

ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH NEWSLETTER

Pastor: The Rev'd Eric Wolf (pew@stjohnsudbury.org) cell: 803-760-0222
Director of Youth & Family Ministry: Michelle Rose (mrose@stjohnsudbury.org)
Office Director: Valerie Ripley (office@stjohnsudbury.org)
Director of Choirs: Benjamin Perry (choirdir@stjohnsudbury.org)
Organist: Bart Dahlstrom (organist@stjohnsudbury.org)

March 4, 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!



OFFICE HOURS

The church office will be open the following hours:

- Monday:** 10:00 am - 3:00 pm- Michelle
- Tuesday:** 10:00 am - 3:00 pm- Michelle
- Wednesday:** 9:00 am - 3:00 pm- Valerie, Michelle
(staff meetings will be held from 11:30 - 12:30)
- Thursday:** 9:00 am - 3:00 pm- Valerie, Michelle
- Friday:** 9:00 am - 3:00 pm- Valerie

PASTOR'S OFFICE HOURS

- Sunday:** Worship, Sunday School & Confirmation (when in session)
- Monday:** remote, appointments as needed
- Tuesday:** 10:00am - 2:00 pm for office hours
- Wednesday:** 10:00am - 12:30 pm; home visits as needed
- Thursday:** 10:00am - 2:00 pm office hours



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

**MARCH 10TH, 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



**ST. JOHN SENIORS ON THE GO BOOK CLUB
FOR MARCH 8th AND 15th**

Please join us!!!

ZOOM book club meetings will be on Tuesdays, March 8th and March 15th, at 11:00 AM.

March 8th will be a get together to discuss prior books read and new books to read.

On March 15th, we will discuss “The Rose Code” by Kate Quinn.

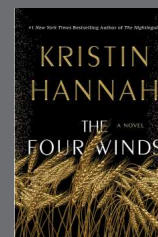
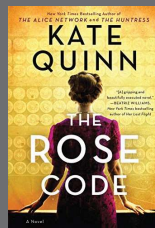
Any questions, contact Jan Nielsen at jrnielsen@charter.net or 978-549-3044.

Next books:

March 15, 2022, “The Rose Code” by Kate Quinn

April 19, 2022, “The Most Beautiful Girl in Cuba” by Chanel Cleeton

May 17, 2022, “The Four Winds” by Kristin Hannah



PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS:

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

Christopher Miller
John Duane
Rhonda Tibbetts
Bill Davis
Jan Nielsen
Judy
Meg Davis
Ed Holmgren

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



LIVING ON THE EDGE

There's something wrong with the world today
I don't know what it is
Something's wrong with our eyes
We're seeing things in a different way
And God knows it ain't his
It sure ain't no surprise, yeah
Living on the edge!

There's something wrong with the world today
The light bulb's getting dim
There's meltdown in the sky
If you can judge a wise man
By the color of his skin
Then mister you're a better man than I, oh
We're living on the edge!

Aerosmith, Living on the Edge Verses 1 & 2 from Get a Grip (1993)

When I first heard the song *Living on the Edge* as a sophomore in high school, there was something that spoke deeply to my heart. The second verse, declaring an unknown wisdom in being able to discern the value of another person from the color of their skin stuck out to me from the very first hearing, and is a line that often echoes in my head to this day.

Growing up in South Carolina, I was often confronted with the image of the Confederate flag. As a member of our AFJROTC program and its agreement with Parris Island to allow our cadets to attend a *Mini-Boot Camp* where we would be treated to a week of USMC hospitality with our very own Drill Sergeant, we were exposed to a lot of military culture. Senior Drill Instructor Sgt. Billups was my host for my week of *vacation* as he termed it. This man made quite an impression!

We did all the generic things one would expect during a mini-boot camp. We learned proper drill and dress. We got to rappel and run the Combat Assault Course. We shot M16A2's, which was a lot of fun despite that I wasn't a crack shot. We sang Marine Corps Jodies as we marched, and I still remember a lot of them to this day because we then used them while marching our fellow cadets around Irmo High School's parking lot during ROTC classes and drill team practices.

On the last day, as we prepared to board the bus home, we got to shop in the PX. I got a pair of aviator sunglasses that I loved and looked silly on me. We got candy and other treats, but my eye was drawn to the cassette tapes containing recordings of the Marine Corps Jodies we spent the week singing. Because in South Carolina it was ubiquitous at this time (1994), I didn't think twice when I saw Confederate flag bumper stickers, paraphernalia, a shirt with a Confederate flag and a mildly inappropriate cartoon image on it, and a tape called *Songs of the CSA*.

