

# ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH NEWSLETTER

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Office Director: Valerie Ripley ([office@stjohnsudbury.org](mailto:office@stjohnsudbury.org))  
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Organist: Bart Dahlstrom ([organist@stjohnsudbury.org](mailto:organist@stjohnsudbury.org))  
Sexton: George LaBarge

November 4, 2022

## UPCOMING AT ST. JOHN

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| November 6  | 9:30 am -Worship<br>10:45 am-Sunday School<br>5:00 pm -Vespers   |
| November 7  | Office Closed: Michelle vacation<br>No Seniorcise  |
| November 8  | 11:00 am-Seniors on the Go Book Group<br>7:30 pm -Youth/Family<br>Ministry Meeting<br>8:00 pm -Executive Committee |
| November 9  | 11:00 am -Seniorcise   |
| November 10 | 10:30 am - Bible Study<br>4:00 pm -Discussion on<br>Race/ Antiracism<br>5:45 pm - Bells<br>7:15 pm -Choir          |
| November 11 | 7:30 pm -Knitting Group  |
| November 13 | 9:30 am -Worship<br>10:45 am-Sunday School<br>5:30 pm -Confirmation  |
| November 14 | 10:00 am -Seniorcise<br>4:00 pm-Senior Ministry Meeting  |
| November 15 | 11:00 am-Seniors on the Go Book Group  |
| November 16 | 10:00 am-Seniorcise  |
| November 17 | 10:30 am - Bible Study<br>5:45 pm - Bells<br>7:15 pm -Choir  |
| November 18 | 5:30 pm -LEGO Night<br>7:30 pm -Knitting Group   |
| November 20 | 9:30 am -Worship<br>10:45 am-Spread the Bread<br>5:30 pm -Youth Ministry Collaborative                             |



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](http://www.stjohnsudburyma.org)

**NOVEMBER 10TH AT 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 NOVEMBER 8th AND 15th**

Please join us!!!

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

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

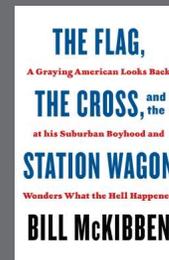
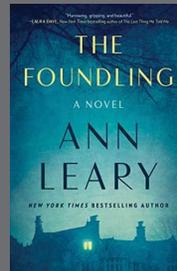
On November 15th we will discuss “The Foundling” by Ann Leary.

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

Next books:

November 15 - “The Foundling” by Ann Leary

December 20 - “The Flag, the Cross, and the Station Wagon” by Bill McKibben



**PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS:**

Brian Young  
Norma Duane  
Rhonda Tibbetts  
Bill Davis  
Marilyn Kunelius  
Carolyn Sweeney  
Joan LeDuc  
Gus Sullivan  
Joan Western  
Barbara Locke  
Liz Packard  
Royce Fuller  
Lisa Marshall

Christopher Miller  
John Duane  
Alexis Marsh  
Janice Potter  
Ann Kirk  
Claudine  
George Stanley  
Wanda Miller  
Mark Sarvela  
Christine Carosella  
Martha  
Susanne Fuller  
Bob & Donna May

Charles Miller  
Helen Williams  
Ruth Avery  
Jan Nielsen  
Judy  
Meg Davis  
Ed Holmgren  
Janet Erb  
Pastor Ivan  
Bob  
George Wolf  
Walter Sarvela  
Valerie Ripley



## FAITH AND THE ART OF GUITAR PROGRESS

This wholly original title came to me as part of a Reddit conversation with someone who's feeling stuck in their progress in playing guitar. Their comment was that they've been playing for three years and feel like they haven't made any discernible progress for quite some time.

I get this.

My preference is to see progress immediately in what I do. I like building, writing, doing things that look like I've been there. These are important things to do because they make an immediate difference. As time goes by, I realize the most important things don't really have immediate results. My marriage, being a parent, pastoral care, helping our congregation to discern culture and calling; none of these can happen overnight.

One thing that I offered that I've been pondering since is something I heard from a Spanish-style classical guitarist, Estás Tonne. He's kind of hippieish in his approach, often lighting a stick of incense and placing it in the strings on his headstock as he plays. He said something like "I'm just trying to play what I feel, and work at it until I can". That's what I've always done even though I didn't realize it — not just in guitar, but in life.

