

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)

September 30, 2021

JOIN THE ST JOHN STEP UPS AT THIS YEAR'S CROP WALK

The 41st Annual CROP Walk for the Hungry will take place in Concord on Sunday, October 17. The 2 ¼ mile Walk kicks off at 2:15 pm from First Parish Church, 20 Lexington Road, Concord, MA. Participating walkers can enjoy the autumn beauty of some of Concord's most historic country roads, as they walk to raise money for the hungry of local communities and around the world. Come early at 1:30-2:00 pm to register and enjoy music by the Concord Carlisle High School Pep Band. Walkers can also choose to walk separately in a place that feels comfortable to them.

Local funds raised will be allocated to nine area community supper/pantry hunger programs: Open Table; the Community Supper/Food Pantry in Acton; Mt. Calvary Community Supper in Acton; the Sudbury Community Food Pantry; the Maynard Food Pantry; the Bedford Community Table/Pantry; Loaves and Fishes in Groton; Westminster Community Food Pantry; and also to Gaining Ground. In addition, the CROP Walk funds go to Church World Service for worldwide emergency relief of disasters, such as floods, hurricanes, and earthquakes, and for fighting the root causes of hunger through community development programs in 30 underdeveloped countries.

To donate to or join the St John Step Ups, please use this link: <https://events.crophungerwalk.org/2021/team/st-john-step-ups>

For more details, see the CWS web site: www.cwsglobal.org and the Concord area CROP Walk web site: www.concordcrop.org



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

ALTAR FLOWERS WILL RESUME

We will once again be adorning the altar with flowers. You may donate the weekly flowers in memory, in honor or in celebration of someone or of an event.

If you would like to sign up for an Oct, Nov. or Dec. date, please use the sign-up sheet across from the office, or contact the church office at 978-443-8350 or office@stjohnsudbury.org.

The cost of the flowers will be \$40.00.



ST. JOHN SENIORS ON THE GO BOOK CLUB FOR OCTOBER 5TH AND OCTOBER 12TH

Please join us!!!

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

October 19th, we will discuss "The Last Train to Key West" by Chanel Cleeton.

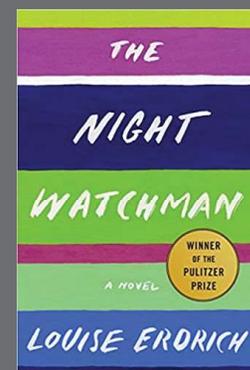
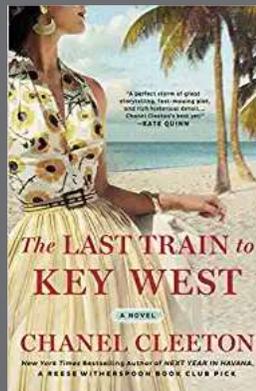
Any questions, contact Jan Nielsen at jrnielsen@charter.net or 978-549-3044.

Next books:

October 19, 2021, "The Last Train to Key West" by Chanel Cleeton

November 16, 2021, "The Night Watchman" by Louise Erdrich

December 21, 2021, "The Yellow Bird Sings" by Jennifer Rosner



PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS:

Debbie Reed
Charles Miller
Helen Williams
Liz Tolbert
Ruth Avery
Janice Potter
Jan Nielsen
Liz Radoski
Claudine

Brian Young
Norma Duane
Angelika Zollfrank
Rhonda Tibbetts
Pat Quinn
Wendy
Marilyn Kunelius
Judy

Christopher Miller
John Duane
Jim Hansgate
Alexis Marsh
Bill Davis
Marilyn Hartke
Ann Kirk
Carolyn Sweeney



St. John Screening of the film GATHER

October 5th at 7:00pm via Zoom



In the face of COVID-19, the commitment to preserving Native food systems and improving the health of Indigenous communities is more important now than ever. Learn more about this movement with a new film, GATHER, co-produced by First Nations Development Institute, at www.nativefoodsystems.org. The Social Justice Ministry at St. John Lutheran Church will be presenting this film on **Zoom on Tuesday, Oct.5, 2021 from 7:00pm – 9:00pm** followed by a discussion on the film. Please join us in learning about Indigenous Food Sovereignty.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9784438350?pwd=UzVHbm5CSWJobXk2d2wydGdoTlZ6Zz09>

Meeting ID: 978 443 8350

Passcode: 8350

One tap mobile

+13017158592,,9784438350# US (Washington DC)

+13126266799,,9784438350# US (Chicago)

CHECK OUT ST JOHN AT MAYNARDFEST!