Now I was born in Florida.

The Confederate flag, even as a junior in high school, was what was printed on the roof of the *General Lee in The Dukes of Hazzard*, a show where "just some good ol' boys" tore up the road running from the sheriff. I was aware of the Civil War, and I was aware of the anti-Northern prejudices that still remained in the South — and do to this day. I was aware of our history of racism because we learned about it in school, but I was sheltered from the real knowledge of it.

I bought the tapes. I learned the Jodies and the CSA songs, catchy because of their familiar tunes as American standards. One song, to the tune of Dixie, had lyrics like, “Southrons hear your country call you / up, lest worse than death befall you / To arms! To arms! / to arms in Dixie!”, and Oh, hear the Northern thunders mutter / Northern flags in South winds flutter / To arms, to arms, to arms, in Dixie”. It didn’t trouble me because I was a high school student, and even being raised in South Carolina since age six, the Civil War was ancient history to me. I felt like I was simply learning something about the past.

I wore the shirt with the Confederate flag on it to school for the first time the week after we got back from Parris Island. After our ROTC class that day, an African American person with whom I was friendly but not close, came up to me and said, “I need to talk to you,” leading me into the back of the flight simulator room where we’d be alone and not overheard. This is my recollection and decades of reflection, so know that the true exchange was more in line with a conversation two juniors in high school might have.

“Sure, what’s going on?”

“That shirt is really bothering me. Is that what you believe?”

“What do you mean? It’s just a Confederate flag.”

“It’s not just a flag to me. That’s the flag they flew when they tried to keep my family as slaves instead of letting them go free. It just really bothers me because I thought you were nice.”

“I *am* nice!” It’s true, I’m mostly a nice person.

“It doesn’t feel nice to me. It really bothers me.”

I don’t remember the rest of the conversation because that gave me a lot of big feelings that I wasn’t ready to process. I can say with certainty that, though I tried to be really cool about it because I genuinely liked him, I was definitely defensive in my response. We still talked some, and I never wore that shirt again, but it wasn’t ever quite the same between us.

I ran into him years later while I was in my chaplain residency, and he was employed at the same hospital. I asked him whether he remembered the conversation, and he said, “I’ve had so many of them over the years that this one really doesn’t stick out”. I told him that it stuck out to me and thanked him for calling me out like that. It was a little awkward, but it made me feel good to at least have some closure to something about which I’d been deeply embarrassed in the moment.

The point is this: as we live out our faith during this time of Lent, and we reflect on what we do well and don’t; where our faith leads us and where it trails behind. As we think about how we as human beings do and don’t live into the faith we profess, the need to engage in relationships that include repentance and forgiveness is deeply connected to the core of our humanity because God’s command to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us — and to seek reparation for the wrongs we’ve committed — is so deeply seated in our Christian ethos that it’s hard to tease out.

Just like my friend held up the mirror of my attitudes and behaviors and I blinked, during this season of repentance we’re each called to look into our own mirrors — and many of us will also blink. This is part of our humanity.

The good news is that even in those unreflected and even unrepentant parts of our humanity, the love of God through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is there to love us into new life.

Grace & Peace,
Pastor Eric

IN RECOGNITION OF WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Hazel Ah Ying Lee was born in 1912 to parents who had immigrated from China. As a child, she became interested in airplanes and wanted to become a pilot. She worked as an elevator operator at a department store to earn money for flying lessons and was one of the first Chinese American women to earn a pilot's license in 1932. When the Chinese military needed pilots as Japan invaded Manchuria, she went to China to join a squadron of volunteers. Her husband was able to join the Chinese Air Force, while she was allowed to fly only commercial aircraft and (later), was given a desk job, solely because she was a woman. She returned to the US in 1937 as a war refugee and worked for an organization sending arms to China. Hazel joined the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) in 1942 and began flying military aircraft; one of only two Chinese American Women to do so. She was known for her leadership and as a fast-talking, hilarious woman. Hazel spent time teaching her fellow WASPs about Chinese culture. It was a difficult time to be Chinese as they were often mistaken for



Japanese. She was stationed at Romulus Army Air Base in Michigan and piloted ferrying missions and administrative flights in several aircraft types, including large C-47 transport aircraft. Women were not allowed to fly in combat. Hazel was given orders to pick up and fly an airplane from Niagara Falls, New York to Great Falls, Montana in November 1944; Great Falls was a staging area for planes going to the Soviet Union. On the approach to the airfield, there was confusion in the control tower and Hazel's plane collided with another on landing. She was badly burned and died of her injuries at the age of 32. Her brother was in the U.S. Army and was killed in action within days of her death, The family was initially denied permission for them to be buried in the white section of the cemetery, but the family fought back, and eventually, permission was granted.