Some things I mentioned that are really helpful at least for me in playing guitar are:

### 1. Compare you to you.

My chief question after playing or practicing is, "did I enjoy what I did today?" If the answer is yes, I do that more.

When I focus on being "good", I start getting frustrated with myself. When I get in that rut I sit down and just play. I doodle around and find something cool sounding. I play and sing loud and rock out for the sheer joy and catharsis of it.

### 2. Learn skills by learning songs.

This is the way.

Pick three songs you don't know that aren't technical nightmares and learn them. Chord charts are awesome, tablature is helpful. I only use tab as a general guide for how my fingers should be positioned. I find I have to listen to the song to get the feel of it, and I usually learn the chords first. Keep learning new songs and dusting off the old ones.

Don't know Barre or power chords?

Learn only songs that require them for a bit. Feel free to fake it some. All Along the Watchtower is a great one for this. Dave Matthews has a slow version that's gorgeous, there are faster and slower versions, and it legit sounds good at any speed.

Want to learn to play more intros?

Sit down with one and suck at it for a bit. Play it slow, break it up, bullshit your way through it a little bit. If you get bored easily like I do, get three intros and work on each one till you're bored and move to the next.

Want to play lead? All I really know is pentatonic and some other dribs and drabs, and branched out from there. It's not really about how much you know most of the time, but how you explore what you do as you learn more.

### **3. Eat the frog ...in small bites.**

I have a suggestion that might sound counterintuitive: learn the hardest chords first. For instance, the barrier to barre chords is often hand strength. Power chords are much easier, but learning to make barre chords builds up hand strength, gives you a feel for how to make notes ring on all six strings

Learn something related to what you enjoy right now.

### **4. Ask why, and follow your ear.**

“Why do I like playing this chord?” Or why is this progression, this song, this lick so interesting to me? There are things I do almost every time I pick up the guitar. I love how they sound or how they feel to play or just find them funny.

If it sounds good to you that’s good enough. It’s a bonus if others do.

### **5. Play along...a lot.**

I learned to play lead guitar by putting Dark Side of the Moon on repeat nonstop for a couple months. My roommates probably hated me for it, but eventually I sounded good playing along with the CD. I wasn’t imitating Pink Floyd or their guitarist Roger Waters note for note unless that was my goal, but I could sound good in compliment to them. It made me more nimble and versatile, and it accidentally set me up for open mics and jams.

I sit down with random music lists (radio, Spotify, YouTube, whatever) and play along with whatever happens to come on. Train your ear, and you’ll learn new chords along the way.

### **6. It’s okay to sound like someone else.**

We all start at a similar place when it’s ground zero. We all start with someone else in our ear. Maybe it’s someone’s rhythm or their technical ability. Maybe it’s their ear, or maybe it’s just the expressiveness of their playing. No one started out sounding like themselves, we all start out as imitators of people we admire. Feel free to learn from others, imitate them, and build on what’s useful and leave behind what isn’t. One day you’ll sound like yourself, and even then, it will change from time to time.

### **7. All you really need to do is hang.**

I went to a blues jam every week for a year on internship. I was really bad at first. I practiced more because I knew I was going to go the next week. I focused on playing the songs well at first, then more and more on my lead stuff. After a year I wasn’t the best, but I could hang.

I’ll never be the best, but I can hang with any player anywhere I go. Let them be the stars. It’s fun just to be there.

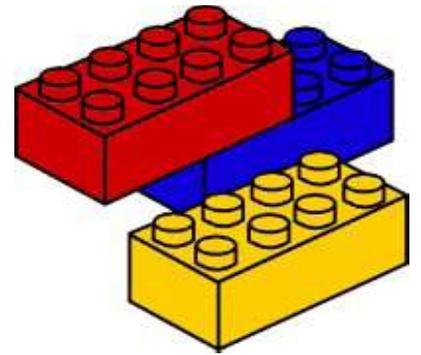
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The more I think about these pieces of advice, the more I see them as principles in my life of faith as well. A lot of following Jesus is starting and stopping, learning and failing. We sound like others until we find our own voice.

Ultimately, what God wants from us isn’t to be anyone else, but to invest ourselves enough that we can hang with whoever we’re with, knowing that what God is giving us is enough to see us through.