Make sure to stop by St John's booth at MaynardFest this weekend on Saturday, October 2nd. Kids can decorate a fall ornament. Clap and dance as Pastor Eric entertains on his guitar around noon. And, of course, the Fonzels will be there—make sure you are too!

The free family-friendly festival celebrating commerce, community & culture in Maynard is an old-fashioned street fair throughout Maynard's downtown. The Fest includes sidewalk sales, 90+ vendors, music galore, and dozens of family-friendly activities! The event runs from 9 AM-3:30 PM, and most of Main Street and Nason Street in Maynard will be shut down to allow for attendees to stroll through vendors booths.



FIRE BY NIGHT

This is a weird moment in the life of St. John and in most of our lives. I feel a lot of things all at once, and it's honestly somewhat tiring and can be demoralizing at times. I say this not to complain or indicate that I'm losing my grip, but to say out loud that I'm feeling it, and that if you're feeling it too, you're not the only one.

I know you've heard me use the *Fire by Night* image if you've ever heard me preach because I use it fairly often right now — in fact, this may not be the first article with this title. *Fire by Night* is an image I use in my prayer life a lot when I'm looking for guidance. Lately it inhabits my prayers daily because I feel this sense of wandering and wondering, and I need to believe that we aren't just flapping in the wind at the mercy of disease numbers, but that there's direction and purpose in this moment.

I'd like to share a few things I've heard recently in the congregation so that I can offer you a chance to process them with me. If you'd like to talk about any of them or anything else, please know I'd love to talk to you — *yes you specifically* — about whatever's on your mind.

We're changing too many things too frequently.

I've heard this a lot lately with regards to the service this Sunday (September 26), which began back in late May or Early June as a *triumphal reentry* into the sanctuary after months of exile. It then meandered through Heritage Hall after our council retreat on September 11, when the council expressed the concern that there are too many things we know we don't know to feel confident enough to worship in the sanctuary. Finally, worship was moved outside when we realized that the number of people wanting to attend in person greatly exceeded our ability to seat them indoors for the most part.

We had around 100 people present with us and it was glorious!

Even so, I feel this too. It's frustrating to me to change plans because I've spent a good part of my career planning events for people around the state of South Carolina, which included lodging and meals, and it was in some ways easier than coordinating this worship service! It was easier because I understood the way the system worked because I was working on things for which there was a precedent. There's no real pandemic precedent, and that means everything is more "spongy" than I would like. I feel the frustration so much too.

It's hard to plan anything or *do* anything when we can't count on anything staying the same.

But all the planning that went into it, all the time we all invested, and everything else we worked to put in place still left some gaps. One gap was what kind of food we could or should provide. The task of simply providing a bottle of cold water turned out to be a monumental task, which was surprising to me because our congregation has some of the most capable people I know! At the end of it all though, we have the statement above: It's hard to plan anything or *do* anything when we can't count on anything staying the same.

I feel this so much.

It's one thing to be flexible / agile / able to pivot / whatever verb for not being so rigid that we can't choose something different. It's another thing altogether when it feels like the nature of everything we do is constantly in flux to the point that even with all this planning, things still feel last minute. I can procrastinate, but I don't when it comes to this kind of event. Last minute drives me kind of nuts too.

What makes this so challenging is that there are moments when the last minute is really the only minute we have during this particular season. That's why we're preferencing outdoor worship until it gets too cold to be outside. That's why we're looking at ways to make outdoor spaces more usable by the congregation, and

in the back of my mind I'm wondering how to make our outdoor spaces more accessible to people who have trouble walking on grass.

Are we ready to invite people into our home?