More information on Hazel Ying Lee's courageous story can be found:

<https://www.nationalww2museum.org/war/articles/women-airforce-service-pilot-hazel-ying-lee>



Zitkála-Šá (Gertrude Simmons) was born in 1876, on the Yankton Indian Reservation in South Dakota. She was taken to a Quaker missionary boarding school in Indiana at age 8 for 3 years to assimilate her into Euro-American Culture. At 15, desiring more education, she entered the White's Indiana Manual Labor Institute planning to become a housekeeper. She instead fell in love with music and studied piano and violin, eventually teaching music at the school. Zitkála-Šá studied and played violin at the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston. She wrote the first American Indian Opera. Zitkála-Šá's graduation speech was on the inequality of women's rights. During her time at Earlham College, she began collecting Native American folklore and cultural stories and translating them into English and Latin. At one point, she taught at the Carlisle Indian Industrial School. Zitkála-Šá was a writer for Atlantic Monthly and Harper's Monthly, as well as an author of

books and stories about Native Americans. Zitkála-Šá was involved with the Society of American Indians (SAI) which was dedicated to preserving the Native American way of life while lobbying for the right to full American citizenship. The Indian Citizenship Act was passed in 1924 giving U.S. citizenship rights to the indigenous peoples who did not have them. She was also active in the General Federation of Women's Club promoting women's rights. Zitkála-Šá ran voter-registration drives for Native Americans. She continued to work for civil rights and access to health care and education until her death in 1938.

More on her amazing life can be found at: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zitkala-Sa>

Dianne Hultstrom

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

March is Women's History month. To highlight the contributions of American women to history, arts, and literature the following books have been added to the Children's Lending Library.

The Fearless Flights of Hazel Ying Lee by Julie Leung

Red Bird Sings: the Story of Zitkala-Ša by Gina Capaldi & Q.L. Pearce

Change Sings: A Children's Anthem by Amanda Gorman

Viola Desmond Won't be Budged by Jody Nyasha Warner; illustrated by Richard Rudnicki

You can read more about Hazel Ying Lee and Zitkala-Ša in the preceding article in this newsletter.

Amanda Gorman is an American poet and activist who was the first National Youth Poet Laureate and the youngest inaugural poet when she delivered her poem "The Hill We Climb" at the inauguration of President Joe Biden.

Viola Desmond was a Black Canadian activist and business woman who challenged racial segregation in a movie theater in Nova Scotia when she refused to leave a whites-only section of the theater.

FROM OUTREACH

Lent and the return to in person worship is a great time to assess our continued support to those around us in need. The pandemic has not stopped for many who are food insecure and who juggle increasing costs for rent and basic needs. Our collections are being delivered monthly by your Outreach Ministry Team to the Acton Food Pantry, servicing Acton and surrounding communities. Kindly make it a personal or family commitment to drop off in-date shelf-stable food items onto the cart in the lounge. Your neighbors will thank you, as St. John is regularly thanked by the Acton Food Pantry and all the other area pantries we support with food and funds.

Thanks,
Larry Kivimaki

Critical Needs - Please Consider Donating These Items Now

laundry detergent
gluten-free bread
flour
cooking oil
dried beans
dried or canned fruits
nuts and trail mix
spaghetti sauce
coffee
cereal

Baby Items

Diapers - size 5, size 6
Pullups - size 4T-5T

Other Recommended Items for Donation:

Oatmeal
Protein bars - Kind, Luna, Clif, RxBars or similar
individual bagged nut-free snacks for kids -
baked cheese crackers, pretzels etc
Rice (bagged)
Baking mixes
Canned vegetables
Peanut butter & jelly

Personal Care

Toilet paper
Tissues
Women's incontinence briefs, size S and size L

Your donations are always welcome to help feed families in our community.