Grace & Peace,  
Pastor Eric

# LEGO NIGHT



FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 18TH  
5:30-7:30 PM

JOIN US FOR PIZZA AND LEGO FUN!

RSVP to Michelle Rose [mrose@stjohnsudbury.org](mailto:mrose@stjohnsudbury.org)  
or 508-320-7245

## Fall Fling!

Come play with the leaves at St.  
John!

Bring your rakes and leaf blowers!!

Saturday, Novemeber 12, 2022  
9:00 am - Noon

Drinks and donuts provided.

***Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.*** Hebrews 13:2

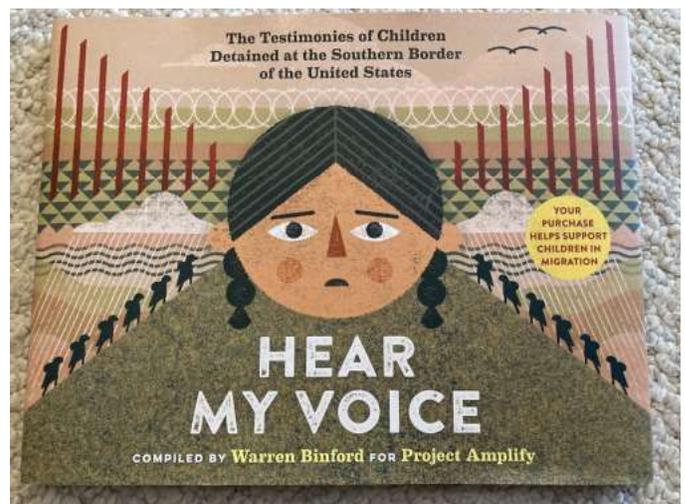
A month-long photographic exhibit of migrant stories from the southern border has been installed in Heritage Hall. The photos are potent images of the accompanying personal stories of migrants, undocumented refugees, asylum seekers and social justice advocates.

The photographs were taken by, Rolf Larson, a member of Christ Lutheran Church in Natick, who spent a week along the southern border in a border immersion program to hear the personal stories of people along the southern border.

The border immersion program is a program of Iglesia Luterana Cristo Rey, an ELCA congregation in El Paso, Texas. The program seeks to educate participants, first hand, about border issues through personal accounts and direct contact with all agencies involved along the border. To learn more about Iglesia Luterana Cristo Rey go to: <https://iglesiacrstorey.wixsite.com/luterana/borderimmersion>.

To accompany this exhibit the Children's Lending Library features the book: HEAR MY VOICE: The Testimonies of Children Detained at the Southern Border of the United States, compiled by Warren Binford for Project Amplify.

On Sunday, Nov. 20, the Adult Forum will feature Rolf Larson and immigration on the southern border. Mildred Cheung



## **CHILDREN'S LENDING LIBRARY BOOKLIST**

Our Children's Lending Library started with seven books in June of 2021. Now, a year and a half later we have 35 books in the library highlighting diverse authors and different lived experiences. If you are interested in receiving a bibliography of the books in the Children's Lending Library please contact Valerie Ripley at [office@stjohnsudbury.org](mailto:office@stjohnsudbury.org) or 978-443-8350.



Please save the date for the first, in a very long time, **Cookie Swap** to be held on Saturday, December 10 beginning at 10 am in the St. John Heritage Hall.

Here's how it works. Bring at least a dozen of your favorite homemade cookies, and a container to bring home a selection from the others on display. You are honor bound to only take as many as you bring.

While **Seniors on the Go** is sponsoring the event, it is open to all. We just need to know if you are interested in coming and bringing cookies.

Please call Joan Niemi @ 978-793-1040 email at: [niemi.joan@gmail.com](mailto:niemi.joan@gmail.com)

## A GLORIOUS DAY FOR CONFIRMATION!

On Sunday, October 30th, we celebrated the Affirmation of Baptism for **Elizabeth Christine Smith, Faith Marie Andersland Beckett, and Jillian Irene Valentino**. Confirmation gifts included a bible in a zippered book cover and a plaque with their bible verse made by one of our current confirmation students.

Students were asked to consider their faith as a tree as they reflected on their faith statements. Faith chose to present her faith statement through the artwork that graced the front cover of our confirmation bulletin. Lizzie and Jill's faith statements are included here.