This is a tough one because when we add it to the other two, it becomes obvious that we definitely *will* invite people into our home to worship and join with us whether we're actually ready or not because that's who we're called to be. We're called to be givers of hospitality and hosts of God's invitation. The way we welcome people into our midst is more than simply offering *something to go to*, because what Jesus calls the Church to offer is *somewhere that we all belong*. We're inviting people — members, guests, seekers, and anyone else to share with us in the experience of God's loving community.

Fire by Night

Okay, no one has said this to me...but to be really honest, I *love* the fact that we invite people anyway even if we don't feel ready. There's a holiness in the willingness to meet people on shaky ground and together learning to trust that God will provide what we need to keep going.

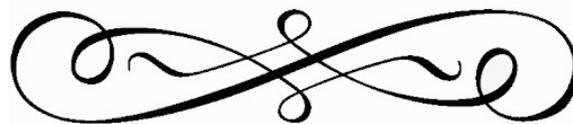
We don't know the way to do all of it because we have no choice but to learn as we go. We encounter obstacles and roadblocks and mental blocks. We trip over stumbling blocks that are there naturally and that we've placed there ourselves. We find that we're often out of step with each other — and yet we keep moving.

This is the Gospel message for this article: we're moving in a direction we don't understand but we aren't wandering. We're following the clear guidance of God's Holy Spirit expressed in the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night that helps us to trust that no matter what limitations we have, God goes before, alongside, and behind us the whole way.

The beloved community of the Church isn't a community that values simple answers to simple questions. We're called to deal with the hardest questions of all: the questions about relationships, loving each other, faithfulness even when frustrated, joy in the midst of sorrow, and all the other things we do.

I honestly don't know how things will look in a year except for this: God is with us then; God is with us now; God has been with us always. What God promises is already delivered. Thanks be to God that the path isn't mine to make, and that my calling and your calling isn't to walk the path alone but to make our way together. Together, we can walk this path and follow God's calling into new life in a Promised Land of God's own choosing — and we know that it will be good because God provides us what we need along the way.

Grace & Peace,
PEW



OFFICE HOURS

The church office will be open
9:00 am to 3:00 pm Monday through Thursday
and will be closed on Fridays.



LEGISLATION UNDER CONSIDERATION IN MASSACHUSETTS IN 2021

- **New design for state seal and flag S2848**
- (Update: Governor Baker signed the bill on 1/11/21 to create a Special Commission to change the Massachusetts Flag and Seal)
- **Remove racist Indian Mascots from schools S 294 H 581**
- **Honor Indigenous Peoples Day S 2027 H 3191**
(ME NM, & DC currently observe IPD instead of Columbus Day. SD observes Native American Day) 20 states observe CD. Some towns and cities have changed CD observances to IPD observances. 27 states observe neither
- **Celebrate and teach Native American history and culture in schools S 382 H 651**
- **Protect Native American Heritage (graves, funerary objects, and sacred objects) S 2239 S 2240 H 3377 H 3385**
- **Support the education and futures of native youth H 582**

Of interest: in the early 16th century, there were approximately 100,000 indigenous in the area now known as Massachusetts. Per the 2010 census, there were 37,000.

UPCOMING AT ST. JOHN

tober 3rd	-9:30 am - Worship at St. John -10:50 am - Family Sunday School at St. John -6:30 pm - Confirmation
October 4th	-10:00 am - Seniorcise
October 5th	-11:00 am - Seniors on the Go Book Group -7:00 pm - Social Justice Ministry movie watch
“Gather” zoom)	-7:30 pm - Facilities Ministry Meeting (no church
October 6th	-10:00 am - Seniorcise
October 7th	-7:30 pm - Confirmation Planning Meeting
October 8th	-7:30 pm - Knitting/Crafting Group
October 10th	-9:30 am - Worship at St. John (no Sunday school, no confirmation)
October 11th	-Office Closed
October 12th	-11:00 am - Senior on the Go Book Group -7:30 pm - Youth and Family Ministry Meeting
October 13th	-10:00 am - Seniorcise -8:00 pm - New(ish) Parents Group
October 14th	-4:00 pm - Discussion Group on Racism/ Anti-racism
October 15th	-7:30 pm - Knitting/Crafting Group
October 17th	--9:30 am - Worship at St. John -10:50 am - Sunday School at St. John -6:30 pm - Confirmation



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