, Armoires

Night Stands

Living Room Furniture

Couches, sofas, love seats, upholstered chairs: Please reject any with stains or rips

Sofa beds: Please open and make sure mattress is not stained

Coffee Tables, End Tables, TV stands (no glass)

Bookcases

Dining Room Furniture

Tables and Chairs (no glass on tables)

Sideboards

Appliances and Electronics:

➤ Blenders, Food Processors	➤ Rice Cookers and Slow Cookers
➤ Coffee Makers (Drip, K-Cup Only)	➤ Toasters and Toaster Ovens
➤ George Foreman Type Grills	➤ Lamps (NO Halogen, Wall or Ceiling Mounted)
➤ Microwaves (Countertop only)	➤ Fans and Space Heaters
➤ Mixers	➤ Flat Screen TVs with BASE
➤ Waffle Irons	

UPCOMING AT ST. JOHN

April 3rd	9:30 am - Worship (In-person) 10:45 am - Sunday School (In-person) 6:30 pm - Confirmation (In-person)
April 4th	10:00 am - Seniorcise 8:00 pm - Pastor's classes: Living Faith
April 5th	11:00 am - Seniors on the Go Book Group 7:00 pm - Social Justice Event/Forum
April 6th	10:00 am - Seniorcise 7:00 pm - Lenten Prayer 8:00 pm - New(ish) Parent's Class
April 7th	10:30 am - Bible Study 6:00 pm - Bells 7:00 pm - Choir
April 8th	7:30 pm - Knitting/Crafting Group
April 10th	9:30 am - Worship (In-person) 10:45 am - Sunday School (In-person) 6:30 pm - Confirmation (In-person)
April 11th	10:00 am - Seniorcise
April 12th	11:00 am - Seniors on the Go Book Group 7:30 pm - Youth and Family Meeting 8:00 pm - Executive Committee Meeting
April 13th	10:00 am - Seniorcise 6:00 pm - Outreach
April 14th	10:30 am - Bible Study 4:00 pm - Discussion on Racism/Anti-Racism 6:00 pm - Bells 7:00 pm - Choir
April 15th	7:30 pm - Knitting/Crafting Group
April 17th	9:00 am - Worship (In-person) 10:30 am - Easter Egg Hunt (In-person) 11:00 am - Worship (In-person)

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



EASTER FLOWERS

It is always so amazing to come into church on Easter morning and see and smell the gorgeous Easter flowers. You can participate in this tradition by donating a plant in honor of, or in memory of a loved one. The cost of the flowers are \$12.00. Please use the blue envelopes in the pews to let the office know that you would like a plant. The deadline is April 13th.



THANK YOU FROM THE STAFF

Friends,

Lauren, Willo, and I are so grateful for the generous gift for Christmas. We give thanks for this congregation and everyone in it every day! Please know how touched we are that you'd think of us.

Grace & Peace,
The Wolfs

My St John family,

Thank you for your thoughtfulness this Christmas season. Your support over the last several months as I figure out how to engage our families and help faith to grow and mature feeds my heart and my spirit. I am so grateful to be a part of this loving family.

With faith,
Michelle

Thank you for your generosity. It is very much appreciated! It is an honor to know that music is cherished in this congregation, and I feel warmed by the support of the program. St John's members truly treasure embodied worship and taking care of their ministry; and that is something very special - thank you again for you making it all possible!

With gratitude,
Ben

To my St. John family,

Thank you so much for your thoughtful Christmas gift. It is so nice to have the support of all of you not only at Christmas, but throughout the whole year.

Blessings and Peace,
Valerie

Dear St. John friends:

Thanks you so much for the generous Christmas gift. I'm grateful to be part of this congregation and work with so many wonderful colleagues.

Bart.

Hello all,

It was so kind of you to remember me this past holiday season. I truly appreciate your kindness and generosity, and feel blessed to continue to work with this church community.

I hope as we get back to in person living I will have the opportunity to meet more of you.

Wishing you all the best for a happy and healthy 2022!

Fondly,
Amie Alzapiedi
Bookkeeper

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

We would like to recognize a special birthday for Paul Haugsjaa. His 80th birthday is Sunday, April 3. Paul and his family joined St. John in 1973 and he has been an active and contributing member ever since. We are blessed by Paul's presence in our midst and celebrate his milestone birthday.