### Jill Valentino

As a tree, my faith would surely be a sequoia. Like how plants draw in water and nutrients from their roots, my faith sequoia draws in love, allowing my tree to grow to its greatest potential and sustaining it; to my faith, love is a necessity. For example, the water and nutrients for my sequoia are like communion, which, because of God lovingly sending Jesus to save us with forgiveness of all of our sins, is a renewing reminder of God's love for me and others.

After absorbing it through the roots, love travels through the sequoia's trunk in a path towards growth. Like the strength of a trunk, noticing recurring ideas of love in scripture, such as in Jesus' parables, supports my faith's growth and reinforces how important the idea of love is to my faith's growth. In being conscious of living out my faith with love, my branches spring forth from the trunk.

Through the sharing of gifts, my faith and love is given to others, spreading positivity. An example of this in my life is being the support that a friend needs if they are having a bad day or going through a hard time. Another example of this idea of sharing gifts and spreading positivity is my participation in our church's community service activities, like the intergenerational Spread the Bread, Florence House Easter Baskets in Confirmation class, and Kitchen Supplies kits both in Sunday school and Confirmation. These examples of living out my faith are the tree's leaves and pinecones.

However, my sequoia is not a grove of one, but is a part of a greater grove community. My church family is like a grove of giant sequoias, living in harmony with support and protection. My positivity-spreading faith sequoia within the church sequoia grove is essential to our biome, and in turn symbiotically strengthens the theoretical Sierra Nevada mixed conifer forest around it. In real life to me, this means living out my faith by impacting the world in a loving and positive way.

### Lizzie Smith

For our Confirmation project, we were asked to represent our faith as a tree, including the roots, trunk, and the branches. At first, I believed the assignment would be easy. But, as I sat there trying to plan what I would say, I realized that this project would make me do something that I'd never truly done before: think about my faith. Really think about my faith. Where it comes from, what keeps it going, what it means in my world, what it is. The reason I was struggling with ideas was that I didn't understand what it was that I was truly struggling with.

My faith can be described not quite as a tree but as a sapling, still young and still growing. My roots are still spreading, my branches are still reaching out into the world, my trunk is still struggling to stretch up into the sky. With time, it'll strengthen and expand. But for now, it remains a new growth.

My faith is like a willow tree. It's flexible and accommodating. Even when the wind is harsh and the tree bends and sways, it will always spring back up when the storm dies down and remain strong. Just so, as even when times seem dark, we will always come back to God.

My roots are the ones who guided me through my faith and continue to hold me steadfast. My mom and my sister, Emily, are the ones who brought me to church every Sunday to worship. My Sunday School and Confirmation teachers taught me about the Bible and the Word of God. Pastor Eric taught me how to interpret it and connect it with the world around us. Their presence is the reason for my faith standing as it is.

My trunk is what holds my faith steadfast and strong. My trunk is my congregation, my community. My trunk is also my pillar of faith, my core belief that God is all encompassing and all loving despite our faults and failures.

My branches are how I spread my belief into the world. I strive to help others in need and respect those around me. I participate in the youth group at church. In the future I aim to be active in our political environment so as to pass laws that improve upon our world and life, serving my community as the Bible tells us to do.

As my tree grows, my branches will extend. My roots will deepen. My trunk will grow tall and strong. But even as all changes, my tree will remain a tree and my faith will remain a driving factor in who I am and who I want to be.

Congratulations to our newest St John voting members! We look forward to watching your faith trees continue to grow and bloom!



## SUNDAY SCHOOL SCOOP

We have taken a diversion from learning about Old Testament stories for the last couple weeks. On October 23rd, we took a field trip back into the sanctuary. Kids and families trained to be acolytes. We peeked behind the altar, visited the sacristy, and



learned how to light and extinguish our altar candles. We are thrilled to welcome all the new acolytes!

On Reformation Day, we talked about Martin Luther and what it means to reform something. We considered how Martin Luther challenged the rules at the time and how the changes that came from his challenges created our Lutheran faith.