CONFIRMATION CONNECTION

Families gathered with their Confirmation students on February 27th to share ideas about Faith Practices. Meeting to discuss this with families stressed the importance of practicing faith as a family. We discussed faith practices that we (personally and as Lutherans) engage in and examined faith practices that people of other faiths have. We explored different places that we experience God in our lives and experimented with different ways of praying, including praying in color. Coloring opened our discussion so that we were able to share ideas about evil occurrences in our world and how we, as children of God, deal with evil.

You can check out our coloring pages on the Youth and Family bulletin board.

GIRL SCOUTS CELEBRATE FAITH

March 6-12th is National Girl Scout Week! For the first time, St John is participating in Girl Scout Sunday to honor the Girl Scouts (and former Girl Scouts!) among us. They will be assisting in the service and affirming their Promise with the congregation. If you are a former Girl Scout please feel free to participate in this special occasion.

At the heart of Girl Scouting are many of the same values most faiths hold:

- Supporting girls
- Making our world a better place
- Building compassionate leaders

Girl Scout Sunday celebrates the powerful ties between Girl Scouting and faith. Girl Scouts are encouraged to connect their faith to the Girl Scout Law and earn the religious recognitions of their faith. Let's honor the Girl Scouts and adult volunteers who give their time and talents in service of others!



GIRL SCOUTS

SUNDAY SCHOOL SCOOP

On February 27th, we gathered together to talk about healing, friendship, and gratitude. After singing "This Little Light of Mine" with Pastor Eric, we explored a couple stories. The Four Friends carried their paralyzed friend through town, up onto a roof, and lowered their friend down through the roof because they were so certain that Jesus would be able to heal their friend. Ten Men Healed were cured by Jesus, but only one turned back to say thank you to Jesus and to praise God. Each of these stories reminded us to let our lights shine as we practice being good friends and showing our thanks.

To help us understand the commitment and faith of the four friends, we carried our friend Minnie in a stretcher and celebrated her "healing."



FAMILIES, LET'S DO LENT TOGETHER!

Make sure to pick up your Let's DO Lent! board today. They are located on the table in the narthex. There is one per child since scratching off is so much fun.

The board is to be used each Wednesday and Sunday during Lent and during Holy Week. On each day, there is a sticker to scratch off that reveals an activity. All activities are designed to support at least one of the following goals:

- Appreciate God's world
- Take care of God's world
- Show our love for the people of God's world



LESSONS FROM KIDSPACE—IT'S NOT JUST THE CHILDREN LEARNING BY MICHELLE ROSE

The activities in KidSpace are ever-changing. And the interactions and conversations are always different.

This past Sunday that included one of our youngest members on dad's shoulder crying, "I want the bread." Note, he just got distracted going up for communion and missed getting the bread. He did successfully get the bread on the second pass through the communion line. After, returning to KidSpace, his attentive sibling jumped around asking, "Did he get the wine?"



This interaction caused a moment (okay, I thought about it a lot) of reflection for me. Do I cry for God's love? Do I jump with excitement at the thought of sharing this meal at God's table? Or have I, in participating in this feast for so many Sundays throughout my life, started to take communion for granted? Is praying at God's table the same thing as being so excited by the invitation to be present at that meal, that I'm moved to tears if I miss that opportunity to share in this meal with Jesus? with my St John family? with all of my fellow faithful believers? Those are questions that I am still pondering, but this Sunday when I stand waiting for my turn to "get the bread and the wine," I might dance around or wiggle a little with a renewed appreciation of this gift of love and relationship to which I am being invited.

THANK YOU

You should be receiving a copy of the *Living Lutheran* magazine to your home. Some of you may not know that this is a continuing gift from an anonymous donor in the congregation. If you have not been receiving it and would like to, please contact Valerie in the church office.

Thank you so much to the generous donor!

THANK YOU

Thanks to all of you for the prayers, cards, and offers of assistance while I am recuperating from surgery. All is well... Gloria "Gogi" Woodward

EXPERIENCES FROM EXTRAVAGANZA

How was your trip to Minneapolis? What did you think of Extravaganza? What did you learn? Who did you meet? These are just a few of the questions that I have—understandably—heard from my St John family since I returned from Minneapolis a couple weeks ago. And, I wanted to share this experience with all of you. I appreciate your gift of patience and time to process what we learned and how we use this understanding to shape the experiences of our St John family going forward.

I am thrilled that I was able to attend Extravaganza 2022 in Minneapolis from February 11-14. Pastor Eric and Laura Kennedy also attended the in-person gathering while Carrie Stamos participated in the on-line experience. Extravaganza is the ELCA Youth Ministry Network's annual conference for folks involved in children, youth, and family ministry.

Quick answers to some of the questions:

Minneapolis was freezing cold, but it felt good to be in a city that I consider another home—and to spend some time with my son, Mitchell, before and after the conference.

Extravaganza was...WOW! A rush! So many experiences, thoughts, and people squashed into a short amount of time! Exhausting! Invigorating! So worth it!

Some of the things we learned—or at least confirmed:

Family commitment and involvement are crucial to the most successful youth and family ministries. Cultivating inter-family relationships for all family members is important.

Developing leaders and providing “job” opportunities is essential for keeping members—both youth and grown-ups—engaged and energized.

We are all in a transitional space right now. We need to move forward acknowledging that we are in the middle of a challenging, uncomfortable time when we don't know what the future looks like.

Our church can—and should—be a safe space to explore and share feelings, reduce stress, experiment with and develop coping skills, build self esteem, and be an ongoing partner with our St John family members as we experience mental health challenges and triumphs.

People learn and participate in life in different ways. Church life should provide experiences that feed different learning and experiencing styles for members, young and older, to examine and form their faith.

Holy Yoga

Through the Blanket Exercise Ceremony, we gained a deeper understanding of the experiences of Native Americans and the trauma, sorrow, and despair that these experiences caused. We recognize the need to join hands with and celebrate all people and their traditions in the ways that they need—not what we force upon each other.

We gained so many ideas for activities and approaches to involve our youth and families more deeply in the life of St John. Some activities are already being used, others are still being planned.

Finally, we formed new relationships with youth leaders and pastors from right here in Massachusetts and across the country.

Extravaganza energized! Extravaganza inspired! Extravaganza expanded our faith family. Thank you for supporting us in our travels, and now that we are home, as we design and build the future of our Youth and Family programs.

With faith,
Michelle (and Pearl the Funzel too)



UPCOMING AT ST. JOHN

March 4th	7:30 pm - Knitting Group
March 6th	9:30 am - Worship (In-person) 10:45 am - Family Sunday School (In-person) 6:30 pm - Confirmation (In-person)
March 7th	10:00 am - Seniorcise 8:00 pm - Pastor's Class: Living Faith
March 8th	11:00 am - Seniors on the Go Book Group 7:30 pm - Youth and Family Ministry Team
March 9th	10:00 am - Seniorcise 6:00 pm - Outreach 7:00 pm - Lenten Prayer Around the Cross (In-person)
March 10th	10:30 am - Bible Study 4:00 pm - Discussion on Race/ Anti-Racism
March 11th	7:30 pm - Knitting Group
March 13th	9:30 am - Worship (In-person) 10:45 am - Sunday School (In-person) 6:30 pm - Family Confirmation (In-person)
March 14th	10:00 am - Seniorcise
March 15th	11:00 am - Seniors on the Go Book Group 7:00 pm - Social Justice Team
March 16th	10:00 am - Seniorcise 7:00 pm - Lenten Prayer Around the Cross (In-person) Council Meeting (stay tuned for potential time change)
March 17th	10:30 am - Bible Study 6:00 pm - Bells (In-person) 7:00 pm - Choir (In-person)
March 18th	Knitting/Crafting Group
March 20th	9:30 am - Worship (In-person) 10:45 am - Sunday School (In-person) 5:30 pm - Sudbury Youth Ministry Collective @SUMC

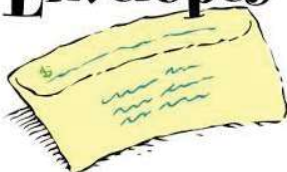


Login information
<https://zoom.us/j/9784438350>
Meeting ID: 978 443 8350
(or call in 1-312-626-6799)

PASTOR'S CLASS: LIVING FAITH

Last session during the Pastor's class, we discussed the changing times that affect our lives, faith, and comfort. This session we'll discuss the faith practices that bring us life and deepen our faith throughout life's journey. It will be a mix of traditional and less traditional practices, and will also provide space to share our own practices and experiences, as well as ask the nagging questions we have. The remaining classes are Mondays at 8 pm by ZOOM: March 7 & 21; and April 4 & 18. You are welcome to join in at anytime, even if you missed a few!

Offering Envelopes



The 2022 Offering Envelopes are available at the church for pick up during office hours and on Sundays in the Narthex. Please let us know if you are unable to pick them up and we will make other arrangements.
Thank you.