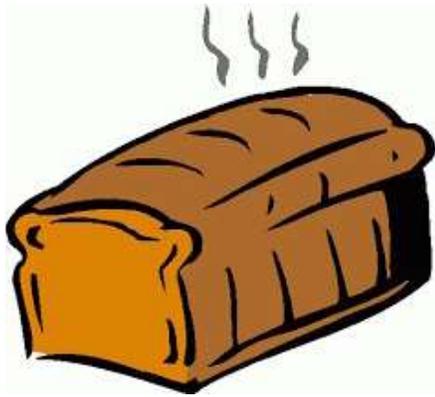
After reading the book, Snippets by Diane Alber, which also talks about challenging an accepted system, we created our own beautiful churches using paper snippets. You can see them on display in our classrooms.!



## CONFIRMATION CONNECTION

Confirmation students have been pondering how God creates us and the relationships around us. On October 23rd we looked at some of our favorite personal photos and considered what we liked about each photo and what that says about us. We discussed three different bible verses around creation and considered God's ongoing process of creating and how we are a part of God's continuous creation.

On October 30th, we looked beyond our own identity to consider our relationships and the relationships of things and people in the world around us. We took a field trip to our St John backyard and thought about trees and how they support each other and communicate with each other. We played some games of This or That? And Worth it/Not Worth It to ponder the relationships that are important to us. After discussing the story of Cain and Abel and God's relationship with Cain, we took on a Halloween challenge and earned some candy for our trick or treat bags!



## SPREAD THE BREAD IS COMING!

Please plan to make some breads for our upcoming Spread the Bread project on November 20th! During Sunday School, we will wrap and make cards for all the breads that are brought in. Breads will be shared with a local food pantry for distribution to families.

Breads can be made from a mix or from scratch—and can be any flavor. Just please note if your bread has nuts in it.

Thank you for your help!

### DIAS Request!

St. John, through our support of DIAS (Dignity in Asylum), has been supporting refugees in the area for many years. Specifically, we have been helping an Afghan family who has resettled in Concord for almost a year now. The family has some immediate needs we can help with as their extended surrogate church family.

The family needs immediately:

- Diapers sizes 1 and 2
- Baby wipes
- Shoes (used are great as well!) size Girl's 10 and Boy's 11

As winter approaches....

Warm clothes and jackets (Girl) 4T and (Boy) 5T

Please contact Johanna Ellis [johanna68@gmail.com](mailto:johanna68@gmail.com) if you can help or have any questions.



## THE COLD WEATHER IS COMING AND OUR MITTEN TREE IS UP!

Our Mitten Tree is out for decorating with all kinds of cold weather items. Please bring mittens, gloves, scarves, hats, and warm socks in women's, men's, and kids' sizes. Note: If you are shopping, the Outdoor Church folks who receive our adult-sized stuff prefer gloves—or the peekaboo fingerless mittens.



## OCTOBER 23RD WAS A BANNER DAY FOR THE CROP WALK!



Members of our St John family gathered in Concord Center on October 23rd for a lovely autumn walk to raise money for the Concord Crop Walk. We were thrilled to raise over \$2000 for the Crop Walk between your donations through the Crop Walk website, through our regular St John giving methods, and through the proceeds from our Crop Walk Bake Sale. We are grateful for all of your support!

The walk began at the First Parish Church where we rolled out our beautiful new banner designed and made by Emily Smith—with help from some of our St John members' feet! We ambled through Concord Center down the road to North Bridge and through the park there and then back to Concord Center. Many thanks to all of our walkers: Jane and Al Miller, Lorraine, Matt, Lizzie, Emily, & Luna Smith (yup! The dogs walked too!), Aleta Labiento, Johanna & Doug Ellis, Molly Goslin, Ryan Zeller, and Michelle Rose.



### Good Birthday Wishes for Donna May

In recognition of Donna May's 83 birthday, we invite congregation members to send birthday cards to her at 98 Maynard Farm Road, Sudbury MA 01776. We hope to lift her up and bring her some joy as she deals with serious health issues.





## WE SCARED UP A GOOD TIME AT TRUNK OR TREAT

On Saturday, October 30th, our St John parking lot was filled with all kinds of wonderful visitors: princesses, Mario, butterflies, owls, superheroes, Harry Potter and friends, 2 Scooby Doo's, and even a Dinosaur! Kids moved from trunk to trunk playing games and collecting treats. We had tables set up to build with legos, make mummy lanterns and Halloween magnets, and even some pumpkin carving. Many families participated in the scavenger hunt to figure out the Mystery of the Puzzling Disappearance of the Pickle Pizzas. Scooby Doo ate them, of course! Many families shared their appreciation for the event, and most lingered to enjoy the fun!



Trunk or Treat would not have been the amazingly fun event that it was without all of the folks who decorated their trunks and helped at the tables!

Many thanks to the Kennedy family, the Jones family, David Kerrigan, the Rose family, Nancy Allison, Lori Fryklund, the Wolf Family, Carrie Stamos, Betty Lewis, the Miller family, the Mihelich/Maranville family, Suzanne Steinbach, the Bascom/Pompilio family, Karen LaCure, Jan Nielsen, Michal Mueller, and Sharon Horton! And thank you to Mike and Valerie Ripley for loaning us some bricks for Lego-style building and for creating Halloween Tic Tac Toe!

We can't wait to do it again next year!

## ADULT FORUM

Pastor Eric will kick-off Adult Forum on November 6th at 10:55 am. Grab a cup of coffee and head on into the sanctuary. The first topic will be "What does it mean to be part of a congregation". If you have ideas for future topics, or if you would like to host a session, please let Pastor Eric know.

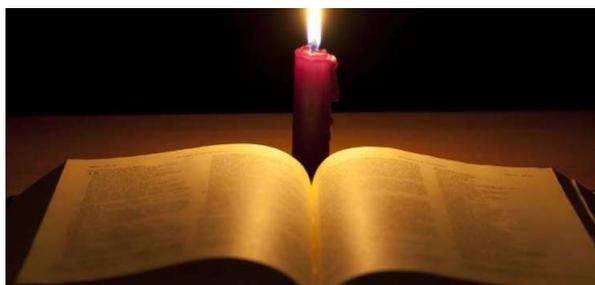


### CHECK OUT WHAT'S NEW IN THE NARTHEX!

There is now a sign-up poster there for you to access.

All you have to do is write your name next to the various worship assistant spots. All help is needed: Communion assistants, Greeters and Ushers, Acolytes and readers.

*Please help us out and reserve your place for future dates.*



**Save the Date**  
**November 6th: 5:00 pm**  
**Evening Vespers**  
**Reception Following**

### HELP US SEND LOVE TO OUR COLLEGE STUDENTS



Each year we send care packages to our college students to give them a boost as they prepare for final exams. Care packages typically include an advent devotional and advent calendar, flat snacks, a packet of hot chocolate, pocket tissues, and a gift card. Please help us ensure there is a gift card for all of our 20+ college

students by providing \$10-\$15 gift cards to places like Starbucks and Dunks. Or, you could write a check to St John with College Care Packages in the memo section and we will gift card shop for you.

Please give gift cards directly to Michelle Rose or slip them under the door of the Youth Office by Sunday, November 13th.

If you have college students in your house, please email current addresses to Michelle Rose at [mrose@stjohnsudbury.org](mailto:mrose@stjohnsudbury.org),

**SUDBURY  
DOING  
GOOD**

**FAIR!**

*Saturday,* **NOVEMBER 5**  
*11 am - 2 pm*  
*@ The* **GOODNOW LIBRARY**

- Meet the folks behind Sudbury's Nonprofits, Community Groups, and Town Departments who are "doing good" in every area that impacts our community: social services, the arts, the environment, health, safety, education and more.
- Get the details on their programs, services, membership options, and volunteer opportunities.
- Learn how you can get involved.
- Drop by for a fun, family-friendly afternoon featuring activities, community service opportunities, and giveaways!

*for more info, visit:*  
**sudburyfoundation.org**

*Hosted by the Goodnow Library &  
Sudbury Doing Good, a project  
of the Sudbury Foundation.*



## Coats and More! for McLean Hospital Patients

Rev. Angelika Zollfrank, chaplain at McLean Hospital, and longtime friend of St. John, has offered us an opportunity to support patients at McLean. Often patients come to them without the proper clothes to be able to go on walks (which happen twice a day and are important for patients who are on locked units).

Once the weather gets cold, they'll need:

- sweaters
- sweatpants
- coats in large, extra large and extra extra large sizes.

New and used clothing are all welcome. If used, please make sure items are washed or dry cleaned and ready to wear.

Donations may be placed in the designated area in the lounge/library.

"It is still mild but very soon the weather will turn and we will need coats sorely. Thank you so much for thinking of me and for supporting the patients here at McLean!!" Rev. Angelika Zollfrank

